

LA PAROLE

NEWSLETTER OF THE ACADIAN MUSEUM

By Warren A. Perrin, Chairman

January 2026

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MUSEUM HOURS

Tue.-Fri. 1-4 pm —Sat. 10-noon

Group tours, call 337 456-7729 (weekdays) or 337 501-3049 (weekends or no answer).

HELP PROMOTE CAJUN CULTURE!

Your tax-deductible donations¹ help:

- Find the [lost location](#) of the first Acadian settlement
- Archive rare tapes and interviews
- Give inspiring [talks and presentations](#) to clubs and civic groups
- Support French “immersion” and other cultural programs
- Expand the museum collection.

Donate [online](#) or by check to Acadian Museum, Box 53597, Lafayette, LA 70505.

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SPONSORED BY: Francophone Section of the Louisiana State Bar Association

¹ Acadian Museum is a Louisiana 501(c)(3) nonprofit. All contributions are tax-deductible.

Happy New Year! Looking Back on 2025...

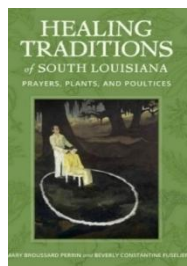
2025 was a great year for Louisiana and Acadian culture and also a great year for our museum. Here are the highlights:

- We [announced](#) a new museum annex that will open at Jefferson Island, LA (details to come) and continue making plans for other museum annexes featuring Acadian textiles and memorabilia of our hometown troubadour D.L. Menard.
- We were featured on the nationally syndicated show, [Traveling with Denella Ri'chard](#).
- We welcomed and participated in the [Grand Réveil Acadien](#).
- Dr. Andy Reaux made a massive donation of Acadian brown cotton textiles, making our collection the largest in the state.
- We welcomed a new pope and helped explore his genealogy.



We continue to thrive thanks to your support, especially from those of you who supported us by [upgrading to a paid newsletter subscription](#). You too can donate for as little as \$5/month.

Book: Healing Traditions of South Louisiana



This popular book provides a comprehensive history of the healing arts from the dawn of man to present times, including details on the mystical arts of the Cajun *traiteur* as well as the medicinal plants supporting their *traitement*. To place an order, call (337) 456-7729 or go [online](#).

ACADIAN HERITAGE AND CULTURE FOUNDATION, INC.

203 S. Broadway, Erath, Louisiana 70533 | (337) 456-7729 | [acadianmuseum.com](#)

IN THE NEWS

MUSEUM NEWS

Our Christmas Party Was Well-Attended

Happy New Year! We hope you had a wonderful Christmas. Here are some photos from the annual Acadian Museum Christmas party at our farm and [guesthouse](#) in Henry, LA.



Art maven Herman Mhire (standing) with volunteer Anna Langlinais and museum supporter Joseph Baudoin

Nelies Dugas cooked delicious bread pudding



(L-R) Warren Perrin, Ernest Etienne, Andy Perrin, and Julian Hinckley



Volunteer Ron Gaspard made a delicious gumbo!

Newsletter editor Ryan Bernard came all the way from Santa Fe, NM



On a chilly night, many of us gathered around the roaring fire

New Volunteer

This month, we welcomed a new bilingual volunteer, John Ray Broussard, who has served in Lafayette Consolidated Government, plays the accordion, and writes songs about Cajun culture.



Honoring Our Cajun French Military



Photo courtesy of Jason Theriot

Dec. 7 marked the 81st anniversary of Pearl Harbor in World War II and the Acadian Museum honors with an exhibit the only known Cajun who died on D-Day: Private First Class Houston Duhon from New Iberia, LA was killed on June 6, 1944 at Omaha Beach, serving with the 397th Antiaircraft Artillery Battalion, and was the only Cajun casualty at Omaha Beach that day, buried at the Normandy American Cemetery. His friend, Carroll Mestayer, carried his body ashore, and Duhon was posthumously awarded the Silver Star and Purple Heart.

When American forces stormed the beaches of Normandy in June 1944, military commanders quickly sent out urgent calls for "Frenchies" - young Cajun soldiers from Louisiana whose French-speaking abilities would prove invaluable in communicating with local populations. These soldiers, who had grown up speaking French as their first language, suddenly found themselves thrust into critical roles as interpreters and cultural liaisons across Europe and North Africa.

LOUISIANA/CAJUN NEWS

La Table Française – Come Speak French

South Louisiana locals meet regularly to improve their language skills. CODOFIL keeps a [list](#) of these events, but here are some of our favorites:

Arnaudville: Last Saturdays, 9:30 am, Arnaudville Community Center. [email](#)

Broussard: 2nd Fridays, 8:30 am, Valsin Broussard House, 408 W. Main St. (337) 445-3478

Dulac: 3rd Wednesdays, Parish Library, call (985) 563-2014

Erath: Fridays (except Jan. 9), 10 am, City Hall. [email](#)

Lafayette: Wednesdays, 7 am, Dwyer's Cafe, [email](#); or 2nd Thurs, 5:30 pm, Petroleum Club. [email](#)

Lake Charles: First Fridays, 4 pm, Central Library, 301 W. Claude St. [email](#)

Loreauville: Tuesdays, 7 am, Main Cup Coffee Shop, 101 N. Main St. [email](#)

Maurice: 2nd and 4th Wednesdays, 10 am, 218 Chief Fred Ave. (337) 652-0166

New Iberia: Thursdays, 8:30 am, Cane River Pecan Co., 254 W. Main St. (337) 519-7942

New Orleans: 2nd and 4th Wednesdays, 5:30 pm, 1519 Jackson Ave. [details](#)

Rayne: Thursdays, 9:30 am, Bernard-Bertrand House, 1023 The Blvd. [email](#)

St. Martinville: Wednesdays, 10 am, Longfellow-Evangeline State Park, 1200 N. Main. 337-394-3754

Scott: 1st and 3rd Tuesdays, 1 pm, Begnaud House, 110 Benoit Patin Rd. [email](#)

Thibodaux: Tuesdays, 5 pm, Jean Lafitte Center, 314 St. Mary St. [email](#)

Ville Platte: Mondays, 2 pm, Hundred Fold Coffee Shop on Coreil St. [email](#)

Via Zoom: Mondays, 9 am. To connect to the meeting, contact [email](#).

New Film by Pat Mire



Award-winning Louisiana filmmaker Pat Mire’s latest narrative feature film “Pointe Noire,” will begin its Louisiana theatrical release in mid-January. In this beautifully designed murder mystery, filmmaker and

crawfisherman Louis Leger (Roy Dupuis) and criminal defense attorney Dolores Arceneaux (Myriam Cyr) join forces in the Cajun prairie community of Pointe Noire to save the life of Joel Richard (Michael Bienvenu), a falsely accused man on Louisiana’s Death Row who faces imminent execution. What follows is a search for the truth -- to find out what really happened 30 years prior when two people were killed the night of the traditional *courir de Mardi Gras*.

The premiere will include a “meet and greet” with the filmmakers and cast members at 6:15 pm on Thursday, Jan. 15, at St. Landry Cinema 4 in Opelousas, LA, and on Friday evening, Jan. 16, 2026, at Parkway Cinema 6, 1011 Keyser Avenue, Natchitoches, LA. On Sunday, January 18, at 1:45 p.m. St. Landry Cinema will present a special matinee screening followed by an Actors’ Studio-type conversation with actor Michael Bienvenu, and co-screenwriter Rebecca Hudsmith, who will lead a conversation on social justice and storytelling. Tickets for these events will be available at acadiancinemas.com.

Tourism Presents a Mixed Picture

On December 20, 1803, some 222 years ago, the American flag was raised in New Orleans' Place d'Armes (now Jackson Square) to mark the Louisiana Purchase, a pivotal event that doubled the size of the U.S. and involved a symbolic lowering of the French flag and raising of the Stars and Stripes amidst celebrations. Many locals were not in favor of being owned by America and vigorously resisted for the next nine years before Louisiana became a state.



The Acadian Museum hosts visitors from throughout the world— especially those who are from Francophones countries. Above is a photo of me with Julia Renaud, a tour guide from Go West Tours of San Francisco who brought several groups of French tourists to our museum. But there has also been “a substantial reduction in tourists,” particularly from Canada, as The Advocate explains:

The reason: President Donald Trump’s new disruptive trade and immigration policies impacted travel across Louisiana, reducing the number of foreign visitors to the state by as much as 15% to 20% over the previous year. Canadian travelers, who typically accounted for one in three foreign visitors to Louisiana, were particularly sensitive to Trump’s tariffs and musings about making the country the 51st state, state tourism officials said.

The Salt Mine Disaster Lives On

I recently hosted Allan Wolf who authored an interesting book on the Lake Peigneur mine disaster. I was part of a team of attorneys who represented the salt mine workers



in a suit that was brought successfully against Texaco. Wolf donated the book to the museum. The book is on Kindle and can be ordered from Amazon [here](#).

“The Vanishing of Lake Peigneur” is a graphic novel, illustrated by Jose Pimienta, that tells the true story of a Louisiana lake that drained away in 1980 due to an underground salt mine collapse. The book uses a gripping, multi-perspective narrative, including the lake itself as a narrator, to recount the disaster from the viewpoints of oil rig workers, miners, and others affected, blending fact with some fictionalized elements for dramatic effect. It's a suspenseful survival story that explains the catastrophic event through detailed illustrations, maps, and diagrams, appealing to fans of true-life mysteries and science/history.

Get Your Tickets Early for Balfa Week

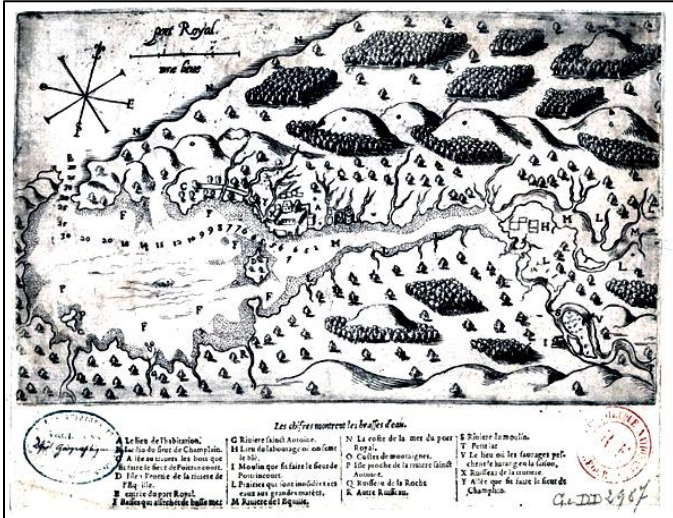


Twenty-five years ago, Christine Balfa glanced around a joyful jam at a Cajun music camp held a thousand miles away from Louisiana and thought, "We need to bring this back home – where we live, where aromas of gumbo, courtbouillon and étouffée are in the air, where this culture was born and bred, where joie de vivre spreads from one generation to the next, where values are shared *entre amis* and celebrated with guests we welcome in our homes." And that's how Balfa Week was born.

Balfa Week is scheduled for April 13-17 in Eunice, LA and you can secure your spot NOW at early bird rates! <https://lafolkroots.org/balfa-week>

FRENCH/ACADIAN NEWS

Proposal for a New Port-Royal Monument



Robert Surette, the co-founder and leader of *L'Association des Familles Acadiennes de Port-Royal 1632-1755*, asked me to help encourage the Canadian government to build a monument commemorating the location of Saint John the Baptist in Port-Royal, NS, the first Acadian church established before 1710. He said:

I would like to share with you ... Champlain's map of the Port Royal area from the early 1600s [see above and [here](#)]. This is one of the most interesting historical maps of early Acadie that Champlain left us. It shows the ground layout of the Port Royal area at that time. The agricultural methods and locations identified on the map are particularly interesting for researchers studying aboiteaux systems around the Lequille River (now known as the Allains River) on the present Fort-Anne site.

A brief [bilingual video](#) [shows] a few aboiteaux still standing along the shores of the Belleisle Marsh. I also wanted to share two short videos

we made last summer. Some of you may have already seen them. I would like to draw your attention to the quality of the Beaubassin video monument.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zlhdsjN2iDk>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X9c9D0Z9ab4>

We could encourage Parks Canada to erect a monument marking the approximate location of the first Acadian church in Port-Royal, which is now located on Parks Canada land in Fort Anne.

Robert suggests that the Government of Canada may find a way to finance such a project. All we need to do is encourage them with letters of support from various Acadian groups and political figures. We will gladly participate.

Arbre de Noël à Miscou fait avec des cages à homard



Photo Carolle Roy

Christmas Wishes from Montréal

Yvon Godin in Montréal sent this photo with greetings:

Happy Holidays to our Cajun brothers and sisters in Louisiana from *La Fédération acadienne du Québec*. This Christmas tree is 15 feet tall and it is in front of Alfred LeBlanc's home in Longueuil near Montréal.



Yvon Godin also sent us this photo:



Members of the *Fédération acadienne du Québec* commemorated the Acadian Memorial Day on Dec. 13 at the Notre-Dame-de-Lourdes chapel in Montréal. Attendees came from l'Acadie, Québec, and France. You can see our beautiful ceremony on YouTube here:

<https://youtu.be/iN0wHqvHCeM>

L'année 2025 avec Dominic LeBlanc



Le ministre Dominic LeBlanc (Photo: Patrick Lacelle)

Cet article de Félix Arseneault a été publié sur le site de Radio-Canada:

Dominic LeBlanc a été assez occupé en 2025, c'est le moins qu'on puisse dire. L'Acadien a cumulé bon nombre de fonctions ministérielles à Ottawa, en plus d'être dans l'équipe des négociations tarifaires avec les États-Unis. En entrevue de fin d'année, il nous amène dans les coulisses des 12 derniers mois, une période qui n'aura pas été de tout repos.

Dominic LeBlanc semble débordant d'énergie, malgré les nombreux allers-retours qu'il a faits cette année entre Ottawa, Washington et sa circonscription de Beauséjour, dans le sud-est du Nouveau-Brunswick.

Il a commencé l'année comme ministre des Finances et des Affaires intergouvernementales sous le premier ministre Justin Trudeau, son ami de toujours. Un changement de premier ministre, une élection et une guerre commerciale plus tard, il cumule maintenant les responsabilités de ministre du Commerce intérieur et ministre responsable du Commerce Canada-États-Unis.

Pour en savoir plus, [cliquez ici](#).

A Bit of Acadian History for You



Warren Perrin displaying an Acadian flag at the Beausoleil home site in New Brunswick

December 13 was the anniversary of the tragic sinking of the British transport ship Duke William in 1758 during the Acadian Expulsion, where over 360 Acadians perished (the majority were children) in the North Atlantic off the coast of France, a major maritime disaster commemorated annually as Acadian Remembrance Day. This event, along with the sinking of the Violet around the same time, marks a devastating moment when many deported Acadians died at sea, highlighting the harsh realities of the "Grand Dérangement." The British transport ship was carrying Acadians from Île Saint-Jean (now Prince Edward Island) to France because they were French subjects and could not be sent to the British colonies like their brethren who were deported from British Nova Scotia. The whole story is demonstrated at our museum in Erath, LA.

LAGNIAPPE

A Major Donation of Rare Books



Last month, J. Christopher Cutler of Shrewsbury, MA donated a 40-volume deluxe leather set of books (shown above) containing the complete works of Washington Irving, the colonial era author who wrote "Rip Van Winkle," "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow," and other classics. The 40-volume set was purchased in the early 1900s by Cutler's great-grandfather, Robert S. Bradley, a prominent philanthropist in Boston, MA.

This printing was called the Joseph Jefferson Edition after Joseph Jefferson, an American actor who was famous for his portrayal of Rip Van Winkle on stage and in silent films at the turn of the last century. Each set bears Mr. Jefferson's autograph and this was Set 32 of 250 total sets printed by G P Putnam's Sons, New York and London, 1900.

Many thanks to Mr. Cutler and his family for the generous contribution of this rare set in very fine condition. The collection will be on long-term exhibit at the Joseph Jefferson House on

Jefferson Island, LA which the actor purchased in 1869 and which is home to today's Rip Van Winkle Gardens.

Christmas Memories – from Us to You

Here's a fun historic fact for you... In 1604, Samuel de Champlain and his crew established a colony on St. Croix Island, where they celebrated the first recorded European Christmas in North America. They founded the colony of Acadie! This historic celebration predates the arrival of the Mayflower by 16 years.

Here are photos from our own Perrin's Christmas in Lafayette, LA:



Legacy of the Queen's Proclamation



December 9 was the 22nd anniversary of the Queen of England's Royal Proclamation. In January, 1990, I prepared a petition and had it delivered to the British Crown. The petition sought a formal apology from The Crown for their role in the 1755 Deportation of Acadians from Nova Scotia. The British had prepared and carried out a strategy to eradicate the Acadian culture: ethnic cleansing. Today, because nearly half of the Acadians died, many now call it genocide. Happily, with near-unanimous international support, the effort was successfully concluded on December 9, 2003, when Queen Elizabeth II's representative signed the Royal Proclamation.

The implications were three-fold: an acknowledgment of the horrific wrongs committed against the Acadian people in the name of the British Crown; a symbolic reconciliation for the death and suffering resulting from the diaspora; and the establishment of July 28 of each year as a Day of Commemoration of the Acadian Deportation.

The following are some of the important developments that have resulted from the Queen's Royal Proclamation of 2003:

1. The image of the Royal Proclamation is featured in a film on the Acadians which is being shown in the Canadian Museum for Human Rights in Winnipeg, Canada.
2. The annual Day of Commemoration of the Great Upheaval is observed by Acadians throughout the world on July 28, giving everyone an opportunity to reflect on how the tragic events of 1755 shaped the Acadian and francophone communities of today.
3. The Royal Proclamation has been used as a primary resource tool for teachers in Louisiana schools. It is a perfect learning tool because it's bilingual and reinforces our French Immersion model and goals.
4. The Faculté de droit de l'Université de Moncton (law school) uses the Royal Proclamation of 2003 in the classes at the University of Moncton Law School.
5. I have been invited to give lectures all over the world on the document. In 2018, I presented seminars on it at Yale University; 2019 at the University of Moncton Law School; 2022 at the University of Texas; 2023 at the University of Auburn; and 2024 at the *Congrès mondial acadien* in Nova Scotia.
6. Many articles, plays and documentaries incorporating the document have been written and produced in France, Canada, and Louisiana.
7. In 2013, the proclamation's 10th anniversary, I donated all of my materials on the Petition to the UL Archives.
8. I have been invited to unveil monuments dedicated to the document in two countries and two states.
9. The document is on permanent display in the historic church at Grand Pré Historic National Park in Nova Scotia.
10. A 2022 article by Andréanne Joly was published on the website Francopress.ca about the 70-year reign of Queen Elizabeth II. In the article, I was quoted as saying that the Queen clearly understood that the wrongs done to the Acadians by the Crown needed to be addressed and were reconciled by the Royal Proclamation, so she graciously gave her consent to the execution of the document by her representative Canadian Governor General Adrian Clarkson. The original document is in the Canadian Archives.

Stay At Our Guesthouse!

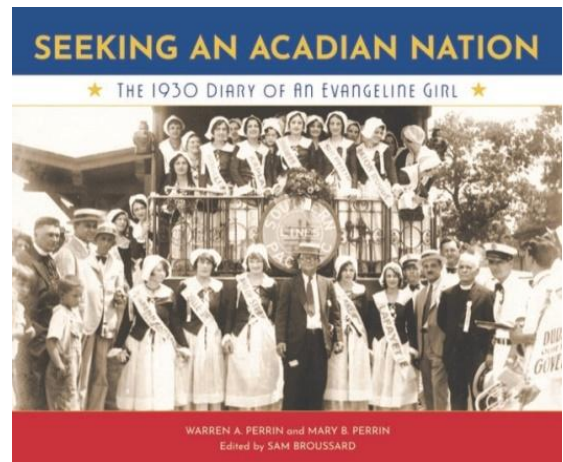


Vermilion Parish is a great place to visit during the winter months. It is known as a “birding paradise.” There are many fabulous Cajun places to visit where you can still experience French being spoken by the locals.

The Perrin Farm in Henry, LA, is only five miles from the Cajun food mecca of Abbeville, and an easy ride to the Acadian Museum in Erath. Situated in a bucolic setting, our Cajun family farmstead has been converted from a family retreat to a rural farm guesthouse. Our party barn accommodates up to 100 for parties, family reunions, crawfish boils, weddings, and more. To reserve, email perrinfarm18@gmail.com.



Visit the Boutique and Get Cool Stuff!



Another way to support the museum is by visiting our [online boutique](#) and purchasing one of our books or souvenirs. Here’s just an example of what you will find:

- [Acadie Then and Now: A People's History](#) with articles by Cajun and Acadian authors from around the world; edited by Warren Perrin, Phil Comeau, and Mary Perrin
- [Acadian Redemption: From Beausoleil Broussard to the Queen's Royal Proclamation](#) by Warren Perrin
- [Healing Traditions of South Louisiana](#) by Mary Perrin and Beverly Fuselier
- *A Century of Acadian Culture, Erath (1899–1999)* by General Curney Dronet
- Histories of [Vermilion](#), [Iberia](#), and [St. Landry](#) parishes by Warren Perrin
- T-shirts, posters, and reproductions

Would You Like a Group Presentation?

As you can see from our [event calendar](#), the Acadian Museum gives regular presentations to groups around the region, and we would be happy to speak to your group. Here is a sampling of topics—or [click here](#) for a complete list. Send all requests to info@acadianmuseum.com.

- Acadian History and Culture
- The Queen’s Proclamation: History of an Apology to the Acadians
- Folk Healing Traditions and the Traiteurs of South Louisiana
- The Development of Cajun Music
- Acadian Resistance Fighters and Beausoleil Broussard
- Louisiana: The French Renaissance 1900–2000
- Longfellow’s Evangeline: The Birth and Acceptance of a Legend
- Acadians’ Role in the American Revolution
- Frenchie: Cajuns’ Contributions in WW II
- Post-Deportation Migrations of Acadians 1755–1800

Come and Visit—In Person or Online

You can read more about us on our website at www.acadianmuseum.com or stop by the Museum at 203 S. Broadway Street in Erath, LA. Museum hours are Tuesday–Friday 1–4 pm and Saturday 10 am–noon.



You can also see our extensive collection of historic Cajun- and Acadian-themed videos at www.youtube.com/@acadianmuseum.



The late D.L. Menard playing at Lake Peigneur near New Iberia, LA