2003 Creole Studies Conference
New Orleans, Louisiana

The Creole Studies Conference held in New Orleans this past October has proven to be a major success. Its goal of bringing together the academic world with the general public to discuss Creole studies was met. This conference truly validated the need for additional research, preservation, and documentation of the Creole culture and history. The largest evidence of this was made by the one over-riding complaint about the conference - “it was not long enough”.

The purpose of this conference was to identify the research that has been and is currently being done in Louisiana Creole studies; and to determine the most fruitful avenues for future research. Now that a start has been made in that direction, more targeted and comprehensive outreach programs will be offered. The Center is in the process of investigating the most prudent and expeditious way of documenting this past conference for publication and distribution purposes. In the meantime, a photo gallery depicting some of the conference activities has been placed online on the Center’s website at http://www.nsula.edu/creole/photos.asp.

The “numbers” associated with this conference are probably the most important validation of its impact. The over 300 participants attending represented 25 states and 3 separate countries. Over 50 separate presentations were given. Exhibits depicting various aspects of Creole culture numbered 32 and included a genealogy station, artists and their wares, Creole family histories, organizational information on a number of groups, a Creole Cuisine film, and a live depiction of the art of masonry by a master builder. The “Creole People’s” award was presented to 11 individuals representing areas within Louisiana and two from outside of the state.

A Message From Janet

October, 2003 marked the 5th anniversary of the NSU Creole Heritage Center and we are all very proud of the various accomplishments we have made. Many of the endeavors that occurred were first-time achievements by a unit that has no model. The Center represents the only one of its kind and almost every undertaking has been a true “learning experience”. One redeeming factor that has sustained us has been the many positive tributes and compliments we have received. Another has been the overwhelming responses through participation and involvement of the academic world, the general public and the Creole people themselves.

Over the past 5 years we have presented the first Creole Heritage Conference, the first Family History Conventions (Louisiana & California), and the first Creole Studies Conference. We have increased our mailing list database ten-fold which continues to grow daily. The Center has initiated the first National Creole Family History database and has made a targeted portion of this information available online in a searchable format. Another first has been the recording of individual Creole communities and related themes through the Creole Chronicles project. We have an established outreach program that continues to meet the goals of the Center throughout Louisiana as well as nationwide.

As stated before, the Center is one-of-a-kind and the first unit to have as its main mission to document and preserve the Creole culture. There are more people and entities to thank for our successes than this publication has space, but I have to at least acknowledge our partners that have shown the Center great support in many ways and with whom we work on a daily basis. These partners are the Cane River National Heritage Area, the Cane River Creole National Historical Park, the Regional Folk life Program and of course, Northwestern State University in Natchitoches.

We will continue to strive to meet our goals and mission and hope to provide another 5 years of “firsts”.

Janet Colson
Assistant Director
PRELIMINARY SCHEDULE FOR VEGAS

THEME: Las Vegas Presents CREOLE

THURSDAY, MAY 20, 2004

8:00 am - 9:00 am
Registration

9:00 am - 1:30 pm General Sessions

1:30 pm - 3:00 pm Luncheon (on your own)

3:00 pm - 5:00 pm General Sessions

5:00 pm - 9:00 pm Computer Lab – Set-up hosting NSU Creole Center's National Family History Database for available for individual research

Exhibits on Display

FRI DAY, MAY 21, 2004

8:00 am - 9:00 am
Registration

9:00 am - 11:30 am General Sessions

11:30 am - 1:30 pm Luncheon (on your own)

1:30 pm - 3:00 pm General Sessions

3:00 pm - 8:00 pm Reception - (Location to be named)

NOTES:

9:00 am, 10:00 am, 1:00 pm, 2:00 pm Separate Mini Presentations On Genealogy & Cuisine

SATURDAY, MAY 22, 2004

10:30 am - 5:00 pm
Family History Fair (Location to be named)

10:30 pm - until
Awatsis Banquet & Zydeco Dance

(Location to be named)

WANT TO JOIN US?

FOR FINAL HOTEL INFORMATION

Creole Family Reunion

The Creole Family Reunion portion of the convention will take place at a local park with food and music. A survey form has been distributed requesting information to be used in developing travel packages and the final agenda. Please call or send an e-mail to the Convention

Family Name to be added to the official Creole Reunion T-Shirt. Don’t let your family be left out. Call 318/575-3986 or e-mail to delpinn@nsula.edu, online at http://www.nsula.edu/creole/vegassurvey.asp, or by calling the Center’s office at 318/575-4685.

THE WESTERN USA COnVention – Las Vegas

The next Creole Family History Convention is scheduled for May 22-24, 2004 in Las Vegas, Nevada. Activities scheduled include general sessions for Thursday and Friday around the topics of research, culture, education and diversity as related to the Creole culture. In addition to the general sessions, breakout sessions are also being developed in the areas of food, genealogy, history, and the Creole in the arts. Please contact the Center for more information.

CROOLE HERITAGE DAY IN HOUSTON

January 24, 2004

The Houston Chapter of the St. Augustine Historical Society will host a “Creole Heritage Day in Houston on January 24, 2004. Featured will be exhibits, speakers, vendors, food and music- PLUS a 50/50 Cash Raffle. This will be a first time presentation for this area and plans are made to make it an annual event.

PLACE: Knights of Columbus Hall
2610 Louisiana St.
Houston, TX 77010

DAILY ACTIVITIES: 11:00 am - 5:00 pm
THE DANCE: Ban - Midnight
ADMISSION: $10.00 (Cash bar and set-ups will be sold)

For additional information regarding raffle tickets, exhibit & vendor applications, and volunteer sign-ups contact Carolyn "LaCour" Llorens; 5822 Painted Trail Dr., Houston, TX 77084 - (979) 931-9352 - via email at calinชาติ@msn.com or dolpeo@msn.com.

REMEMBER: Creole Cookbook!

CROOLE HERITAGE EDUCATION & RESEARCH SOCIETY CONFERENCE

June 25-27, 2004

CREOS (Creole Heritage Education Research Society) is holding their 2004 regional annual conference June 25-26, 2004 and the theme this year will be "Louisiana Creole Society in the 19th and 20th Centuries: Cultural Contributions, Occupations and Migrant Paths". Scheduled speakers for the conference include Arai Broyes, archivist and researcher, and Xavier University archivist and lecturer Lester Sullivan.

Genealogist Anderson will conduct a workshop on how to research your Creole ancestry. Jeanine Collins, representing the NSU Creole Heritage Center will speak on Saturday. Also, a Creole play will be presented by Mary Eustine's Pitchein Battle and the Creoles Sans Limits.

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Support The Center

Although the Center has been fortunate to continue to survive through federal appropriations and state and local grants, there is still a definite need for additional funding, especially to support our proposed outreach programming. We are in the process of developing an option that would allow all interested individuals, as well as corporate groups, to show support for the Center through publication purchases or direct donations. The option to make these purchases or donations is now online at http://www.nsula.edu/creole/support.asp. For those wishing to submit via mail may do so by using the enclosed order form. There are plans to expand the items for purchase to include the many requested t-shirts.

Your support is needed on an ongoing basis to help maintain our current level of research and outreach programming (conferences, conventions, workshops, etc.). In addition to the needs of this programming effort, there is also the added cost of publishing and distributing the information gathered regarding the Creole culture and history.

Notes From The Genealogy Department

The Creole Heritage Center’s Genealogy Department staff, was on hand to welcome Creole family history and genealogy information to the first Creole Studies Conference held in New Orleans. They would like to share a little story that demonstrates how close our family ties really are:

A young lady by the name of Carla Alsandor, residing in Shreveport, stopped by our exhibit to inquire about the Alsandor and Thibodeaux families. Already seated and discussing his family was James Metoyer Jr., a resident of New Orleans. Upon hearing Carla’s family names, James made the comment “I bet that’s probably somebody that is not related to the Metoyers”. Her response to him was “Oh yes I am”.

After going through the genealogical chart that she shared with us, not only is she a distant relative of James Metoyer but a closer relative to Luke Metoyer, one of the coordinators of the Western USA Creole Family History Convention being held in Las Vegas next May. She met James in New Orleans. Will she attend the convention in Las Vegas to meet the other cousin?

Louise and Shirley would like to thank all of you who took time to come and share your family information with us. We appreciate you allowing us the opportunity to include your history in the National Creole Family History database.

CONTACT INFO: Louise Ravard Llorens (creole@nsula.edu); Shirley Dunn Chevalier (chevaliers@nsula.edu). 318/379-8350 TEL, 318/379-8348 FAX. Mailing address: NSU Box 5675, Natchitoches, Louisiana 71497

Mark Your Calendar... Creole Heritage Day Has Moved To October!

Louisiana Creole Heritage Center
Northwestern State University
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Natchitoches, LA 71497

Phone: 318-357-6685
Fax: 318-357-6689
Email: colsonj@nsula.edu

Calendar

January 24, 2004
Creole Heritage Day in Houston

May 20-22, 2004
Western USA Creole Family Convention
Las Vegas

June 25-26, 2004
CHERS Annual Conference
New Orleans

October 7-10, 2004
National Creole Heritage Day Celebration
Natchitoches, Louisiana

Edith Garland Dupre Library
302 E. St. Mary Boulevard
USL Box 40199
Lafayette, LA 70504