



# Preserve St. Landry

Newsletter of the Preservationists of St. Landry, Inc.

July 2024

## Did You Know?

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On October 16, 1796, Michel Prudhomme executed a Donation to the Church of St. Landry Parish of a certain tract of land, three arpents wide and 40 arpents deep. The donation was signed in the presence of Martin Duralde, Captain of the militia, civil and military commandant of the Opelousas Poste. The donation was made in the name of Michel Prudhomme and his wife, Marie Snyder. The property was described as being bounded on the North by other property of Michel Prudhomme, and on the South by Marguerite Villers, a “free mulatto woman.” The donation was made on the condition that a church be constructed on the property. Michel Prudhomme also agreed “to furnish from his woods all the cypress necessary for the construction of said church, priest house, jail, fences in standing posts around the cemetery, yard, garden, and other commodities pertaining to the decency of divine worship and maintenance of the priest.” The donation can be viewed in the original French language and an English translation under Act No. 999415 in the Conveyance records of St. Landry Parish, Louisiana.

## Visitors to the Michel Prudhomme House

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During the first six months of 2024, visitors to the historic house have included a group of 20 middle school children from France, a group of genealogists, Rotarians from Eugene, Oregon, and descendants of Michel Prudhomme.

The home and gardens were featured on May 29, 2024, on the morning show of KLAF, Channel 15. The segments were broadcast live. Travel reporter Al Hebert was given a tour of the home and the grounds by James Douget, Etha Amling, and Greg Brandl.



## Speaker Series

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The first person to speak at our Speaker Series was La. Supreme Court Justice Jimmy Genovese, an Opelousas native. Jimmy spoke about the origins of Swamp Pop music in the 1950's, and how he watched his brother Mike Genovese form a band known as the Twisters, which featured a young singer known as Rod Bernard. Jimmy reminisced about the local clubs that were popular hot spots for young people before smart phones, at the dawn of the golden age of television.

## Repairs

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Funded by a grant from the St. Landry Tourism Commission, repairs were made to the roof and the gutters of the house, including the replacement of some of the wood shingles and repairs to the dormers.

## Fundraising

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The second annual May brunch was held at the Prudhomme house on May 5. Chef Jason Huguet prepared the meal served at the house. Magic Blends, a Prudhomme-owned seasoning company in the New Orleans area, made a significant donation and provided wine and champagne for the event. St. Landry Parish Government helped out by providing tents, tables, and chairs. More than 130 tickets were sold, and the sum of \$31,500.00 was raised.

## Historical Signage Grant

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The Preservationists were able to obtain a grant of \$1950.00 from the Pomeroy Foundation to purchase a historical marker to be placed in front of the house to show that the Prudhomme House is on the National Historic Register of Historic Places. The sign is being fabricated now and will be dedicated in the coming months.

## Membership Drive

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If you want to become a member of the Preservationists of St. Landry, Inc., or if you want to continue your membership, please complete the membership form and mail it to PO Box 613, Opelousas, LA 70571. Dues are \$25.00 per year and are payable on July 1. If you were a Sponsor of the 2024 brunch, your dues are waived, but please submit your membership form as soon as possible!

## Native American Baskets

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The Preservationists own a large collection of Native American baskets. Art Historian Phyllis Lear is in the process of cleaning and photographing and cataloging the collection. The Preservationists hope to sell the collection to fund ongoing repairs.