

# Les Nouvelles de la Famille Doucet

NEWSLETTER OF LES DOUCET DU MONDE

NOVEMBER 2005

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Deadlines for submitting articles are: January 31 for the February issue, May 31 for the June issue and September 30 for the October issue.

## WEB SITE

Dean Doucet, Web Master  
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<http://www.doucetfamily.org>

## MESSAGE FROM THE INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT

By Carol Doucet

A "Happy Thanksgiving" (belated for our Canadian cousins) to you, our Les Doucet du Monde members and families.

You will find two membership forms enclosed. One is for you to fill and return with dues. Feel free to give a gift membership (they make nice Christmas gifts). Please give the other form to a family member and encourage them to join LDDM. You can also download a membership form on our LDDM web site.

Read about the election in the article below.

Send in an article about your Doucet family history, or about outstanding members in your Doucet line. Check our web site and you'll see the variety of articles which have appeared in our newsletters during the past six years. If you copy an article to send to us, please give the source and give credit to the author.

To all of our Doucet cousins who suffered a loss during the recent hurricanes, we hope you will have a complete recovery soon. The two hurricanes combined created the worst natural disaster in the history of the United States.



## ELECTION RESULTS

As you recall nomination forms sent out to all members were to be returned by September 30th. The only persons nominated were those presently serving on the board. Therefore, we did not mail ballots. The board amended the by-laws to provide for election by acclamation when a candidate for office is unopposed, or, in the case of board members, if there are six or fewer candidates.

The board for January 1, 2006 to December 31, 2007 will be as follows: PRESIDENT - Carol Doucet; VICE PRESIDENT - Dean Doucet; SECRETARY - Pat Hayes; TREASURER - Jacqueline Auclair; BOARD MEMBERS - Lucien Doucet, Samuel Doucet, Norman Doucette, Jr. and James Gaboury. Two board positions remain unfilled.

A "grand merci" to these persons who volunteered to provide Doucet/Doucette descendants with a family organization which strives to promote pride in its heritage.

Unfortunately, there were no candidates at the chapter level, so we have no president of the Acadian/Canadian Chapter nor of the Louisiana Chapter.

It is not too late to offer to serve in one of these positions. Let us know if you wish to serve the Doucet/Doucette family. The board can appoint you.

## THANKS FROM LOUISIANA

Thanksgiving Day will come a few days after the newsletter. We wish all of our Doucet/Doucette cousins a Happy Thanksgiving Day. We hope that our Canadian cousins had a Happy Thanksgiving Day a few weeks ago.

People find so many things for which to be thankful. After the destruction caused by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, we in Louisiana, Texas and Florida are grateful for the help which came from so many. From Florida to the Canadian Maritime Provinces, from Ontario to California and many other states came help for the people of Louisiana and the other states who suffered losses because of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

There were Doucet cousins who suffered because of the hurricanes, cousins in Texas, the Lake Charles and Jennings areas in southwest Louisiana, from the greater Baton Rouge area to greater New Orleans and indeed the entire coastal area of Louisiana and parts of Florida. Mercifully, our members experienced only property damage -- no loss of life.

Diverse groups such as councilmen, firemen, teachers and students, sister cities, musicians and other performers, corporations, medical personnel, military groups, radio stations assisted in various ways. There was a Doucette cousin with the Washington, D. C. national guard who came to Louisiana to help. Some individuals organized fund raisers; others participated in them. Many Doucet cousins were among these. Les Doucet du Monde members became involved.

Thank you for the relief supplies, the hours you volunteered, and especially for the prayers and expressions of concern.

As a result of these two hurricanes, Louisiana lost one-third of its economic base and the unemployment rate almost tripled, going from 4.5% to 11.5%. There has been a major loss of population because many evacuees are spread all over the US. A dramatic shift in population has occurred within the state with some cities growing by 20% to 40% and some doubling in size.

The people of Louisiana are resilient. The culture, music, food, French language -- the things that make Louisiana unique -- have survived. Louisiana will rebuild and be better than ever!

### WEB SITE - MEMBERSHIP

The Les Doucet du Monde web site has grown tremendously during the past year. About 10,000 names were added to the descendants of Germain Doucet. New features are constantly being added to make it more appealing and user friendly. If you haven't visited it lately, please do so. We think you will be pleasantly surprised.

**Membership** Our genealogy data is free. In return, we ask that you consider renewing your membership in Les Doucet du Monde. The cost is \$15.00 US for the entire household (those under 18). Spread the word about LDDM. Encourage relatives to join.

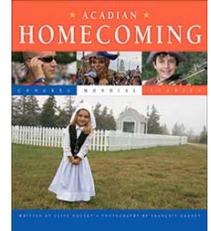
**Share Your Genealogy** One way you can show your appreciation for our fine web site is to share your genealogy. Send it to Dean Doucet at [deand@doucetfamily.org](mailto:deand@doucetfamily.org). If you have sent some of your genealogy information, perhaps just your direct line, send the information on your peperes and memeres, uncles and aunts, etc.

## WON'T YOU HELP US?

When you help LDDM, you are making our family association a better one. Besides being a member, getting a relative to join LDDM, and sharing your genealogy, members can help by being active.

Currently there are several openings on the LDDM board. Neither the Louisiana Chapter nor the Acadian/Canadian Chapter has a president. If you are interested in working on the board, to bring together individuals and families who are descendants of the Doucet family, E-mail our President at [carold@doucetfamily.org](mailto:carold@doucetfamily.org).

### Acadian Homecoming The Congrès Mondial Acadien 2004 By Clive Doucet



The Nova Scotia Congrès Mondial Acadien of 2004 represents the completion of a cycle, marking the four hundredth anniversary of the first arrival of French-speaking settlers in Nova Scotia. The third and final stop in the trilogy of reunions that have begun the reconnection of a community that was broken and scattered 250 years ago, the Nova Scotia Congrès will always be an important landmark in the history of the Acadian people.

This significant milestone deserves a wonderful keepsake—and this souvenir book is the perfect way to remember this special event. Full-colour photographs provide a vibrant accompaniment to the personal recollections, interviews, family reunions, and community celebrations included in this volume. The excitement at reuniting with loved ones and rebuilding a united future has been captured within the pages of this volume, and will endure, along with the unshakeable spirit of the Acadian people.

*- from the publisher's catalogue  
Nimbus Publishing*

### Michael Doucet Awarded National Heritage Fellowship

After a Grammy (1997), more than two dozen recordings and almost 30 years as a band leader, fiddler Michael Doucet of Beausoleil is coming of age. Doucet is one of 12 recipients of the 2005 National Heritage Fellowship, the nation's highest honor in folk and traditional arts. The NEA fellowships are given to artists who show excellence, cultural authenticity and outstanding contributions in their field. Doucet and Beausoleil have made a career of learning from the masters of Cajun and zydeco. Their mix of Cajun, Creole, jazz, country, blues, Tex-Mex and more has won them countless fans around the world.



# SACRAMENTAL RECORDS OBJECT OF ARCHIVAL PRESERVATION

By: Ron Brocato

(The Clarion Herald, New Orleans, LA, October 29, 2005)

In a city whose history ranks among the most storied in the United States, it is imperative the documents that will guide the writings of future historians be maintained at all costs.

And in a city like New Orleans, where the Catholic church has been significant in recording much of its history, the safekeeping of records is even more important.

Although all of the records and artifacts most vital to the Archdiocese of New Orleans were saved before Hurricane Katrina struck on Aug. 29, many of the individual parishes' sacramental records either perished or were badly contaminated.

Dr. Charles Nolan, archivist for the archdiocese, and his Baton Rouge counterpart, Emilee Leumas, have been working feverishly over the last several weeks to save the recovered records. They anticipate a new set of document preservation procedures will rise from the mold and mildew.

The normal procedure for the restoration of wet documents is to act within a few days of the incident. But national archivists had no guidelines to take into account the amount and kinds of sludge, mold and mildew that attacked paper and material over a long period of time.

"ALL THE sources we know of on a national level and things we looked at that pertain to records recovery for conservation when things are wet, every guideline says do this within the first 48 hours," Leumas said. "Well, our records have been wet for 48 days or more, and there is no playbook for this."

There is no proven order of steps to salvage items that have been ravaged by a combination of murky water, heat and humidity that accumulates in closed quarters. "But when this is over, we will be able to talk at national meetings about what we did," Leumas said. "It will create an entirely new chapter in restoration guides."

Records from nine church parishes have been sent to Louisiana State University and are undergoing a procedure that freezes a document at minus-20 degrees Fahrenheit for 72 hours to kill the mold. Nolan and Leumas will then clean and preserve the records on microfilm.

The records in the LSU freezer are from Corpus Christi, St. Bridget, St. David, St. Frances Cabrini, St. Maria Goretti and St. Theresa of the Child Jesus in New Orleans, Prince of Peace (Chalmette), St. Patrick (Port Sulphur) and St. Robert Bellarmine (Arabi).

"The most valuable records, things like the old church wardens' records that go back to 1756, and valuable photographs that we have from the Belloc collection, we got out



NEW ORLEANS archdiocesan archivist Dr. Charles Nolan separates pages from a water-logged parish sacramental register. He carefully separates them and puts them on blotter paper. Some of the records are being placed into a special freezer at LSU to prevent the growth of mold. (Photo by Lee Leumas)

of the (Ursuline) Convent immediately," Nolan said. "So we have not lost any of the historical records so far."

**BUT THE** main losses are sacramental records from several of the archdiocese's 151 parishes and missions. These records include marriages, baptisms, first Communions, confirmations and funerals.

"Up until today, we've identified the status of 126 parishes and missions. Twenty-five we have not been able to reach either in person or by telephone to verify the status of their sacramental records," Nolan said. "The pastors who took their records with them when they evacuated before the storm or took the records to a safe place, those records have come here (to the archives at the Catholic Life Center in Baton Rouge). Thankfully, many of the pastors in St. Bernard did that so we will be able to save very much of that (civil) parish's history."

But some pastors felt, in good faith, that they had safe havens to store their sacramental records in their rectories. They discovered, in horror, that, while the storm itself did not harm the vital papers, other elements did.

Some journals are badly decomposed to a degree the archivists say they may have to recreate them from scratch.

"We still can't account for about 10 parish records," Nolan said. "We know the records at St. Nicholas of Myra were lost when the church was completely destroyed. One pastor told us his records are in a safe that can't be opened. A lot of priests thought that if they wrapped the records in plastic and put them in a safe, they'd be OK."

"One priest put his church's records in an ice chest on the second floor of his rectory. They survived the hurricane, but the looters came in and stole the ice chest. Fortunately, they left the sacramental records," Nolan added.

Looting also occurred at St. Raphael and St. Mary of the Angels. At St. Mary of the Angels, about 300 evacuees were all rescued on the Thursday after the storm, but "then the looters went in and just ransacked the school," Nolan said.

"THE lesson learned from this is that it could happen again, and if it does happen again, how do we prepare for it and prepare for it better than we did this time," Nolan said.

He added the archdiocese has to develop a policy to safely send away sacramental records when there is a mandatory evacuation for an impending disaster is ordered.

Luckily, Nolan estimated about 98 percent of all sacramental records have been backed up and most are saved on microfilm.

"We have backed up parishes in Deaneries 1, 2, 3, 4, 11 and St. Tammany, and we have scheduled East Jefferson and St. John/St. Charles



The parish records from St. Frances Cabrini parish are a blur of runny ink. (Photo by Lee Leumas)

to microfilm," Nolan said. "But those parishes were not badly damaged and the records are unharmed.

"As far as I can tell, we haven't lost any records from lower Plaquemines. The records at Port Sulphur (St. Patrick) are badly water-damaged, but not lost, and all the others are intact and right here."

Nolan pointed out that New Orleans has the only diocese in North America ("and maybe all the Americas") that also records weekly church bulletins on microfilm.

Vital records were saved from their three central locations – the Old Ursuline Convent, the archdiocese's Administrative Building on Walmsley Avenue and the 1000 Howard Avenue building. The winds at the convent were so violent that bricks from a chimney fell through the roof and ruptured the building's sprinkler system. But the water that cascaded down from the third-to-first floor ruined none of the artifacts.

Leumas offered the assistance of the Diocese of Baton Rouge archives and staff. She personally took charge to save some of the New Orleans records and made key contacts to get the restoration process started.

### **SPECIAL OFFER TO LDDM MEMBERS**

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### **CREATE A BACK-UP TEAM**

**By Susan Buce**

**<http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.com/~buce/>**

**Submitted by Jacqueline Auclair**

Lila Rose's article about "Safeguarding Family Treasures (Roots Web Review, 12 October) called to mind an incident I was involved with two summers ago. My friend is an avid genealogist, and has also inherited a number of things from both her mother and her mother-in-law. Some of her items are valuable heirlooms, others are just bric-a-brac, but all have a sentimental place in her heart. She always gives her friends and family "the tour" to show us the new and interesting things she has added to her collection.

It was a summer week and my friend and her husband had been looking forward to a few days of vacation time. They hopped in the car on a Thursday morning and left town, headed out for a five-day rafting trip. None of us realized that a small lightning-caused wildfire 13 miles away, was about to blow up into a huge conflagration. By Thursday evening the fire had spread to hundreds of acres and had burnt up over the ridge, headed right for their house.

Those of us who realized the danger went to their house and began to evacuate their belongings. We left things like the TV set and stereo behind --insurance would replace those items. Because my friend had always made a practice of pointing out the things that had sentimental value, we knew exactly what to rescue: the misshapen clay pot her son had made in school, the Christmas-tree ornaments, the anniversary gift vase, along with the genealogy notes, photos, treasured items and family heirlooms. Five of us, within an hour, managed to pack everything up and stuff it in our cars.

Thanks to 800 firefighters over a five-day period, the wildfire was brought under control and no one lost their house, although it was a close call. By Monday, the heavy smoke which a few days ago had made it impossible to see beyond the backyard, had finally cleared away. When my friends returned there was little evidence, beyond a house stripped of sentimental keepsakes, to show them the chaos that had taken place during their absence.

They couldn't get over the fact that we had only missed rescuing two items of any sentimental value; both had been deliberately "hidden" incase someone broke in. They were thankful we managed to do such a thorough job. We would never have been able to locate it all, if we hadn't been given "the tour" from time to time.

One way to safeguard your family treasures is to make sure your friends and family know which things you value and where to find them. Not many people consider, "What would happen if someone, other than I, had to suddenly evacuate my home during an emergency?"

Everyone should have a "back-up" team who knows you well enough to help salvage your treasures in the event that you can't be home during an emergency?"

### **DON'T FORGET TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP FOR 2006!**

TO HELP YOU KEEP TRACK OF YOUR DUES STATUS, WE ARE NOW LISTING ON YOUR ADDRESS LABEL THE LAST YEAR FOR WHICH YOU PAID DUES. IT'S NOT TOO EARLY TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP FOR 2006. ENCLOSED ARE TWO MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/RENEWAL FORMS. USE ONE TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP AND GIVE THE SECOND APPLICATION BLANK TO ANOTHER DOUCET COUSIN AND INVITE HIM TO JOIN.

WE HAVE MEMBERS FROM ALL OVER THE US AND CANADA AS YOU CAN SEE FROM THE FOLLOWING LIST:

ALBERTA	NEWFOUNDLAND
ARIZONA	NEW HAMPSHIRE
CALIFORNIA	NORTH CAROLINA
CONNECTICUT	NVA SCOTIA
FLORIDA	ONTARIO
ILLINOIS	OREGON
LOUISIANA	QUEBEC
MAINE	TEXAS
MASSACHUSETTS	VIRGINIA
MINNESOTA	WISCONSIN
NEVADA	



## ACADIANS RECALL PAINFUL HISTORY AS N.S. MONUMENT TO EXPULSION UNVEILED

By Alison Auld

The Canadian Press, July 28, 2005

Earl Muise bowed his head and placed a small bouquet of white lilies on the base of a waterfront monument, thinking only of his unknown ancestors forced out of the country hundreds of years ago....Hundreds of families gathered on the Halifax shoreline, marking the anniversary of the darkest chapter in their painful history called Le Grand Derangement or Great Upheaval.

It was on July 28, 1755, that the Council of Nova Scotia, as directed by Britain, issued an order to deport the Acadians from their settlements. The order resulted in 10,000 men, women and children being forcibly removed from their homes and their land, which they'd farmed for a century, and shipped to far-flung lands around the world.

Their homes were torched and their land given to settlers loyal to the British Crown. At least 5,000 died of disease or deprivation or in shipwrecks.

The majority ended up in Europe, the New England states and Louisiana, only to return after 1763, on the condition that they swore allegiance to the British Crown and settled in small groups.

Many settled in New Brunswick and the Nova Scotia communities of Clare, Argyle and Cheticamp....

As a choir sang the Acadian national anthem, a long line of relatives of the deported lay flowers at the monument and gazed at the small uninhabited island (Georges Island) where at least 2,000 Acadians were imprisoned after the deportation began.

Sailboats and ships loaded with tourists drifted by, as if to recall how the Pembroke and other British vessels carried Acadians away from their homes and destroyed settlements that had been flourishing for 400 years.

"Today it means we can focus on that we're here, we're here despite all of this," said Muise. "Maybe others can share in what we've been through, but hopefully look forward to what we're becoming."

A few hundred people also gathered in Dieppe, NB to unveil a monument to honour Acadians, particularly those along the Petitcodiac River who formed a resistance against the British.

"Despite the great tragedy of the deportation, this event should serve as an opportunity to celebrate the continued existence of the Acadians," New Brunswick Premier Bernard Lord said at the ceremony.

The federal government also designated the former Acadian village of Beaubassin in Nova Scotia as a National Historic Site.

### LOCAL ACADIANS FLEW FLAG AT BOSTON CITY HALL ON JULY 28

Submitted by Norman Doucette, Jr.

On Thursday, July 28, a group of Acadians proudly flew the Acadian flag at Boston City Hall to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the tragic deportation of some 10,000 Acadians from their homeland in the area now known as Nova Scotia in Canada. In 1755, and following years, their homes were burned and property destroyed so

that anyone who escaped could not later return. These hapless exiles were scattered throughout the North American British colonies in an effort to destroy them as a people. Many families were separated and thousands died in the upheaval.

The Acadian Cultural Society based in New England, with its mailing address in Fitchburg, organized the event. The Rev. Laurie Leger of St. Joseph's parish in Fitchburg gave the opening blessing. In attendance were some 200 Acadian descendants from surrounding cities such as Leominster, Gardner, Fitchburg, Waltham, and Littleton. State Rep. Emile Goguen read a proclamation from the Governor's office acknowledging the hardship faced by the Acadians and declaring July 28, 2005 as Acadian Day, a commemoration of the great upheaval. Also present was Michel Tetu, the Canadian Consul based in Boston.

It was fitting that this ceremony be held in Boston, since the Massachusetts colony played a significant part in carrying out the deportation. Also, ships carrying the exiles stopped in

Boston, en route to further ports. Some 1,000 Acadians were

re-located in Massachusetts towns along the shore. Records of

their hardships can be found in the Massachusetts Archives. The State Archives currently has on display an exhibit entitled "The Acadian Exile in Massachusetts, 1755-1766."

The Acadian Cultural Society also hopes to further a project for erecting a monument near the Boston harbor commemorating the Acadian exiles.

After 1766, surviving Acadians were allowed to return to eastern Canada. However, the fertile lands which they had owned and farmed were now taken over by Loyalists who had moved there. The Acadians re-settled in areas of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island. Many also resettled in Quebec province. A large group, after having been exiled in France, settled in Louisiana which was then French territory. These are the people whose descendants we refer to as Cajuns.

Massachusetts now has thousands of Acadian descendants, many concentrated in the cities of Fitchburg, Leominster, Gardner, Waltham, Lynn, New Bedford, as well as other areas. These are people whose parents came from the Maritime provinces in Canada in the last century to find work here. It is these people who were represented in the flag raising event on July 28.

*[This letter by Anthony L. Olson of Keene, NH appeared in the "Sentinel and Enterprise" in Fitchburg, MA]*

#### GENEALOGY QUERIES

We would like to have as a regular feature in each newsletter a section for members to submit genealogy queries. If you have reached a "brick wall" in your research and would like to seek help from other members, submit your query, including as much information as possible. Include your name, address, E-mail address (and phone number, if you wish). We will publish it and ask members to reply to you. Please advise our web master Dean Doucet (see contact info on page 1) of any information you receive so it can be added to the Miscellaneous Section of the Genealogy Section on our web site.

**THE TWO RENES**  
**By: Glenda Doucet-Boudreau**

In 1999-2000, my daughter Coralie participated in an academic exchange with Belle-Isle-en-Mer. Thomas Granger, the young boy who was paired with Coralie, stayed with us for two weeks in October 1999 and Coralie then stayed with his family in Belle-Isle-en-Mer in March 2000.

Having promised to revisit each other, in 2004, the Granger family visited Nova Scotia and New Brunswick and attended a number of the Congrès Mondial Acadien's events including the Granger Family Reunion in Amherst, the closing ceremonies in Grand-Pré and the concert in Halifax. Following the events, they stayed with us just as Thomas had done five years earlier.

On August 16, 2004 we visited Annapolis Royal and with the "Au Coeur de l'Acadie, Acadian Settlement on the Annapolis River, 1707" map, we located the land of René Granger, Thomas' ancestor, and across this piece of land was René Doucet's land, Coralie's ancestor. I am sure that, in 1707, the two Renés never would have dreamed that their great, great, great, great, great, great, great, great, great, grand children would cross the ocean and visit each other on their respective continents; that 249 years after the Deportation their great, great, great, great, great, great, great, great, great, grand children would be standing on their ancestral land. By standing very still and closing one's eyes, we could recreate two homesteads with women waving to each other at the clothesline, children running and yelling and perhaps even the two Renés coming from the field for lunch.

Then this summer, Coralie and I visited the Granger family in Belle-Isle-en-Mer. We stayed at the Grand Phare (the island's tallest lighthouse) where Michael Granger (Thomas' father) is the lighthouse keeper.

We visited this magnificent island and stopped at the Citadel. Here we saw the Acadian exhibit. Hanging on the walls were reproductions of Claude Picard's paintings of the Acadians before and during the Deportation. Many of you may have seen these pictures in postcard form at the Magasin Campus in Church Point and in Grand-Pré. The other two portraits, not present in these two localities, were of the landing of the Acadians in Belle-Isle-en-Mer after being deported from Acadie in early October 1765 and of the Acadians now happily living in their new home, Belle-isle-en-mer. 78 Acadian families landed in Belle-isle-en-mer, one of which was the family of Pierre Doucet. In 1734 this family lived in St. Charles des Mines and was then imprisoned in South Hampton, England. This family was in St. Malo, France before finding their way to Belle-isle-en-mer.

After my daughter's first trip to Belle-isle-en-mer she had explained to me time and time again how beautiful an area this is, but I thought it simply impossible for something to be as magnificent as she claimed it to be. I was wrong. If you ever have the chance to go visit Belle-Isle-en-Mer, jump to the opportunity. You won't be disappointed. Like all Acadians, the Bellilouis(e) display an incredible "joie de vivre" and great hospitality.

**TWO NEW ACADIAN COMMEMORATIVE STAMPS**



The 400th anniversary of the founding of Port-Royal is recognized in this distinctive domestic rate stamp, the second in a series dedicated to French settlement in Canada.

This commemorative release marks the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the deportation of thousands of settlers from their native Acadia to the British colonies of North America.



**Ordering Information**

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[www.canadapost.ca/collectng](http://www.canadapost.ca/collectng)



**ACADIAN RECIPE CORNER - TRADITIONS REMEMBERED**

**By: Michele Doucette**

I have many positive memories with regards to my Grandmother Feeley (née Breau) and her farmhouse, complete with woodstove. As coordinator of the Acadian GenWeb, I find that I am quite eager to share Acadian recipes.

As they say in Louisiana, the heart of Cajun country, "Laissez les bons temps rouler."

**Vegetable Soup**

From Acadian Pictorial Cookbook

½ cup barley	½ cup grated cabbage
10 cups stock	½ cup diced turnip
1 tablespoon salt	½ cup green peas
½ teaspoon pepper	
Herbs to taste	Soak barley in water for 1 hour and drain. Meanwhile, combine stock, salt pepper, herbs and onion. Bring to boil. Reduce heat, add barley and simmer for 10 minutes. Add potatoes and vegetables and simmer until tender.
1 large onion, chopped	
2 medium-size potatoes, peeled and cubed	
1 large carrot, diced	
½ cup kernel corn	
½ chopped green or yellow string beans	



## MASS COMMEMORATES HERITAGE

By Jan Risher

(Excerpts from *The Daily Advertiser*, Lafayette, LA, July 29, 2005)

As young and old took their places in the pews (at St. John's Cathedral in Lafayette), the Chorale du Monument Acadien began singing the entrance hymn from the balcony. The service was conducted alternately in French and English, in homage to the roots of the Acadian people.

In the homily, Fr. Keith DeRouen said, "The great historical truth -- the suffering of our Acadian people -- was transformed and continues to be transformed. Not because now it has become chic to eat gumbo at fancy Fifth Avenue restaurants...Or because it has become fashionable to throw in a 'ma chere' in casual conversation, but because of faith in God and how God is revealed in the Holy Catholic Church."

The Rev. Mitchell Guidry said that "the integration between our faith and our culture is sadly deteriorating."

Guidry offered a brief history lesson about the Acadian people's refusal to deny their faith and French heritage in the face of British oppression.

"What the English couldn't do to us, we are doing to ourselves now," Guidry said. Our ancestors preferred death and exile to the betrayal of our faith."

He said that he was disturbed that young couples with Cajun names are married outside the Catholic Church in civil and non-Catholic ceremonies.

We no longer tell the old stories. We no longer sing the old songs. The French language has given way to English. Home-cooked food has gone the way of fast food," Guidry said. The more we become like the rest of America, the more we lose our identity. Without the active practicing of the Catholic faith, the more we lose our culture.

Jan McNeil, one of the organizers of the event, said that she personally went to the Atchafalaya Basin and filled a bucket of water. The water from the Atchafalaya was mixed and blessed with water from other seas and ocean. McNeil said the water was used "to bless the people from the waters from where they came."

## NATIONAL DAY OF THE ACADIANS OBSERVED

Generations of Acadian descendants gathered (on August 15) at the Acadian Memorial in St. Martinville for a full day of activities commemorating the National Day of Acadians....

"It's important to remember our ancestors' trouble and pain, and in this memorial, we hope we can help people understand what happened to the Acadians," said Brenda Comeaux Trahan, director of the Acadian Memorial.

Activities included a presentation on recent archaeological excavations in Nova Scotia, where archeologists have been working to find some of the historic Acadian settlements (it was noted that many of the original Acadian settlements in South Louisiana remain unknown and unstudied by archeologists), a presentation and exhibit by primitive Cajun artist Mary Ann Pecot, viewing of the 1929 film "Evangeline," a presentation on getting started doing genealogical research, a French Mass with Acadian Family Name Banner procession, and an evening presentation of selections from the new "Grand-Pré Musical" by Cody Daigle and Roy Bertucci

