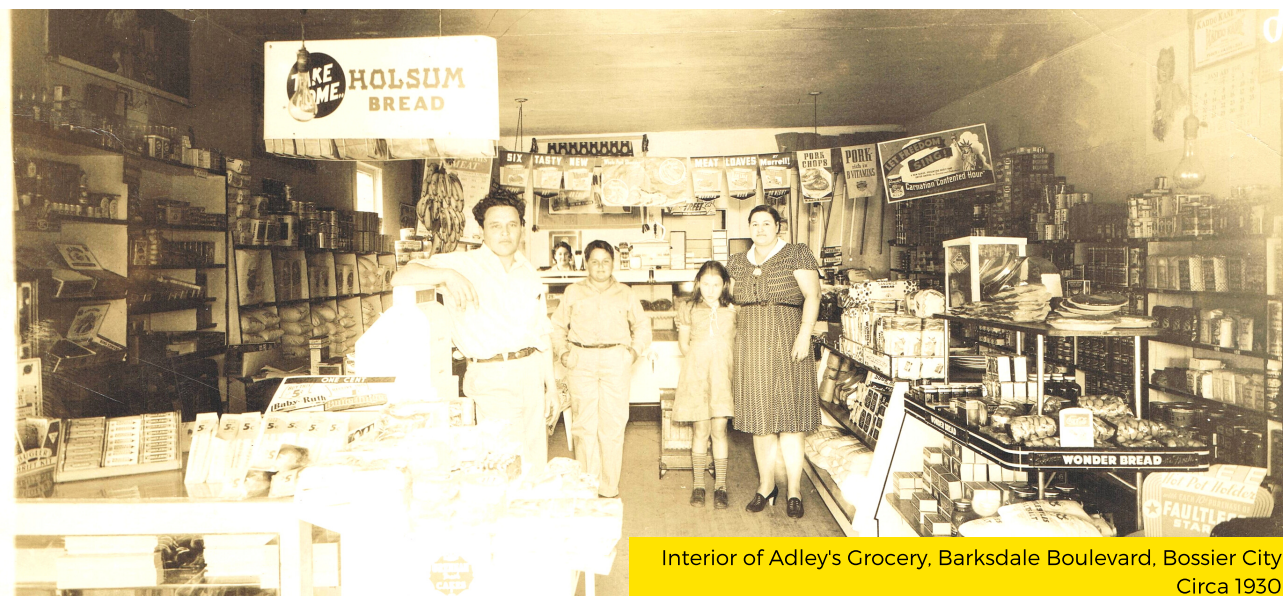




THE HISTORY CURRENT

News and highlights from the Bossier Parish Libraries History Center
Preserving the history and memories of Bossier Parish, Louisiana



Interior of Adley's Grocery, Barksdale Boulevard, Bossier City
Circa 1930

SUMMER PROGRAMMING RETURNS

by Marisa Richardson

We're glad to welcome patrons back for programming. Our meeting rooms have reopened and are at normal capacity. We have several upcoming programs this summer, both in-person and virtually. The past year helped us learn how to host virtual programs and we've had the bonus of seeing our history-related programming reach a greater audience. See page 5 to discover two unique virtual programs this summer.

Our Pages Past book club will be coming back with in-person meetings in September. This club focuses on books about American history. Look at page 6 to find our book selection and then stop by the History Center to get a copy. We wanted to ease back into the club, so there is plenty of time to read before our first meeting!

Our grant-funded "Bossier's Virtual History Tour" has begun! You can watch the first tour of Rocky Mount Cemetery on the Bossier Parish Libraries YouTube channel or on our History Center Facebook page. Keep an eye out for more video tours each month. The Bossier Arts Council (originally the City Hall for Bossier City) is coming up next, along with a look at downtown Plain Dealing.

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SPOTLIGHT: PLAIN DEALING BANK GOES BELLY-UP

by Amy Robertson

Look for Amy's weekly column in the *Bossier Press-Tribune* newspaper every Wednesday!

On May 3, 1904, the Plain Dealing Bank was chartered with a capital stock of \$25,000 divided into 500 shares of \$50. The first Board of Directors were H.H. Montgomery, President; P.G. Pye, First Vice President, and Cashier; W.B. Boggs, Second Vice President; S.H. Cochran, Dr. T.N. Keoun, N.W. Sentell, W.J. Johnston, and J.P. Keeth. Four months after the charter was filed, the bank opened its doors for business.

Although P.G. Pye was listed in the charter as the cashier, W.M. Stephenson was the first cashier when it came time to open for business. After his resignation in early 1905, Jonah Perry was elected to succeed him. Perry had been serving as the Cotton Belt Railroad agent before becoming the cashier. He temporarily employed the assistant cashier W.J. Pugh from the Bank of DeRidder to assist him in getting started with the job.



Being a cashier of a small-town bank back in those days often meant you were a one-person show. For the next sixteen years, Perry not only served its members at the cashier window processing deposits and withdrawals, but he also processed loans, maintained the bank's books, charged overdraft fees, and collected monies due, among other things. During that time, he earned the people's trust, and he even served as the Mayor of Plain Dealing from 1914-1916.

But in April of 1921, he fled to Arkansas. "Upon making his departure Sunday night, Perry left a note intimating that he was short in his accounts and announcing that the bank would have to suspend operations, but he gave no information as to where he was going." "It is stated that Perry had told his wife when he left home Sunday, that he was going to Little Rock, and instructed her to inform Sheriff Adair that he would return voluntarily when notified that his presence was desired. Sheriff Adair wired Perry at Little Rock Wednesday, requesting him to return, and a few hours later the sheriff received a message from the fugitive that he was on his way, and asked Sheriff Adair to meet him in Shreveport."

The following statement by his attorney, Thomas W. Robertson, appeared in The Shreveport Journal, "Mr. Perry denies that he got any of the money – not even a nickel. The losses were occasioned [sic] by injudiciously allowing overdrafts and the accumulation of uncollectable notes, coupled with a loose system of keeping track of profits and losses. This condition of affairs was brought about largely by the fact that he had no assistance, and the work, for several years has been entirely too arduous for him, rendering it impossible for him to perform correctly all of the various duties devolving upon him."

"According to his attorney, Perry, at the time of the crash, was worth, in notes, bonds, stocks, land and property of various kinds, in the neighborhood of \$20,000, and that he surrendered it all in an effort to protect, as far as he was able, those who had lost through the bank's failure." A final audit of the books revealed that the bank had been insolvent for four or five years and the shortage was \$121,000. Even with Perry surrendering his property and monies and the bank's liquidation, the members only received a small portion of their money back after waiting nearly a year.

**Plain Dealing Bank
Corner of Palmetto Avenue and Lynch Street
Plain Dealing Library Collection 1997.031.102**

Perry was convicted and sentenced by Judge Roberts of Minden to serve 9-10 years in the state prison. His attorney filed a motion for a new trial but was denied. He then appealed the case to the Supreme Court, which sustained the district court's verdict. Perry maintained his innocence in the embezzlement charge and that he never personally made use of the money. He was granted an early release from jail and was discharged on May 9, 1926. He died on Christmas eve that same year.

Shortly after the Plain Dealing Bank closed, the State Bank of Plain Dealing was organized, with a capital stock of \$15,000 and Dr. Shea Edward Prince as president. It purchased the building and fixtures of the defunct institution and opened for business on Sep. 1, 1921.

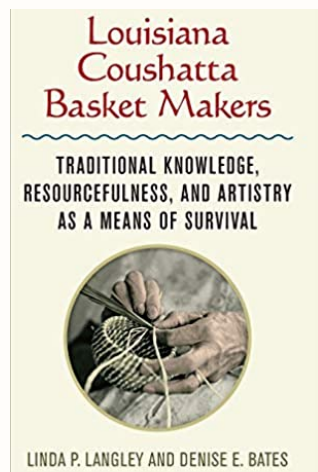
An independent agency of the federal government, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC), was created in 1933 in response to thousands of bank failures that occurred in the 1920s and early 1930s.

READ ABOUT HISTORY!

Our History Center staff recommends these nonfiction reads.

These two selections are available for checkout at the History Center.

Place a hold or come in to browse.

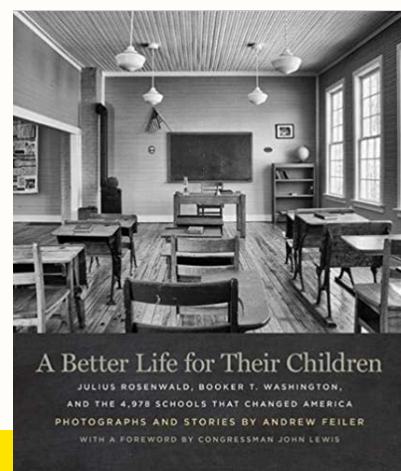


Louisiana Coshatta Basket Makers: Traditional Knowledge, Resourcefulness, and Artistry as a Means of Survival
by Linda P. Langley and Denise E. Bates

Louisiana Coshatta Basket Makers brings together oral histories, tribal records, archival materials, and archaeological evidence to explore the fascinating history of the Coshatta Tribe's famed basket weavers. After settling at their present location near the town of Elton, Louisiana, in the 1880s, the Coshatta (Koasati) tribe developed a basket industry that bolstered the local tribal economy and became the basis for generating tourism and political mobilization. The baskets represented a material culture that distinguished the Coshattas as Indigenous people within an ethnically and racially diverse region.

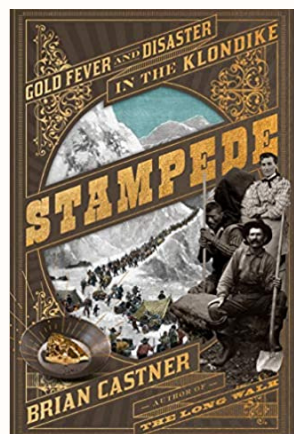
A Better Life for Their Children: Julius Rosenwald, Booker T. Washington, and the 4,978 Schools That Changed America
by Andrew Feiler

Of the original 4,978 Rosenwald schools built between 1917 and 1937 across fifteen southern and border states, only about 500 survive. [Including some in Bossier Parish.] While some have been repurposed and a handful remain active schools, many remain unrestored and at risk of collapse. To tell this story visually, Andrew Feiler drove more than twenty-five thousand miles, photographed 105 schools, and interviewed dozens of former students, teachers, preservationists, and community leaders in all fifteen of the program states.



NEW RELEASES

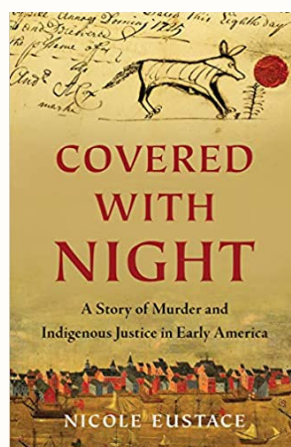
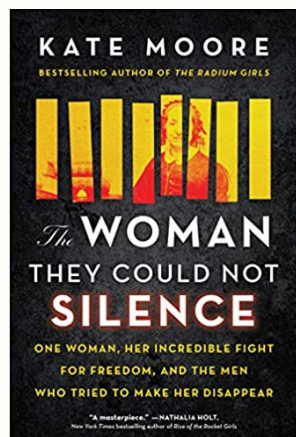
Dive into some new history books this summer!



Stampede: Gold Fever and Disaster in the Klondike
by Brian Castner

Brand new from the author of Radium Girls!

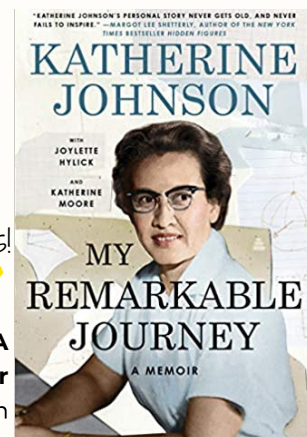
The Woman They Could Not Silence: One Woman, Her Incredible Fight for Freedom, and the Men Who Tried to Make Her Disappear
by Kate Moore
Available on June 21, place a hold!



Covered with Night: A Story of Murder and Indigenous Justice in Early America
by Nicole Eustace

One of NASA's human computers from Hidden Figures!

My Remarkable Journey: A Memoir
by Katherine G. Johnson
eBook available on Hoopla



CURATOR'S CORNER

by Randall Palmer



BOBBY GAUTHIER DONATION

For this issue, I wanted to highlight a recent donation here at the History Center. It was made by Janis Gauthier, and contains items that belonged to her husband Bobby during his time in the military. In case you aren't familiar with the name, Bobby Gauthier was the former Bossier City Police Chief. After serving four years in the United States Air Force, he joined the police department in 1971. In 1982, he was appointed police chief by Mayor Marvin Anding, and served in that position for three years. In 1986, Bobby was diagnosed with ALS, also known as Lou Gehrig's Disease, and in 1988, he passed away at age 44.

During his time in the Air Force, Bobby was stationed at Castle Air Force Base, just outside the city limits of Merced, California. It was there that Airman First Class Gauthier taught survival skills to Castle pilots. Included in the donation from Mrs. Gauthier was survival gear such as a fishing kit, a sea dye marker, a flotation device, and a parachute that attached to an emergency radio transmitter.

In addition to the objects donated is a collection of 17 black and white photographs showing A1C Gauthier at work training the Castle airmen in water survival. The instructors used a swimming pool on base to simulate the ocean to prepare for sea emergencies. The training included such tactics as to how to turn a large rubber raft upright using the wind, and how to put on the R-1 waterproof suit, which if done incorrectly could drown the wearer.

Included here are two photos from the collection. The first shows Bobby Gauthier (wearing white) assisting a pilot as he puts on his equipment. The second shows a group of airmen floating in the water during a training exercise. The photos in the collection can be viewed via our online database <https://bossier.pastperfectonline.com/> or stop in to see them in person.

UPCOMING VIRTUAL EVENTS

African American Riding Clubs in Northwestern Louisiana

presented by Human Dimensions Specialist, Dr. Rolonda Teal

July 13th at 4 pm - Contact us to register and receive the Zoom link.

Northwest Louisiana's African American riding clubs grew from a long tradition of African Americans working with horses in the region, yet their existence defies prevalent stereotypes of "cowboy culture". Dr. Rolonda Teal will present her research on an incredibly significant aspect of Riding Clubs in Northwest Louisiana, their function as Mutual Aid Societies, and the sense of community they create for both rural and urban African Americans.

Dr. Rolonda Teal has a Ph.D. in Forestry (Human Dimensions) from Stephen F. Austin State University. As the Founder of Cultural Lore, an anthropological consulting agency, she has worked with numerous cultural groups, nonprofit organizations, and local and government entities in project planning and development, multicultural tourism, Unconscious Bias Workshops, and grassroots organizing.

Dr. Teal is currently working on an African American Ethnographic Study for Arkansas Post National Memorial while also serving as a Research Associate at Stephen F. Austin State University, and Adjunct Professor at Houston Community College.



Mr. Leon Pouncy



Carolyn Jones:

"Beauty and the Ballot Box"

Honoring Contributions of African-American Cosmetologists in the Voter Rights Movement

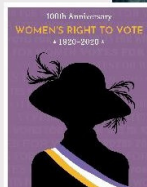
Online (Virtual) event: Thursday, August 26, 4:00 p.m.

Call the History Center at 318-746-7717 or email pcarlisle@bossierlibrary.org to pre-register for access to this online program

In the 1960's South, African Americans continued obstructions to voting. In Shreveport's Modern Beauty Shop, self-employed beauticians from Shreveport and Bossier organized crucial yet often overlooked political activities to reclaim voting rights.



Carolyn Jones, current owner of Modern Beauty Shop in Shreveport, Louisiana, has strong ties to its former beauticians and activists such as Ann Brewster and Mamie Love Wallace. She spent much of her childhood and early career in the shop. She is also one of Shreveport-Bossier's civil rights trailblazers in her own right.



Bossier Parish Libraries History Center

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318.746.7717

history-center@bossierlibrary.org

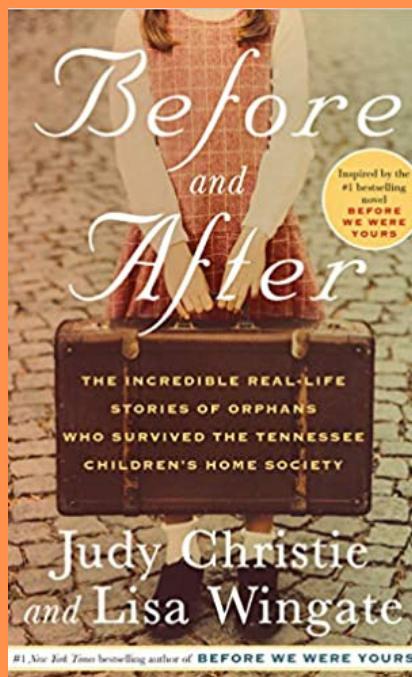
www.bossierlibrary.org

Contact us to join our mailing list!

Pages Past: An American History Book Club

Our Book Club resumes this September! Join us on the first Thursday of every month at 6pm in the History Center meeting room.

If you enjoy learning about the people and events that shaped our nation, this is the book club for you. No need to be an expert historian - this is an informal and entertaining group.



On September 2nd, attend Pages Past to discuss *Before and After: The Incredible Real-Life Stories of Orphans Who Survived the Tennessee Children's Home Society* by Judy Christie and Lisa Wingate.

Books available for check-out at the History Center.