Melrose
ARTS & CRAFTS FESTIVAL

41st ANNUAL MELROSE ARTS & CRAFTS FESTIVAL • APRIL 18-19
Thanks for your support of the 41st Annual Melrose Arts and Crafts Festival. We hope you enjoy the event and have an opportunity to tour our facilities. We’d like to invite you back to our community for the Fall Tour of Homes to be held on October 9th, 10th and 11th, 2015. If you would like to join us in efforts to preserve our many historical structures and facilities, we would love to have you join us at the Association for the Preservation of Historic Natchitoches (APHN).

For more information contact us through our current president:

Vicki Parish, APHN, PO Box 2248, Natchitoches, LA

www.melroseplantation.org
The Melrose Plantation Arts and Crafts Festival will be held April 18-19. The festival is sponsored by the Association for the Preservation of Historic Natchitoches (APHN) and annually attracts more than 2,000 visitors during the two-day event. The festival will open at 9 a.m. on the first day and 10 a.m. on the second day. Tickets are $5 for adults and $3 for children ages 6-12. Tickets for the guided tours are $5 and include the “Big House and “Yucca House.” Viewing of the other buildings and self-guided tours of the grounds, which feature centuries old live oak trees and various flower beds, are included with the entry fee. Additional information about Melrose Plantation and the Arts and Crafts Festival may be found at www.melroseplantation.org.

Each year the festival features more than 100 vendors from several states. Items offered will include original paintings, stained glass, gourmet foods, jewelry, clothing, photography, plants, toys, woodworking products, pottery and other arts and crafts. Located in southern Natchitoches Parish on State Highway 119, Melrose Plantation has been designated as a National Historic Landmark.

The property features eight historic structures dating to the 1800’s. African House, an early 19th century structure on the grounds received the honor of being named a National Treasure by the National Trust for Historic Preservation. The National Trust’s Hands-On Preservation Experience, or HOPE Crew has worked on the restoration of the African House to repair the roof. The Hope Crew, with the guidance of our Preservation Trades Expert, Alicia Spence, has done all the restoration in the same manner the building was constructed.

Information on the African House, its restoration and opportunities to help with its restoration will be shared on the tour.

The Yucca House, another structure on the grounds was constructed in 1833. It was the first “big house” built on the property that now comprises Melrose. Yucca House features the construction methods of that era as well as period furniture. While most of the structure is painted, one wall has been left bare so visitors can see how bousillage was used to build walls and fill the spaces between wooden beams during construction.

The other structures on the Melrose Plantation grounds include Clementine Hunter’s house, the Bindery, the Writer’s Cabin, the Weaving House, the Barn, the Ghana House, and the Ice House.

Melrose Plantation was a sanctuary for many artists and writers during the “Southern Renaissance” in the early 20th century and served as a temporary home for several well-recognized artists and writers. Lyle Saxon wrote his best-known novel, “Children of Strangers,” while living at Melrose. His tale was based on the culture of the plantation and the Cane River area. François Mignon resided at Melrose for 32 years and wrote his “Plantation Memo” and several thousand pages of journal entries during that time. Probably the best-knows artist to live at Melrose was Clementine Hunter, an internationally renowned primitive artist who worked as a field hand, housekeeper, and finally as a cook at the plantation. She was a self-taught artist who began painting using paints and brushes that were discarded by an artist in residence. Many of Hunter’s works are on display in the plantation house at Melrose. Her most unique work, a series of murals depicting life in the Cane River area, were displayed in the African House for many years, were removed for restoration and are on display in the Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame and Northwest Louisiana History Museum. Once the restoration of the African House is completed the murals will be able to return.

Funding for the restoration projects, maintenance and operation is provided through the festival receipts, the Fall Tour of Homes, designated gifts, and plantation tours.

Casual Dining Overlooking Beautiful Sibley Lake

MARINERS
Restaurant

OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK
Mon. - Thurs. 4:30 pm - 9:30 pm
Fri. - Sat. 4:30 pm - 10:00 pm
Sunday 11:00 am - 3:00 pm

Outside
Lakeside Dining & Cocktails

NOW OPEN FRIDAYS & SATURDAYS AT 5PM
(outdoor dining & cocktails any night)
weather permitting

Hwy 1 Bypass in Natchitoches, LA
318-357-1220
Festival Information

tickets • directions • Melrose Plantation tours

Festival Dates and Times: April 18 & 19, 2015
Saturday 9am-5pm
Sunday 10am-4pm

Festival Admission: Adults $5.00
Children (6-11) $2.00

Guided House Tour: $5.00

The Festival will feature over 100 vendors showcasing a wide range of art, handmade items, and foods. Vendors range from all over including California, Texas, Mississippi, Arkansas, and Louisiana.
Festival Map
Melrose Arts and Crafts Festival to feature two local bands

NATCHITOCHES - The Melrose Plantation Arts and Crafts Festival will feature two well-known local bands and more than 100 vendors this year during the April 18 and 19 exhibition days, according to Harry Thompson, chairman for the event.

The Back Porch Band will return to the festival after a hiatus of more than a decade, bringing its repertoire of traditional folk and Celtic music. The current band features seven members, all with ties to Natchitoches and most with ties to Northwestern State University (NSU).

The Arts and Crafts Festival will also feature Reverend Charley's Patent Medicine Show which returns for the second straight year and will present traditional folk music. Both bands have played extensively throughout Central Louisiana as well as other areas of the state and neighboring states.

The Back Porch Band was created in the late '70s when it was known as Mountain Music. During its 40 years of its existence, the band has changed its members as well as its name. The two most veteran members are Dr. Hurst Hall and Dr. Bill Bryant, both retired professors from Northwestern State University (NSU) in Natchitoches. Hall purchased his first guitar when he was five years old, and he played at community events, “school house concerts” and with various bands throughout his life. He also played when he was at Ole Miss and in the Air Force. He moved to Natchitoches in 1959 and taught psychology at NSU for 40 years. While at NSU, he met Bryant and another NSU professor, Bill Hunt. Together they formed Mountain Music, which later became the Back Porch Band. Bryant plays several instruments, including the dulcimer, fiddle, guitar, banjo, and Irish Penny Whistle. He has arranged music, written lyrics and musical scores, and was inducted into the Louisiana Folk Life Center's Hall of Master Folk Artists in 2012.

Dr. Richard Rose, professor emeritus at NSU and a former conductor of the Natchitoches-NSU Symphony Orchestra, has played cello for the band since he became a member in 1995. While at NSU, he taught music theory, composition, and cello. He also joins most of the members in the vocal selections. Dr. Michael Yankowski brings guitar, banjo, harmonica, and percussion to the band. He is a professor of visual arts at NSU.

Dr. Burt Allen, Director of Choral Activities and professor of music at NSU, has been with the Bank Porch Band for several years. He plays the keyboard and performs vocals. He founded and conducts the NSU Chamber Choir as well as the Red River Chorale.

Ed Huey is an NSU graduate in Music Education and a music instructor and choral director. He plays the guitar, harmonica, washboard, and spoons, and he joins the others in vocal music. Keith Shirley is the only member not to bring a musical family. At the age of 13 he started playing folk tunes on his guitar, but he didn’t start playing professionally until 30 years later. The Reverend's folk music reflects his earliest music memories of Woody Guthrie, Pete Seeger, Leadbelly, and Bob Dylan, all of whom influenced his style. He has played in Rhythm and Blues bands and spent five years with a traditional Cajun French band. He has created a sound that reflects all of these influences. He calls the Medicine Show a Folk or American Roots band.

He is joined by Frank Willis, a forensic engineer for Frank Willis Engineering, who plays a left-handed five-string fiddle and a "claw hammer" banjo; Rick Adams (consulting psychologist) on guitar, mandolin, and harmonica; Chris Wilson (substation design manager for Beta Engineering) who plays bass, harmonica, dobro guitar, and banjo; and John Neal, an English teacher at Pineville High School who plays banjo and guitar.

The Medicine Show band has played throughout Louisiana including gigs at the Blue Moon Café, the Blue Dog Café in Lafayette, Natchitoches Folk Life Festival, Blooming Arts on the Bricks in Natchitoches, Oakland Plantation, the Olla Bluegrass Festival, Abita Springs Opry, the Alexandria Museum of Arts, and the Wild Side of the Arts and Les fest at the Alexandria Zoo. Their benefit concerts have included gigs at Tipitina's Musicians Co-op. Turning Point Women's Shelter, Manna House, Pineville Humane Society, and the Red Cross.
Reverend Charley’s band will join more than 100 artists and arts and crafts vendors at Melrose. Among the items available to visitors are original art works, stained glass, gourmet pickles and jellies, hand-made jewelry, clothing, photographs, plants, toys, woodworking products, wrought iron artwork, pottery and other arts and crafts. Melrose Plantation, located on Highway 119 in southern Natchitoches Parish, is a National Historic Landmark featuring eight historic structures. Tours of the plantation home, the “Big House,” will be available, and guides will be on hand at the African House to explain its current renovation.

The Melrose Plantation served as a retreat for many artists during the early 20th century, a period often referred to as the “Southern Renaissance.” Many renowned writers and artists visited and lived at the plantation during those years, including Lyle Saxon who wrote his best-known novel, “Children of Strangers,” while living at Melrose. His story was based on the culture of Melrose and the Cane River area. Francois Mignon lived at Melrose for 32 years and wrote his “Plantation Memo” and several thousands of pages of journal entries during that time.

Probably the best known resident of Melrose was Clementine Hunter, who came to the plantation as a field hand and taught herself how to paint using paints and brushes discarded by an artist at Melrose. Hunter’s paintings have gained national and international notoriety, and some of her works hang in the Louvre in Paris. She is one of the most recognized primitive artists in Louisiana history, and her home is among the historic structures at Melrose.

The festival is sponsored by the Association for the Preservation of Historic Natchitoches (APHN), and annually attracts more than 2,000 visitors during the two-day event. The Melrose Arts and crafts Festival will open at 9:00 a.m. on Saturday and at 10:00 on Sunday. Tickets are $5 for adults and $2 for children ages 6-12. Tickets for tours of the Big House are $5. Self-guided tours of the grounds and viewing of all the historic buildings are free. Additional information about Melrose Plantation and the annual Arts and Crafts Festival may be found at www.melroseplantation.org.
African House Renovation still underway during Melrose Arts & Crafts Festival

NATCHITOCHES - Restoration of the roof and most of the exterior of the African House will not be completed in time for the 41st annual Melrose Plantation Arts and Crafts Festival scheduled for April 18 and 19, according to Harry Thompson, chairman for the event. The festival is sponsored by the Association for the Preservation of Historic Natchitoches (APHN) and annually attracts more than 2,000 visitors during the two-day event.

While tours of the interior of the structure will not be available, Thompson said a guide will be at the site to tell visitors about the work that has been completed and is still underway. The entire roof structure has been removed and replaced including all of the timbers and wooden shake shingles. The original structure’s main architectural feature is a cantilevered roof surrounding the building. As the original timbers aged, it was necessary to prop the corners of the roof with posts. With the replacement of the timbers, the African House has been restored to its original appearance, and the support posts have been removed. Additionally, new weatherproofing under the shake shingles will eliminate the leak problems that have plagued the structure for many years.

International Paper donated five truckloads of wood, including cypress and pine logs. The project’s timber framing consultant and members of her workshop spent several weeks hand-sawing and hewing the logs to create the timbers that were used for the project. The process was very labor intensive as the crew performed all of the functions by hand using the processes that were used when the African House was first constructed. Following a chalk outline on each log, timber framers used a two-man crosscut or “buck” saw to rip the first timbers and then cut the timbers to dimensional sizes. The framers also used axes to hand-hew the lumber into its final shape before placing it in the building. Following theframers donated their work as they used the opportunity to learn and experience firsthand the methods used by builders centuries ago.

The original time frame for the restoration was two months, but weather delays have pushed back the date for completion. Interior work will not be as extensive as the exterior restoration. One problem that will be addressed is the wicking of water from the ground into the walls of the structure. The original building had dirt floors, but an earlier project installed a brick floor which complimented the appearance of the African House. However, the bricks have contributed to the wicking action which introduced water into the walls. The bricks will be removed, and the structure will once again feature its original dirt floors. Other work includes restoration of the walls and updating of electrical service - not original to the structure.

Cost of the restoration project is estimated at $120,000 which will be paid from revenues generated by its annual projects, including the Melrose Arts and Crafts Festival and its annual Tour of Homes.

Besides the African House, the Melrose Plantation is the site of several other structures including the plantation home (big house), Clementine Hunter’s house, the Bindery, the Yucca House, the Writer’s Cabin, the Weaving House, the Barn, the Ghana House, and the Ice House. Guided tours of the big house will be available.

The annual festival at Melrose features more than 100 vendors from several states. Among the items offered in past years were original works of art, photographs, stained glass windows, handmade jewelry, plants, gourmet pickles and jellies, clothing, toys, woodworking products, pottery, and other arts and crafts objects. Located in southern Natchitoches Parish on State Highway 119, Melrose Plantation has been designated as a National Historic Landmark.

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The festival will be open 9:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. on April 18 and from 10:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. on April 19. Tickets are $5 for adults and $2 for children ages 6-12. Tickets for the tour of the big house are $5. Viewing of the other buildings and self-guided tours of the grounds, which feature centuries old live oak trees and various flower beds, are included with the entry fee. Additional information about Melrose Plantation and the Arts and Crafts Festival may be found at www.melroseplantation.org.

April 17 & 18
Downtown Natchitoches
2015

20TH ANNUAL
Natchitoches JAZZ/R&B FESTIVAL

MARKETPLACE FOR CHEVROLET AND BUICK area. François Mignon resided at Melrose for 32 years and wrote his “Plantation Memo” and several thousand pages of journal entries during that time. However, Clementine Hunter is recognized as the best-known artist to live at the plantation. She was a self-taught artist who began painting using paints and brushes that were discarded by an artist in residence. Many of Hunter’s works are on display in the plantation house at Melrose.

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Marie Thérèse Coincoin, born in 1742 as a slave in the household of the founder of Natchitoches, Louis Juchereau de St. Denis, later became a free woman and is largely credited with the creation of what eventually became Melrose Plantation. She and several of her children, through hard work, land grants and the purchasing of slaves, became the leading family in a community called Isle Brevelle.

In 1796, one of Marie’s sons, Louis Metoyer, was deeded 911 acres of land which was then known as the Yucca Plantation and which would eventually become Melrose Plantation.

Metoyer began construction of the “Big House” in 1832. His death on March 11, 1832, left his only son, Jean Baptiste Louis Metoyer, to finish construction a year later. The original house was a Creole cottage, consisting of two rooms on the upper floor which was raised off the ground and supported by brick pillars. A gallery surrounded the two rooms and the whole construction was covered by a large roof. The open space below was used for storage and plantation business.

The ground floor is constructed of slave-made brick two-feet in thickness. The second floor is constructed of “brique entre poteaux” which was an alternate fill-in method to bousillage. The exterior of the second floor was covered with weatherboards. The details of the dormer windows on the roof are considered to be similar to those found in the DeLord Sarpy Plantation House in New Orleans. Two of the nieces of Louis Metoyer married two of the Franco-African Sarpy brothers, and it has been speculated that those brothers designed and possibly built the dormers.

Brothers Henry and Hypolite Hertzog purchased the plantation in 1847. Fanny Hertzog, the widowed sister of Henry and Hypolite, began living in the Big House shortly thereafter. She expanded the meager two-room raised cottage into a large plantation home by enclosing the two rooms and upper gallery as well as the open space below. The renovation quadrupled the number of rooms in the house, creating eight rooms.

Around 1884, the property was sold to Joseph Henry who named it “Melrose” in honor of Sir Walter Scott’s poem about Melrose Abbey. When he passes away in 1899, his son and daughter-in-law, John Hampton Henry and Carmelite (Cammie)
Garrett Henry, bought the property from their heirs, and Cammie Henry undertook an extensive restoration of the structures located on her new property including expanding the Big House yet again. She added the distinct hexagonal Garçoonnière towers (translated as bachelor's apartments) on each end of the gallery of the Big House. She also added the back portion of the home to make her bedroom, indoor kitchen, indoor pantry, and a sun and quilting room.
We would like to introduce the newest member to the Causey’s Team.

Lynn Johnson, RPh