

Free Lincoln Parish history book available

One of the first projects of the Lincoln Parish Sesquicentennial Committee has come to fruition with the recent release of a long out-of-print history of the parish.

The Lincoln Parish Library has posted a digitized version of “Lincoln Parish History,” a book published in 1976 by the Lincoln Parish Bicentennial Committee.

The massive hardbound book was available only for a short time in connection with the American Bicentennial. The only printing sold out quickly. The volume often sells at online auctions sites for hundreds of dollars but is now available as a digital file on the library’s newly designed history section of its webpage celebrating the 150th anniversary of the creation of Lincoln Parish.

Library Director Jeremy Bolom, a member of the Sesquicentennial Committee, commented, “I am pleased to be a part of this parish-wide effort to not only celebrate Lincoln Parish’s anniversary, but also to highlight the Parish’s rich and sometime elusive history.”

The project was an early idea of the Sesquicentennial Committee appointed by the Lincoln Parish Police Jury to find ways to commemorate the anniversary.

“The book is a collection of materials and articles from whoever wished to donate in 1976,” Sesquicentennial Committee chairman Wesley Harris said. “While it is very large at nearly 700 pages, it has its shortcomings. Nothing is included about the world war experiences of Lincoln Parish and other significant events. But it contains valuable information, most of which has not been published elsewhere.”

The book contains history articles with sections on parish schools, families, churches, and businesses. Originally, the book came without an index, but one has been added to this digitization.

“I get asked often where to obtain a copy of the book,” Harris said. “I looked for years before I found my copy at a garage sale. It’s been available to view at the parish and Louisiana Tech libraries, but finding a personal copy is very difficult.”

“We appreciate Louisiana Tech Archives scanning the book for us, but we have been looking for an easy way to disseminate it free to the public,” Harris said. “Its size makes it difficult to email, so we hoped to find a means to get it to the public at no charge. Jeremy Bolom and the library have solved that issue for us.”

“The library has always kept our two copies noncirculating to preserve our community’s history in print as long as possible. It’s very exciting to finally offer wider access to this unique and rare document, especially with the addition of an index,” said library director, Bolom.

“The printed book was prepared by a committee of citizens appointed by the Police Jury, so it belongs to the public,” Harris said. The sesquicentennial committee decided quickly when the digitization project was brought up that no one would be charged for the book, he said.

Bolom said the book can be accessed at mylpl.org/lincoln-parish-history/. Articles on early parish history and other information on Lincoln's 150th anniversary can also be found on the page.

Bolom and Harris said the committee is working on activities to involve the community in the anniversary and hope to announce them soon.