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**The American Society of Le Souvenir Français Inc.
Monthly Bulletin - Vol. II. No 2 - February 2022**

**Tribute to French-American Legend
Joséphine Baker**



Joséphine Baker in her French Air Force uniform, 1948, with her "Croix de Lorraine" insignia in the front pocket, by Studio Harcourt - RMN, Public Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=76195495>

EDITORIAL

On November 30, 2021 a very moving ceremony took place at the Panthéon in Paris.

The President of the French Republic, Emmanuel Macron and thousands of Parisians paid tribute to an exceptional woman during a ceremony watched by millions of French citizens and viewers around the world.

We at the American Society of Le Souvenir Français are proud to pay homage to Joséphine Baker, a citizen of the United States and France, who served during World War II under French uniform, a philanthropist and humanitarian, and to dedicate this February "*Black History Month*" bulletin to her legacy.

Our monthly bulletin is also the place where we can publicize conferences, lectures, events planned by like-minded patriotic

associations. Please scroll to the bottom of this bulletin for these announcements.

Finally, you may have received recently an e-mail asking for the renewal of your membership or donations. We listed several projects that are particularly important to us in 2022. To all those who responded with a click of the mouse to our PayPal button, our heartfelt thanks. To everyone who reads this bulletin, we express our thanks for your support and suggestions.

It is not too late to become a candidate for a seat on our Board of Directors, or to become a Regional Delegate. Our General Assembly will be held via Zoom on Thursday, March 3, at 6:00PM (Eastern Standard Time). You need to be a member in good standing to participate. We will send you the link and proposed order and slate of candidates by February 24th.

Finally, if you want to brighten your day with a song that will stay for a long while in your mind, I invite you to watch and listen to Joséphine by clicking: [Here!](#)

"A nous le Souvenir, à eux l'immortalité",
Thierry Chaunu
President, on behalf of the Board of Directors.
American Society of Le Souvenir Français, Inc.



WHO WAS JOSEPHINE BAKER?

Josephine Baker (born **Freda Josephine McDonald**, naturalized French **Joséphine Baker**; 3 June 1906 – 12 April 1975) was one of the most popular and beloved artist in France in the 20th Century, with a wide international renown.

She was born in Saint Louis, Missouri, in a poor family, doing house cleanings at the age of 12, married at the age of 13....

She moved to New York to sing and dance in a cabaret, and was offered to perform in Paris.. the rest, as they say, is history.

She instantly became of the most famous artist of the Interwar period. She remarried in France, and chose to become a French-naturalized citizen.

During World War II she joined the French Resistance. For her service, she was awarded the *Resistance Medal* by the French Committee of National Liberation, the *Croix de Guerre* by the French military, and was named a *Chevalier of the Légion d'Honneur* by General Charles de Gaulle.

After WWII she adopted 12 children from different countries and continents, calling them "my rainbow family" and raising them in her beloved château of Milandes in the Dordogne region of Southwest France.

As she resumed her international career and did tours throughout her native United States, she became a militant activist for civil rights. Baker refused to perform for segregated audiences and supported the civil rights movement. She spoke immediately before Dr. Martin Luther King in his famous "I have a Dream" speech in Washington in 1963. Following Martin Luther King, Jr.'s assassination in 1968, she was offered unofficial leadership in the movement in the United States by his widow Coretta Scott King, and relented, preferring to devote her time to her 12 adopted children.

An aging artist no longer in the limelight and in deep financial trouble, she lived her last years in Monaco, as a host of her friend Princess Grace.

She died of a heart attack 12 days after returning back on stage in 1975 in Paris for a farewell tour. The outpouring of emotion at her funeral throughout France was immense.

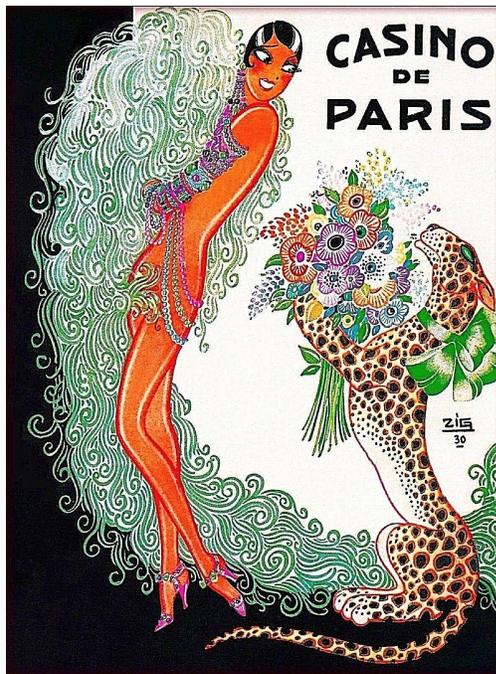
On **November 30, 2021**, during a particularly moving ceremony, she entered the Panthéon in Paris, the first black woman to receive one of the highest honors in France. As her resting place remains in Monaco, a cenotaph was installed in vault #13 of the crypt in the Panthéon.

As President Emmanuel Macron said at the end of his speech:
"You enter our Pantheon because, born American, there is no one more French than you."

FROM POVERTY IN SAINT LOUIS TO STARDOM IN PARIS



"Stereotypes, Josephine Baker endorses them. But she jostles them, scratches them, turns them into sublime burlesque. Spirit of the Enlightenment, ridiculing colonialist prejudices on notes by Sidney Bechet."



**Emmanuel Macron,
Panthéon Speech,
Nov 30, 2021**

Joséphine Baker was born in a poor family in Saint Louis, Missouri, doing house cleaning at the age of 12, married at the age of 13... Her stage talent was noticed in a cabaret act in New York and she was offered to go to Paris... Upon her arrival in France at the age of 19, in 1925, she became instantly famous as a music-hall entertainer.

Her first acts on stages made headlines. She was dancing almost naked, with a belt of bananas, rolling her eyes, making fun of herself and caricaturing black dancers represented in the collective psyche of colonial France.

In the Interwar period, she became one of France's most popular artists. Her song: "I have two loves, my country and Paris" became an enduring classic of French repertoire.

In Paris she meets Sydney Bechet, who reinforces her convictions: "*You know my darling, the fruit of success, you have to pick it before it falls to the ground and rots*".

She was the first black woman to star in a major motion picture, the 1927 silent film *Siren of the Tropics*.

Over the years, she became the muse of Paul Colin, Picasso, Le Corbusier, and forged intimate friendships with Colette, and other women... Her personal lifestyle was wild, free spirited, in the image of the "Roaring Twenties" and the abandon of the 1930's, when the clouds of war were once more gathering over France...

She had a eccentric and extravagant lifestyle, spending her fortune around town. Joséphine has a deep passion for animals and never traveled without being accompanied by her monkeys, dogs, mice or her cheetah or any other living animal that can sometimes surprise, even impress! She would say: "*I like dogs. I love all animals. I have noticed too often how men, women who do not love them, can lose the human sense, all sensitivity, even the meaning of life*"... A lover of France and everything French, she had an immoderate taste for croissants.

Photo above:

By Zig - [https://s-media-cache-](https://s-media-cache-ak0.pinimg.com/736x/f4/da/db/f4dad4de495311a380318f3d699a2b7.jpg)

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**"1937: "Joséphine
returns from a difficult
tour in the United States.
Segregation is more
severe there than ever.
She married Jean Lion**



and officially became a French citizen.
***“The French gave me everything. I am ready to offer them my life today”*: Josephine Baker does not consider her new nationality as a right, but above all as a duty, a daily conquest”**
Emmanuel Macron, Panthéon Speech, Nov 30, 2021

For Joséphine Baker, an African-American raised in full segregation, France is the land of all promises and all freedoms. A land where no one judged neither her color, nor her

bisexuality, nor her demands for emancipation.

A veritable "bakermania" descended on France, where women smeared their skin with walnut husk and plastered their hair with "Bakerfix".

After she had danced almost naked, with her famous belt of bananas as her only clothing, the greatest fashion designers covered her with the most sumptuous dresses and she became Mistinguett's rival at the Casino de Paris.

An exotic and burlesque dance leader, she was totally glamorous. *“I felt liberated in Paris,”* she said. Parisians artists and intellectuals flocked to the "Bal nègre", a club devoted to jazz and West Indian music. It may be hard to believe with the current political narrative, but the reality is that she felt at home in France at a time when the 1931 "Exposition Coloniale" celebrated the colonies of the French Empire and its 100 millions inhabitants of all races on all continents.

She, however, was not just a rich and famous artist socializing with the rich and famous. She became a very prominent humanitarian and philanthropist, and a social activist.

After marrying her husband Jean Lion in 1938 she chose to become a naturalized French citizen. Jean Lion was confronted with anti-Semitism (his name was Jean Levy), and she became involved in the LICA (International League Against Racism). In a few years she would show herself to be very sensitive to the fate of the Jews throughout the period of the Occupation. Later, she will participate in meetings of the MRAP (Movement against Racism and Anti-Semitism and for Peace) in relation with UNESCO in order to raise awareness of the fight against racism on an international scale.

After the declaration of War in 1939, she gave memorable concerts to the troops in the Maginot Line, and enrolled in the French Air Force.

When France collapsed in May and June 1940, to the world surprise, after more than 100,000 dead, 300,000 casualties and millions of refugees in 8 weeks of devastating "blitzkrieg", she went to prove that her heart belonged to France.

A FRENCH RESISTANCE HERO



Algiers, 1944

Photo: Office français d'information cinématographique (OFIC) — Domaine public,
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=112923240>

In September 1939, when France declared war on Germany in response to the invasion of Poland, Baker was recruited by the "Deuxième Bureau", the French military intelligence agency. Baker worked with Major Jacques Abtey, the head of French counterintelligence in Paris.

"It is France that made me what I am, I will always be grateful to her. France is sweet, it is good to live there for us people of color, because there are no racist prejudices. Haven't I become the darling of the Parisians? They gave me everything, especially their hearts. I gave them mine. I am ready, captain, to give them my life. You can dispose of me as you wish!" - Joséphine Baker to her Intelligence Officer superior, Major Jacques Abtey.

As the Germans were about to enter Paris, Baker left the capital and sought refuge in the **Château de Milandes**, her home in the Dordogne département in the south of France, which became part of Vichy-France after the armistice. She housed people who were eager to help the Free French effort led by General Charles de Gaulle and supplied them with fake ID's.

She had a remarkable courage and "sang-froid". While still in Vichy-France, during preparations for a mission, in the company of a core of resistance fighters, she narrowly dodges a Nazi search, standing up to the German officer who suspects her of hiding weapons. She hosted Jews who had managed to cross the "demarcation line" between the northern half of France occupied by German troops and the southern-half, nominally "freer" under the Vichy administration, and helping them join Resistance networks who in turn assisted them to escape to officially neutral Switzerland, Spain and Portugal.

As an entertainer, Baker had an excuse for moving around Europe. She carried information for transmission to England, about airfields, harbors, and German troop concentrations in the western coast of France. Her café-society fame enabled her to rub shoulders with those in the know, from high-ranking German, Italian and Japanese officials

as well as Vichy-bureaucrats collaborators, without raising suspicion, and reporting to the London Free French intelligence what she heard.

In 1941, she moves to Morocco, then a French protectorate. The stated reason was Baker's health (since she was recovering from another case of pneumonia) but the real reason was to continue helping the Resistance. She routinely turned over to the US vice-consuls Canfield, Read et Bartlett information she received from her recruiter Jacques Abtey, who had taken the false identity of Mr. Hébert, assuming the role of an artistic director of a theater in Marseilles. Moving from place to place, she would pass information in invisible ink in music partitions, or in notes in her bra, as her celebrity status made it unlikely to be searched while crossing borders to Portugal, and Spain.

After the American landing in North Africa in 1942, and the transfer of the Provisional Government of the French Republic under de Gaulle from London to Algiers in 1943, she resumed duties in the French Air Force and multiplied galas to support the morale of the Allied troops in the Maghreb region, in French Syria and Lebanon, in Palestine and in Egypt, under the supervision of Colonel Meyers, a friend of General Eisenhower. The Free French had no organized entertainment network for their troops, so Baker and her entourage managed for the most part on their own. They allowed no civilians and charged no admission.



During one of her first fund raising galas in Algiers, in the presence of General de Gaulle, one of the greatest memories of her life occurred...

Frédéric Rey, her partner on stage, recalls...:

"We were adjusting the lights when Joséphine said: 'It would be fantastic if a large tricolor flag could be unfurled on the stage... with a cross of Lorraine!' Of course, such a flag did not exist. "We'll do it! She said. It's not hard to find white fabric, blue fabric and red fabric!" The curtain thus rose on the American jazz which electrified the theater. During the intermission, an aide-de-camp asked Joséphine to go to the general's box of honor. Moved, her hand compressing her heart, she finally found herself face to face with the man she had been following since the famous Call to Resistance of June 18th, 1940. The general gave her his own seat. When she came backstage, she was holding her fist clenched on a small gold cross of Lorraine... I had never seen her more overwhelmed with emotion. It was the general's gift. She opened her hand, showed us the jewel, her throat so tight that she couldn't articulate a word...And when, at the end of the evening, the large flag unfolded with its immense cross of Lorraine of six meters while the Marseillaise was played, the entire audience was on its feet with enthusiasm and emotion. That was Josephine's gift to General de Gaulle. »

Henceforth, she was determined to carry out propaganda for General de Gaulle during her shows. It was very important to her that French influence be maintained in the Middle East. In each city, at each gala, the French flag with the cross of Lorraine unfurled: Sfax, Cairo, Tripoli in Libya, Benghazi, Tobruk, Alexandria, Beirut, Damascus, Jerusalem, Tel-Aviv, Haifa.

In October 1944, Josephine Baker returned to Paris for a short time. She was instructed by General de Lattre de Tassigny to follow the First French army as it advanced through the country in order to sing and collect new funds. Always so inflamed as soon as General de Gaulle's name was pronounced, she managed to convince an entire orchestra to follow her. The shows continued in Alsace Belfort, the very day of the entry of the troops of General De Lattre after fierce fighting with the Germans. Despite the snow and the cold, Joséphine and her orchestra perform for the victims. She performed in Strasbourg, which has just been liberated by the French 1st Army. She followed the troops into Germany. Her last stop was in the concentration camp of Buchenwald, where she sung to a wretched "audience" infested with typhus, in a hangar of the so-called "intransportables"...The scene, as difficult it is today to even fathom, reportedly instilled to all those who had been confronted to hell on earth a will to carry on - - and live.

Photo above:

By Studio Harcourt - RMN, Public Domain,

<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=76195495>

A HUMANITARIAN AND PHILANTHROPIST



Joséphine Baker's "Rainbow Tribe" with 10 of her 12 adopted children in Amsterdam
October 4, 1964

By Hugo van Gelderen (ANEFO) - GaHetNa (Nationaal Archief NL) 916-9642, CC0,
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=37335490>

***"... in [her
château of]***



Milandes where she wants children from all over the world to be taught tolerance, secularism, a taste for equality and fraternity...the adoption with Jo Bouillon of 12 children - Akio and Teruya from

Japan; Luis from Colombia; Jari from Finland; Jean-Claude, Moses and Noel of France; Brian and Marianne from Algeria; Koffi from Ivory Coast; Tara from Venezuela; and Stellina from Morocco, yes, these twelve children, this family allowed Josephine Baker to prove to the world that skin colors, origins, religions could not only coexist but live in harmony. You are here tonight. True to her dreams."

Emmanuel Macron, Panthéon address, November 30, 2021

After World War II, Joséphine married French composer and conductor Jo Bouillon, which ended around the time Baker opted to adopt her 11th child.

Joséphine had a heart of gold, and she proved it. She built a family with orphans adopted on all four corners of the globe, to prove that the world can be a harmonious place with no racism.

"[There was] no point in adopting children of every color to be kept away from everyone else! They must be made visible so that people can see that it is in fact possible; that children from different races, raised together as siblings, have no animosity; that racial hate is not natural. It's an invention by mankind." - Joséphine Baker

The children were all brought up in accordance with their heritage and the religions that Baker assigned to them. Janot was Buddhist, Jari Protestant, Koffi animist, Moïse Jewish, and so forth. Jo Bouillon wrote them a universal prayer of brotherhood:

"O Father, our Good God, grant [...] that our brothers and sisters across the world may show greater love for each other, with the peace, understanding and tolerance that You inspire in us each day through the love that You offer us."

Bouillon and Baker decided to turn their Château des Milandes estate into a tourist centre, as a living tribute to brotherhood between human beings. Along the roads of the Dordogne, signs called drivers to visit this "Village of the World", the "Capital of Brotherhood", which hosted 300,000 visitors annually in the late 1950s.

Baker also worked with the NAACP. Her reputation as a crusader grew to such an extent that the NAACP had Sunday, 20 May 1951 declared "Josephine Baker Day." She was presented with life membership with the NAACP by Nobel Peace Prize winner Dr. Ralph Bunche.

Photo above, the Château of Milandes.

Photo by Jean-Yves Didier - CC BY-SA 3.0,

<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=1043880>

A CIVIL RIGHTS ICON



"I have walked into the palaces of kings and queens and into the houses of presidents. And much more. But I could not walk into a hotel in America and get a cup of coffee, and that made me mad. And when I get mad, you know that I open my big mouth. And then look out, 'cause when Josephine opens her mouth, they hear it all over the world ..." - Joséphine Baker

On August 28, 1963, she spoke at the March on Washington at the side of Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.

Baker was the only official female speaker, while wearing her French Air Force uniform emblazoned with her medal of the Légion d'Honneur.

There was this double symbolism: she was alongside Luther King to tell him: 'I am not forgetting you, I am fighting for civil rights, against racism, for equality... but now I am French.'

She introduced the "Negro Women for Civil Rights." Rosa Parks and Daisy Bates were among those she acknowledged, and both gave brief speeches. Not everyone involved wanted Baker present at the March; some thought her time overseas had made her a French woman, one who was disconnected from the Civil Rights issues going on in America.

Joséphine Baker addressed the huge crowd gathered from the rostrum: *"I want you to know: this is the happiest day of my life! You are a united people. Finally! Because without unity, no victory is possible" ... "When I was a child and they burnt my neighborhood, I was frightened and I ran away. Eventually I ran far away. It was to a place called France. Many of you have been there, and many have not. But I must tell you, ladies and gentlemen, in that country I never feared. It was like a fairyland place....when I ran away to another country, I didn't have to do that. I could go into any restaurant I wanted to, and I could drink water anyplace I wanted to, and I didn't have to go to a colored toilet either, and I have to tell you it was nice, and I got used to it, and I liked it, and I wasn't afraid anymore that someone would shout at me and say, "Nigger, go to the end of the line."*

Joséphine spoke just before Dr. Martin Luther King gave his "I Have a Dream" oration.



HER LAST YEARS: A DIFFICULT TIME



After 1968, Joséphine fell on hard times. The cost of raising her twelve children, the cost of maintaining a castle, and the gradual disinterest of the public for an outdated and unfashionable repertoire led her to experience severe financial difficulties. In spite of the mobilization of her show business friends, fund raising efforts fell short to avoid bankruptcy, and she had to relinquish her much-beloved castle. Eventually, she was saved by her good friend Philadelphia-born Grace Kelly, Princess Grace of Monaco, who gave her residence in Monte-Carlo.

Joséphine valiantly continued appearances on stage. In 1973 she performed at Carnegie Hall in New York to a standing ovation.

In 1975, at the age of 69, she orchestrated a triumphal return on the stage of the legendary Parisian music-hall *Bobino*. The press and the public were once again in unison to praise her immense talent. However, she died of a heart attack after her 12th night of sold-out performance.

When she died on April 12th, 1975, the French government ordered a National Funeral to take place, a first for a black woman. Thousands of Parisians gathered and paid their final respects along her funeral procession to that special lady who only had two loves: her country, and... Paris!

Joséphine's remains were interred in the principality of Monaco, where they remain today, until they became symbolically transferred to the Panthéon, following a decision of French President Emmanuel Macron in 2021.

FINALLY: A MOVING NATIONAL TRIBUTE TO THE PANTHÉON



"After Sophie Berthelot, Marie Curie, Germaine Tillion, Geneviève de Gaulle-Anthonioz and Simone Veil, Joséphine Baker is the sixth woman to enter at the Pantheon on November 30, 2021.

"Through this destiny, France distinguishes an exceptional personality, born American, having chosen, in the name of the fight she waged all her life for freedom and emancipation, the Eternal France of Universal Enlightenment.

World-renowned music-hall artist, engaged in the Resistance, tireless activist anti-racist, she was part of all the fights that bring together citizens of good will, in France and around the world.

For all these reasons, because she is the embodiment of the French spirit, Joséphine Baker, who died in 1975, today deserves the recognition of the motherland»

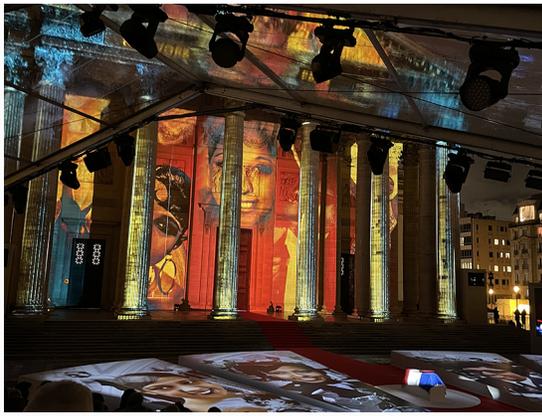
Elysée press release, August 23, 2021.

On November 30, 2021, the music hall artist, resistance fighter, second lieutenant of the French Air Forces and anti-racist activist entered the Panthéon.

Joséphine Baker is thus the 81st personality to enter this "hall of fame" of France. She is also the very first black woman to receive this honor, which is an event in itself. She joined other great figures in the history of France, such as Voltaire, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Victor Hugo, Émile Zola, Pierre & Marie Curie or Alexandre Dumas.

• 30 November
2021 - Conclusion
of the speech by
Emmanuel
Macron, president
of the French
Republic

*"She enters here
with all those who,
like her, have seen
in France a land to*



live in, a place where one would stop dreaming of oneself elsewhere, a promise of emancipation. She enters here with all those who chose France, who loved her and love her, carnally, who saw her stumble and continued to love her, who saw

her on the ground and fought to raise it. French by the blood shed, the battles fought, the love given. She enters here to remind us all, to remind us of ourselves, who sometimes put so much stubbornness into wanting to forget her, the elusive beauty of our collective destiny: we who are a Nation of combat, fraternal, that one desires, one deserves, which is itself only when it is great and fearless.

*Josephine Baker,
You enter our Pantheon where a wind of fantasy and audacity rushes with you. Yes, for the first time here, it is a certain idea of freedom, of celebration, which also enters.
You enter our Pantheon because you loved France, because you showed her a path that was hers, but which she nevertheless doubted.
You enter our Pantheon because, born American, there is no one more French than you.
And while at the end of your career, adapting the lyrics of your greatest success, you proclaimed: "My country is Paris",*

Each of us tonight whispers this refrain, sounding like a hymn to love: "My France is Josephine".

Long live the Republic. Long live France"

Emmanuel Macron, President of the French Republic, November 30, 2021

For full access to the speech, and to view the full ceremony in English on YouTube:

<https://youtu.be/CdLQsVqHiaE>

To download a full transcript of the President's speech:

<https://www.elysee.fr/emmanuel-macron/2021/11/30/josephine-baker-entre-au-pantheon>





HER LEGACY IN THE UNITED STATES

THE LEGACY WALK



JOSEPHINE BAKER

Bisexual Civil Rights Activist and Entertainer
(1906 - 1975)

*"UNFORTUNATELY, HISTORY HAS SHOWN US THAT BROTHERHOOD
MUST BE LEARNED, WHEN IT SHOULD BE NATURAL."*
- JOSEPHINE BAKER

BORN TO A HUMBLE WORKING-CLASS FAMILY, JOSEPHINE BAKER GREW UP CLEANING HOUSES AND BABYSITTING FOR WEALTHY WHITE FAMILIES WHO REMINDED HER TO "BE SURE NOT TO KISS THE BABY." AFTER DROPPING OUT OF SCHOOL, SHE LIVED ON THE STREETS OF ST. LOUIS WHERE HER STREET-CORNER DANCING LED TO A CAREER IN VAUDEVILLE DURING THE HARLEM RENAISSANCE. IN 1925 SHE JOINED "LA REVUE NÈGRE" IN PARIS WHERE HER EXOTIC AND SENSUAL PERFORMANCES MADE HER AN OVERNIGHT SENSATION. IN 1934 BAKER WAS THE FIRST AFRICAN AMERICAN FEMALE TO STAR IN A MAJOR MOTION PICTURE *ZOUZOU*. DURING THE NAZI OCCUPATION OF FRANCE, SHE JOINED THE FRENCH UNDERGROUND AND SMUGGLED INTELLIGENCE CODED WITHIN HER SHEET MUSIC TO THE RESISTANCE IN PORTUGAL. IN RECOGNITION OF HER SERVICES SHE RECEIVED THE *CROIX DE GUERRE*, THE *ROSETTE DE LA RESISTANCE*, AND WAS MADE A *CHEVALIER DE LA LEGION D'HONNEUR* BY GENERAL CHARLES DE GAULLE. IN SPITE OF HER GALLANTRY, AFTER THE WAR, BAKER WAS REFUSED SERVICE AT NEW YORK'S POPULAR STORK CLUB FOR BEING BLACK. IN RESPONSE SHE REFUSED TO ENTERTAIN IN ANY CLUB OR THEATER THAT WAS NOT INTEGRATED - SETTING OFF A FIRESTORM ABOUT INTEGRATION. THRUST INTO THE ROLE OF CIVIL RIGHTS ICON, BAKER WAS THE ONLY WOMAN ASKED TO SPEAK AT THE MARCH ON WASHINGTON IN 1963, THOUGH SHE PERFORMED LESS AND LESS IN THE ENSUING YEARS. IN 1973 SHE OPENED AT CARNEGIE HALL TO A STANDING OVATION, FINALLY RECEIVING THE RECOGNITION THAT HAD LONG ELUDED HER IN THE U.S. ON APRIL 12, 1975 - SHORTLY AFTER RECEIVING RAVE REVIEWS FOR A RETROSPECTIVE ON HER 50 YEARS IN SHOW BUSINESS - SHE SUFFERED A CEREBRAL HEMORRHAGE AND PASSED AWAY AT THE AGE OF 68. SHE RECEIVED FULL FRENCH MILITARY HONORS AND WAS INTERRED IN MONACO AT THE BEHEST OF LONG-TIME FRIEND, PRINCESS GRACE. JOSEPHINE BAKER - WHO BELIEVED IN A TRULY MULTIRACIAL SOCIETY - ADOPTED 12 CHILDREN FROM NATIONALLY AND RACIALLY DIVERSE BACKGROUNDS. SHE WAS A SURVIVOR WHO NEVER GAVE UP ON LIFE IN SPITE OF TREMENDOUS CHALLENGES, AND REMAINS ONE OF THE MOST BELOVED ICONS OF HER ERA.

THIS PLAQUE IS DEDICATED WITH LOVE
TO MY TWO- AND FOUR-LEGGED CHILDREN
PAUL M. LISNEK, J.D., PH.D.
TELEVISION & RADIO HOST, AND AUTHOR
"IN MEMORY OF JEAN-CLAUDE BAKER"
DEDICATED OCTOBER 11, 2015

Marker, « Josephine Baker»
3704 North Halsted Street, Chicago IL 60613
[41.949467, -87.649667](https://www.mapquest.com/chicago/3704-North-Halsted-Street)
Photographed By Andrew Ruppenstein

• Inscription:

“Bisexual Civil Rights Activist and Entertainer
(1906 - 1975)”

*“Unfortunately, history has shown us that brotherhood
must be learned, when it should be natural.”* - Josephine Baker

“Born to a humble working-class family, Josephine Baker grew up cleaning houses and babysitting for wealthy white families who reminded her to “be sure not to kiss the baby.” After dropping out of school, she lived on the streets of St. Louis where her street-corner

dancing led to a career in Vaudeville during the Harlem Renaissance. In 1925 she joined "La Revue Nègre" in Paris where her exotic and sensual performances made her an overnight sensation. In 1934 Baker was the first African American female to star in a major motion picture, *Zouzou*. During the Nazi occupation of France, she joined the French Underground and smuggled intelligence coded within her sheet music to the resistance in Portugal. In recognition of her services she received the *Croix de Guerre*, the *Rosette de la Résistance*, and was made a *Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur* by General Charles de Gaulle. "

"In spite of her gallantry, after the war, Baker was refused service at New York's popular Stork Club for being black. In response she refused to entertain in any club or theater that was not integrated – setting off a firestorm about integration. Thrust into the role of civil rights icon, Baker was the only woman asked to speak at the March on Washington in 1963. Though she performed less and less in the ensuing years, in 1973 she opened at Carnegie Hall to a standing ovation, finally receiving the recognition that had long eluded her in the U.S. On April 12, 1975 – shortly after receiving rave reviews for a retrospective on her 50 years in show business – she suffered a cerebral hemorrhage and passed away at the age of 68. She received full French military honors and was interred in Monaco at the behest of long-time friend, Princess Grace. Josephine Baker – who believed in a truly multiracial society – adopted 12 children from nationally and racially diverse backgrounds. She was a true pioneer who never gave up on life in spite of tremendous challenges and remains one of the most beloved icons of her era."

"Erected 2015 by The Legacy Project."



Plaque, "Joséphine Baker, Rainbow Honor Walk"

2338 Market St, San Francisco, CA 94114

[37.763733](tel:37.763733), [-122.434017](tel:-122.434017)

Photographed By Andrew Ruppenstein, November 20, 2021

• In August 2019 **Joséphine Baker** was one of those inducted in the *Rainbow Honor Walk*, a walk of fame in San Francisco's Castro neighborhood noting LGBTQ people who have "*made significant contributions in their fields*".

• **Inscription:**

Josephine Baker
(1906-1975)

"African-American born French dancer, singer, actress, Resistance fighter and world-famous entertainer who refused to perform for segregated audiences"

"Erected 2019 by Rainbow Honor Walk."



Marker, Josephine Baker, Born June 3, 1906"

6501 Delmar Blvd, University City, MO 63130

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joséphine_Baker

[38.656000, -90.304467](https://www.google.com/maps/place/38.656000,-90.304467)

Photographed By Devry Becker Jones, October 7, 2018

• **Inscription:**

"As a child in St. Louis, Josephine Baker rummaged for coal behind Union Station and for food behind Soulard Market. At age 13, she waitressed at the Chauffeurs' Club on Pine Street and danced with a minstrel band. In 1925 she went to Paris with the Revue Negre. She starred in the Folies-Bergere the next season and became one of France's best-loved entertainers. During World War II, she was a heroine of the resistance, earning the Légion D'Honneur. Although a French citizen, she was an activist for civil rights in the United States. On her death in 1975, she was given an unprecedented state funeral in Paris."

"Erected 1990 by St. Louis Walk of Fame".

ELSEWHERE IN THE UNITED STATES:

- She has also been inducted on 29 March 1995, into the [Hall of Famous Missourians](#). St. Louis's Channing Avenue was renamed Josephine Baker Boulevard and a wax sculpture of Baker is on permanent display at [The Griot Museum of Black History](#).

IN FRANCE:

- *Place Joséphine Baker* ([48.841442](#), [2.323481](#)) in the [Montparnasse Quarter](#) of Paris was named in her honor.
- The *Piscine Joséphine Baker* ([48.836068](#), [2.376026](#)) is a swimming pool along the banks of the Seine near the Pont de Bercy, in Paris, also named after her.

Joséphine Baker continues to influence celebrities more than a century after her birth:

- In a 2003 interview with *USA Today*, Angelina Jolie cited Baker as "a model for the multiracial, multinational family she was beginning to create through adoption." Beyoncé performed Baker's banana dance at the Fashion Rocks concert at Radio City Music Hall in September 2006.
- On 3 June 2017, the 111th anniversary of her birth, Google released an animated "Google Doodle", which consists of a slideshow chronicling her life and achievements.
- On Thursday 22 November 2018 a documentary entitled [Josephine Baker: The Story of an Awakening](#), directed by Ilana Navaro, was released. It contains rarely seen archival footage, including some never before discovered, with music and narration.
- Writing in the on-line *BBC magazine* in late 2014, Darren Royston, historical dance teacher at RADA credited Baker with being the Beyoncé of her day, and bringing the Charleston to Britain. Two of Baker's sons, Jean-Claude and Jarry (Jari), grew up to go into business together, running the famous restaurant [Chez Josephine](#) on Theatre Row, 42nd Street, New York City. It celebrates Baker's life and works.

JOSÉPHINE BAKER

Panthéon - 30 novembre 2021



By JipéDan

<https://www.facebook.com/JipeDan/photos/a.108787668108736/198182889169213/>, CC BY-SA 3.0,

<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=112977316>

**BREAKING NEWS - - -
THE STATUE OF MAJOR PIERRE L'ENFANT WILL
BE PLACED AT THE UNITED STATES CAPITOL ON
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 2022!**



A LONG JOURNEY HOME

- Only the 50 States have the privilege to place **two** statues each of prominent leaders in the Capitol, siege of the United States Congress.
- The District of Columbia has been pushing for years its admission as a State in the Union. So far it only has one representative without voting rights, and D.C. is administered by Congress. Years ago, in anticipation to becoming someday the 51st State, the city commissioned statues to abolitionist **Frederick Douglass** and Major **Pierre L'Enfant**, the French-born military engineer and architect chosen by General George Washington himself to design the master plan of the Federal capital of the new nation.
- The bronze statue has been languishing in relative obscurity inside the lobby of **Wilson Building**, near the White House, which houses the municipal offices and chambers of the Mayor and the Council of the District of Columbia.

- In 2013, a compromise was passed and Congress allowed only one statue, that of Frederick Douglass. As Representative Holmes Norton declared: "*I expect to get his done the way I was able to get Frederick Douglas done,*" she declared. "*It became impossible to refuse Frederick Douglas. I don't see how the Senate can sit there and say 'We don't want **Pierre L'Enfant** — the man who created the very city where the Senate and the House sit.'*"

- When Major Pierre L'Enfant designed the District in the 1790's, the Paris-born engineer dedicated a hill on the east end of the Mall for the Capitol.
He called the grassy knoll: "*a pedestal waiting for a monument.*"

- Finally! The dedication of the statue at the Memorial Door Foyer in the U.S. Capitol will take place on **Monday, February 28, 2022.**
We hope this will make national news!

PAST MONTHLY BULLETINS THROUGHOUT 2021

OUR GOAL: turn the spotlight on a famous, or less famous, episode or historical figure during the long shared history between France and the United States, with illustrations and anecdotes.

You can have access to all our past Monthly Bulletin since February 2021 by visiting our website:

www.SouvenirFrancaisUSA.org

Our next Bulletin in March will pay homage to
[Antoine de Saint-Exupéry](#)
French Air Force pilot, poet, novelist,
author (while residing in New York) of
["The Little Prince"](#)
the most translated book after the Holy Bible
and our project to erect a statue in New York.



ANNOUNCEMENTS



"The French Will Never Forget..."

"The Girl Who Wore Freedom" is a documentary on the reception given to Veterans GIs by the Norman population. In particular, the title refers to a French little girl who wore a dress cut from an American flag and an American parachute of nylon fabric in 1944.

This American flag dress was worn by Daniele "Dany" Patrice Boucherie, of Ste.-Marie-du-Mont. She has kept over the decades her star-spangled dress sewn by her mom, with vivid memories of the days of liberation. She remembers seeing planes with gliders and the parachuted paratroopers landing.

You can watch the trailer on YouTube just by clicking on the photo above or:

<https://youtu.be/-VxSY0GsGJg>

Having watched this documentary by pure happenstance on a Delta Airlines flight recently, I purchased a digital copy on AppleTV, however I realized that it was quasi-impossible to purchase a DVD copy anywhere.

I therefore contacted the producer, Christian Taylor, a former US Senate cable TV reporter in Washington, who now lives in Illinois. Her story on how she made the documentary is as moving as the film itself. Unfortunately at the present time, there is no sufficient funding to mass produce DVD's with a fancy packaging. The only way is to have access to the Apple store and AppleTV.

However, a few DVD's (\$30 each) are available for sale at:

[TGWWF DVD | The Girl Who Wore Freedom](#)
Password "Dany"

We are now looking at ways to host screening around the United States, possibly in Veterans associations clubs, high schools, universities, Alliances Françaises and similar cultural institutes, etc...

Any suggestions are most welcome!

For more information, please contact: Ms. Christian Taylor, Director/Producer, "The Girl Who Wore Freedom" at the Normandy Project LLC.

info@normandystories.com

Tel: (708) 669-4696

<https://thegirlwhoworefrees.com/contact/>

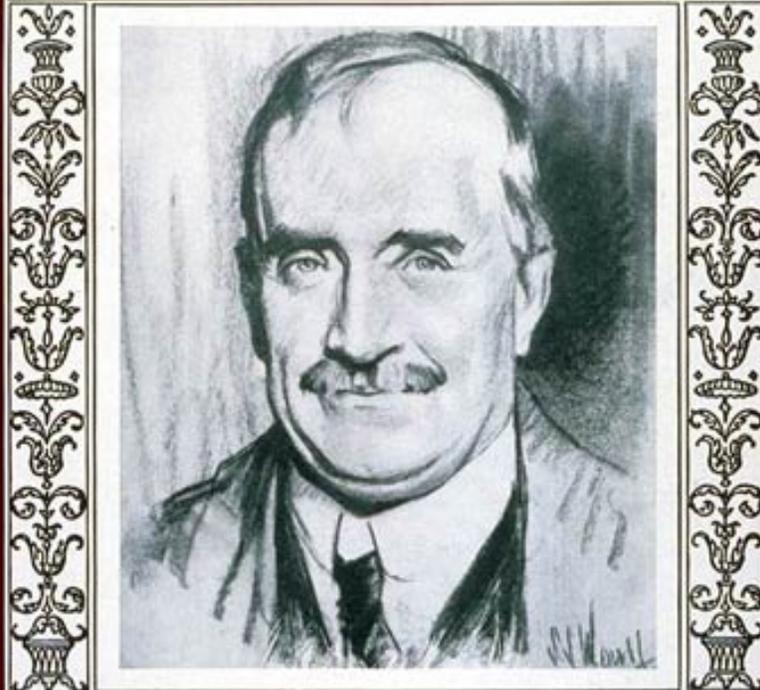
UPCOMING EVENTS ANNOUNCEMENTS

FIFTEEN CENTS

March 21, 1927

TIME

The Weekly Newsmagazine



Volume IX

THE FRENCH AMBASSADOR
Hymns, acts, etc.
(See Page 13)

Number 12

Paul Claudel, Cover of *Time Magazine* (21 March 1927)
By Artist: S.J. Woolf (Samuel Johnson Woolf, 1880-1948) - Public Domain

**From our Board Member Francis Dubois, an invitation to attend:
"Le dernier voyage de Monsieur Claudel"
on March 14, 2022 at 6:30PM,
National Arts Club, Grammercy Park, New York NY**

You are cordially being invited by our friend and board member Francis Dubois at the National Arts Club, 15 Gramermy Park South, New York , March 14, 2022 at 6:30pm for a play " Le dernier voyage de Monsieur Claudel" (" The last voyage of Mr. Claudel ") , a play written and performed by Sylvain Beltran Lamy.

[Paul Claudel](#), French poet and diplomat attends his own funeral at Notre-Dame and comments about the mourners, and his life . This play was presented more than 300 times, in France, Belgium, and Japan and was extremely well received .

The play describes an exceptional artist as well as the literary environment of the Parisian " fin de siècle " .

The play will be **in French**: it is lively and humorous....and not to be missed !

Limited seating. Please rsvp : francisdubois2005@yahoo.fr

Paul Claudel, one of France's most celebrated writer, novelist and playwright of the XXth Century, had also been **Deputy-Consul General of France** in New York in 1893, and **Ambassador of France** to Washington from 1928 to 1933.

ANNOUNCEMENT FROM LAFAYETTE TRAIL.ORG

“Lafayette 101” – Why we Celebrate the Marquis



Who was this French guy, Lafayette?
What was his background?
What did he really look like?
What motivated him to come to America
and get involved with our war with Britain?
What was his impact on the American Revolution?
Who became his “adopted” father?
How did he come to be such a celebrity in America?
Why did he return to America to visit, twice?
Why was a college in Easton, PA named after him?

Come and find out!

Illustrated Lecture by John Becica, Lafayette College Class of 1969



Sunday, February 20, 2022, 2 PM

Bethlehem
Masonic Lodge #283
1607 Stefko Boulevard
AND ON ZOOM



Free and Open to the Public
To register, please email

Brian Atwood: batwoodman@aol.com

Please let us know if you will attend online or in person

Sponsored by
The American Friends of Lafayette, The Lafayette Trail, Inc.
Valley Forge Chapter, Sons of the American Revolution

Please join John C. Becica, a graduate of Lafayette College (class of 1969) and member of the board of directors of The Lafayette Trail, Inc., on **Sunday, February 20, 2022**, at 2 pm ET for a talk presenting Lafayette.

The talk is organized by the Valley Forge Chapter Sons of the American Revolution and will be held at the Bethlehem, PA Masonic Lodge. It is free of charge. You can either attend in person or virtually.

Please, email Mr. Brian Atwood at batwoodman@aol.com with your full name and your mode of attendance, either in person at Bethlehem's Masonic Lodge (1607 Stefko Blvd, Bethlehem, PA 18017), or via Zoom.

If you decide to attend virtually, a Zoom link will be sent to you closer to the date of the event.

John Becica has given this presentation numerous times within the Lafayette College community. This will be the first time that it is shared with the general public.

Visit the captivating "[Follow the Frenchmen](#)" series and its latest episode in Buffalo, New York, presented by our friend Julien Icher, President of [TheLafayetteTrail.org](#).

ANNOUNCEMENT FROM THE AMERICAN FRIENDS OF LAFAYETTE

From Chuck Schwam, COO The American Friends of Lafayette

On February 24, 2015, the Virginia Assembly passed House Joint Resolution No. 797:

**"Designating March 14, in 2015
and in each succeeding year, as a Day of Honor for
the Marquis de Lafayette in Virginia."**

Now, almost seven years later, I am pleased to announce our seventh annual "LAFAYETTE DAY" festivities (this year in Richmond, Virginia).

Once again, we start at the Virginia State House and will have a few short walks the rest of the day. Pay parking lots and decks are nearby on 8th & Grace Streets and 7th & Marshall Streets.

Please note: The itinerary below is all within walking distance. You will only need to park your car once.

We expect many dignitaries in attendance from the United States and Europe.

The itinerary for March 14th, 2022 is....

- 10:30am: We will start with the Lafayette Day ceremony in the Rotunda of the Virginia State House (1000 Bank St, Richmond, VA 23219). We will conduct a wreath laying ceremony in front of Houdon's Lafayette bust (see below) and Washington's statue in the Capitol Rotunda. This is a FREE EVENT.
- We will have a private tour of the Capitol Statehouse with renowned historian Mark Greenough (Capitol Historian and Tour Supervisor at the Virginia State Capitol). This is a not-to-be missed tour (even if you've done it before). This is a FREE EVENT. We will then walk over to....
- ...a group luncheon within walking distance of the statehouse (Meriwether's). This lunch was a HUGE hit in year's past as the chef flexes his culinary muscles with a delicious and authentic French four-course meal, (Mushroom Soup, Salad Nicoise, Coq au Vin, Creme Brulee) (\$30pp to be collected at the door). We will then walk over to...
- ...The Library of Virginia for a private tour. The Library of Virginia houses the most comprehensive collection of materials on Virginia history and culture available anywhere. Their staff will be pulling out several Revolutionary War-related items for AFL members to enjoy. This is a FREE EVENT.
- As we've done in year's past, we are trying to finagle either a tour of the Virginia Governor's Mansion or an audience with Virginia Governor Glenn Youngkin. Neither of these possibilities have come to fruition yet, but I promise we are trying and I will keep you posted.

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN ATTENDING, PLEASE REPLY TO:
friendsoflafayette@wildapricot.org
by February 28th



Grab your kids or Grandchildren !!!
Finally a Lafayette medium they might relate to...a cartoon !!!
AFL member Gloria Womble sent me this video and I thought I should share with everyone. In this 23-minute episode of Liberty Kids, Lafayette arrives in America and fights in the battle of Brandywine. This is a wonderful opportunity for the youngsters in our lives to understand why we all admire Lafayette.
After a brief commercial, the video can be watched by clicking: [HERE](#)
There is also a Yorktown episode with Lafayette and James Armistead which can be viewed by clicking: [HERE](#)
Many of our younger members became "Lafayettists" after watching an animated Lafayette.

ALSO...

AFL member Mark Holland came to me with a GREAT idea. How about a Lafayette Book Club? I loved the idea...so let's do it.
Attention all authors, if you are interested in submitting your book for our book club, please let me know. We will give readers one month to read your book and then schedule a one-hour zoom with you hosting the conversation.
Our first book club event will be Thursday, April 7th at 7:00pm EDT
In the spirit of "The Year of Adrienne", our first book will be The Women of Chateau Lafayette, by AFL member Stephanie Dray. This wonderful book was published this past March by Berkley Books.
So grab a copy of The Women of Chateau Lafayette at your local library or book store and start reading. You have eight weeks to do so.
You can register for our first book club zoom by clicking: [HERE](#)
After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting on Thursday, April 7th at 7:00pm EDT. Stephanie Dray will be on hand to field your questions and comments.
All authors interested in hosting our May book club (or any future book club events) please contact me at:
americanfriendsoflafayette@gmail.com

Please visit <https://friendsoflafayette.wildapricot.org/>
for membership and reservations information



**Our Canadian member and friend Patrick Salin
cordially invites you to his lecture (in French)
on March 9, 2020 at 1:30PM (Eastern Standard Time):
"Québec, Ville fortifiée"**

Société de Généalogie Canadienne-Française (SGCF)

Conférence, mercredi 9 mars 2022, 13h30 (Montréal), 19h30 (Paris)

Sur plateforme Zoom - Pour recevoir le lien Zoom, prière de vous inscrire en contactant directement la SGCF : conference@sgcf.com

QUÉBEC, VILLE FORTIFIÉE (1608 – 1871)

De l'humble poste de traite au Gibraltar de l'Amérique

Régime français - Régime anglais - Aujourd'hui

Patrick Salin

psalin10@gmail.com



France



Grande-Bretagne



Canada



Royal 22^e Régiment

La « Vieille Capitale » tire ce surnom de son destin exceptionnel, unique en Amérique du nord. A l'aide de nombreuses photographies personnelles et copies numérisées de cartes et plans d'époque, Patrick Salin nous fait revivre le destin unique de l'humble lieu de rassemblement amérindien devenu poste de traite avec Champlain, puis formidable camp retranché perché sur un promontoire, capable selon les termes du gouverneur Frontenac de « répondre aux insultes de l'ennemi par la bouche de mes canons ». Québec fut également siège du plus vaste évêché catholique d'Amérique du Nord, dans un rêve d'empire jusque-là inégalé. Vient ensuite la forteresse incomplète de la Bataille pour Québec de 1759-1760, face à un envahisseur britannique pugnace et déterminé. La Vieille Capitale évolue, après plusieurs affrontements courageux, en quartier général fortifié de l'Amérique du nord britannique, pour parvenir finalement au stade de « Gibraltar de l'Amérique ». Plus récemment, d'importantes conférences internationales furent organisées dans ce cadre historique exceptionnel. Parfois capricieux, le Destin et l'utilitarisme des temps modernes auraient pu balayer ces vestiges désuets et inutiles pourtant plusieurs fois centenaires, témoins d'événements hors du commun. Bon prince, ce même Destin reconnu enfin leur caractère exceptionnel, l'UNESCO l'inscrivant en 1985 parmi les sites du Patrimoine mondial.

L'auteur est membre de plusieurs sociétés d'histoire et de patrimoine du Canada, des États-Unis et de France. Il est titulaire d'un doctorat en droit de l'Université McGill et d'un doctorat en histoire de CY-Cergy-Paris Université. Après avoir mené une carrière bancaire puis universitaire, il explore les facettes mal connues de l'histoire de l'Amérique française.

PLEASE RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP!

Your dues and donations all help us accomplish our missions.

YOU ARE INVITED TO BECOME A CANDIDATE TO JOIN OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS AT OUR NEXT GENERAL ASSEMBLY TO BE HELD ON THURSDAY MARCH 3, 2022.

In accordance with our By-Laws, in order to participate and vote, you must be a Member in good standing.

For more information, please contact: info@SouvenirFrancaisUSA.org or visit:

www.SouvenirFrancaisUSA.org/donate

OUR MISSIONS:



- To preserve the memory of the French soldiers, sailors and airmen who gave their lives for freedom, and who are buried in the United States.
- To honor French Citizens who did great deeds in the United States, or with a strong connection with the United States,
- To promote the appreciation for French culture and heritage in the United States, and the ideals that unite our two nations, in order to

pass the torch of memory to younger generations.

• To strengthen the long-standing traditional bonds of friendship between the American and French peoples, and to this end: erect or maintain memorials and monuments and encourage historical research, public presentations and publications in the media.

Le Souvenir Français, a French association under the high patronage of the President of the Republic, was born in 1872 in occupied Alsace-Lorraine, and was founded in 1887 in Paris by Professor Xavier Niessen. The association has more than 300,000 members in France and in more than 45 countries.

In the United States, the American Society of Le Souvenir Français (Souvenir Français USA) has been represented since the First World War by a General Delegate, among whom were Dr Jules Pierre, MM. Bruno Kaiser, Colonel Roger Cestac, Christian Bickert, Mathieu Petitjean, and Jean Lachaud. The association is presided since November 2020 by CC(H) Thierry Chaunu (H) Lt Cdr., French Navy.

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Jacques Baisnenou, Great Lakes and Midwest

Marc Onetto, West Coast

We are looking to expand our geographic coverage with Regional Delegates in cities such as Austin, or Houston (SouthWest), New Orleans (Louisiana), Savannah, Jacksonville or Miami (SouthEast), Boston or Newport (New England).

The American Society of Le Souvenir Français, Inc. is an independent American corporation, apolitical, established in 1993 in NY, with 501 (c) 3 non-profit status.



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Simply go to: smile.amazon.com, designate American Society of Le Souvenir Francais Inc. as your beneficiary, and shop away!

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[Donate!](#)

**Help us implement several historic commemorative projects celebrating the
244-year-old Franco-American friendship and alliance!**

The American Society of Le Souvenir Français, Inc. is a registered NY State non-profit corporation and has full IRS tax exempt 501(c)3 status. All donations are tax deductible.

Contact: Thierry Chaunu, President
697 Third Avenue #341 New York, NY 10017
Email: info@SouvenirFrancaisUSA.org Tel: (212) 328-0150

