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Department of State**



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**LPB AND THE SECRETARY OF STATE'S OFFICE
LAUNCH THE LOUISIANA DIGITAL MEDIA ARCHIVE**

On Jan. 20, LPB and the Secretary of State's Office officially launched the Louisiana Digital Media Archive. This exciting new project is the home of the Louisiana Public Broadcasting Digital Collection and the Louisiana State Archives Multimedia Collection. This is the culmination of a five-year effort to give the general public a front row seat to Louisiana history through video of historic events and allows viewers a chance to visit remote and endangered Louisiana places and cultures. It's also the kickoff of LPB's 40th anniversary celebration.

"We see the LDMA as both an exciting educational tool for teachers and students and a way to preserve the valuable media from our state's rich history," LPB President CEO Beth Courtney said.

"Preserving our state's unique history in a format that the average person can explore and enjoy has always been one of the critical missions of the State Archives," said Louisiana Secretary of State Tom Schedler. "Seeing actual moving pictures of federal marshals escorting Ruby Bridges as she integrated New Orleans public schools, watching President Kennedy's assassin, Lee Harvey Oswald, distributing information on Bourbon Street or witnessing the devastation left by Hurricane Camille all along the Gulf Coast brings us all back to those moments in time and makes them real. Working collaboratively with LPB makes perfect sense and allows us to continue to capture and catalog important historical moments so that they can be remembered by future generations."

Originally discussed in 2005, actual work began on the archive in 2009 when LPB joined in the American Archive of Public Broadcasting project funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

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Since that time, the LDMA has digitized more than 1,500 videos including interviews with Louisiana civil rights heroes, notable political figures, war heroes, artists and literary icons. Thousands of other videos will be added to the collection in the coming years. The public cannot download any of the content on the site, but they can view it by visiting <http://ladigitalmedia.org>.

Some of the items featured in the LDMA are episodes from LPB's award-winning series "Louisiana: The State We're In" and "Louisiana Public Square," clips from the six-part "Louisiana: A History" series, coastal conservation documentaries and cultural heritage programs. LPB will be adding more clips from its award-winning documentaries and series in the future. The Louisiana State Archives holds the historic collections of many of the state's oldest and most respected news broadcasters including WWL-New Orleans; WBRZ-Baton Rouge; and KLFY-Lafayette along with hundreds of oral history interviews recorded over the past half-century.

In addition to providing an educational resource for our state, part of the LDMA's mission is to preserve the historic video that was recorded during the modern age. Most archival media collections contain thousands of videotapes that have outlived their shelf-life. Many have videos that have deteriorated to the point where they will be destroyed by a single play. Equipment necessary to "play" these videotapes is no longer manufactured and locating and maintaining obsolete machines is costly and will soon be impossible. Another challenge in preserving this recorded history is the state's climate. Humidity threatens videotapes and film and devastating Gulf storms pose serious problems for fragile recordings in terms of power outages, fluctuation in storage conditions and facility damage. LPB and the State Archives are dedicated to saving as much of this fragile video as possible by providing it with a safe, protected permanent home.

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