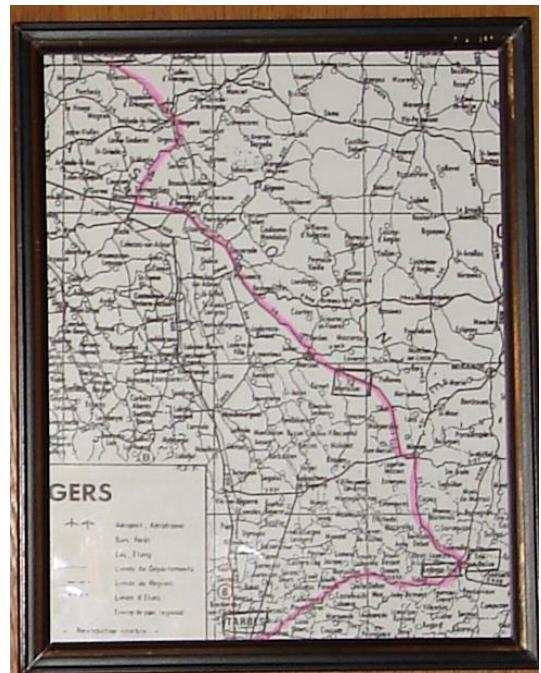


The Lee Joseph and Anna 'Gertrude' Hensgens-Monlezun Special Collection!" 'The Living Room!'

This central room is original to the home which was built in 1904! The floor is wide plank pine and behind the sofa was a fireplace which is covered by paneling; in vintage photos one can see the brick chimney jutting up from the roof. The door surrounds are cypress, very solid and beautifully crafted. The crucifix was a wedding gift and has hung above the door since the beginning of time! Mom selected the light fixture which she loved as well as the blue rug. The sofa and two arm chairs are very old, only the second of the original set in this room and are especially crowded in on for the arrival of Santa Claus every Christmas!

The heritage artifacts, memorabilia, furniture, photographs, clothing and letters are of the Dominique Monlezun lineage. He was born in the Basque region of The Pyrénées called 'Gers' in southern France and is my paternal great-grandfather who immigrated to New Orleans, LA. His original passport is on the left while on the right is the 'Monlezun Family Tree Maker' ~ Generation One, Pierre and Jeanne Abadie-Monlezun.

A map of the Basque region of origin has its place along with a postcard of this region and the earliest acquired photo of "Grandpa Dominique."





The large gold framed mirror was a wedding present from my maternal grandparents Joseph and Anna Gertrude Reiners-Hensgens. This is the grandfather that was invited to view Arthur Avenue just after Daddy bought her and grandpa said, “Yep! Lee, this home is big enough to raise ten children!” The rest is history! (Mom and Dad gave large mirrors to their children as wedding gifts; they never uttered those words that I can remember!!)

A unique and generous Christmas Gift 2004 from my sister Constance Victoria Monlezun Darbonne that was later framed and I handed on to my son. It was given in commemoration of the ‘First Monlezun Reunion 23 April 2005!’...on the back is a brass plate which reads...

This painting is a gift to Antoine Adolfo Pontón, Great-Great-Great-Great-Grandson of Dominique Joseph and Louisa Thomasine Peterson-Monlezun.

*This is their original home place at Cypress Point, LA 1876-1923.
Painted from memory by their granddaughter, Mary Monlezun-Broussard, 1902-1977
Godmother of Lee Joseph Monlezun, Sr. 1917-1985*

Dominique Joseph Monlezun
Born 1845 Lalanne, France ~ Died June 29, 1928 Lake Arthur, LA

Son, Antoine Monlezun
March 31, 1882 Cypress Point, LA - March 29, 1971 Lake Arthur, LA

Grandson, Lee Joseph Monlezun, Sr.
April 24, 1917- July 31, 1985 Lake Arthur, LA

Daughter, Anna 'Bernadette' Monlezun-Pontón
b. December 12, 1947 Jennings, LA

Son, Antoine Adolfo Pontón
who receives this treasure as gift!
b. July 24, 1982 Denver, CO



This wonderful portrait of 'Dominique Monlezun as a Young Man' (April 8, 1845 ~ June 29, 1923) was acquired by his namesake Dominique Joseph Monlezun co-owner of this ancestral home of origin. 'Great-Grandpa' was refurbished on archival paper February 2008. His original frame was reworked, straightened and sealed with the original and the current portrait back-to-back. Attached to the frame-back in a sleeve is an archival CD for descendants to always have the opportunity and capability to fire-grandpa-up to hang on the walls of his beloved descendants! Wouldn't he be amazed, proud and pleased that he had been sought, found and revered to the best of his great-grandsons' ability?! (I think there is a definite handsome resemblance between the two 'Dominiques', wouldn't you agree?!)

"He was a calm man tending his orchards of oranges on this site along the Mermentau River. Theodore, his son, eventually bought the property and filled the side drawer of the side board with oranges every year. Grandpa Dominique eventually moved to town and

*built a bakery delivering the goods in his wagon." Inez Monlezun-Marx, granddaughter
~ Notations 2009!*

On the left is the only photos known of great- grandmother Louisa Thomasine Peterson-Monlezun and of her brother, John Auguste Peterson, dapper gent I think! Also here is the gravesite pic where my sister Constance Victoria, nephew Christian Joseph, cousin Renee and I, following the oral history of this high ground burial spot, slogged through Cypress Point woods with the landowner, a neighbor and friend of old of my father to visit this grave where we dug six bricks down still not reaching the base. There are tall and profuse gardenia bushes surrounding the grave, a cutting which I secured and is blossoming on Arthur Avenue!! We are invited to visit at any time. I want to return with a cross for the grave and a whispered prayer.

Their five children and spouses are lined up in birth order beneath their parents!
Anna 'Josephine' Monlezun & John Edward Murray, Joachim Ezador Monlezun & Adele Boutte,
Paul Emile Monlezun & Adeline Boutte, Theodore Joseph Monlezun & Blanche
Blanchard, Antoine Monlezun & Victoria Broussard.

The framed photo beneath the light switch is one taken of 230 descendants on the sacred ground of this home for the first 'Dominique Monlezun Grand Family' Reunion 2005. Also the photo of Antoine, my son and Dominique, my brother at graveside holding the flag of their namesakes!

This wonderful little black desk was crafted about 150 years ago by great-grandfather Dominique and has been in this home for centuries! Now it sits under his wonderful portrait and seems totally at home at last! It holds several treasures to include the ever present pillows and lap quilts sown by Grandma Monlezun are gently and lovingly folded and stacked; remember she was 105 when she died so she threaded many a needle and stitched many a thread!



Crossing the room on this main wall of my paternal grandparents Antoine and Victoria Broussard-Monlezun are wonderful moments in time of their four children. Grandpa's crucifix that hung over his bed and under which he died and vintage photos are placed here for all to see and know. The children/spouses are: Mary 'Beulah' Monlezun & Alvis Pitts, Clyde Joseph Monlezun, & Nadine Moss, Lee Joseph Monlezun & Anna 'Gertrude' Hensgens, and Alvin Joseph Monlezun. The wonderful bench is at least 150 years old and has at last found a resting place as its been moved from pillar to post!



1st Lt. Alvin Joseph Monlezun was killed in action, WW 11 October 10, 1944 'Battle of the Budge.' He is far right along with his framed high school and college diplomas as he was the first college graduate in the family with a double major in Business and Finance...his last letter home written "some place in Europe" as well as photos of his gravesite in Henri Chapelle cemetery and that of his headstone in St. Anthony Cemetery, Lake Arthur, LA.

His section of this wall is so special and treasures continue to be discovered. In his green trunk under the bench which I found in the attic (A.M. initials penned!) proudly holds two 'Logs' from LSU/1936-1938, papers and textbooks, letters from Europe, cancelled checks to his father, newspaper articles; one in 1998 and the caption reads... "Fléron residents who attended a memorial service on the Fourth of July in Belgium stand at attention during the national anthem in honor of Eddie Kratzer, Alvin Monlezun and Ernest Newman, who died during World War II and are buried in Henri Chapelle Cemetery near Fléron." Again on August 9, 2007 I received a letter with poignant photographs from our friend of old, David Marcantel of Jennings, LA... "As you can see, each year the city of Fléron and my friend Léon Jacqmin in Belgium continue to have elaborate ceremonies to honor the soldiers from Jeff Davis Parish who died to rescue Belgium." ...unbelievable and heroic gratefulness and greatness!

I honor Uncle Alvin Joseph, as I am married to a retired Army officer who served 36 years in uniform; my respect and love are theirs and I can't wait to meet my paternal uncle in heaven whom I will recognize as I am growing closer to him over time! I will tell him of our tending his memory by his treasures found which now reside next to his siblings and parents who longed for this youngest child, third son, all their years on this side!

*“They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them.” Laurence Binyon*

To the right of the bench are my paternal great-grandparents, Antoine and Aspazie Miller-Broussards' Wall! They were born and reared in Cameron Parish. This is the familial connection to dear cousins Anne Broussard-Fautt and Renee Reina! I am researching this family as you are reading this text; I now have a photo of the progenitor, great-great grandfather Nicholas Monlezun!!

The high chair was made by the grandfathers for my father and his siblings! Tis one of my favorite pieces as one of its little arms is missing but in spite of its missing 'appendage' serves as a wonderful end table, proudly!



In the window is a window from my grandparents home on Iowa Street. Grandma Monlezun's hat for the garden hangs from the cross along with her pecan picker. I ask the children if they know what it is and one said a type of golf club!! It is a can nailed to a long stick complete with three pecans keep close by for demonstrate purposes...they all want a turn!!

The white shelf proudly displays Grandpa Monlezun's dynamite box with a separate section for fuses. He was a carpenter and showed up to build a house with planed cypress planks in his wagon; he blew the cypress trees out of the swamp on his property behind his home on the original 15+ acres where Dominique and Tina now have their home. The children on tour love this story and the small cypress knee! I tell them there were no Stine's or Lowe's in those days.

I found prayers in this home typed in French so folded them and placed them here, the best place I could think of! My grandfather's wallet has also found its way to this spot as the contents remain undisturbed since his death! Next to his wallet is a medicine bottle and in the bottle is a rolled piece of paper with the last words of my grandfather penned by my mother ... "I have lived a clean life. I have never harmed anyone and given justice to all. I am ready to go. I worked for everything I have. I believe like this: 2 words Heaven or Hell." Just amazing!

The 100 year old cross forms were made by Grandpa Monlezun. He used these as forms to fill with concrete and inscribed by hand the name of the deceased with birth and death date. We found a concrete cross from this form in St. Anthony's cemetery and the photo is near the cross! The smaller cross form is for children leaning against the adult form! What a presence! What a statement in this home! Grandpa's tools are sprinkled on the crosses.



And, the long, long broom; a little boy on a Heritage Tour mumbled, "that must have been a very very, very tall person to use THAT broom!" It was used to clean cobwebs from the corners of the 12 ft. ceilings in Grandpa's home.

Visit from-Santa Claus- Ready Every Year!

This is only place I know to track Santa's Helpers 2004 to present year as recorded by my sister, Constance Victoria! Santa has so much to do just before Christmas for all the boys and girls that have written to him of their hearts desire delivered before the birthday of Jesus! 2004 ~ KADD, 2005~AAP, 2006~ChristianJM, 2007~BHB, 2008~SJB, 2009~DJM, Jr, 2010~RJM, Jr, 2011~LarrY Broussard, Friend, 2012~MSaunders, 2013~ KLM, 2014~



The display cabinet holds many treasures collected over forty-seven years by Mom and Dad! So very special is a very old and worn little Santa Claus that warms my heart to this very day; on his leg is a vintage Christmas ornament and a picture of Veronica Gertrude holding Mr. Claus! Newspaper articles, grandma's folded dress, blue shawl, a song book from the Catholic Church in Creole, LA with an inscription written by my father that it survived Hurricane Audrey 1957. I added a votive from Sacred Heart of Jesus church in Creole, LA found after the devastation of Hurricane Rita 2005. I love placing special items on these shelves that hold such memories and continuity in faith.

Front and center of the room is a beautiful and meaningful icon print by Sister Catherine Martin, Order of Carmelite entitled "Mother of Divine Tenderness!" Just below is an icon print of "St. Michael, Archangel" by Ruth Bernard-Hebert, deceased great-niece of Msgr. Irving A. DeBlanc! These icons are gifts for Arthur Avenue given by Sr. Martin in

appreciation for their stay while retreating here and by Ruth's mother so as to "give focus and solace for all especially during Silent Retreats!"



THE BASQUE SHEPHERD AND THE SHEPHERD PSALM XXIII

Found among the 'papers' as an enclosure in one of the Oblate newsletters of Sr. Yvonne Lerner, OSB, Holy Angels Convent, Jonesboro, AR...one of our 'Goretti Sisters!' Author unknown.
(I love this prayer, with this shepherd and his flock that he gathers, to its core and mine.)

Old Fernando D'Alfonso was a Basque herder employed by a big Nevada sheep outfit. He was rated as one of the best sheep ranchers in the state, and rightly so, for back of him were at least twenty generations of Iberian shepherds. But D'Alfonso was more than a sheepherder, he was a patriarch of his guild, the various traditions and secrets of which have been handed down from generation to generation. Despite a long absence from his homeland he was, when I knew him, still full of legends, the mysteries, the religious fervor of his native hills.

I sat with him one night under the clear starry skies, his sheep bedded down beside a sparkling pool of water. As we were preparing to curl up in our blankets, he suddenly began a dissertation in a jargon of Greek and Basque. When he had finished I asked him what he had said. In reply he began to quote in English the 23rd Psalm. There on the desert I learned the shepherd's literal interpretation of this beautiful poem.

YOU ARE MY SHEPHERD O GOD, THERE IS NOTHING I SHALL WANT

Sheep instinctively know that before they have been folded down for the night the shepherd has planned out their grazing for the morrow. It may be that he will take them back to the same range; it may be that he will go to a new grazing ground. They do not worry. His guidance has been good in the past, and they have faith in the future because they know he has their wellbeing in view.

FRESH AND GREEN ARE THE PASTURES WHERE YOU GIVE ME REPOSE
Sheep graze from around 3:30 in the morning until about 10. Then they lie down for three or four hours and rest. When they are contentedly chewing their cuds the shepherd knows they are putting on fat. Consequently the good shepherd starts his flocks out in the early hours on the rougher herbage, moving on through the morning to the richer, sweeter grasses, and finally coming to a shady place for the forenoon rest in fine green pastures, the best grazing of the day. Sheep resting in such happy surroundings feel contentment.

NEAR RESTFUL WATER YOU LEAD ME REFRESHING BY SPIRIT
Every shepherd knows that sheep will not drink from gurgling water. There are many small springs in the hills of the Holy Land, whose waters run down the valleys only to evaporate in the desert sun. Although the sheep need the water, they will not drink from these fast-flowing springs and streams. The shepherd must find a place where rocks or erosion have made a little pool, or else he fashions with his hands a pocket sufficient to hold at least a bucketful.

YOU GUIDE ME ALONG SAFE PATHS YOU ARE TRUE TO YOUR NAME
In the Holy Land each sheep takes his place in the grazing line in the morning and keeps the same position throughout the day. Once during the day, however, each sheep leaves its place and goes to the shepherd. Whereupon the shepherd stretches out his hand and rubs the animal's nose and ears, scratches its chin, whispers affectionately into its ears. The sheep, meanwhile, rubs its cheeks against his face. After a few minutes of this communion with the Master, the sheep returns to its place in the feeding line.

THOUGH I WALK IN THE VALLEY OF DARKNESS NO EVIL DO I FEAR,
YOUR ROD AND STAFF COMFORT ME

There is an actual valley in the Shadow of Death in Palestine, and every shepherd from Spain to Dalmatia knows of it. It is south of Jericho Road leading from Jerusalem to the Dead Sea, and it is narrow - a narrow defile - though a mountain range. Climatic and grazing conditions make it necessary for the sheep to be moved through this valley for seasonal feeding each year. The valley is $4 \frac{1}{2}$ miles long. Its side walls are over 1500 feet high in places, and it is only 10 or 12 feet wide at the bottom. Travel through the valley is dangerous because its floor has gullies seven or eight feet deep. Actual footing on solid rock is so narrow in many places that sheep cannot turn around, and it is an unwritten law of the shepherds that flocks must go up the valley in the morning hours and down toward eventide, lest flocks meet in the defile.

About halfway through the valley the walk crosses from one side to the other at a place where the path is cut in two by an eight-foot gully. One side of the gully is about 18 inches higher than the other; the sheep must jump across it. The shepherd stands at this break and coaxes or forces the sheep to make the leap. If a sheep slips and lands in the gully the shepherd's rod is brought into play. The old style crook circles a large sheep's neck or a small sheep's chest, and the animal is lifted to safety. If a more modern crook is used, the sheep is caught about the hoofs and lifted up to safety. Many wild dogs lurk in the shadows of the valley, looking for prey. The shepherd, skilled in throwing his staff, uses it as a weapon. Thus the sheep have learned to fear no evil in the Valley of the Shadow of Death, for the master is there to protect them from harm.

YOU PREPARE A BANQUET FOR ME IN THE SIGHT OF MY ENEMIES
Poisonous plants which are fatal to grazing animals abound in the Holy Land. Each spring the shepherd must be constantly alert. When he finds the plants, he takes his mattock and goes ahead of the flock, grubbing out every stock and root he can see. As he digs out the stocks he lays them upon little stone piles, some of which were built by shepherds in the Old Testament days, and by the morrow they were dry enough to burn. When the pasture is free from poisonous plants, the sheep are led into it, and in the presence of their plant enemies, they eat in peace.

MY HEAD YOU ANOINT WITH OIL; MY CUP OVERFLOWS

At every sheepfold there is a big earthen bowl of olive oil and a large jar of water. As the seep come in for the night, they are led to a gate. The shepherd lays his rod across the top of the gateway just above the backs of the sheep. As each sheep passes he quickly examines it for briers in the ears, snags in the cheek or weeping in the eyes from dust or scratches. When such conditions are found, he drops the rod across the sheep's back and it steps out of line. Each sheep's wounds are carefully cleaned. The shepherd dips his hand into the olive oil and anoints the injury. A large cup is dipped into a cool jar of water. When all the sheep are at rest, the shepherd places his staff within reach in case it is needed during the night. Then he wraps himself in his woolen robe and lies down across the gateway, facing the sheep, for his nights repose.

So after all the care and protection the shepherd has given it, a sheep may well soliloquize in the twilight, as translated into words by David: SURELY, GOODNESS AND KINDNESS SHALL FOLLOW ME ALL THE DAYS OF MY LIFE, I SHALL DWELL IN YOUR HOUSE FOREVER.

Email- leadkindlylight@bellsouth.net 'Room by Room/The Living Room!' **Website-** www.leadkindlylight.net
J.M.J.