

POINTE COUPEE: A HIDDEN GEM

STORY BY HALEY SUMMERS

Pointe Coupee, a sleepy parish located 30 miles west of Baton Rouge, has become increasingly significant to film production in Louisiana. Filled with history, the parish can best be described as a hidden gem for filmmakers.

“We believe we have a lot to offer to the film industry. We’re laid back, which helps make it easy to get permits to film here, and we’re surrounded by beautiful Louisiana landscape,” said Jeanie Andre, director of Pointe Coupee Parish Tourist Commission.



Liza Kelso (center) of the Baton Rouge Film Commission, with Film Pointe members.

“If someone needs to film a scene with a barn, trestle, or something of that nature, we can provide it in a way that other places can’t.”

Andre believes the increased visibility of the unique Louisiana scenery has been amplified by television shows like *Duck Dynasty* and *Swamp People* and has, in turn, aided in the growth of film production in the parish.

“We saw a huge increase of interest in Pointe Coupee once those shows became popular,” she said. “We started getting a lot more phone calls and we realized that there was a need for organization on our part in order to facilitate the growing demand for production here.”

So Andre and her colleagues collaborated and created Film Pointe, a filming committee designed to facilitate the needs of Pointe Coupee film production.

“We decided years ago that we should focus on bringing in tourism through the film industry,” said Andre. “It’s good for both the parish and state economies. The committee is just an in-house group that’s organized to facilitate that.”

Since the committee was created in December of 2013, film production in the parish has increased significantly. The movie *Bad Asses on the Bayou* has filmed there, along with *Bonnie & Clyde*, *Beautiful Creatures*, *Easy Rider*, and *Long Hot Summer*. Most recently, the committee has been in correspondence with National Geographic, hoping to secure a deal that will bring in a larger production to the parish.

According to Wilmer Moore, tourist commissioner, the group facilitates filming in other ways, as well. “We procure whatever is needed for film productions. There are a lot of hidden treasures here and we are glad that people are recognizing that,” he said.

Businesses in Point Coupee also have an opportunity to benefit from the parish’s growing film industry. Film Pointe has created a service that connects local businesses with production companies, making it easy and affordable for both large and small productions to collaborate with each other.

“We are trying to work as a group in order to bring in more filming to the parish. The more revenue we bring in, the better off we are as both a parish and a state,” said Andre. “I’m looking forward to the future; I think we will eventually land that one big production.” LJV



Bonnie & Clyde filmed in Pointe Coupee Parish in 2013.



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