

Biography

Warren A. Perrin was born of March 11, 1947 in the hamlet of Henry, located in Vermilion Parish, Louisiana. The son of Henry Lolly and Ella Mae Broussard Perrin, he graduated from Henry High School in 1965, UL Lafayette in 1969 and LSU Law School in 1972. Presently, he is a skills professor at Loyola Law School in New Orleans. In 1969 he married Mary Lenny Broussard; they have three children: Rebecca Perrin Ouellet, married to Jean Ouellet, Andrew Perrin, married to Coree Perrin and Bruce Perrin. Perrin has four grandchildren, Nicolas Ouellet, Lily Mae Ouellet, Henry Perrin and Nicoline Perrin. After law clerking for Judge J. Cleveland Fruge at the Third Circuit Court of Appeal, Perrin founded the firm of Perrin, Landry, & deLaunay with offices in Lafayette, Erath, and Houma.

In 1990, Perrin, and his good friend, Weldon Granger, established the non-profit Acadian Heritage & Culture Foundation, Inc., owner of the Acadian Museum of Erath which is supported by many volunteers from Erath who operate the facility. In 1996, under Director Kermit Bouillion, the Acadian Museum established the "Order of Living Legends," which, under Director Kermit Bouillion, honors individuals who helped to shape and promote the French culture of Louisiana.

For 15 years Perrin spearheaded a campaign to compel Queen Elizabeth II of England to acknowledge and apologize for the Acadians' expulsion from Nova Scotia. In 1988, Perrin began an intense historical study of his ancestors' plight after his youngest son, Bruce, asked him what the Acadians had done wrong to be expelled from Nova Scotia. He began researching the issue from a historical and legal perspective. The more Perrin read, the more he became incensed. In January, 1990, with the support and urging of many, Perrin presented a Petition on behalf of the Acadian people to the British government and Crown seeking an apology for the Deportation of the Acadians from Nova Scotia in 1755. Perrin merged his efforts with the S.N.A., *Societe Nationale de l'Acadie*, and this successfully resulted in a Royal Proclamation being signed on December 9, 2003 and decreeing July 28th as the annual Day of Commemoration of the Acadian Deportation. In recognition of this accomplishment, the French-American Chamber of Commerce honored him on January 20, 2004 with a special Cultural Achievement award. On August 11, 2004, the Broussard Family organization of Louisiana, *La Famille Beausoleil*, recognized Perrin for his achievements by presenting him with the *Beausoleil* Award during the *Congrès mondial acadien 2004* in Nova Scotia, Canada.

In 1993, Perrin represented the United States at the World Human Rights Conference held in Caen, Normandy, France, where he made a presentation on his Petition for an Apology. Subsequently, he founded the Human Rights Conference held in conjunction with *Festival International de Louisiane*, which annually presented programs dealing with cultural and minority rights.

In 1994, Governor Edwards, named Perrin to serve as President of CODOFIL, the Council for the Development of French in Louisiana. He was then re-appointed in 1996 by Governor Foster, in 2004 by Governor Blanco and 2008 by Governor Jindal. Perrin has worked tirelessly to promote the francophone culture. He has developed new initiatives, programs and organizations to involve the African-Americans, Creoles and the Houma native people of

Louisiana in the movement to restore pride in their unique cultures. In recognition, he was the recipient of the "Cajun of the Year" award by the Cajun French Music Association.

In recognition of his leadership role in the Acadian community of North America, Perrin was invited to be a featured speaker at the *Congrès mondial acadien 1994* in Moncton, New Brunswick. Following that event, he was instrumental in having Louisiana host the *Congrès mondial acadien* in Louisiana in 1999 as part of *FrancoFete '99*, an idea he promoted to help celebrate the state's tricentennial. In support of that initiative, Perrin served as president of a Task Force of individuals appointed by then-Lt. Governor Kathleen Babineaux Blanco, to carry out this year-long event comprised of over 1,500 separate cultural celebrations.

In 1997, Perrin received an invitation from French President Chirac to represent the United States at the World Francophone Summit in Hanoi, Vietnam. Perrin accompanied the French president to the event and has since represented Louisiana and the U. S. at summits in Bucharest, Quebec, Moncton and Montreal.

Perrin has been the subject of articles appearing in leading publications such as *The New York Times*, *Esquire Magazine*, *National Geographic Magazine*, *Canadian Bar Journal*, *The Smithsonian*, *Paris Match Magazine*, *Le Monde*, *Los Angeles Times*, *The Economist* and *The London Observer*. In an article appearing in *Esquire* magazine in 2004, he was described as the "defender of the Cajuns." He has published numerous professional articles in legal publications and served on the Advisory Editorial Board for *The Daily Advertiser* newspaper.

From 1979 until 2003, Perrin was an adjunct professor at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. Further, he was the co-founder of the Francophone Section of the Louisiana Bar Association and the Babineaux International Civic Law Symposium. In recognition of those efforts, he was given the award of *L'Ecole de Droit* by the University of Moncton in 1991. Presently, he serves as Chairman of the Francophone Section.

From 1993-94 Perrin served as President of University of Louisiana at Lafayette Alumni Association. In recognition of his services to his alma mata, Perrin was named by President Ray Authement to serve on the Professional Services Division of the University's Centennial Campaign.

In 1987, he was inducted into UL of Lafayette's Athletic Hall of Fame for his athletic achievements: he was a member of the then-USL Weightlifting Teams that won the National Collegiate Weightlifting Championships in 1966, 1967 and 1968.

In May, 2000, his family honored his father's memory by establishing the Henry L. Perrin Memorial Endowed Scholarship at UL Lafayette which annually awards a scholarship to two Vermilion Parish High School graduates. Additionally, in 2001, Perrin's law firm established the Memorial Endowed Scholarship for French Immersion studies at UL Lafayette which provides funds to send students to attend the *Sainte-Anne Université* in Nova Scotia.

In 1979, Perrin was named by LSU to head its Alumni Fund drive in Acadiana. He served on the Board of Directors of "Friends of French Studies" at LSU and has been a panelist for legal seminars at the LSU Law Center.

Perrin has been the subject of interviews which have been televised and broadcast nationally and internationally, including *National Public Radio*, *TV 5 North American*, *USA National TV Network*, *the BBC of London*, and CBS's morning news show "Sunday Morning."

Perrin has been honored with the following awards:

1990. "Newsmaker of the Year," *The Times of Acadiana*;
1991. "Outstanding Contribution to French law," University of Moncton School of Law;
1992. "Outstanding Service to the Community," Better Business Bureau of Acadiana;
1993. Finalist, World Human Rights Conference, Normandy, France;
1994. Guest speaker, *Congres Mondial Acadien*, New Brunswick, Canada;
1995. "Outstanding Service and Dedication Award," USL Alumni Association;
1996. Chief, Louisiana Delegation, Accords between governments of France and Belgium;
1997. Representative of the State of Louisiana at the World Francophone Summit, Hanoi, Vietnam;
1998. Cajun French Music Association "Heritage Award;"
1999. "Outstanding Businessman of Acadiana," *The Times of Acadiana*;
1999. Honorary Doctorate of Laws, degree *Universite Sainte-Anne*, Nova Scotia and "French National Order of Merit" conferred by President Jacques Chirac of France;
2000. "Distinguished Service Award," Louisiana Restaurant Association and "Louisiana Rural Tourism Success Award," LSU Louisiana Sea Grant Program;
2001. "International Achievement Award," International Trade Development Group;
2002. "Order of Merit," The Council for French Development, Quebec, Canada;
2003. "Cultural Preservation Award" by Vermilionville;
2004. "Cultural Achievement Award" by the French-American Chamber of Commerce; "Pioneer Award" by the Abbeville Cultural and Historical Alliance; "Beausoleil Broussard Award" from the *Famille Beausoleil Association*;
2005. Book "Acadian Redemption" named "Best History Book" of 2004 by the Louisiana Press Women's Association;
2005. Honoree representing Louisiana, along with May Bouchard of Pomquet, Nova Scotia, to unveil the Acadian Odyssey Commemorative Memorial Monument in Halifax Harbor, Halifax, Nova Scotia, July 28, 2005;
2005. Recipient, "President's Award," from the CFMA for cultural preservation and promotion;
2006. Recipient, "*Venet d'Ord de la Francophonie*," International Organization of French at the United Nations;
2006. Award of Merit, American Association of State and Local History;
2006. Representative of the State of Louisiana and the United States of the Francophone Summit held in Bucharest, Romania.
2007. Induction, Louisiana Justice Hall of Fame.
2008. Recipient, Acadian Crusader Award from the *Famille Beausoleil Association*.
2009. Recipient, "Outstanding Corporate Award" from the Louisiana Association of Museums, May 18.
2010. Speaker, Francophone Symposium, Smithsonian's National American History Museum, March 31.

- 2011 Speaker, Great North in the Deep South Lecture Series, sponsored by Canadian Consulate, Atlanta, GA.
- 2011. Grand Master, 2011 *L'Ordre du Temps*, October 13.
- 2012. Recipient, Louisiana Association of Museum's "Outstanding Individual Support."
- 2013. Speaker, unveiling the first historical Acadian Memorial in Maryland, July 28.
- 2014. Chairman, Francophone Section of the Louisiana State Bar Association.
- 2015. Recipient, Daughters of the American Revolution Americanism National Medal of Honor, March 21.
- 2015 National Federation of Press Women Communication Contest for *Acadie Then and Now*, Second Place for best essay, chapter or section in a book.
- 2016 Selected by *Acadiana Lifestyle* as one of the most interesting people of the year.
- 2016 Recipient, John Ashby "T-Jean" Hernandez, III Memorial Francophone Leadership Award by the Louisiana State Bar Association.
- 2018 Speaker, French North American Group at Yale.
- 2018 Recipient, University of Louisiana at Lafayette, 2018 Outstanding Alumni Award.

In 1999, Perrin was named by the Speaker of the Louisiana House of Representative Charles Dewitt to serve on the Louisiana Purchase Bicentennial Commission which organized that year-long celebration and served as Chairman of the International Relations Committee.

In 2003, Perrin was named as a Honorary *Chevalier* by the Giant Omelette Festival of Abbeville and Goodwill Ambassador by the City of Lafayette.

In 2004, Perrin authored the first biography of an Acadian exile, *Acadian Redemption*, which is a historical narrative that defines the 18th century society of Acadia into which Joseph *Beausoleil* Broussard was born in 1702 and his subsequent militant struggles against the British to prevent the destruction of his Acadian culture and led his people to Louisiana. The book was translated into French as *Une Saga Acadienne*. He has authored or directed the following additional books: *Vermilion Parish*, *Iberia Parish*, *St. Landry Parish*, and is co-author/director of *Acadie Then and Now, a People's History* and *L'Acadie hier et aujourd'hui - L'histoire d'un peuple*, 2015, winner of *Le Prix France-Acadie*. All proceeds from the sales of the books have been donated to support the Acadian Museum of Erath.

In 2005, he was featured in a *National Geographic* article (July, 2005, "Remembering The Acadians") wherein it was stated: "After years of pleas by Louisiana lawyer (and Acadian descendant) Warren Perrin, Queen Elizabeth II has acknowledged Britain's part in the exile. July 28 – the decree's 250th anniversary – will be Canada's first annual day of the Acadian Commemoration. Perrin said that he was satisfied: 'It's never too late to right a wrong.'"

Since 1991, Perrin has aided an archeology project to attempt to locate the first Acadian settlements in the Attakapas Territory. In 2013, he, along with other Acadian activists, formed the New Acadia Project which has pledged to raise funds to support the UL archeologist Dr. Mark Rees and his staff. It is hoped that this project will ultimately locate not only the first home sites but also the grave sites of the first Acadians to arrive in Acadiana. Thereafter, plans are under way for the creation of an Acadian museum in the Loreauville community.

On May 24, 2014, Perrin was the subject of a documentary which aired nationally on the *Weather Channel*, "Mixing Oil and Water, An Inside Look At What Happens When Land Sinks And Oil Money Is On The Line." The documentary from Weather Films was written and produced by Katy Reckdahl.

Perrin's work in promoting the French culture has elevated him to the pantheon of leading cultural activists and has helped to reinvigorate the Cajun pride movement through his Petition for an Apology, his authorship of many articles and books, chairman of the Francophone Section of the Louisiana State Bar Association, the establishment of the Acadian Museum and his many ongoing CODOFIL activities.