

Alumna gives hope to understanding New Orleans street names

April 21, 2014 8:45 AM Alicia Duplessis Jasmin
aduples@tulane.edu

The correlation between New Orleans street-name placements and the origin of those names is explained in a new book penned by Tulane University alumna Sally Asher.



Sally Asher's book, *Hope and New Orleans*, is an encyclopedia-like guide to local street names. (Photo by Sally Asher)

Hope and New Orleans: A History of Crescent City Street Names begins with a letter from "Lucy" dated March 21, 1876, from the *New Orleans Times* (now *The Times-Picayune*). Lucy seeks clarification about the way her uncle pronounces street names like Terpsichore and Tchoupitoulas.

"I say ? Shop-e-too-la. He says ? Chop-i-too-lass," Lucy writes.

In the end, the paper confirms that her uncle is indeed correct. It's a fitting start to a unique history that will be of interest to generations of New Orleanians as well as visitors seeking to uncover this mysterious aspect of the city.

Asher, who earned a master's degree in English from Tulane and is currently pursuing a master's degree in history, is also a Tulane University staff photographer. The book features photos that she took along the journey of writing *Hope and New*

Orleans.

Having grown up on a small farm on the Puget Sound just across from Seattle, Asher never expected to write a book on this topic.

“In the country, we navigated by landmarks and nature so it's a little ironic that I ended up writing a book about street names,” says Asher. “I started documenting interesting street intersections and wanted a better understanding of the origin of the streets I was photographing.”

The book, published by History Press, delivers a solid history of many New Orleans streets, which follow themes like civic leaders, pirates, plantations and saints.

Since the launch of the book, Asher has made several appearances with a few more soon approaching. Book signings will be held on Thursday (April 24) at Maple Street Book Shop from 6â€“7:30 p.m., Tuesday (April 29) at the Tulane Bookstore from noonâ€“2 p.m., Friday (May 2) at the Roosevelt Hotel from 6 â€“8 p.m., and Sunday (May 4) at the Jazz Fest Book Tent from noonâ€“1 p.m.

A complete list of appearances and times is available on her [website](#).