

THE AGE OF ANTIQUÉ FURNITURE & PREMIUM-AGED BRANDY

BY OLIVIA SPALLINO SAVOIE

PHOTOS BY *ArtifactAdventure* & JACOB JENNINGS

**My family loves it.
I like every bit of
the book.**

Two women born 81 years apart work together to create an heirloom that will outlast a lifetime.

Aline Fournier Foret has spent over 90 years living in Lafourche and Terrebonne Parishes. Recently, she set out to undertake an unprecedented experience—a rare find this far along in her 104 years. She endeavored to put her life story down on paper.

Aline's granddaughter-in-law, Mica Hawthorne, contacted Louisiana life story writer, Olivia Spallino Savoie, founder of and chief writer at Raconteur Story Writing Services, to craft Aline's heirloom life story book.

23-year-old Olivia met Aline at her retirement apartment in Houma. The two immediately felt like friends rather than strangers. Olivia asked Aline guided questions and recorded the answers. In just one interview session, the pair exhumed an entire lifetime.

"I felt very comfortable and liked the questions Olivia gave me," Aline says. "It [the interview questions] refreshed memories that I almost forgot. It brought up things I hadn't told my

After the interview, Olivia had enough material to create Aline's biography. She wrote in first person in Aline's point of view.

"I thought Olivia was very, very good," Aline says. "The whole book is very informative and sounds very much like me telling about my life. My family loves it. I liked every bit of the book."

The hardcover, heirloom biography is made up of three chapters—Childhood, Adult Years, and Later Years—and includes an array of photos that will inform future generations of Aline's family about her life.

Aline hopes that the keepsake book will leave a legacy. "I was very happy that my family would have something to look back upon," she says. "I would like all my family to have my book and remember me with joy."

The life story book preserves over a century of memories.

Aline was born in Raceland in 1913. Her widowed father raised her and her two older sisters in Raceland, Harahan, New Orleans, and Lockport. Aline married Gillis Foret of Matthews in 1935. Several years later, Gillis enlisted in the Coast



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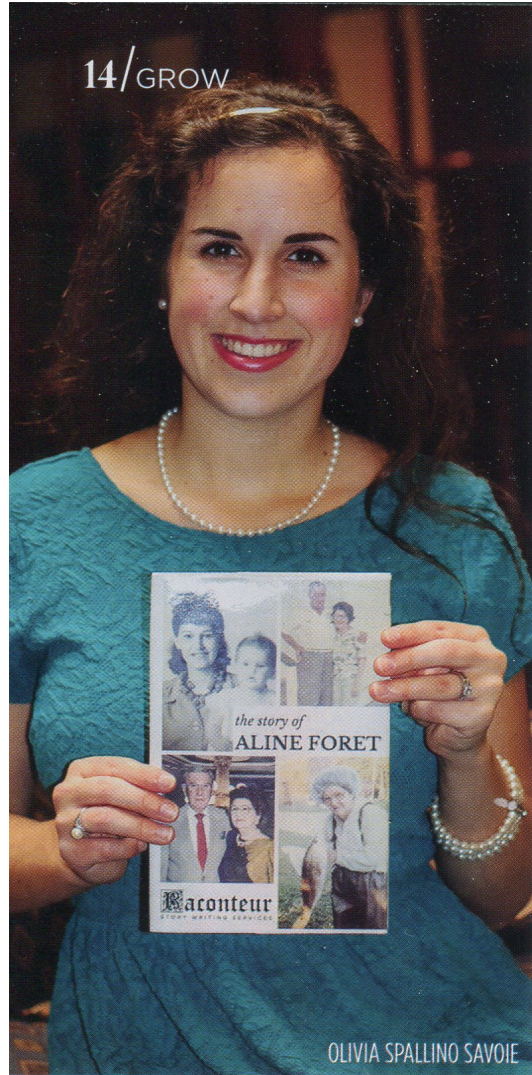
the husband and wife lived in bases along the East Coast from New York down to Florida before ultimately residing in Golden Meadow and Galliano with their daughter, Dianne, who they nicknamed "Happy." Aline enjoyed over 40 years of marriage until Gillis passed away in 1975. A few years later, she encountered her second love, Enest Pierce, who she endearingly calls her "playmate." They enjoyed over 25 years together before he passed away.

At 104, Aline has more spunk than most half her age. Well into her upper eighties, you could find her in the Gulf, fishing. Accordingly, her book includes a range of fishing stories. "Once while fishing, a bird squawked, and I squawked back. We carried on a whole conversation that way," Aline remembers. She also shares how her husband, Gillis, never enjoyed fishing. However, he spent time with her along the shorelines or in their boat, reading aloud poetry while she fished. "I loved that," Aline says. "It was romantic." Another memorable fishing experience occurred off the coast of Grand Isle. Aline says, "I gazed at the horizon and spotted the strangest thing coming out of the water. I couldn't believe my eyes... My playmate [Enest Pierce] told me in French that I'd seen a monster called 'The Devil of the Sea.'"

Aline's book also touches on her passion for cooking, career as a dietician, and love for hospitality. While juggling the tasks of caring for her husband, young daughter, and home in the 1950s, she managed to travel to New Orleans for dietitian classes. "I went to school because I loved food. I loved cooking," Aline says. "It [dietician courses] gave me more knowledge about food and cooking." Aline worked at Lady of the Sea General Hospital for twenty-six years. She also used her love for cooking to provide family and friends with great food. "I always held my annual Christmas party and crepe day... I would cook gourmet meals," she says. "I've always had an open house." To cope with her husband's death in the late 1970s, Aline authored two cookbooks.

Aline's biography covers other lifelong interests that include participation in the Golden Meadow Women's Club, traveling, dancing, and what she loves best about Louisiana: family, friends, food, and fun. "I love Louisiana since my family lives in Louisiana," she says. "And I love the friendly people and food being extra good. We like to have a lot of parties and a lot of fun." She credits Louisiana's culture with giving her a "good, fun life."

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ALINE FORTNIER FORET

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When asked about her secret to living a long, healthy life, Aline says it involves both love and positivity. "Being positive is the keynote to living," she claims. "My being happy has made my family happy. Happiness spreads." As for love, she believes love sustained her health over the years. "I think love and health... are two things you can't buy, but the most important in your life. I have had love with my husband, my playmate [Enest Pierce], and my children..." In addition, she laughs and says, "The rest [of the secret to living a long life] is plain luck and always only eating one serving of food."

Aline doesn't see her age as a hindrance; instead, she chooses to see it as something to be celebrated, saying, "I've joined the age of antique furniture and premium-aged brandy."

Aline's smile is as bright as ever, and her outlook is unwavering. "I still wake up with excitement, being alive looking forward to another great day," Aline says. Her upbeat, vibrant voice shines through the pages of her biography, which will inspire her family for more upcoming years than her 104 and counting. **WN**