

Broussard, Louisiana



A Brief History

1765 - 1991

BROUSSARD, LOUISIANA: A Brief History

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1984

In Support and Recognition of
The Centennial Anniversary of the Founding of
Broussard, Louisiana

Revised 1991

Artwork by Craig D. Viator

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Geography and Early Settlers

The town of Broussard, Lafayette Parish, Louisiana, is located approximately 6 miles southeast of the city of Lafayette. It lies on the flood plain of one of the old meandering courses of the Mississippi River, approximately 1 mile south of the embankment. Acadians who first settled the region referred to this particular area as Cote Gelee. The usual cold winds of winter characteristic of “la cote” and a particularly severe winter in 1784 may have prompted these early settlers to name the area Cote Gelee, meaning frozen embankment or frozen hill. Geographically, the area at that time was mostly open prairie, tree-lined coulees, bayous and swampy areas. The land is very rich and fertile which made it an attractive area for settlement.

Although French trappers and Indians lived in and around the Cote Gelee area prior to 1765, it was not until the exiled Acadians began arriving that permanent settlement began. Among the first Acadians to arrive in southwest Louisiana at Poste des Attakapas (presently St. Martinville) were the brothers Alexandre Broussard and Joseph Broussard. Due to the countenance of the Broussard brothers, their round, always smiling faces and their “always willing to help” attitude – each was also very commonly known by the nickname “Beausoleil”. It was Joseph “Beausoleil” Broussard who was the more renowned of the brothers, and he became the leader of the early Acadians in Louisiana. Joseph was appointed as Captain of the Militia and Commandant of the Acadians in the Attakapas country.

However, it is a descendent of Alexandre upon which is bestowed credit for the founding and early development of Broussardville.

Acadians who had been driven from their homes and deported to foreign ports on both sides of the Atlantic followed Joseph Broussard's lead and began to regroup and settle in Louisiana. The Cote Gelee area was first settled by the Broussards and Thibodeauxs; however, within a few weeks other families with the names Comeau, Landry, Breaux, Girouard, Menard and LeBlanc began to settle in the area. For the few remaining months of his life until his death on October 20, 1765, Joseph Broussard directed and assisted in the continued settlement of the area by exiled Acadians.

Following the arrival of the Acadians came Frenchmen fleeing the turmoil of the French Revolution and other people fleeing the slave revolts in Santo Domingo and Haiti. Among these emigrants were the St. Juliens and the Billeauds who settled in the Cote Gelee area.

Valsin Broussard and the Development of Broussard

Don Louis Broussard (a great-grandson of Alexandre Broussard) and his wife, Anastasie Landry, residents of Cote Gelee, baptized a son, Valsain (Valsin) Broussard, on December 17, 1825, at the church of St. John the Evangelist of Vermilionville. At that time the small established Acadian farms were intermingled among the ever-expanding cotton plantations of the Cote Gelee area, and south Louisiana, in general, experienced the economic growth of large-scale agricultural production. New emigrants continued to move in through the main port of the area, St. Martinville. The

times were difficult due to the problem of transporting produce across the Atchafalaya Swamp for market in New Orleans. However, a gradually improving prosperity was realized.

Sometime before the Civil War Valsin Broussard acquired land in the Cote Gelee area. He and several other planters, owners of large tracts of land, realized that a trading center was necessary to serve the people of the area. After all, the Old Spanish Trail coursed through their lands, and there was speculation of a railroad being laid in the area. These men had the foresight of the impact that service to transients would have on the potential of a town.

Economic growth and the isolation of the area generated problems. Government in the 1850s was limited to a few settlements – St. Martinville, New Iberia, and Vermilionville. The limited law enforcement agencies became increasingly ineffective in dealing with growing and organized groups of bandits who preyed on local residents. In fact, the magnitude of criminal activity reached a point beyond the handling capabilities of local police and judicial systems. Consequently, citizen committees were organized. These groups took the law unto themselves and dispensed their own justice. The first Vigilance Committee organized in Lafayette Parish was the Cote Gelee Vigilance Committee. Incidentally, the governor condemned the Vigilance Committees. He considered such groups a threat to the authority of the government.

Organized criminals called themselves “anti-vigilantes,” and the countryside became an armed battleground. Eventually, all of the Vigilance Committees of the area merged. Major Aurelien Saint Julien of Cote Gelee was made commander of all forces, and General Alfred Mouton, a West

Point graduate from Vermilionville, was made drill master of the combined forces. Anti-vigilantes also merged and organized. Their stronghold was in southwest Lafayette Parish where they had constructed a fort near Bayou Queue Tortue.

On September 3, 1859 the vigilante wars were brought to an end when Major St. Julien with a force of seven hundred men, armed with a brass cannon which they had named “Betsy” and which had the capacity of four-pound shot, attacked the eighteen hundred group of outlaws at their fort. The attack was a tremendous success for the vigilantes. Most of the outlaws fled never to return. Two hundred anti-vigilantes were captured, and all but eighty were released on their pledge that they would leave the area and never return. The “unfortunate eighty” were thrashed unmercifully as an example to any would-be outlaw and released. The vast majority of these outlaws fled to the west. Members of the victorious vigilantes who were from the Cote Gelee organization included Charles Duclize Comeau, Alexander Bernard, Don Louis Broussard (Valsin’s father), Eloi Guidry, Paul Leon St. Julien (J. Gustave St. Julien’s father), Raphael Lachaissee, Cesaire L’Abbe, Joseph Guidry, Valsin Broussard, Martial Billeaud, Dupre Guidry and Desire Roy.

During the year following the vigilante skirmish, in 1860, the Civil War erupted. The Cote Gelee area bore the repeated movement of Confederate and Union forces as they skirmished to control their respective supply lines and the state. No major battles took place in the immediate Cote Gelee area; however, there was destruction of private property due to troop encampments and the related raiding for food and horses. Valsin

Broussard had volunteered for the Confederate forces, but since he was in charge of the mail for the area he was allowed to return home.

Towards the end of the war Union forces occupied the area. For Confederate sympathizers, signing a declaration of allegiance to the Union cause was a condition for freedom. Some citizens opted for imprisonment rather than declare allegiance to the “Yankees.” Among those strong-willed individuals were Valsin Broussard and Jules Guidry of the Cote Gelee area.

At the conclusion of the war Valsin Broussard returned home. He had survived the vigilante activities and the Civil War. Very soon he was busily engaged in developing a large cotton and sugar cane plantation.

The Early Leaders

Recognized as leaders of the area during the years immediately following the Civil War were Valsin Broussard, Martial Billeaud, Joseph Girouard, Marcel Melancon, J. Gustave St. Julien and Jean Batiste Malagarie. However, it was Valsin Broussard who was most influential in the realization of a town. He donated land for a church and cemetery site, a private school site, a public school site, a railroad depot site, the right-of-way for a railroad, and the streets and “ruelles” (alleys) for a town. In 1870 F. R. Rosk, a civil engineer, was commissioned by Valsin Broussard to lay out the town. In appreciation for Valsin’s leadership and donations of land the people of the area recommended the town be named Broussardville in his honor.

In 1874 the first post office was established in Broussard with Jean Batiste Malagarie as the first postmaster. Broussard was duly incorporated in 1884 with a charter of incorporation which provided for a government consisting of a mayor, corporation council, town clerk and marshal. Two years later, in 1886, the town people had become discontented with their officials and government and chose not to elect new officials, thus allowing the charter of incorporation to lapse for failure of administration. It was not until 1906 that the town was re-incorporated and a new government established. R. Ulysses Bernard (father of Bernadette and Rosa Bernard) was elected mayor and served in that capacity for many years. The governmental organization established in 1906 has satisfied the demands of Broussard's citizens to this day.

During the early years of Broussard's history, agriculture constituted the livelihood for a great majority of the people. Cotton was the major crop with sugar cane rapidly gaining popularity as a main crop.

Credit for introducing sugar cane to the area goes to Martial Francois Billeaud. Born on August 25, 1834, in Borgneuf, France, he came to the United State at the age of two in 1836. By the age of 16 he was in Lafayette Parish. At the outset of the Civil War he was already an established and well respected land owner of the area. By 1890 he owned 1300 acres of land and a large sugar mill. Incidentally, he imported the first Holstein cattle to the area. As was the case with other owners of large tracts of land, Martial Billeaud also donated a right-of-way for the railroad across his land.

Also among the influential and respected planters of the times was J. Gustave St. Julien, grandson of Louis d'Erneville de Saint Julien. Louis d'Erneville was from an aristocratic family in the Bordeaux province of

France. During the French Revolution he escaped to America to avoid the guillotine. The son of Louis d'Erneville, Paul Leon St. Julien (the father of J. Gustave) became the owner of a very large tract of land through a land grant, inheritance and other acquisitions. J. Gustave subsequently inherited some of this land. The direct descendants are still in possession of some of the large St. Julien tract.

Joseph O. Girouard was another planter considered to be an influential leader of the time. His great-grandfather, Firmin Girouard, was an exile of Acadia having been 11 years old at the time of the expulsion. He was one of the early settlers of the Cote Gelee area. From land which had been a large plantation acquired by Firmin, Joseph inherited, through his grandfather, Pierre Raymond Girouard, etc., a sizeable tract of land.

At the outset of the Civil War Joseph joined the Confederate Army and eventually rose to the rank of major. Upon the conclusion of the war he returned home to rebuild his plantation and to develop a viable mercantile business. During the latter part of the 19th century and until his death in 1916 he was a respected planter and leader among his people.

Broussard After the Civil War

Cote Gelee rebounded fairly quickly from the Civil War. The railroad from New Orleans to Morgan City had been completed before the war, building further west towards Broussard. Finally, in 1878, the New Orleans, Opelousas and Great Western Railroad Company (N.O.O. and G.W.) completed the railroad through the area bringing new prosperity to

the area by facilitating the transportation of farm produce exports and dry goods imports. Very shortly after the completion of the railroad two cotton gins and a cotton oil mill were constructed near the railroad depot. Several small sugar and syrup mills were operated by a few large landowners of the area. During that time the main thoroughfare in Broussard was Morgan Avenue, a street running north-south with the north end of the street accessing the railroad depot. Under the guidance of Valsin Broussard, Martial Billeaud, Joseph Girouard, and J. Gustave St. Julien the town of Broussard grew and prospered. At the turn of the century Broussard boasted of the following: a cotton oil mill, two cotton gins, several small sugar and syrup mills, one large sugar mill, five general merchandise stores, a bank, two hotels, and a railway express and passenger depot. Eventually, the Southern Pacific Railroad Company absorbed the N.O.O. and G.W. Railroad Company. Trains moving from coast to coast have been running through Broussard regularly since then.

Broussard had been established as a successful and dependable service center for an agricultural community when, suddenly, disaster struck in the form of the cotton boll weevil. The cotton industry was literally wiped out for that area. To add to their misfortune, the cotton oil mill burned down. The cotton gins were abandoned, and the people immediately turned to the sugar cane industry in an effort to maintain their economy. Before they could successfully completed the transition from cotton to sugar cane the Great Depression fell upon them.

The years following the Depression were years of change for Broussard. The transition from cotton to sugar cane was finally completed.

Of significance in this change was the expansion and improvement of the Billeaud Sugar Factory by Martial Billeaud II.

In following with the plans for the construction of a national highway system, U.S. Highway 90 was constructed, and it ran, in part, along the Old Spanish Trail which runs through Broussard. Increased utilization of motor vehicles as a means of transportation caused the people of Broussard to devote more of their services to this mode of travel. This resulted in a gradual shift of the main thoroughfare from Morgan Avenue to what is presently called Main Street (old U.S. 90, presently LA 182).

In 1962 the latest national interstate highway system brought more change to Broussard. Plans for a four-lane highway, Evangeline Thru-way, which servers as an access to I-10, placed the thoroughfare along the northern edge of Broussard. Traffic through town was drastically reduced, and most of the business of service to transient motor vehicles was lost.

Mechanization of farming procedures drastically reduced the labor force required for cultivating sugar cane. The majority of the people previously employed in harvesting sugar cane was gradually absorbed by the growing petroleum and related service industries.

Beginning in the early 1950s the development and growth of the Lafayette Oil Center generated an urban growth explosion for the entire area. The largely agricultural economy of the Broussard area rapidly changed to fast-growth urban development. Agricultural land was converted into residential subdivisions, apartment complexes, shopping centers, and industrial parks. As a result of this transition Broussard has changed from a town serving an agricultural community to a town which serves as a residential area. The greater majority of the people living in

Broussard work in Lafayette or in the outlying plains and waterways, engaged in oil exploration or production efforts. During the middle and late 1960s a few grocery stores, three automotive service stations, and a clothes cleaning and pressing business were the only remaining business places which served the immediate population. Other industries have since moved in; however, they employ very few people from Broussard. To put it simply, Broussard is now a quiet residential area. The great majority of the people who live in Broussard commute to work in Lafayette or other areas away from Broussard.

The Church in Broussard

Sacred Heart Parish

During the third quarter of the 19th century the first mass ever celebrated in the Cote Gelee area was conducted in Valsin Broussard's store. A priest from Youngsville would travel to Broussard to celebrate mass for the people of the area. Valsin eventually donated the building in order that it serve as a church building. He re-located his mercantile business to another location. In 1883 Sacred Heart Parish was officially organized. A small chapel was constructed, and Rev. Christopher Cuny was the first resident priest of Broussard. Father Cuny had been there almost two years when during the night of November 17, 1886 the church and presbytery burned down and Father Cuny left. In an effort to maintain the church in Broussard the leaders of the area immediately began the construction of another building for a church. However, this project was not completed for lack of a priest. For 22 years no priest was available for Broussard. During this period the people of Broussard traveled to either Youngsville, Lafayette, or St. Marinville for church services. Finally, in 1901, the pastor of the Youngsville church, Father Roguet, began traveling to Broussard for Sunday mass and sometimes for week-day mass. Under his direction the church building was completed. On October 15, 1904, Rev. Arthur Drossaerts assumed the duties of resident pastor and served until January 16, 1911. During his tenure and under his leadership a Catholic school, St. Cecilia School, was constructed and opened in 1909. On January 16, 1911, Rev. Louis Castel assumed the duties of pastor. Rev.

Drossaerts left, later to become Archbishop of San Antonio. Father Castel served until July 15, 1919. At that time Rev. M. Masebiau took over as pastor. Rev. Castel was appointed pastor at Delcambre, Louisiana. Rev. Masebiau served as pastor of Sacred Heart Parish until July 18, 1933. Financial difficulties had emerged during Father Masebiau's tenure due to the Great Depression. Plans for a more extensive church fair had been initiated during his last year of service in Broussard. Subsequently, in 1933, when Rev. P. G. John Kemps assumed the duties of pastor, he assisted in implementing the church fair project. During his first year as pastor the expanded church fair was conducted in the same organizational pattern as exists today. Mrs. D. G. Bernard, Valsin's daughter, followed Mrs. Anatole Monte as chairperson of the dining room for the fair, and she served in that capacity for several years.

Ever since its inception the church fair has been very strongly supported by the community, and it has served as a cohesive medium, bonding the people of Broussard together in a unified effort. This, in the opinion of the writer, has been the greatest benefit of the fair.

Father Kemps retired in 1974 having served Broussard for 41 years. During his tenure the present church building was constructed in 1954, and a new presbytery was built in the early 1960s. Rev. Harry Benefiel replaced Father Kemps, and he served until 1976 at which time Rev. Michael Jarrell became pastor. He served for seven years. In early 1984 Father Jarrell was transferred to Sacred Heart Parish in Ville Platte, Louisiana. Rev. Robie Edward Robicheaux assumed the duties of pastor at that time, and he serves to date.

St. Joseph Parish

From the late 1920s until 1952 the members of the black community attended mass at Sacred Heart Church. During that time, however, even church seating was segregated. The writer remembers quite well how the black people were assigned the right-side aisle pews for seating. A railing separated their seating area from the remainder of the seating places. During the very early years, 1920s through 1940s, instruction for catechism for the black people was provided by Misses Alzire Broussard (daughter of Valsin), Helen Lacaze, and Lydia (Douce) Lacaze.

Bishop Jules Jeanmard of the Diocese of Lafayette appointed Rev. Harold Perry to the St. Joseph Mission in Broussard in 1952. They had recognized the need to establish another parish in Broussard. Father Perry moved into a rental house near Sacred Heart Church where he lived for six months. On Sundays he celebrated mass at Sacred Heart Church, and on week days the ceremony was celebrated in a large classroom at the negro school. With the assistance of three teachers – Miss Theresa LeBlanc, Miss Parker, and Miss Comeaux – religion classes were initiated for adults and children at the school.

In January, 1953, Mrs. Louis (Loul) Billeaud informed Father Perry that her late husband had designated in his will that an acre of land be given for the establishment of a church for a new parish for the black people. By the end of 1953 the transfer of land to St. Joseph Parish, the new parish, was realized. It was at that time that the building utilized for St. Joseph School was moved from Sacred Heart Parish property to St. Joseph Parish property.

A rectory was built on the grounds, and another building donated by Mother Katherine Drexel was moved on the new site.

Construction of a new church, St. Joseph Church, had begun immediately upon acquisition of the property. With the help of Charlie Johnson, Gerard Green, Robley Melancon, Willis LeBlanc, Charley Washington, Lucien Brown, Augustin Labbe, and a host of other volunteers, St. Joseph Church was completed in the fall of 1954. Father Perry left St. Joseph Parish in 1958, later to rise to the office of Auxiliary Bishop of New Orleans. Other resident pastors who served the parish were: Rev. Maurice Rousseve, 1958 – 1966; Rev. Mark Figaro, 1966 – 1969; Rev. John Dauphine, 1969 – 1978; Rev. Alvin Dixon, 1978-1984; Rev. Anthony Bourges, interim pastor for 3 months in 1984; and Rev. William Oliver, 1984 – to date.

First Baptist Church

During the early 1950s the Northside Baptist Church of Lafayette felt the need to establish a mission in the Broussard area. In 1955 a survey was conducted in order to assess the potential for a church in that area. As a result of the survey a tent revival was planned for the summer of 1955. At that revival Rev. Amadie Janice preached in French, and Rev. St. Clair Bower, Pastor of Northside Baptist Church, preached in English. Another revival was held in 1956 which resulted in the establishment of a mission in the town. The old bank building on Morgan Avenue was rented, and the structure served as a meeting place for the mission.

By late 1957 property for the mission had been acquired. This property was the northwest corner lot at the intersection of Morgan and Monroe Streets. In the meantime, plans for a sanctuary/education building had been drawn up. Construction was begun in late 1957 and completed in 1958. On June 22, 1958, an open-house activity was held, marking the official opening of the new mission building.

On September 21, 1958, the mission was organized as a Southern Baptist Church and named the First Baptist Church of Broussard. Rev. Elroy Jones served as the first pastor. Other pastors who served in Broussard are: Rev. Jessie Bailey, 1960 – 1963; Rev. Fred Sudduth, 1963 – 1967; Rev. Mike Newton, 1967 – 1973; Rev. Albert Langley, 1982 – to date.

The church facility has grown from one building on one lot in 1958 to five buildings on seven lots in 1984. Furthermore, the congregation has grown steadily.

Schools in Broussard

The first school to operate in Broussard was a private school which was established by Valsin Broussard. It was located on Valsin's property where the Dr. Robert M. McKay (old Charles Billeaud home) residence stands today. Mrs. D. G. (Clara Broussard) Bernard, daughter of Valsin, was born in 1872. She started her schooling there; therefore, that school was in operation by 1880 or before. Mr. Marcel Melancon was the teacher when Mrs. Bernard was in school. Mrs. Demas Bernard, who was later to

be Mrs. D. G. Bernard's mother-in-law, succeeded Mr. Melancon as teacher, and Mr. Edmond (Belin) St. Julien followed her.

In 1884 the first public school was opened in a two-room building donated by the Farmers' Alliance. The property for the school was donated by Valsin Broussard and was located where the W. M. McKnight (old Andre Billeaud home) residence stands today. Attendance grew rapidly and at the turn of the century a new two-story, wood-frame school building was constructed where the present old Broussard Elementary School facility stands on East Madison Street. By 1916 this building became inadequate to serve the ever-increasing number of students who sought an education there. A bond issue for \$30,000 was proposed for the construction of a new and larger school building. A spirited campaign was waged for this proposal. However, it was voted on favorably by the majority of the citizens. A new eight-classroom, brick building was constructed and completed in 1917. In 1930 four additional classrooms and a gymnasium were added. Elementary and secondary education was provided for young citizens of the Broussard area in this building until 1947. At that time the high school department was closed, and the last senior class to graduate there was the 1946-47 class of old BHS. Supposedly, this was the beginning of an effort to consolidate the public high schools of Lafayette Parish. Since that time and until 1983, the facility served as an elementary school plant.

In the meantime, education for the blacks made its appearance in Broussard in the late 1920s through the person of Mrs. Anna Flugence. The few blacks who could attend received instruction in Mrs. Flugence's home; however, the time she was able to devote to teaching was limited as she was

also raising a large family. Therefore, classes met at Mrs. Flugence's home twice a week.

Through the efforts of Mother Katherine Drexel a mission school to serve the blacks of Broussard was built on the grounds of Sacred Heart Parish. This school was named St. Joseph School and stood at that location until 1953. At that time the building was moved to property which had been acquired through a previously mentioned donation for St. Joseph Parish. It served as an educational institution for the blacks until the early 1960s when the first public school for blacks, Broussard Negro Elementary, was built.

In the mid 1960s Mrs. Nelson, a teacher who had worked under Mother Katherine Drexel, succeeded in having the Lafayette Parish School Board change the name of the school to Katherine Drexel Elementary School. Mr. Paul Oppenheimer served as the first principal of Broussard Negro Elementary and Katherine Drexel Elementary. In 1981 Oppenheimer retired and Mr. Lawrence Lilly was appointed principal. He serves in that position to date.

Total desegregation of schools in Lafayette parish was ordered by the courts in 1970. Katherine Drexel was designated a primary school to serve all students, black and white, in grades K-3. Broussard Elementary began serving all students in grades 4 and 5. All students in grades 6 through 8 were bused to Youngsville Elementary School. Beginning in 1981 the upper grades were re-assigned to Broussard Elementary, one grade per year, in ascending order. Grade 4 was transferred to Katherine Drexel Elementary. In 1983 a new, modern air-conditioned facility was built on South Morgan Avenue, south of Broussard, to replace the old Broussard

Elementary facility. The old facility had outgrown its feasible utility in terms of adequacy and the physical requirements for a modern, effective educational institution. It is presently for sale by the Lafayette Parish School Board. In 1984 the new facility was renamed Broussard Middle School.

Even though bursting at the seams Katherine Drexel Elementary and Broussard Middle Schools continue to serve students of grades K-8 from the Broussard area. In all probability a new elementary school will have to be constructed in the near future to take care of the ever-increasing enrollment.

Some of the more recent principals to serve Broussard High School, Broussard Elementary School and Broussard Middle School were: Mr. J. C. Landry, 1922 - 1937; Mr. E. W. Brown, 1937 – 1943; Mr. Stephen Coussan, 1943 -1944; Miss Cecile Pineau, 1944 – 1950; Mr. Merritt Beadle, 1950 – 1963; Mr. A. J. Antoine, 1963 -1967; Mr. Gerald Moresi, 1967 – 1978; and, Mr. Tom Gerard, 1978 – date.

In 1909 St. Cecilia School became a reality through the efforts of Father Drossaerts and some of the enthusiastic Sacred Heart parishioners. The original building was constructed at a cost of \$25,000. Under the supervision, guidance and direction of the Sisters of Divine Providence the school prospered and grew. In 1922 the school was accredited as an elementary and secondary school by the State Department of Education. In 1964 the high school department was closed by order of the Bishop of Lafayette in the interest of initiating a movement to consolidate the Catholic high schools of Lafayette Parish. The writer remembers very vividly the tears of sadness streaming down Father Kemp's face as, at a Sunday mass,

he announced the closing of the high school department. In 1974 the Sisters of Divine Providence announced they could no longer serve the school. Since that time the faculty has consisted entirely of lay teachers. In 1978 the school building was completely remodeled and a new cafeteria was constructed. The old gymnasium, constructed in 1935, burned down during the early morning hours of October 8, 1981; and a new, modern, air-conditioned facility including a gym, five classrooms, dressing rooms, a stage, and a spacious, well-equipped kitchen was constructed and completed in 1982. Enrollment at the school has steadily increased since 1974. At present the school serves over 500 students in grades K-8.

Epilogue

Due to several transitions brought about by nature, the Industrial Revolution, and the evolution of the oil industry in the area, Broussard has emerged as a quiet, residential, commuter area. The probability is high that other forces will emerge, and the town will be affected and experience more change.

Descendents of early settlers and newcomers have become aware of the changing complexion of the community and the related losses of Broussard's unique character. Efforts have been combined in a movement, the Broussard Historic Preservation Society, to maintain the architectural characteristics of the Acadian and late Victorian era. Several of the old homes which have been restored and converted into restaurants, galleries and a bank offer outstanding examples of historical preservation in Broussard. Significant in this movement was the official entry on March 14, 1983, of the Valsin Broussard home into the National Register of Historic Places. Built in 1877, this home remains today occupied by direct descendent of the man who had the determination and fortitude to build a town because his family, friends and neighbors needed the services which could thereby be provided. Valsin died on March 2, 1899, but not before having realized his dream of a town which was growing and prospering. THANK YOU, VALSIN BROUSSARD! THANK YOU!

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