Dances were once held in the attic of Blue Rose. Now it holds furnishings from state's past, including a bed from Opelousas hotel, which was once state capitol.

A Wing for Blue Rose

By Gil Webre

Mrs. S. L. Wright of Crowley has bought another Acadian cottage, and is again faced with two chores: moving it and refurbishing it into a museum.

"It's a small cottage, only about 20 feet square," says Mrs. Wright. "Now it's in a rural area immediately east of Lafayette. I don't think I'll have too much trouble having it moved to Crowley and renovating it for Blue Rose."

Blue Rose is Mrs. Wright's rice museum, one of her personal projects, carried out at her own expense, to promote tourism in the Crowley area and to encourage the use of rice.

Mrs. Wright bought Blue Rose, an ante-bellum Acadian cottage, in the spring of 1964. It was in Youngsville at the time. She had it moved to her husband's farm south of Crowley, then had it renovated and converted into a museum. She chose the name Blue Rose because it was the variety of rice long grown in the area and developed years ago on the Wright farm.

"The new cottage will be used as a wing to Blue Rose," she says. "I'll display dining room and kitchen furnishings in it after renovation. These furnishings are also in a room of the main museum, and I'll replace them in this room with my husband's extensive museum staff photos.

Museum-maker Mrs. S. L. Wright crisscrossed the state collecting the furnishings for the place. She bought most at auctions.

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collection of antique music boxes.”

Mrs. Wright is also having a small building constructed near the Acadian cottages. Old-time rice farming implements and her husband’s collection of foreign automobiles will be moved into the structure when it’s completed.

Being a museum-maker and a museum-keeper has filled Mrs. Wright’s life with a lot of satisfaction and headaches.

She has crisscrossed the state buying antique furniture and furnishings for Blue Rose.

“...I have gotten most from auctions held to settle estates,” she says. “Additional displays have been donated, others have been loaned.”

Blue Rose is furnished like a regal antebellum plantation home. But unlike most plantation homes, its rooms are not roped off. Visitors can tour the whole house, not just certain rooms.

Among the prized displays are a tur-oney platter once belonging to Rufus King—defeated by James Monroe for the United States presidency in 1816, furniture belonging to Zachary Taylor and a bed from the old Lacombe hotel in Opelousas. For a short period during the Civil War, the hotel served as the capitol of Louisiana.

It usually takes Mrs. Wright about two hours to show visitors around the museum and comment on its contents. There is an entrance fee, but she charges this only the first time a family goes through.

“This helps area residents who return with friends and relatives,” she explains.

The museum is on a country road about six miles from Crowley. Because of its out-of-the-way location, one might think it would not have many visitors. But it does.

Mrs. Wright spent own money renovating cottage into tourist attraction.

Museum’s articles include this wishbone dresser and the woman’s shotgun above.