Acadian people are discussed

Powder made from a green lizard dried in the sun, when thrown on the object of one's affection, was supposed to work wonders and ring wedding bells. This is one of many early customs of the Acadians which Mrs. Nancy Khoury told about in a talk, "Customs and Traditions of the Acadian People in Louisiana," before the Calcasieu Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, Saturday.

The meeting was in the home of Mrs. J. Garf Macdonald on Hodges Street.

Mrs. Khoury, a staff librarian at McNeese State University Library and formerly reference librarian at Lake Charles Public Library, said, "Marriage was so important that it is little wonder that a Cajun woman's life was considered a miserable failure if she did not marry. A Cajun old maid was rare and she was an object of pity."

She continued, "Each night many Cajun girls would faithfully examine their heels for signs of yellow coloration, for such was a sure indication of spinsterhood. A young girl had reason to worry because 18 was just about the latest a girl could hope to marry."

She said, "For an immediate proposal, she could tie a rooster under her porch, seat the man in a rocking chair directly over this bird, sit beside him and wait. He was sure to fall in love with her."

Mrs. Khoury described the wedding day schedule, "The betrothed couple would go to confession early in the morning of their wedding day. The bride took the noon meal with her family and the groom with his. After dinner, the bridesmaids would help the bride get ready for the afternoon wedding."

She continued, "Most generally, there was a procession to the church with the groom picking up the young lady in his buggy. One indication of the importance of the wedding was the number of buggies in the procession. In the Acadian wedding, the fathers did not give away the daughters, and in many cases, the mothers did not attend the weddings. They were considered to be too sad."

"The typical wedding attire for the bride consisted of a long white dress, a veil, which later would be decorated with dollar bills, and artificial flowers. The groom wore a dark suit and black kid gloves, and white socks were considered a must."

"After the wedding, the guests would race buggies back to the bride's house. This is comparable to the wild horn blowing of automobiles today."

"Having reached the bride's house, all settled down for the wedding feast. Another judge of the importance of the occasion was the number of cakes at the feast."

"A wedding dance followed the marriage feast, and although the newlyweds departed by midnight, the dancing continued on and on. The couple did not go away on a wedding trip, as is customarily done today."

"Usually a relative, an aunt or uncle, left his house to the newlyweds for the night, unless the groom was fortunate enough to have a home of his own."

"Mrs. Khoury said that another form of marriage celebration was the 'shivaree.' She said, 'According to one source, any widow, widower or even old bachelor who married, more or less expected to get a shivaree, not unless he or she was a social outcast.'"

The speaker said, "The Encircled by flowers.