Canadians Have Eventful Weekend

By BOB ANGERS JR.
ACADIANA, USA . . . . .

Mayor Louis Kern made them honorary citizens of Breaux Bridge. Miss Jeanne Castille's student singing group called "Les Acadiens du Pont Breaux" rendered "Au Canada", and St. Martin Sheriff Charlie Fuselier provided them an escort across the parish.

They were luncheon guests at Evangeline State Park with St. Martinville Mayor Harold Reasweber as host. After inspecting the Acadian Museum in the park they were welcomed at the brand new city hall in New Iberia by a delegation of about 20 persons representing the chamber of commerce, the city government and other men and women from the civic and business life of the "Queen City On The Teche." It was Saturday in Acadiana, and on the receiving end of the hospitality were Longueuil, Canada Mayor Marcel Robidas and Coun- cilman Lee LaFrance.

During their last full day in Cajunland they toured the Oil Center and the University of Southwestern Louisiana. They had coffee with the "Queen Of The Acadians," Mrs. Ruth Hamilton; and USL Dean Thomas Arceneaux, a past president of the France-Amerique society.

From Lafayette they went to Breaux Bridge for a gala reception at the home of Miss Castille. Mayor Kern extended greetings in French and bestowed citizenships on the Acadiens Du Pont Breaux sang a variety of French songs. Aubrey Heumann, president of the International Festival, extended their membership in the association and pinned crawfish emblems on their coat lapels and slipped crawfish red garters on their sleeves. Both LaFrance and Allen Babineaux, chairman of the Heritage Committee, joined Robidas in French response to the hospitality.

A double journey marked the final visit. After lunch at the park and the tour of the Acadian Museum they returned following the New Iberia welcome. During the second trip they visited with another French-Canadian, Msgr. Henri Hamel of the historic St. Martin de Tours Catholic Church.

The pastor took them on a tour of the church and then to Evangeline's grave. A stop by the famed oak where Gabriel met Evangeline ended the visit. Teche News Editor Henri Clay Bienvenu gave them a 75th anniversary edition. Mayor J. Allen Daigre made Robidas, a onetime Canadian Army veteran, an "Admiral Of Bayou Teche." New Iberia Chamber of Commerce President Ray Mullins and Manager Gaston Mestayer were among others who greeted the Quebec officials. Robidas, who is also chief of trade missions for the Quebec government, was briefed on Iberia's significance as an industrial and research center. Babineaux spoke to the Iberians on the aims and objectives of the Acadiana-wide project to revitalize interest in the French culture.

A quick combined business-shopping trip to Lafayette ended the busy schedule for the day. Robidas and LaFrance were guests of Babineaux's for Easter dinner. At the airport prior to departure Sunday Babineaux bestowed honorary Acadian citizenships on the two men. Among those joining the group bidding the visitors farewell was Raymond Rodgers, USL professor, who was instrumental in getting them to visit Lafayette.

Longueuil and Lafayette will be "twinned", and student as well as trade mission exchanges are planned between Acadiana and Que- bec.

During the reception at the Lafayette Municipal Airport Thursday Mrs. Ethel Burleigh of Lafayette High, and Sister Laura Marie of Cathedral-Carmel and Sister Ann Carolyn of Fatima Teurlings High led student groups welcoming the visitors. Music was provided by Ed. LeBlanc, Joe L. Sonnier and Jack LeBlanc.

Robidas' address is Hotel de Ville, 100 Ouest, Rue St.-Charles, Longueuil, Quebec.