Sunday's Centennial Reunion At Roberts Cove Claims Interest

During last Sunday's beautiful centennial Reunion of all descendants of the original colonists who came from Germany to settle Roberts Cove 100 years ago, some 6,000 visitors were present on the grounds of St. Leo's Church for this historic gathering, and among the many local families included in these descendants were Mrs. C.D. Daigle, the former Josephine Heinen, daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. Jos. Heinen of Roberts Cove, and her family.

Sharing in the day-long program were Mrs. Daigle, Mr. and Mrs. Freddie Daigle, and children, Mr. and Mrs. John Hamilton of Baton Rouge and their son, Derwin, Mr. and Mrs. Bert Daigle and children, Lowell and Gena of Lafayette, Mr. and Mrs. Jim Ethridge and children, Jude, Jill and Don of Lafayette, along with Mr. and Mrs. Oscar L. Borne, Jr., Mr. Borne representing his mother, Mrs. Oscar L. Borne, Sr., of Rayne member of the Knipping family.

Families were represented from all over the United States, Canada, Holland, Germany, with Mr. and Mrs. Wallace Ousse and their baby, Jennifer, from Germany, being honored as the couple coming from the greatest distance. His parents are Mr. and Mrs. Wallace Ousse, Sr., of Church Point, his mother being the former Eleanor Zaunbrecher of Rayne. Each original family had a separate table for registration to begin the morning, and at 11 a.m. a magnificent outdoor Mass was celebrated by Bishop Gerard Frey on an altar situated under the historic old liveoak trees on the St. Leo's grounds. Bishop Jude Speyrer came from Lake Charles to share in the ceremonies, along with many other priests, many of whom were native priests of St. Leo's parish. Also honored were a number of Sisters from St. Leo's . . . originally.

Also seated on the Altar were Honorary Chairpersons for the reunion, representatives of each of the old families of the Cove. Mrs. Marcy (Alberta Hensgens) Lyons was organist, and the Choir and singing were directed by Gertrude Hensgens Monlezun of Lake Arthur.

Family dinners were enjoyed on the grounds at the noon hour, with much visitation until 2 p.m. when the official Centennial Reunion program was held under direction of Father Charles Zaunbrecher, inspiration for the tremendous reunion events, with cooperation of Father Stanley P. Begnaud, St. Leo's pastor.

Honor guests included Governor Dave Treen, Commissioner of Agriculture Bob Odom, Lenny Hensgens, Acadia businessman and Republican leader, and Dr. Hilary Zaunbrecher. Many presentations were made during the program, with Commissioner Odom awarding recognitions to a group of today's outstanding farmers as direct descendants of the German emigrants to Roberts Cove. Casper Berken received many honors as the only surviving colonist, having come to the Cove with his parents when he was only 15 months old. Other presentations included Mary Agnes Schl cherche Taylor, oldest Descendant attending the reunion, Odelia Thevis Cramer, oldest living child of the founding Father, Gerhard Thevis, who was unable to be present; Baby Michelle Didier, 18-day old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Daniel Didier, youngest child present; and the award to Wallace Ousse, Jr., and his family. Also honored during the Mass were Mr. and Mrs. Joe Theunissen as the longest married couple among the descendants.

In the closing portion of the ceremony, a surprise presentation of a most appropriate plaque was made to Father Charles Zaunbrecher in appreciation for his long months of work on behalf of the reunion, and he was also presented the beautiful gold coat-of-arms, which had been designed for the occasion and was used on the Altar for the morning Mass.

With all the formal programs completed, an authentic German Band from Houston, Texas, took over the afternoon, and played for general dancing, singing and more visiting to round out a completely perfect day.