Chitimacha crafts on display at USL library

LAFAYETTE — An exhibit of Chitimacha crafts, including wood carvings, jewelry, beadwork, basketry and historical items of the tribe, are being displayed this month in Dupre Library at the University of Southwestern Louisiana. Indian Bend, on Highway 326 near Jeanerette, are the oldest and only recognized tribe of Indians in the State of Louisiana. They were in this area before the time of Christ. These on the reservation are the last remaining descendants of a once powerful tribe who left their mark on the history of the state. The earliest written record of the tribe is in Iberville’s Journal of 1699.

Forty-eight families, about 200 Indians, live on the reservation. There are about 600 who are recorded in the tribe.

The present chief of the tribe is Nicholas Stoff. At a tribal meeting recently, the Indians agreed to join the Northwestern Association of Indians. Mrs. E. A. Stoff maintains that there are over 4,000 Indians in Louisiana who are not recognized by the Federal government.

Until 1932 the Chitimachas had no opportunity for education, but in that year Chief Ernest Darden gave a room in his house for a classroom. In 1935 the U. S. Government erected a one-room schoolhouse on the reservation.

The Chitimacha held title to their land during the Spanish occupation of Louisiana through a treaty signed Feb. 14, 1772 at the Hotel New Orleans in New Orleans by Bernardo Galvez. They also have title to their land by treaty signed in 1803 with the United States.

Now You Know

By United Press International
If is a small island in the Mediterranean two miles from Marseilles, France.