First Acadiana Day Is Celebrated Here

By DONNA PONTENOT
Advertiser Staff Writer

The first annual Acadiana Day was celebrated in a way that was all but a first for most of the 100 people on hand who attended the ceremony last night.

Representing 22 area parishes, they gathered rather informally, listened to their favorite Cajun music selections and talked about the good old days.

The ceremony, held in the central plaza of the new Acadiana Mall, marked the eighth anniversary of the official naming of Acadiana by the state legislature on June 6, 1971.

But last night’s conversation brought talk of much further back.

James Dumonceaux, president of the Council for the Development of French in Louisiana (CODOFIL), spoke a revival of the French language and culture within the past 10 years.

Louisiana historian Glenn Conrad and members of USL’s Center for Louisiana Studies gave biographical sketches of Acadiana’s founders.


(Continued On Page 7, Col. 4)

that accompanied the birth of the area as Acadians descended from Nova Scotia.

And Cajuns of all ages topped their feet to the old-time music of Lafayette’s ‘Cajun Hamblers.’

Also on hand for the event was Mayor Kenny bowen.

The program was opened with the band playing of ‘La Marseillaise,’ the French national anthem, and the first of three sketches by Carl Brasseaux, a member of the USA Center.

Brasseaux outlined the life of Joseph Landry, a Louisiana senator in 1753 and one of Acadiana’s first residents.

Similar presentations were later given by Conrad and Mathe Alfain, a French instructor at the university. The two USL members recounted the lives of Alexander Monica, Acadiana’s first governor; and Joseph A. Breaux, a former chief justice and director of the Louisiana State Museum.

An updated version of Acadian traditions came during a bilingual speech by Dumonceaux.

“During the last 10 years, we have seen a revival of the French language in Louisiana,” he told the crowd, first in French, then in English.

“This great heritage is indigeneous to our local culture and was once practically hostile to its misuse and should be the cause of our disadvantage,” he continued.

The CODOFIL president said that’s all changed today.

“We may have different approaches, but anyone with good sense and judgment can see the greatness of this culture as our salvation.”

Dumonceaux’s call for local appreciation of that culture was termed by Mouton as “already underway and even deeper than just South Louisiana.”

Acadians are invited by all others for their warmth, their culture and the background,” said the senator.

We’ve gotten to the point where our colleagues understand that there is a section called Acadiana and that section is the proud possession of a rare and pure heritage.”

Mouton says his belief in the strength of the Acadian culture is constantly reinforced by the knowledge that so many of our people are involved in important roles in this country and in the world.”

He cited the employment of...

Adviser, Lafayette, La., Thurs., June 7, 1979