Bishop Jules B. Jeanmard, brother of Joseph Raoul Jeanmard, lived in this house when the Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist was being constructed.

**Historic house lures tourists**

By Mario Malmalakis

A growing number of tourists are being drawn to Lafayette for its many attractions. One which has proved to be of special interest is the historic house in the Sterling Grove Historic District, at 406 North Sterling Avenue.

Adding to its interest as an historic house is the manner in which its present owners, Jeffery G. Gueno and Frank L. Hanley, have furnished its interior.

Gueno and Hanley are both artists in their own right. They have gained international recognition for their creche collection, which they have gathered on their travels, as well as for their work in miniaturia, a field of art in which they take special pleasure. Their antique creche figures were collected over a period of 20 years.

These and other items they have collected, grace the spacious rooms of this house, built in a mid-Georgian style of architecture with a palladian influence. It was built in 1901 by Minor Meriwether.

Also giving the house historical significance is the fact that Bishop Jules B. Jeanmard, brother of Joseph Raoul Jeanmard, lived in the house with his brother during the period, when the Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist and its rectory were being constructed. The Jeanmard family had lived in the house for the longest period before it was sold to the present owners.

Gueno and Hanley chose not to decorate rooms in any particular period so that additional furniture or treasures they picked up on their travels could fit wherever they wished to place them.

One room they refer to as the “Red Room” has an Austrian petit point wall hanging, which was once owned by John D. Rockefeller. The room also features two large display cases of 17th and 18th century creche figures.

Another attractive room, the living room, which displays a silk wallcovering painted by Gueno and Hanley with regional birds. They used a Chinese brush paint technique in executing this wallcovering.

The special charm of the kitchen suite reflects a unique approach. The butlery was eliminated, when the wall between it and the kitchen was removed to expand the kitchen to double as a relaxing sitting room as well as for a show place for a collection of pottery from Mexico, Spain and Italy.

These and other unusual interests found in this house are constantly being featured in print like the book If They Could Talk by Mario Malmalakis and currently in the March/April issue of Louisiana Life magazine.

Tour groups coming to Lafayette make arrangements to visit this historic house and its special collections.