Lotta turns 100

Town celebrates birthday with parade, music, raising of flag

Trevis R. Badeaux
Staff Writer

LOTA—Lotta began as an agriculture and railroad community in 1902 nestled away amidst crawfish ponds and rice fields in rural Acadia Parish.

On Saturday, Lotta residents celebrated the town’s 100th birthday with a parade, live music, political speeches, food, friends and family.

O’Neal Lister from nearby Engle helped his son Travis, 11, and daughter Meda, 6, both of Lotta, scramble for candy thrown from the parade’s 24 floats.

“It was a great birthday party for the town with plenty of candy for the kids,” Lister said.

Railroad developer C.C. Duson gave the town its name when he refused to move the railroad “one iota” away from the development despite political pressure, Mayor John Beting said.

Through the years, the town held fast to its autonomy, small-town atmosphere and southern charm, he said.

“It’s still a town where everyone knows everybody else, where you can eat a hot plate of good home cooking and a friendly smile anywhere you go,” Beting said.

Alma Fisher spent most of her 90 years living in or near Lotta, she said.

“My husband, I, and our four boys lived on a farm outside of town for a while raising cotton, rice and potatoes,” Fisher said. “We had to work hard. We moved to town about 60 years ago.”

It’s a decision she never grew to regret, she said.

“The people don’t change,” Fisher said. “They’re good, caring people. I didn’t want to call nowhere else home.”

Mamie LeJeune, 90, sat beneath a tent Saturday fanning herself with a sheet of paper folded in half and staring at passing faces. Many she recognized from the 25 years she spent as an Lotta Senior High School cafeteria worker, she said.

“It was a very nice day, very hot,” LeJeune said. “I loved being with all the young people, most of whom I fed.”

Like Fisher, LeJeune said she never considered living elsewhere.

“I'm my life,” she said. “It's who I am. It's where I'm from.”

Lotta celebrates its 100th birthday with a parade, music and the raising of the American flag. Here, Wimpy Bertrand of the American Legion Post No. 371 helps raise the flag after the parade.