I hope your visit to our State Capitol has been pleasant and interesting. Thousands come each year, and we are naturally very happy to have them as guests—even though many are Louisianians and, of course, we are as much their guests as they are ours. The capitol nevertheless does hold a strong attraction for young and old, from places near and far.

And I further hope your schedule permits you to enjoy our state’s many other features. If your time is limited, the Tourist Information Center, located on the first floor of the capitol, can be of much help. You will discover that these experienced employees are sincerely interested in assisting you to make the most of your visit, and that they are fully qualified to offer thoughtful, practical advice.

Louisiana has a lot to offer, regardless of the direction in which you travel—rolling hills and piney woods in the north, the charm and atmosphere of South Louisiana’s Acadian Country, our lively modern cities both north and south, and a wealth of friendliness everywhere.

All of us hope you will visit us again; our sincerest wish is that you will enjoy your stay in Louisiana so much that happy memories will bring you back in the future—and if you choose to make Louisiana your home (as many visitors have) you’ll find that you are certainly welcome.

Jimmie H. Davis
Governor

A TOWER Rising in dignity
450 feet above the world’s most pro-
ductive great PROGRESS river
valley, the Louisiana State Capitol is a re-
minder, both beautiful and useful, that the
state is a standard-bearer for a thriving, pur-
poseful New South . . . a state that knows where
it’s going.

The capitol was completed in March, 1932,
on a 27-acre tract steeped in history. Indian,
Spaniard, Frenchman, Englishman, and
American fought for it (and sometimes on it).
From this place Zachary Taylor was called to
serve as President of the United States. For
more than half a century, until construction
of the capitol was begun, Louisiana State
University was located on this site.

The architects wished “to express in stone
and granite, bronze and marble, and other
enduring materials, the history of the state
. . . recounting alike the trials and triumphs
of its people.” This they have done.
SYMBOLISM

Visible signs of things invisible are generously used in the capitol.
A broad base contains working space for fundamental functions of government: legislative chambers, executive headquarters, and judicial courts and offices. Forty-eight granite steps lead to the main entrance, each bearing the name of a state, with "Alaska" and "Hawaii" cut into the topmost step on each side of E Pluribus Unum. Buttresses flank the steps, decorated with the pelican (symbol of Louisiana's dedication towards posterity) and the lotus-flower indigenous to Louisiana waterways (symbol of fertility).

Atop the buttresses, statuary modeled by Lorado Taft and carved by C. M. Dodd depict The Patriot on the east and The Pioneers on the west. The east group is dominated by an armored soldier and the mourners of a warrior slain in battle. The west buttress shows men and women of vision who created a state out of a hostile wilderness.

Bas-relief portraits of 22 great men in Louisiana history are sculpted over the large windows of the Senate and House of Representatives. They are works by New Orleans artists Albert Rieker, John Lachin, Rudolph Parucci, Juanita Gonzalez and Angela Gregory. Above these, an Ulric Ellerhusen frieze depicts Louisiana's early struggles and admission to the Union, the state at war, Louisiana jurisprudence, and peaceful development of natural resources. Beside the 50-foot-high main entrance is a quotation from the Louisiana Purchase accompanied by friezes by Adolph Alexander Weinman.
MEMORIAL  This is the striking main lobby of the capitol—HALL 124 feet long, 40 feet wide, and 37 feet from the ceiling to the polished volcanic stone floor quarried from Italy's Vesuvius. Mural paintings in oil by Jules Guerin, *The Abundance of the Earth*, are dominated by the Goddess of Agriculture on one panel and the Goddess of Knowledge on the other, with scenes of family groups, harvests, rich farmlands, and the arts of sculpture, music and literature—all in harmony with nature.

Chambers of both the Senate and the House of Representatives are reached via magnificent bronze doors modeled by Attilio Piccirilli. No Renaissance palace in Europe can boast of superior workmanship in this rare, almost lost art; each door weighs a solid ton, yet opens as smoothly as a well-crafted piece of cabinet-work on oiled hinges. Panels on House doors represent events in the state's history; Senate doors depict colonial Louisiana.

Each legislative hall is lavishly decorated and equipped with electric voting machines that tabulate the outcome of every measure on which a vote is taken. Red and green lights signal nay or yea as members press the "for" or "against" buttons on their desks. From the gallery, spectators see legislative decisions almost at a glance (as the governor does, if he chooses, because a duplicate, interconnected panel in his office permits him to see the outcome of the balloting without interrupting other work).

Fashions constantly change in architecture and decoration. Beside contemporary structures of glass and metal, the capitol seems ornate and stuffy in the opinion of some, such is the price of modernism. Most people, however, fully understand and appreciate the effort that went into the building during the grim days of the Depression—the exquisite French, German, Spanish, Italian, and native American marbles (quality marble from every recognized producing nation in the world, every producing state in the union), the bronze ornamentation and fixtures, the stainless steel, the murals, the sculpture and relief carvings—all at a cost of only five million dollars!

Try it nowadays...
Ride up with us to the OBSERVATION TOWER and see the beautiful grounds spread out below, some 350 feet down, from the twenty-seventh floor. A circular design in well-tended poplars, flowering plants, and hedges encloses the sunken garden, the grave and statue of United States Senator and Former Governor Huey P. Long, with only great, ancient, moss-hung oaks to interrupt—pleasantly—the precise geometry.

To the east, on a triangular point of land, are formal rose gardens and a well-preserved Eighteenth Century Spanish arsenal. The broad Mississippi flows solemnly toward the Gulf on the west. To the north, spectators see in the distance the massive industrial complex of the Baton Rouge petrochemical establishment. To the south, see the business district and strain your eyes a little in hopes of getting a preview of your visit to the L. S. U. campus.

Make sure your visit to Louisiana’s State Capitol includes a trip to the observation tower. You’ll enjoy the view... and you’ll tell your friends about it.
The capitol is only part of the story. The old Spanish Arsenal, the Pentagon buildings and other government structures are worth seeing, too.

The Pentagon, for instance, once housed troops during the War Between the States, and before that was visited by such interesting persons as a young U.S. Army engineer named Robert E. Lee. Now it houses several state departments and offices. West of the capitol is the capitol annex, built to handle new and expanded state agencies. The handsome Welfare Department building is the center of one of the most complete GROUNDS social service systems of any state in the nation.

Newest of all is the Louisiana State Library, repository of valuable official and semi-official materials constantly in demand by the state government (and by private citizens who use its central location and efficient facilities through their local libraries).

Not actually part of the “grounds” but still a popular attraction is the agricultural museum in the capitol basement. Interesting and educational to visitors of all ages, the museum presents a dramatic assortment of three-dimensional scenic views of agricultural life in Louisiana, displays of raw materials and finished goods, and blue-ribbon exhibits gleaned from agricultural shows throughout the state.
In clear contrast with the present capitol is Louisiana’s Old Capitol (above, left) in downtown Baton Rouge at the corner of North Boulevard and St. Philip Street. It was designed by James H. Dakin, a prominent architect of his day.

Representing an unusual blend of Norman, Gothic, and Moorish styles, complete with stained glass, curving stairway and crenelated battlements, it was much admired or severely criticized as soon as it was completed in 1847. Mark Twain, piloting a steamer down the river, recommended dynamite and called it the “Monstrosity of the Mississippi.” The very uniqueness Twain deplored, however, has made the Old Capitol a fondly preserved, carefully restored landmark.

At upper right is the Governor’s Mansion, a few blocks away. It is a stuccoed Georgian building erected in 1930 to replace the frame Victorian structure that served as the mansion for about 50 years.

The Indians called it Istrouma—a tall cypress, stripped of bark and adorned with freshly killed game. It marked the boundary between the Houma and Bayougoula tribal hunting grounds. In 1699 someone in the party of the French explorer Pierre le Moyne, sieur l’Iberville, marked his map to show the red pole on the bluff: le baton rouge.

It isn’t surprising that the name stuck. Iberville and his brother, Jean Baptiste le Moyne, sieur le Bienville, were sturdy types with a good eye for likely settlement sites (and never mind your Spaniards and their “cities of gold”).

In time le baton rouge was fortified (by the British), attacked and captured (by the Spanish), yielded by treaty (to the French) and sold (to the United States) . . . the place was under three flags in one 20-day period. Thus Thomas Jefferson, apostle of democracy, found himself looking down the throat of Napoleon Bonaparte. The hard-pressed Napoleon unloaded one-third of a continent (which he couldn’t defend) for $15,000,000 in the Louisiana Purchase. It doubled the size of the U.S., adding 828,000 square miles at one whack.

Baton Rouge’s City-Parish area amounts to just .0005 per cent of the vast tract. However, local industrial payrolls alone are more than 10 times as great as Jefferson’s $15,000,000 every year. From the observation tower of the capitol, look north and you’ll get an idea why: Baton Rouge, in addition to being the seat of Louisiana government, a university town, a retail and wholesale trade center and communications hub, is the site of a petrochemical complex that has to be seen to be believed. Here is one of the world’s great oil refineries, major rubber and chemicals and plastic plants, processing installations that reduce ore for aluminum, cement and concrete products plants, manufacturers of pipe and tanks and fabricated steel structures—the company names alone would fill this page.

And when you look, remember Jefferson, Iberville, all the others—they were unafraid of heights and distant horizons.
Unorthodox, colorful, THE unpredictable, a spell-binding orator and LEGEND debater—Huey P. Long once jokingly that he was in a class by himself. Neither friend nor enemy (he had plenty of both) disagreed. He was the Kingfish.

Born at Winnfield, Winn Parish, in 1893, Huey Long had a flash and flair that was backed up by an exceptionally quick mind—he completed an exacting three-year law course in eight months. More than any other man, he must be credited with introduction of badly needed improvements such as a system of paved roads and free schoolbooks in Louisiana.

The capitol was built while he was governor. Ironically, it was in this building, while he was a United States Senator, that he was fatally wounded on Sunday, September 8, 1935. He died two days later in the nearby Our Lady of the Lake Sanitarium.

He was buried on the capitol grounds, and a bronze statue of him stands at the head of his grave, facing the capitol.
STATE CAPITOL is open to visitors seven days a week: 8:00 am to 5:00 pm

THE TOWER is open from 8:30 am to 11:15 am and from 12:15 noon to 4:15 pm