LeBlancs unite before reunion

Tuesday's visit held to plan reunion and meet town officials.

Bernard Chaillot
Vermilion Bureau Editor

ERATH — No one drew any blanks, but everyone drew LeBlancs.

Prominent LeBlancs from Canada met Tuesday with prominent LeBlancs from Vermilion Parish to plan an August family reunion as part of the state's yearlong Francophone celebration of 300 years of French influence in Louisiana.

Dominic LeBlanc, son of Canadian Governor General Romeo LeBlanc, said his father and many other LeBlancs from north of the border plan to attend the reunion Aug. 13 and 14 in Erath City Park and Aug. 15 at Acadia Village in Lafayette, where well-known Francophile A.J. LeBlanc is the executive director.

Presley LeBlanc of Erath, president of the Famille de LeBlanc Inc. reunion association, led a tour of the Acadian Museum here Tuesday before lunch on the banks of the Vermilion River at the RiverFront Restaurant in Abbeville and a trip to Franklin to see Oakshawn Manor, home of Gov. Mike Foster.

The Canadian delegation also included press attaché Gérard Jolivet, aide de camp Jeremy Sales and Joselyn Turgeon, who are Canadian marines, and trade commissioner Céline Bittes, who works in a regional office in Dallas.

Dominic LeBlanc said virtually every Canadian who visits Acadiana raves about the friendly people, the wonderful food and the feeling of family, "and it's all true. We look forward to coming back in August."

LeBlanc said his father wants to come back not so much as a government official, "but as a LeBlanc, that's all. He wants to come here and enjoy himself with his cousins from Louisiana at the LeBlanc reunion."

Relie LeBlanc of Erath, who has been active in promoting both the reunion and Erath's centennial observance this year, said the purpose of Tuesday's visit was to plan the reunion, show the visitors the park where it will be held, meet town officials and "share the joie de vivre of Southwest Louisiana."

He said the delegation seemed particularly impressed with the verdant lushness of the countryside. "They said over and over how beautiful and green everything was," he said. "And how hot it was, of course. Oh, well, c'est la vie."