Louisiana Mayors Plan France Mission

ACADIANS WILL HOLD CEREMONY
Families to Return to Province of Poitou

LAFAYETTE, La. - Louisi-
aana mayors will head a sum-
mertime mission to France for
an historic 200th anniversary
celebration of Acadians from
around the world who will gath-
er at their ancestral home in
the province of Poitou.

Acadians from the United
States, Canada, France and
elsewhere will participate in the
international bicentennial cere-
mony to celebrate the return of
more than 300 Acadian families
to their native land of Poitou
France, after being expelled
from Nova Scotia and New
Brunswick and living in peon-
age in England for 10 years.

Families with such names as
Boudreaux, Daigle and Breaux
are among those who settled
and remained in Poitou. In rec-
ognition of their loyalty to the
French crown and to their Cath-
olic faith, King Louis XV of
France donated land, build-
ings, cattle and pensions to them.
In 1765, some of these families
came to Louisiana to be reunit-
ed with their relatives and
friends, who, like themselves,
had been expelled by the British
from Nova Scotia and New
Brunswick.

Plans for the mission to Poi-
tou were announced by Lafayette
Mayor Kenny Bowe, chairman
of the International Municipal
Bilingualism Committee
(IMBC) and by James Domen-
geaux, chairman of the Cuncil
for the Development of
French in Louisiana (CODOFIL),
following a recent organiza-
tional meeting in Lafayette.

More than 25 municipal offi-
cials and CODOFIL chapter
representatives attended the
meeting, and a show of hands
indicated enough community in-
terest in participating to ensure
the success of the mission. A
May 1 deadline for applicants
was set. Persons wanting to
sign up for the journey should
communicate directly with their
respective mayors or with the
CODOFIL office in Lafayette.

Domengeaux said.

The two-week trip will include
a weeklong celebration in Poitou
province, plus a week in
Paris and other French cities.
Chairman of the celebration is
Dr. Ernest Martin, an authority
on Acadian history and a for-
mer dean of the University of
Poitou. Domengeaux noted.

Tentative plans call for departure
from Houston June 29 and
return to Louisiana July 15.
Highlights of the schedule in-
clude commemoration of the
Acadian event, opening of an
exhibition at Chatellerault and a
university symposium keyed to
the theme, "The Acadians in
Louisiana and the Work of CO-
DOFIL." Other symposiums are
set on France of the Eighteenth
Century and the French-speak-
ing movement in New Bruns-
wick.

Lafayette area mayors who at-
tended the organizational
meeting are: Corbette LeBlanc
Jr., Maurice; Wilson Moosa,
Eunice; Bennett Broussard,
Kaplan; Wilfred Cortez,
Opelousas; E. P. Broussard,
Estherwood; John Olivier,
Sunset; Leo Erhardt,
Simmesport; Clovis
Bailey, Jennings; Elmo Brous-
sard, Cankton; and John Bobb
Jr. Grand Coteau.

Also attending were Vance J.
Theriot, mayor pro tem of
Breaux Bridge; Duane Guidry,
duty clerk of Kaplan; Dan Bou-
let, representing Mayor James
Vorhoff of Abbeville; Owen
Guidry, representing the mayor
of Church Point.

CODOFIL chapter representa-
tives attending include Cath-
eroine Prudhomme, Evangeline
Parish; Jackie Voorhies, Iberia
Parish and Jeanne Castille,
St. Martin Parish.

Attending from
the University of Southwestern
Louisiana were Dr. Thomas Ar-
ceneaux and Dr. Hosea Phillips.

Bowen said the mayors of
Lake Charles, Grand Isle and
Kenner have expressed interest
in participating in the mission.