Acadian Memorial tells story of pioneers

Our Communities

By Don DeLeau/Staff Writer

ST. MARTINVILLE — Visitors' emotions and additional memories echo in the large vault of the unknown room. Even in the heat of the summer sun, the memory of those who came before remains fresh in their minds.

"You can almost feel their presence," says one visitor, "as if they are with you as you walk through the museum." The Acadian Memorial, located at 601 New Market Street, is a shrine to the more than 3,000 Acadians who made their way to New Orleans and the surrounding areas after the French Revolution in 1815.

The museum is housed in a restored 19th-century schoolhouse and features exhibits that tell the story of the Acadians' journey from their homes in Acadia to their new homes in Louisiana. Visitors can explore the history of the Acadians, learn about their culture and see artifacts from their time.

The story of the Acadians begins with the French Revolution of 1789, when the British invaded New Orleans and forced the Acadians to leave their homes. Many Acadians chose to settle in Louisiana, and the area became known as Acadiana.

The museum is open daily from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and admission is free. For more information, call 337-356-0014 or visit the museum's website at acadianmemorial.org.

Leonard "Brother" Rossever stands in front of a mural that displays Cajun tradition and culture at the Acadian Memorial on New Market Street in St. Martinville. The museum is a shrine to the Acadians who left Nova Scotia and made their way to Louisiana.