OLD STATE CAPITOL

The Old State Capitol on the corner of North Blvd. and St. Philip Street, has been made a memorial and dedicated to the Veterans of World War II. It houses many veteran organizations including the Amvets, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Spanish American War Veterans, Marine Corps League, Disabled American Veterans and the Army and Navy Club and is the headquarters of the State of Louisiana Art Commission and Galleries. A museum has been set up and is being filled with souvenirs, trophies, photographs and flags of all wars.

The building was planned by James Harrison Dakin and was started in 1847 and completed in December, 1849, at a cost of $396,000. It was outfitted with furnishings shipped from Europe to the Emperor Maximillian of Mexico, but which arrived too late, after that unhappy ruler's death.

From 1850 to 1862, when Baton Rouge was captured by Federal troops, the building housed the Louisiana State Government. In 1882 it was reconstructed and another story added. Again it served as the State Capitol until the present Capitol was erected in 1932.

The pink marble monument located on the north side of the building was dedicated in memory of Henry Watkins Allen, Brigadier General in the Confederate Army. He was buried in his Confederate uniform. Also located on the north side of the building, at the corner of St. Philip Street and North Blvd., is the Louisiana box car of the "Merci" train from France expressing the gratitude of the people of that nation in appreciation of the generosity of the American people. It was presented to the state by Consul General Lionel Vasse on February 22, 1949. The dedication was made on these grounds by Drew Pearson on June 12, 1949. The erection of this monument was made by The Old State Capitol Memorial Commission. The American and the French flags are flown here daily.

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