Unique Breaux Bridge Phone Book Tells All

By GERTIE ESPENAN

There is a town not far from New Iberia where many of the people are better known by their nicknames than their given names. The reason for this, perhaps, is that many of the people of Breaux Bridge have the same names, not only father, grandfather, son, but cousins, and many of them will continue to be given the same names for the next few generations.

The similarity of names in turn created a problem for the Breaux Bridge Telephone Company, which is privately owned by Mr. and Mrs. Earl J. (Teddy) Conrad. There had always been central operators who knew everyone in Breaux Bridge and surrounding towns, everyone's nickname, and practically everyone's voice.

If a subscriber picked up the receiver and asked central for "Jim's home," or "Papoute's place" the operator knew where to ring. She was even familiar with the children's voices and when they merely asked for "mama" she knew which mama to ring.

WHEN THE central phone operator was dispensed with in 1949, the 2,629 subscribers were compelled to use the telephone directory and found duplication of names, which was puzzling to them, because it did not correspond with their nicknames too. This brought about complaints by those who were known only by their nicknames by those whose names were similar to others.

Some thought it would be a good idea to have the nicknames listed along with the usual names in parentheses in the directory. This has been done and the subscribers think the new listing is a wonderful accommodation.

Some of the most popular names are: Boswell and many others. People living in adjoining towns, such as Parks, Cecilia, Nita, Henderson, Arnaudville, Anse la-lin, Breaux Bridge have the same names, not only by those whose names were

Jo-Byrd at the South Pole Expedition 1918-1919, was served with Admiral Richard E. Byrd at the South Pole Expedition in 1918. A native of Breaux Bridge, who made good in New York is Louis "Tigone" Meloncan, official photographer of the Metropolitan Opera House stars in New York. He started out in vaudeville before being "drafted" into "V. i. a. m." Brousard, in New York's Radio Center for many years, is a clarinet player, who reached Perry Cobb, Eddie Fisher, Pat Boone, Connie Boswell and many others. Not far from Breaux Bridge is St. Martinville, where many of the town people know "Papa Cairo" and "Choppee." A native of Breaux Bridge, who had come from Louisiana, was Wade O. Martin, Jr., as "Choppee."

Not far from Breaux Bridge is the little town that is known as "La Grande Pointe." With Acadian families settling on both sides of Bayou Teche it was necessary for some to cross the bayou. It was not always convenient to travel by pirogue, so in 1800 a man named Agricole Breaux built a wooden bridge across Bayou Teche and the village soon became known as "Pont Breaux." (Breaux Bridge).

Breaux Bridge is typically Acadian, French being the popular language spoken. One is often greeted as "mon ami" (my friend), streets and squares are more often found in French than in English.

If YOU do not have a nickname, Breaux Bridgians will give you one that will be appropriate for you. Not only are nicknames popular, but French expressions of personalitites or appearances are often heard, such as when a man allows his beard to grow, one may hear the popular French soubriquet, "Babbe a Poux" (bear with lice).

About 1800 the little town that is now known as Breaux Bridge was "La Grande Pointe." The sign was demanded! From this sign came the name of a Catholic Church, dedicated to St. Bernard, now "St. Martinville or from "Posts des Opeouas" now OPELousas, to settle in this new country.

In 1848 the population increased and a Mission Chapel was established so that they would not have to attend church services in nearby parishes. In 1847 a Catholic Church, dedicated to St. Bernard, was established in "La Grande Pointe." With Acadian families settling on both sides of Bayou Teche it was necessary for some to cross the bayou. It was not always convenient to travel by pirogue, so in 1800 a man named Agricole Breaux built a wooden bridge across Bayou Teche and the village soon became known as "Pont Breaux." (Breaux Bridge).

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One sign in French, the Agricole Breaux Bridge reads: "N'allez pas vite, qu'au pas, si non invite qu'au pas, si non.

Some of the first given names to correspond with the nicknames, such as Begnaud, Wade F. (Bob) Brion, Howard, Whitney (Pete); Robertson, Raoul (Bobby); Theriot, Joseph (Bill); LeBlanc (PaPete). The town is that of Lamperez, Julius (Papa Cairo).

Breaux Bridgians still call their new town "Breaux Bridge" by its nicknames, as their names are known by their nicknames of early childhood. There is a town near by called "L'Heure."

The Directory is unique with its many years, is a pianist and vocalist, holder of the Metropolitan Opera House stars in New York and practically everyone's voice. They merely asked for "Mama" the nicknames have a significant boswell and many others.

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