Rice Museum
CROWLEY, LA. - W. HIGHWAY 90

Open Monday through Friday - 9:30 to 4:00. Closed in January. Admission: Adults 75c, Students under 12 and on tour 35c. Call 783-0749 for tours.

Two other Tourist Attractions: Blue Rose Museum and Wright-Andrus House.

The history of rice, and of Crowley are interwoven. The museum tells the history of rice to the present by means of pictures and written history. Indoor and outdoor tool and machinery displays complete the story. A working model of a rice mill demonstrates the rice milling process. One room is devoted primarily to the history of Crowley. Oil too, has a prominent role in the development of this area. Consequently, one room of the museum is devoted to the oil industry. The Acadian Room contains old Acadian bedroom, dining and kitchen furniture and accessories.

WRIGHT-ANDRUS HOUSE, Lakeview Drive, Crowley, Louisiana - Open February & March. By appointment remainder of year. Call 783-0724 or 783-0749. Adults $1.50, Students under 12 - 50c.
Founding

In 1888, the land in this region was owned by Southwest Louisiana Land Company, headquartered in Opelousas with Alphonse Levy as president and W. W. Duson as general manager.

A one hundred, seventy-four acre tract of land, which was sold to the Southwest Louisiana Land Company, for $80.00 was to become the site of Crowley.

Recognising the importance of this area to the railroads, widespread publicity was given to the first sale of lots in 1887 and the Louisiana Western (Southern Pacific) Railroad ran special excursions for the occasion. Deeds totaling $23,000 were recorded and work that had already started on streets, ditches, and buildings now went forward in earnest ... Crowley was on the map.

There was a desire to name this new community in honor of the president of the Louisiana Western Railroad, but he refused the honor. Therefore, Crowley was named after Pat Crowley, an Irish roadmaster.

Municipal government came quickly with Dr. J. P. January, mayor, and four councilmen composing the first established administrative branch. By January of 1888, the settlement had been incorporated as a village and on June 21, 1899, a charter was granted by the State, incorporating Crowley as a town. By this time Crowley had been named Acadia Parish seat. It was designated a city in 1903 and its subsequent growth has been a story of steady, stable development ... a dream come true as conjured by W. W. and C. C. Duson.

Rice Capital

Crowley is the “Rice Capital of America”. Here, the rice industry had its real beginning and from this large production area sprang the success of the American rice industry. Acadia Parish farmers in 1965 planted 102,840 acres, harvested 2,556,320 barrels and reaped an income of $18,964,200 from this rice industry. The Crowley area enjoys the heaviest concentration of rice mills of any other rice area.

During the seasonal periods of activity in the rice industry, the local mills average employing more than 100 workers each, to say nothing of the other related economic endeavors, associated to the industry.

Another reason the City is the Rice Capital is the presence of the Rice Experiment Station maintained near Crowley by Louisiana State University in conjunction with the U. S. Department of Agriculture. It is considered an outstanding authoritative center on rice genetics. It draws scholars, tourists and farmers from many parts of the world for study and research. The government also sends station staff members to many areas here and abroad, to teach methods for increased rice production and quality control.

Rice-related industries also give a decided boost to the city’s economy. The local bag companies, for example, make burlap and citrus fruit bags that are marketed all the year from Southern Texas to Florida. The major bag companies in the city are Crowley Industrial Bag Company, Louisiana Bag Company, and Continental Bag Company. Three companies operate fertilizer blending plants in Crowley to meet the area’s soil conditioning needs.

Blue Rose

An acadian house, formerly owned by George Scranton, was moved from Youngsville to this site and restored by Mr. and Mrs. Salmon Wright, Jr. in 1964. The house was named for Sol Wright’s Blue Rose Rice, propagated on this spot in 1907. Moving the house and restoration by Roy Berard and Jess Girouard.

Heritage

A sizeable portion of Crowley’s populace consists of the descendants of the Acadians who were exiled from Nova Scotia in 1755. The culinary art of these people is known to the world over and once you have partaken of their gumbo, jambalaya, etouffees, etc. never again will you doubt the quality of, and the pride in, this art! All types of recipes from this area can be sent to you upon request to the Crowley Chamber of Commerce.
RECREATION AND WATER

Recreation is not only plentiful in this area but it is a major economic factor. Crowley is located in the heart of the Mississippi Flyway and is second to no area in duck and goose hunting. This activity attracts people from all over the United States. Guides and facilities are available. An abundance of dove, quail and rabbit exist also.

A large percentage of the populace own their boats and motors. Deep sea fishing is easily available at extremely reasonable prices. With the great abundance of water . . . skiing and other water sports are readily available.

This tremendous amount of surface water affords the Crowley area a great potential in cheap water transportation. Two-barge tow is available to within one mile of Crowley at the present. The Intercoastal Canal and the Vermilion River are presently being developed for ocean going craft.

Crowley has an eighteen hole golf course . . . Bayou Bend Country Club. On this property is situated a modern and beautiful club house with lounge and dining facilities. Also, there is available at Bayou Bend, a swimming pool and several tennis courts. The Town Club is a social membership club with dining room, lounge facilities and operates a swimming pool. The City of Crowley operates two swimming pools, two recreation centers, five large parks, and has a 12-month recreation program, with a year-round paid director. These activities are supported by a 2-mill tax. Seven additional acres of wooded area are being developed for more recreational facilities.

FOR RECREATION . . . . YES, CROWLEY IS UNSURPASSED ! ! !

OIL AND GAS IN THE PARISH

Beginning with the day in 1901 when Louisiana's first oil well was completed between Bayou Nezique and Bayou des Cannes in Acadia Parish, oil and natural gas have figured prominently in the history of Crowley and its environs. The modern day advent of the petroleum industry for Acadia Parish started in the 1920's, some 30 years after the original discovery well, with the Bosco Field. Other fields then followed rapidly.

A Federal Power Commission official recently stated, "The Southern Louisiana area, including offshore, is the principal area for natural gas resources development in the United States and so represents an area of prime importance to the natural gas consumer and to the economy in general".

With 18 major producing fields, Acadia Parish today enjoys more petroleum development than any other inland parish in the state. Acreage in production approximates 18 per cent of the total land area of the parish. These Southern Louisiana gas fields supply more than 40% of the natural gas consumed in the Eastern and Midwestern United States. United Gas Corporation serves Crowley.

RICE FESTIVAL

The first International Rice Festival was held in observance of Crowley's Golden Jubilee and was begun under the direction of Mr. Robert Schlicher and Mr. Justin Wilson. The first festival drew in excess of 30,000 people and now enjoys throngs up to 100,000.

In 1952, the State Legislature appropriated $50,000 for construction of a Rice Festival Building. A subsequent appropriation of $100,000 was made and, from a combination of these funds, the now existing Rice Festival Building sprang into being.

This Festival Building, now owned by the City of Crowley, will seat six hundred people for a banquet and over 1,000 persons auditorium style.

At one time an effort was made to check on the probable value of free advertising Crowley received because of the Rice Festival. This figure was over $1,000,000 in value.

Come see in October . . . . You'll love the Livestock Show, the Frog Derby, the Queen's Ball, the rice exhibits, the parades and contests.

Speaking of PARADES . . . . an estimated 60,000 people attended the 1966 Christmas Parade. A gala affair, to say the least. Inquiries as to scheduled dates each year will be furnished upon request.

RICE SCENE—Above is a Crowley rice field. The added glamour is three of the local Acadian rice belles. Acadians feel that no other scene is so beautiful as a Rice Field at harvest time.

AGRICULTURE STATISTICS

Based on Federal and State reports, Acadia Parish has in excess of 300,000 acres, out of a total of 417,000, classified as cropland. Other Federal and State statistics show that there is a greater concentration of cattle per acre within a 50-mile radius of Crowley than any other area in the United States. Soy bean production is on the way to being a major and vital crop to this area, not to mention the existence of major cotton, crawfish, and sweet potato (yam) production.

INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Crowley is in its infancy in the field of industrial development. However, it is estimated that in the past five years new industry has added $1,500,000 in annual payrolls to the city. This is attributable to new industries that have located here.

The expansion of our old industries has been quite consistent.

Sites, information and labor training are available to industrial prospects.

OIL WELL SCENE—The discovery oil well of Louisiana, the Clement No. 1, is located in Acadia Parish. It is depicted by the arrow. The well as fire is the Jennings No. 2. This cluster of wells signifies the discovery of one of the greatest oil and gas reserves and fields in the world. Photo Courtesy of H. J. Kerr.