ACADIAN VILLAGE

ACADIAN VILLAGE AND ROUND THE WORLD TROPICAL GARDENS

The Acadian Village and Round the World Tropical Gardens are projects of the Lafayette Association for Retarded Citizens. In 1972, Mr. and Mrs. Elias J. Allman donated the property to the association for training and employment of the handicapped citizens of Acadians. Retarded clients maintain the grounds of both projects. Here the clients become tax payers instead of tax burdens. All proceeds from admissions and sales help support the programs of the association.

"The Tourist Attraction with a Heart" opened to the public on July 4, 1976. All of the houses in the village are authentic homes of circa 1800-1850. They were moved onto this property to reconstruct a rural village of Acadian style from various locations throughout the surrounding countryside. The Chapel, General Store, and Blacksmith's Barn, however, are modern structures built on the property. Great pains were taken to duplicate early Acadian architecture.

GENERAL STORE: (Replica) Aged lumber was used to build the briquette entre poteaux structure. (brick between the posts) Exposed wiring is typical of the period and was a precautionary measure to prevent fires due to faulty wiring. Items for sale here include crafts made by the clients of the New Hope Sheltered Workshop and Work Activity Program. Many local artisans' work are also displayed.

THIBODEAUX HOUSE: Built about 1850 by Narcisse Thibodeaux, moved from Breaux Bridge, St. Martin Parish, LA. This bousillage entre poteaux (mud and moss between posts) structure is pegged together with cypress pegs and square head nails are used in the interior. Mud was mixed with Spanish moss and/or animal hair and packed between support beams forming an early type of insulation, excellent for both summer and winter. (Note: Peg and moss (not used to mark beams and slots. (Note: beam across on front or back porch.) Inside walls were covered with plaster made of lime and deer hair; outside walls with red cypress weatherboards. shutters were used to gather rain water for drinking while the lower compartment was used for refrigeration storage. Outdoor staircases were built to avoid taxes. The second story attic was used as a granary. Also, the attic is a second master bedroom. The only entrance to the girl's room through the master bedroom was for protection and observation by parents. Kitchens were a separate building due to fire hazards, odors and excess heat. The central chimney was another structural move to avoid taxes.

LE BLANC HOUSE: Built between 1821-1856, this small farm house was moved from Youngsville, Lafayette Parish, LA, sometimes known as Capitain Community. The house is the birthplace of the "Hadracol King", Dudley J. "Cooker Duh", Le Blanc, one of Louisiana's state Senators. You may recall Le Blanc's cross country caravans promoting his home remedy. Notice the armoire used for storing clothing and the memorabilia of the "Hadracol King".

ST. JOHN HOUSE: Built about 1840. Little is known about this little house probably made of salvaged cypress timbers of another building. It was moved from St. John St., here in Lafayette after being donated by a local dentist. A hand loom is part of the interior.

CHAPEL OF NEW HOPE: (Replica) Built like a French chapel of 1850, the chapel was built through the efforts of the Acadiana Knights of Columbus. The floor is Louisiana long leaf pine, sanded and sealed, three inches by twelve inches. The pew, with the exception of the first one on the right, which is the only antique, were handmade, pegged with wooden nails. The ceiling's height made the summer days cooler. Matched doors, stained glass windows and other fine furnishings were commonly found only in the chapel as these were hard times and such luxuries were fit only for the church of the community.

BLACKSMITH'S BARN: (Replica) Built on location with weatherbeaten, aged cypress boards, the interior houses tools and equipment used in the period.

BILLEAUX HOUSE: Moved from the Billeauch Sugar Plantation near Broussard, LA, this structure was built prior to the Civil War and used as a shelter for house servants. It was a living and sleeping quarters for a large family and has withstood the test of time due to superior construction of the wealthy French family's plantation structures.

CAPITILE HOUSE: Moved from the Breaux Bridge area, built about 1830 by the Dorsene Castille family, this house is the village's most sound-proof structure. The fancy woodwork is typical of a more wealthy family and is also constructed of bousillage entre poteaux.

The Garden Tour begins at the LOG CABIN STORE built on location through the efforts of the Citizen Club of Lafayette. Paths lead through gardens and greenhouses displaying typical vegetation of five tropical and semi-tropical regions: Gulf Coast, Latin America, Asia, Africa, and the Pacific Isles. The store is filled with plants grown by the clients and are for sale to the general public here.

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS THAT ARE NOT COVERED BY THIS YOUR SHEET, PLEASE FEEL FREE TO COME BACK INTO OUR STORES AND ASK ANY MEMBER OF THE STAFF. WE WILL BE HAPPY TO TRY TO ANSWER YOUR QUESTIONS.

Merci beaucoup et bon voyage!!