Breaux Bridge's female founder still keeps watch over town at City Parc

Marsha Sills
Staff Writer

LAFAYETTE

Scholastique Breaux won't leave the town she founded. She stands as determined as ever in City Parc with one hand on her hip and the other holding her plan for Breaux Bridge.

"She looks determined like Patton or somebody," said Kenneth Delcambre, the town historian.

She stands as first and only Acadian woman in Louisiana history to found a town, but for more than 160 years, Scholastique Breaux was not acknowledged for her accomplishment. The distinction went to her late husband, Agricole and the men in his family.

"She was omitted from history because of her sex, mainly because it wasn't seen as something a woman back then would do," Delcambre explained.

Agricole and his father were often credited with founding Breaux Bridge because Agricole built the first vehicular bridge in the town and his father was one of the largest landowners, according to Delcambre.

But that changed officially in 1998, when more than 300 Breaux Bridge women decided there would be no more room to question where Scholastique stands in history. Now, it's etched in stone and marble, that reads, "Plan de la ville du Pont Breaux." That's when Breaux Bridge was born, Delcambre said.

"She didn't found a town for the notoriety. She did it out of the necessity to keep her family afloat," Delcambre said.

"She was a doer" said Celia Soper, the woman chosen to sculpt Scholastique.

Scholastique remained in Breaux Bridge, married Jean Domengeaux and had two more children. She died in 1846.

Because there were no pictures of the pioneer woman, Soper traced Breaux's family tree to find pictures of her descendants. There among the branches, she found her own grandmother's name. Soper's own daughter, dressed in traditional costume, modeled for the figure.

"It was a revelation for me and exciting that I got to do her sculpture too," said Soper, who also shares Breaux's birthday, July 25, 1796.