ON RANCH NEAR BROUSSARD

Terry Girouard Home Dates Back 1798

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On a motorist visitor turns off busy U.S. Highway 90 east of Broussard and drives on the domino Girouard Rd, he will notice that the flat terrain becomes rolling and there are alternating pastures and wooded patches.

Continuing on he comes to a "T" intersection with the Bayou Turton Rd. He is now on Coxe Gelee, from hill, so-named because Joseph "Beausoleil" Broussard and his pioneer followers suffered terribly there from a severe winter, their first since coming from tropical Santo Domingo.

Soon he approaches the gates of the 120-acre Girouard Ranch, part of a Spanish land grant made in 1799. The right gate leads to the Terry Girouard home, a beautiful brick home tucked in between two elderly live oak trees.

The original cottage was built on the Bayou Turtue Rd, about 1800 by Pierre Girouard. Terry's great-great-grandfather. It was inherited by his son, Pierre Girouard, and later by his grandson, Joseph, who added what is referred to now as the "original" part of the home.

Joseph Girouard selected choice cypress lumber produced by his own sawmill on his plantation and with it he built a new section on the front of the old house. The older part was then used as a kitchen, overserver's quarters, a parlor, and a bathroom.

The home has remained in the family until today except for one year during the depression of the 1930's. However, Bagnous Girouard, Terry's father, was able to buy back the property that had been sold during the lean years.

One of the area legends which involves the old home is one about the British corsairs having broken into the home and stolen a beautiful chandelier. It's said the corsairs were after the Girouard land and not the chandelier.

For over 300 years the Girouard property has been owned and operated by descendants of Pierre Girouard, who built the first home there, a small structure of native cypress and beams (made with moss or animal hair). Probably no part of that home exists today, but it was the forebearer of the present Terry Girouard home.

Girouard, Mr. Girouard is a direct descendant of the first Girouard, who came into the property through a Spanish land grant.

However, before leaving, the legend has it, Father Chayn placed a curse on the heads of the leaders of the mob. All of them died in some tragic way, it is related.

The Girouard home declined when it was used as a tenant house from 1939 to 1954. Later it remained vacant for over 10 years, and when Terry was married to Sandra Dee Shaw of Bentley, La. in 1960, Mr. and Mrs. Hermie Girouard gave the home to their son and his bride.

Mr. and Mrs. Girouard had the home moved back from the Dominica Girouard Rd. to its present site on the hill, where another Girouard property was located.

Among the major modifications made by the new owners were the removal of the front porch and bricking in the exterior wall. The home now has three friendly front entrances and the Girouds thought the added porch tied the doorways and intervened.
with the flow of the house lines.
A new slate roof was laid and some partitions were removed to make one large living room of the two smaller ones on the lower floor. This room has been tastefully furnished with period pieces and rare and beautiful antiques and collectables.

Mr. Girouard has been collecting antiques and art objects since he was 12, and Mrs. Girouard has become an avid collector since her marriage. Between them they have numerous lovely articles which are displayed throughout their home.

On the lower floor is the living room, a second room now serving as a TV room, the kitchen, a central hallway, and a half bath under the stairs.

The upstairs bedrooms have been changed only a little. Mr. Girouard did have interesting built-in armoires placed on each side of his wife's vanity. Unlike typical armoires, these have clear glass panels instead of mirrors on the doors.

Both bedrooms are furnished with antiques and one has a beautiful Mallard dresser.

The upstairs bathroom, which was added, is a creation of Mr. Girouard, who calls it "steamboat style." The oak doors were replaced by a metal frame and the windows were redesigned where necessary. All exterior doors and the lower floor windows have board and batten shutters.

The durable cypress floors had only to be refinished. The beaded wainscoting on the lower floor walls is typical of homes of the era in which this home belongs; however, the beaded planks are not typical. They are wider, about three inches, and have four beads centered in the planks.

More than enough cabinets have been installed in the kitchen—all made from wide weathered cypress planks taken from a barn on the Terrence Girouard place.

The Girouard garage was designed and placed on one side of the home to simulate an attached kiln in accordance with a practice in this area long ago.

Mr. Girouard's collection abilities have been enhanced tremendously by his talent and training—he is an art teacher. He pursued his major interests at the University of Southwestern Louisiana, where he obtained a bachelor's degree, and at Louisiana State University, where he was awarded a master's degree in art. He is a long-time member of the faculty at Northside High School in Lafayette.

The couple has two sons, Clay, 18, and Craig, 14. The home today is comfortable and graciously, perhaps a little majestically, at the top of a gentle hill. Two live oaks and other trees, including some stately pines, are perfectly compatible with the colonial home. They do have much in common: there was a happy marriage.