

Loreauville

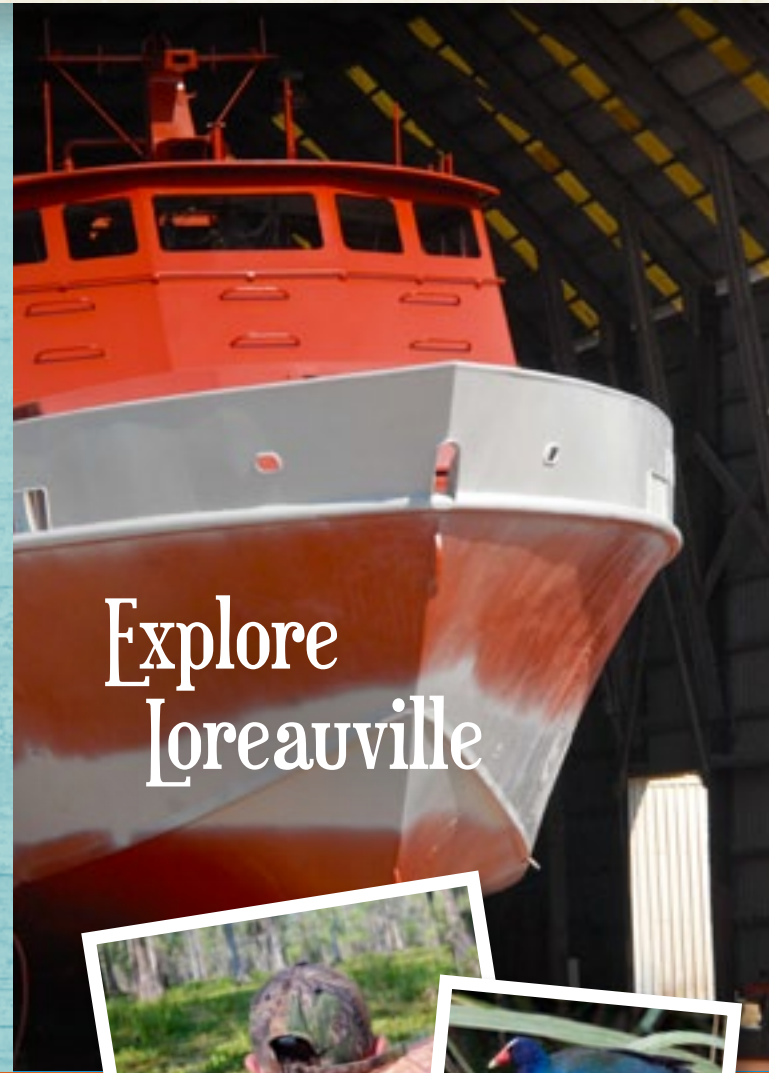
IBERIA PARISH

Loreauville

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St. Joseph's Catholic Church Tailgating Cookoff
Every October



Explore Loreauville



Birth of Cajun Culture

The Broussard-Acadians and their 200-plus kin were the first large group of Acadian refugees to reach Louisiana. In May 1765, they arrived in the Attakapas territory and settled along Bayou Teche in what would become Loreauville.

Their leader, Joseph Beausoleil Broussard, was named Commandant of the Acadians in that territory. During the ensuing four months, they negotiated the Dauterive Cattle Compact (beginning of the cattle industry), named their land New Acadie, and transplanted their culture from the meadows of Acadie to the prairies of Louisiana. The New Acadia Project has been studying Loreauville and its surrounding area to find the graves of these first Acadians.

1. Vida Sugar Mill

The legend of the Vida Sugar Mill, known locally as the Big Bang, is one of tragedy. Established in 1860, the mill owned by the Loreauville Sugar Company, was the site of possibly the worst industrial accident Iberia Parish has ever seen.

On Nov. 21, 1923, the explosion of five boilers left 11 dead and 16 injured. The total monetary loss was estimated at \$100,000 in 1923, equaling more than \$1 million today. After reconstruction in 1924, operations resumed until the company sold to Vida Sugars, Inc., in 1931.

The mill officially closed in 1972 and was sold in pieces to a company from Guatemala. The last remnant is the Vida Shaw Bridge on Vida Shaw Road (Parish Road 402).



2. Bank of Loreauville

The Bank of Loreauville was built in 1910 and served the community until its closure in 1928. The building remained vacant from 1928 to 1944 during which time Dr. Guy Shaw built an addition.

The portion of the building that was the bank became different grocery stores from the 40s to the 80s, while the portion that Dr. Shaw built for his office and pharmacy changed names three times (Wender Pharmacy, Broussard Pharmacy and McHugh Pharmacy) before becoming Western Auto from 1962 to 1967. Mestayer's Grocery took over from 1964 to 1985 and Tweets Treats from 1996 until recently.

The Bank of Loreauville is now Loreau Place and is located on 103 North Main Street.

Iberia Parish Convention & Visitors Bureau
2513 Hwy 14, New Iberia, LA 70560
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Welcome Center open Monday through Saturday.

Loreauville.us

3. Roy Breaux's Blacksmith Shop

Loreauville is renowned for its history of ship building, and the use of Bayou Teche and Lake Dauterive has become vital to the business. One of the first to begin building boats commercially was Roy Breaux Sr.

After taking over his father's blacksmith shop in 1946, Breaux saw a need for more quality vessels and founded Breaux's Bay Craft, Inc. in October 1957.

The first boats he produced were mostly steel tugboats and small crewboats used by the oil industry, and he established a shipyard dedicated to quality craftsmanship.

Breaux is credited with building the world's first all-welded aluminum crewboat in 1957, which is still in operation today in Trinidad, West Indies.

Over the past 50 years, the firm constructed more than 1,700 aluminum vessels of various types from 35 to 165 feet in length. Breaux's children, Royce and Roy Jr., took over the company under their father's guidance in 1985.

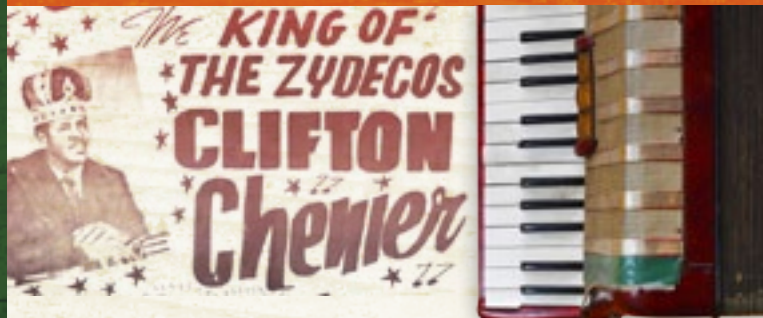
Today, Breaux's Bay Craft, Inc., located at 7810 Danielle Road in New Iberia, is also known for its large passenger vessels and large motoryachts. Other businesses out of Loreauville include the boat motor companies Pro-Drive and Gator Tail and the boat builders Breaux Brothers and Neuville Boat Works.



4. Our Lady of Victory Catholic Church

Once a Protestant church in Centerville, La., Our Lady of Victory Catholic Church was bought and relocated to Loreauville by Rev. Fr. J.M. Ramel M.S. who wanted to establish a church for African Americans during segregation. It was not opened as such until 1948 by Rev. Eugene Veillard M.S.

On September 16, 1953, the church was formally established as a parish, and on September 22, Fr. John C. McDonald M.S. was appointed pastor of the new parish, which counted 214 families. The church is still located at 120 Daigre Street.



5. Clifton Chenier

Clifton Chenier (1925-1987) became the "King of Zydeco" and the first Creole to be presented a Grammy award on national television. Blending the French and Cajun two-steps and waltzes of southwest Louisiana with New Orleans R&B, Texas blues, and big-band jazz, he created the modern, dance-inspiring, sounds of zydeco. He founded the Clifton Chenier Club in Loreauville, now owned by his nephew who received the Lifetime Achievement Grammy Award on his behalf in 2014. Every June, the club (located at 2116 Fernand Crochet Lane) hosts the Clifton Chenier Celebration, a tribute to Chenier's life and legacy.

6. John D. Walet Home

Built in 1900 by three local carpenters for \$5,000, the Walet home derives its name from John D. Walet, who died in 1917 of an appendix attack.

Members of the Walet family lived in the home until they sold it in 1980. The property remained vacant for a few years before Edmond Broussard leased it to David's Mortuary.

The funeral home opened in the late 1980s and is dedicated to John D. Walet. David's Funeral Home is still located at 116 South Main Street.

7. Loreauville High School

Before 1918, Loreauville had no high school. There were only four country schools, which went up to the 7th grade.

The first high school was a four-room wooden structure set up on brick pillars near St. Joseph's Church and Rectory. New rooms were added each year to the school. In 1936, the building burned down and classes were held in the old Camos Home (now known as Darnell Place) on Highway 86, south of Loreauville.

The school was rebuilt on its present site, 410 North Main Street, in 1941, but another fire claimed it. Students were schooled in Jeanerette until the present brick building was completed in 1943.



8. Lake Fausse Pointe

Lake Fausse Pointe and the connecting Lake Dauterive have always been a haven for fishermen. Once a part of the Atchafalaya Basin, the 6,000-acre state park was home to the Chitimacha Indians.

The park features a boat launch, playground, splash park, picnic area and pavilions. Visitors might spot a whitetail deer, raccoon, black bear or even an alligator on the abundant nature and canoe trails. Lake Fausse Pointe is located at 5400 Levee Road in St. Martinville.

9. St. Joseph's Catholic Church

Ozair Joseph Loreau donated a piece of his property in 1871 with the stipulation that a church be constructed in Fausse Pointe.

Loreauville became a parish in 1873 and Father Charles Beaubrien from Canada was named the first pastor. A bell tower was added to the church in 1872 after Monsieur le Colonel Alcebiade DeBlanc donated a bell. The first recorded burial in the cemetery was March 31, 1873.

In 1960, renowned architect A. Hays Town was commissioned to draft a new plan for the church. That plan was put on hold due to lack of funds, but the town recently took up the task of completing the project and building the church into Town's original vision. Visit the church at 113 South Main Street.

