

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Broussard Multiple Resource Area consists of ten individually nominated buildings and a five building district. All but one of the fifteen date from the turn-of-the-century (c.1890-c.1910), and the majority are Queen Anne Revival residences. Except for those in the district, the buildings in question are scattered throughout the small semi-rural crossroads community of Broussard. None have been seriously altered; hence there is no integrity problem.

Broussard, an open semi-rural community of about 3,000 people, is located in the flat canefield country of southern Lafayette Parish. When incorporated in 1884, Broussard was a remote village; however, today the town is directly in the path of the rapidly expanding city of Lafayette, which is presently experiencing an oil boom. It is thought that within a few years Broussard will be engulfed by suburban development.

The town retains the type of broad and open feeling, with widely spaced buildings, which would have characterized a typical turn-of-the-century crossroads community. However, in the past twenty-five years the historic semi-rural cohesiveness of the community has been violated by the construction of numerous modern buildings and the demolition of several older structures. As a result, what would undoubtedly have been considered a worthy historic district has been badly fragmented. What remains is a number of landmark turn-of-the-century structures (mainly residences) set amid an infill mixture of modest turn-of-the-century/ early twentieth century structures and glaring modern buildings.

After making numerous on-site visits and reviewing the survey, the State Historic Preservation Office was of the unanimous opinion that the old part of town as a whole, did not constitute an eligible Register district. If such an area had been cordoned off, it would have had an intrusion rate of about fifty percent. But this was not the only problem. Many of the intrusions are large and some are set directly next to the sidewalk. This is in contrast to the town's historic structures, most of which are set back in large well treed yards. Hence demolition, distances between historic structures, and prominent intrusions have eliminated almost all vestiges of the cohesive turn-of-the-century architectural character which the old part of Broussard at one time had. This cohesive character would have been the only possible basis for an overall historic district nomination for the town. Because it no longer existed, the staff concluded that a large historic district nomination for the greater part of old Broussard was not possible.

There is, however, one small remaining area where the turn-of-the-century structures still dominate the scene. This is a small district consisting of five historic structures set either side of Main Street in the center of town. The three large frame residences dominate the district's two small commercial buildings. This is an important aspect of the district because it shows that small crossroads communities at the turn-of-the-century often had no commercial main street as such. "Main Street" was often as much residential as commercial, and the residences were often more impressive.

Although the town of Broussard dates back to the 1870's, its most conspicuous development took place between c.1890 and c.1910. This turn-of-the-century growth spurt replaced most of what existed before and created the town's present architectural heritage. In many ways this growth reflected a contemporaneous boom in the production of sugar which affected much of southern Louisiana. In Broussard that prosperity was generated by the massive Billeaud Sugar Mill which was substantially improved and enlarged in 1889. (The mill is not included in the nomination because it is outside of the town limits.) The products of this economic boom can be seen today in the following resources being nominated: eight substantial frame Queen Anne Revival houses, three late Italianate frame commercial buildings, one late Italianate residence, one frame commercial vernacular store, and a large brick school building which reflects the late Italianate taste. (The home of the founder of Broussard is also included in the nomination even though it dates from c.1876.)

These architectural products of the sugar boom are somewhat isolated in time. The town had grown to the level its prosperity would support by about 1910. After that time little of consequence was built. Construction in Broussard did not begin again until the 1960's when oil prosperity began to introduce commercial intrusions into the area, as previously described.

Architectural Character

All but four of the multiple resource area's fifteen buildings fit into one of the following two categories:

I. The Queen Anne Revival Residences:

These share the following characteristics:

- a) Each is of frame construction.
- b) Each has one principal story however high it is raised and however much space the garret may have.
- c) Each has galleries.
- d) Each has an unusually large amount of typical turn-of-the-century manufactured ornamental detailing.
- e) Each is in a good state of architectural integrity,

In addition, most have large lots but with only a modest setback.

II. The Late Italianate Commercial Buildings:

Most of these share the following characteristics:

- a) Each is set directly along the street front
- b) Each is a frame structure with a pressed tin facade,
- c) Each has a relatively elaborate cornice line for a small commercial structure.
- d) Each is in a good state of integrity.

THE SURVEY:

The foundation for the Broussard survey is a two volume historical sites inventory of Lafayette Parish prepared by the Lafayette Regional Planning Commission under the auspices of the Lafayette Council of Governments. The first volume, which covers structures built before 1880, was published in June of 1976. The second volume, which covers the period 1880 to 1920, was published in June of 1977. A photograph, written description, historical sketch, and bibliography are provided for each building inventoried. The project was funded through a grant from the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

The actual survey work was done by the following professional planners who were on the staff of the planning commission at the time: Albert C. Sonnier, Jr., F. Michael Hollier, Gregory K. Moroux, Mariano Alesi, L. Edward Castille III, Lorna Guynn, Daniel Higginbotham, Barbara Hebert, and Vilma Rodriguez.

The above two volumes of survey data were supplemented with a survey of Broussard conducted by the State Historic Preservation Office in the summer of 1981. This was necessary for two reasons. Firstly, the aforementioned document concluded with the year 1920, rather than the National Register fifty year cutoff. Secondly, it was found to be incomplete for the years it covered. Hence, it was necessary for the State Historic Preservation Office, assisted by local citizens and with the cooperation of the city government, to fill in these "gaps."

In preparing this nomination, the State Historic Preservation Office carefully evaluated each 50+ year old building within the Broussard town limits and selected those for which a plausible case could be made for architectural or historical significance on at least the local level. For reasons which have already been explained, a large district was ruled out. With only one exception, those properties selected were so chosen because of their demonstrable architectural significance. The one exception, the Valsin Broussard House, was selected for its historical significance as the home of the founder of the town. The reason for this solitary selection was that nothing else of historical significance (as opposed to architectural) remains within the town limits of Broussard. Nothing survive in the town from prior to 1876. After that time, the only major historical developmental focus of the community was the Billeaud Sugar Mill, which is outside the town limits, and hence could not be considered for this submission.

NB: The survey forms for the individually nominated buildings were revised by the State Historic Preservation Office. However, the survey forms for the buildings within the Main Street District were not revised because it was decided that they contained enough information to suffice for a district inventory.

Physical description of property and historic significance

Alesia is a large, frame, story and a half, Queen Anne Revival cottage with a central plan. It follows the standard Queen Anne cottage formula found throughout the parish and indeed the state -- i.e., a central front door with a window on one side and a projecting semi-octagonal bay on the other. However, it has two asymmetrically placed forward facing shingled gables, something which is found on only a handful of Queen Anne houses in the parish. The roofline is additionally enlivened by the use of a central dormer. Moreover, the house has a Colonial Revival gallery with double columns, which is an unusual feature within the context of the parish. Finally, the gables have elaborate Eastlake aprons such as are seldom seen on period houses in Lafayette parish.

The above house was built c.1900 by Hebert Billeaud for his wife Alice, for whom it was named.

Physical description of property and historic significance

This rambling, frame, story and a half, Queen Anne-Colonial Revival house has an asymmetrical hall-less plan. The Ionic front gallery protrudes to encompass a semi-octagonal bay under a shingled gable. The hip roof features large decorated dormers on three sides. The carport and the brick bases for the columns were added in the 1920's.

About half of Lafayette Parish's Queen Anne Revival style residences have semi-octagonal bays. Of these, the subject property is one of the five or six largest. It is also one of very few where the massing is enlivened by the use of a protruding gallery section as described above. It is also one of very few which has a large two bay dormer. For these reasons, it is a landmark in the turn-of-the-century architecture heritage of Lafayette Parish.

The above house was built by Charles Billeaud c.1907. He and his wife raised nine children here. After Billeaud's death in 1946, the house was sold to the Gusman family, who lived there for about two years. After 1948 it became rental property until its sale to Reverend P. J. Kemps in 1959. The present owners, who acquired the house in 1976 are in the process of restoring it.

Physical description of property and historic significance

The Martial Billeaud, Jr. House is a large, frame, story and a half, Queen Anne Revival cottage with a central hall plan. It follows the standard Queen Anne cottage formula found throughout the parish and indeed the state -- i.e., a central front door with a window on one side and a projecting semi-octagonal bay on the other. However, it is noteworthy in several respects. It is much larger than the average example in the parish. Moreover, it has a far more complex roofline with a shingled gable and six dormers of different sizes, one of which is articulated as a balcony. The massing is additionally enlivened by a large projecting side bay on the south side. More importantly, the north side has a projecting bay with a mansard roof. This is Lafayette parish's only reflection of the Second Empire style.

Physical description of property and historic significance

Built c.1876, this frame, two-story, gallery fronted house has a hall-less plan two rooms deep. The round gallery columns and the single story rear wing were added c.1900. The lower gallery has been partially screened in and the central chimney has been removed. Despite these changes, the house would still be easily recognizable to its builder, Valsin Broussard.

Significance/History: The home of Valsin Broussard, the founder of the town of Broussard, was built around 1876 and is the oldest remaining house in the town today. Broussard and his family settled on the land where the town is presently located soon after the Civil War. To encourage the growth of the town, Broussard donated the eight arpents of land on which the church and cemetery are located and also the land on which the Southern Pacific depot was built. In appreciation of these gifts, the town was named in his honor when it was laid out. In 1884, Broussard was duly incorporated and received a charter which provided for a government consisting of a mayor, council, clerk, and marshal. Two years later, in 1886, the people became discontented and elected no officers, thus allowing the charter to lapse. It was not until 1906 that the town was reincorporated and a new government put into operation.

Physical description of property and historic significance

Built c.1908, this frame, story and a half, Queen Anne-Colonial Revival house is symmetrical except for its corner turret. The house has a semi-octagonal bay at each end of the facade and an all encompassing semi-octagonal Doric front gallery. The building has been converted into a restaurant, and, as part of the renovation, glass panels have been fitted between the gallery columns. However, this constitutes only a minor loss of integrity. In any case, the panels are removable and they have not affected the house's most significant feature, its extraordinary roofline. Of the approximately fifty-five examples of Queen Anne Revival houses in Lafayette Parish, the above pictured house is one of the most elaborately massed. There are only about a half dozen Queen Anne houses in the parish which have corner turrets. The subject property is one of only about four which have corner turrets plus the additional pretention of a bell cast cupola.

The house was built c.1908 by Edmond Comeaux and his wife Cecile St. Julien Comeaux.

Physical description of property and historic significance

Constructed in 1903, this two-story, frame, pressed tin sided commercial building retains its original shopfront and corner entrance, though it has lost its original gallery. Nonetheless, it retains the Italianate styling for which it has been judged significant.

There are about seventy-five 50+ year old commercial buildings in Lafayette Parish, most of which date from the 1920's. Of these seventy-five, the Ducrest Building is one of only four known examples which reflect the commercial Italianate taste. This can be seen in the pressed tin siding which imitates stonework and in the elaborate, ornamental modillion cornice. Virtually all other old commercial buildings in the parish reflect later styles.

The above building was constructed in 1903 by T. Lucien Ducrest, who operated a pharmacy there for over thirty-five years. Upon Mr. Ducrest's death, the building was purchased by his son, Francis M. Ducrest, who maintained the building and ran the store for thirty-one years. After the death of Francis M. Ducrest, his wife leased the building to George DeBaillon, the present occupant.

Physical description of property and historic significance

Built c.1890, this frame, pressed tin sided, story and a half commercial building still retains its original shopfront windows and its original gallery, although the interior has been renovated.

There are about seventy-five 50+ year old commercial buildings in Lafayette Parish, most of which date from the 1920's. Of these seventy-five, the Janin Store is one of only four known examples which reflect the commercial Italianate taste. This can be seen in the pressed tin siding which imitates stonework and in the elaborate, ornamental modillion cornice. Virtually all other old commercial buildings in the parish reflect later styles.

Francois Janin, the builder of the above, came to the United States in the late 1880's from France. He died in 1928, and his family continued operating the general store until the late 1960's. In 1972, it was inherited by two of his granddaughters.

Physical description of property and historic significance

#105 St. Pierre St. is a five-bay, frame, story and a half, late Italianate house with two front dormers. The side wing is recent, but it does not detract from the articulation of the house. The most distinguishing feature of the residence is its handsome bracketed pedimented portico.

The house is architecturally significant on the local level. It has one of only two pediments to be found in Broussard. Moreover, of the town is numerous turn-of-the-century residences, the subject property is the most consummate reflection of the Italianate taste.

Joseph Arthur Roy built the above house for his bride, Cornelia Bailey, in 1886. It remained in their ownership until 1889 when it was sold to J. G. LeBlanc. Mr. LeBlanc operated a general merchandise store near the home for a number of years. The present owner, Mrs. Earl J. Boudreaux, is LeBlanc's daughter.

Physical description of property and historic significance

St. Cecilia School is a late Italianate, three-story, brick building seven bays wide with a symmetrical front entrance. The ground story is set below a water table and has segmentally arched windows. The second story, which is the main story; feature a band of arched windows interrupted by the central entrance. The entrance vestibule, which is reached by means of a central stair, is set in a pedimented aedicule motif with an inscribed archway. The building has a brick cornice surmounted by a hip roof with a front facing ventilation dormer. The interiors are large and plain. The building has a rear wing which is connected by a breezeway.

St. Cecilia is locally significant in the area of architecture because it is a landmark within the town of Broussard. It is the town's tallest 50+ year old structure as well as the largest. It also has an impressive second story arcade effect. Finally, it is one of only two buildings in the town which feature a pedimented entrance.

Physical description of property and historic significance

Built c.1910, this frame, story and a half, Queen Anne-Colonial Revival house was built as a copy of the nearby Comeaux House (406 Second), except that the turret and cupola were omitted. In 1979 the house was renovated for restaurant use, at which time glass panels were fitted between the gallery columns, an awning was installed, and new balustraded steps were built. Both the glass panels and the awning are easily removable. In any case, these changes have had only a minor effect upon the massing of the house, which is the source of its architectural significance. Of the approximately fifty-five Queen Anne Revival houses in Lafayette Parish, few have double front gables and a dormer as well. Only a handful have the dormer enlarged and articulated as a balcony.

The above residence was built c.1910 by Mrs. Marguerite Helena Roy St. Julien, widow of Gustave St. Julien. After her husband's death, she wanted to leave her country home and move to town to be near her daughter Cecile St. Julien Comeaux. She had the builder copy her daughter's home (406 Second) exactly except for the turret and cupola.

Physical description of property and historic significance

The Main Street Historic District consists of five turn-of-the-century structures set in a contiguous grouping at the intersection of Main and Washington Streets. Three are Queen Anne Revival residences, one is a late Italianate commercial building, and one is a commercial vernacular store. (See the attached inventory sheets.)

The district is immediately encompassed by non-contributing elements. For example, north of the district are two modern convenience stores and a parking lot. A railroad siding and some less than fifty year old storage buildings are located to the south. To the east and west are residential neighborhoods with numerous less than fifty year old houses. In short, to have extended the boundaries in any direction to pick up any of the resources being submitted separately would have meant taking in numerous intrusions, thereby creating a fragmented entity without a convincing historic character.

The buildings are sufficiently concentrated that this portion of Main Street (near the intersection with Washington St.) has an overwhelming turn-of-the-century character. In fact, it is the only turn-of-the-century streetscape remaining in Broussard. But beyond this, it is easily the most impressive turn-of-the-century streetscape in Lafayette Parish. This is because of the district's two landmark anchor buildings (E and D, see map).

Of the approximately 111 late nineteenth/early twentieth century residences in the parish these two have undoubtedly the most elaborate massing and detailing. However, this is not their only contribution to the architectural importance of the streetscape. The State Historic Preservation Office is aware of only six Queen Anne Revival houses in the parish which have turrets. Four of these have the additional pretension of bell cast cupolas. The Main Street District has two of them side by side.

NB: The attached inventory forms, with the exception of the one for Building C, were prepared by the Lafayette Regional Planning Commission.

BUILDING A

NAME: Andre Billeaud House

DESCRIPTION: The main roof structure of the house is gable running east and west with gabled dormer centered over entry with a matching one on the rear side. The octagonal shaped parlor to the left as you enter has a large gabled roof with "fish scale" shingle siding at pediments. Gables of east and west ends of main portion of home match, with the east side sheltering a sun porch and the west (left) side, a two story octagonal shared wing. Interior features include a large entrance foyer, 14 foot ceilings, 12' double hung windows, operable transoms above all doors, large double raised panel sliding doors between parlor and dining room.

SIGNIFICANCE/HISTORY: This home was constructed by Andre' Billeaud in 1903. Mr. Billeaud lived in the home with his family until his death. Mrs. Billeaud lived in this home until her death in 1958. After her death, the children sold the home to Mr. Walter Broussard. The Broussard's lived in the home until 1965. At this time, it was purchased by Mr. & Mrs. William McKnight. Shortly after the purchase, Mrs. McKnight, a renowned artist, converted a portion of the residence into an art studio and classroom. The studio is known as one of the finest between Houston and New Orleans.

REFERENCES/SOURCES: 1) Mrs. William McKnight

BUILDING B

NAME: Bernard Building

DESCRIPTION: Typical commercial building at the turn of the century, this structure was altered to accommodate its use as a service station in later years. The porch is free-span supported by tension rods and turn brackets. Large glass windows and transom for display and interior light are note worthy. The building is wood frame with the exterior front fake facade covered with embossed galvanized metal in the shape of stone masonry. There is an open gallery in the main store area.

SIGNIFICANCE/HISTORY: This structure was built by Mr. Guillian Bernard in 1902 and operated as a grocery store. The building was purchased in the 1920's by Denis Bernard who converted and altered the structure for use as a gas service station and repair shop. The business and building is now owned by Mr. L. D. Bernard, a great grandson of Valsin Broussard, the founder of the Town of Broussard.

REFERENCES/SOURCES: 1) Mr. L. D. Bernard

BUILDING C

NAME: Bobby's Lounge

The above c.1910 structure was not noted in the 1976-77 survey prepared by the Lafayette Regional Planning Commission. It is a relatively simple frame commercial building with a stepped parapet front. It retains its original galleries, although some of the ventilators have been filled in. In about 1940 a small brick side wing was added. Although it is owned in common with the original frame commercial building, today it houses a separate business.

BUILDING E

NAME: Hub City Bank

DESCRIPTION: A fine example of late Victorian fantasy, the Old Comeaux Home is considered by some to be the most successful representative of the era in Lafayette Parish. The elaborate woodwork, contrasting geometric shapes, and irregular roof planes combine in ostentatious display. A wide gallery wraps three-quarters of the way around the house and is supported by pairs of fluted ionic columns resting on paneled rectangular piers. Similar columns support the balcony directly over the main entrance. Clusters of three columns are located at either end of the front gallery. The elaborately turned spindles of the railing continue to the side and rear portions of the gallery which are supported by simple Doric columns.

The large octagonal bay to the left of the entrance is decorated with corner brackets, stained glass, and paneled exterior walls. The gable-end over the bay has scalloped shingles ("fishscales") and a triple stained glass window with a central arch reminiscent of a Palladian window. The entrance and balcony pediments are finished in the "sunburst" motif. The octagonal bay in the extreme F left of the photograph is entirely paneled and contains an oval cameo window. A domed octagonal tower is located on the right side of the structure. Note the large window panes in the tower and other areas of the house.

The front entrance is a heavily leaded glass door with side lights and a segmented arch transom. The doors upstairs are beveled glass with elaborate carvings. There is a magnificent staircase in the entry hall and another leading from the kitchen to the servants quarters upstairs. One can still see the tubing for the ceiling gas lights and crystal chandeliers.

SIGNIFICANCE/HISTORY: This structure was built by Mrs. Alphonse Comeaux, nee Eulalie Billeaud, a daughter of Martial Billeaud in 1910. Next to the site of the old cistern to the rear of the house is an inscription in concrete which reads "Mrs. A. Comeaux, July 22, 1910". Hub City Bank bought the home from the St. Juliens, descendants of the original owners, in December, 1971. The former residence is now used as Hub City's Broussard branch bank.

This is an excellent example of adaptive re-use of an architecturally significant building. In today's economy, few families can afford to operate and maintain a residence of this type. Rather than being neglected or demolished, the old Comeaux residence stands as a proud reminder of the past and also performs a viable function for the present.

REFERENCES/SOURCES: (1) Hub City Bank, Inc.

Specific dates c.1876; c.1890-c.1910
Builder/Architect Multiple Resources

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)
Criteria B and C

Broussard's architecturally significant resources are all outstanding examples of turn-of-the-century architecture on at least the local level. They represent most types of structures which would normally be found in a prosperous crossroads community of the period. Taken as a whole, they represent Lafayette Parish's finest collection of turn-of-the-century structures. In

addition, the Valsin Broussard House, is locally significant in the area of exploration/settlement because it was the home of the founder of the town (see survey form).

The superiority of Broussard's turn-of-the-century architecture within the context of Lafayette Parish is obvious to even the most casual observer. Other collections in the parish pale in comparison. Other small towns such as Carencro, Scott, and Youngsville each have a few (less than five) above average examples of turn-of-the-century architecture, however, in most cases, the residential examples are noticeable only because of their applied manufactured ornamentation. Lafayette, one of the state's larger cities and the parish seat, has a large number of turn-of-the-century residences, but the vast majority are plain and unpretentious. Again, in most cases, the above average examples are so considered because of manufactured ornamentation. For example, as far as the State Historic Preservation Office can determine, there are only two examples in Lafayette that even have turrets. As far as turn-of-the-century commercial architecture is concerned, the parish has only about twelve or so examples.

By comparison, Broussard is significant because it contains, especially for a small town, so many first-rate examples of turn-of-the-century architecture. The collection is noteworthy not for its size, but for the superiority of each individual example. There are only four known examples of Italianate commercial buildings remaining in the parish, and three of these are in Broussard. St. Cecilia School and 106 Pierre Street are two more rare surviving examples of the Italianate taste in Lafayette Parish. (Most of the parish's 50+ year old buildings reflect later styles.) As has already been noted, the superiority of noteworthy examples of Queen Anne Revival residences in other towns in the parish rests largely upon the application of manufactured ornamentation (for example, Eastlake porches). By contrast, the superiority of the examples in Broussard rests additionally upon their elaborate massing and upon the variety of specific features employed on each residence (turrets, cupolas, multiple gables, projecting bays, double columns, stained glass, etc.).

If one considers the overall architectural significance of Broussard's nominated buildings, two themes emerge. These are the Queen Anne Revival as applied to residential architecture and the late Italianate style as applied to commercial, residential and institutional architecture.

I. The Queen Anne Revival

The eight nominated Queen Anne Revival residences of Broussard are among the twenty-four finest examples of period residential architecture in Lafayette Parish. (These twenty-four were chosen from a total survey count of 111 late nineteenth and early twentieth century residences for the entire parish. Actually this 111 figure is probably low.)

Queen Anne Revival architecture in Louisiana is known for the following characteristics:

- (1) elaborate and "picturesque" massing, particularly in the roofline;
- (2) the use of long galleries which accentuate the massing of the house;
- (3) the use of different surface materials on the same structure;
- (4) the use of different shapes and sizes of windows in the same structure;
and
- (5) the use of bay windows and turrets.

Six of the nominated Queen Anne Revival residences in Broussard have broad galleries which echo the basic massing of the house. Six have areas of scalloped shingles which enliven the basic clapboard surface. In addition, three of them have at least three different surface materials. All the nominated Queen Anne houses have at least two forward facing gables which enliven the roofline and six of them have more than two. (This is in contrast to the usual example with its single forward facing gable.) All of Broussard's nominated Queen Anne Revival houses have at least two different windows types and five of them have at least three. Six of the nominated Queen Anne residences have at least two bay window projections and three of them have turrets with bell cast cupolas. (There is only one other Queen Anne house with a cupola in the entire parish.) Finally, all of Broussard's nominated Queen Anne houses are well above average in terms of size.

Of the 111 or more period residences in Lafayette Parish, most are simple frame Queen Anne cottages with only hesitant decorative touches. Others are late examples of raised cottages with Eastlake or Colonial Revival details. With few exceptions, these other period residences are

smaller than the nominated Queen Anne Revival structures in Broussard. In addition, they are not as richly or as assiduously treated with characteristic Queen Anne Revival features.

II. Late Italianate Style

The Broussard Multiple Resource Area contains five Italianate structures: three tin sided commercial buildings, one residence, and one institutional building. These are significant as a group because they are among six surviving examples of the Italianate taste in Lafayette Parish. Historical research indicates that at one time there were many more examples. Most of these were lost in the redevelopment of the parish which has taken place as a result of the previously mentioned oil boom.

BROAD HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT:

The town of Broussard is situated in the center of an area identified as Cote Gelee by the Acadians who began settling around nearby St. Martinville in the 1760's. Although French trappers and Indians lived in and around the Cote Gelee prior to this time, it was not until the exiled Acadians arrived that permanent settlement began. Some of the early families included the Broussards, Comeauxs, Landrys, Breauxs, Girouards, Menards, and LeBlancs. By the end of the century the landscape was dotted with small Acadian farms.

As the nineteenth century progressed, these farms became increasingly interspersed with ever-expanding sugar plantations as south Louisiana experienced the economic growth of large-scale agricultural production. The prosperity generated by "King Sugar" was, of course, interrupted by the Civil War, and the Cote Gelee area suffered economically along with the rest of the state.

It is in the years immediately following the war that the town of Broussard has its origins. A railroad from New Orleans to Morgan City had been completed before the war and work commenced in the late 1860's on extending the road further west toward what would become Broussard.

In 1870, perhaps anticipating the coming of the railroad, Valsin Broussard contracted with a Mr. F. J. Rosk, an engineer, to lay out a town on part of his sugar plantation. Following the drawn plans, Valsin Broussard donated the eight arpents of land on which the present Catholic church and cemetery are located. As construction of the rail line continued and reached completion to his town, Broussard donated the land for a railroad depot. The first train from New Orleans arrived at Valsin Broussard's community in 1879.

It is important to note at this point in the historical narrative that Valsin Broussard's c.1876 house is the oldest extant structure within the Broussard town limits. Nothing survives within the town limits to represent Broussard's earlier history.

The new community on Broussard's plantation began to grow as lots were sold, and in 1883 a small church was built. In 1884, the town of Broussard was duly incorporated and received a charter which provided for a government consisting of a mayor, council, clerk and marshal. In that same year the first public school was opened, having been built on land donated by Valsin Broussard. Two years after incorporation, in 1886, the town was reincorporated and a new government was put into place.

A pivotal event in Broussard's history occurred in 1889 when Martial Billeaud converted his horse powered syrup mill into a steam powered sugar factory. The new factory was constructed at a cost of \$50,000 and had a daily capacity of four hundred tons of cane. Now area sugar planters had a local mill for their product. The Billeaud Sugar Mill brought a tremendous wave of prosperity to Broussard which coincided with the previously mentioned sugar boom in southern Louisiana as a whole. All but one of the properties being nominated (the founder's home) reflect this turn-of-the-century prosperity.

From the early years of settlement the majority of the land in the Broussard area was cultivated with sugarcane. However, this has been changing in the last thirty or so years because the community is directly in the path of an ever-expanding Lafayette. Beginning in the 1950's, Lafayette's development as an oil center has produced an urban growth explosion. The largely agricultural sugarcane economy of the Broussard area has increasingly begun to change to a fast growth urban development. Land formerly used for agricultural purposes is now the site of subdivisions, apartments, shopping centers and industrial parks. This trend accelerated in the early

1970's. As a result, many of Broussard's Victorian and earlier homes and businesses have been torn down.

PRESERVATION ACTIVITIES:

To date there have been no official preservation activities resulting from the survey. However, the town government hopes to use the listed multiple resource package as a springboard to enact a preservation ordinance. Despite the lack of municipal action, a number of private preservation initiatives have taken place. Of the town's five most pretentious Queen Anne Revival residences, two have been converted into restaurants, one has been rehabilitated for use as a branch bank, and another has been reworked for a commercial art studio.

Major Bibliographical References

Research/Survey Report on Broussard's History and Historic Architecture. Prepared by Lafayette Regional Planning Commission, August, 1982. Copy located in Broussard National Register File, Louisiana State Historic Preservation Office.

Historical Sites Inventory, Lafayette Parish. Vol. I: June, 1976. Vol. II: June, 1977. Prepared by Lafayette Regional Planning Commission under the auspices of the Lafayette Council of Governments. Copy located in Louisiana State Historic Preservation Office.