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Emily Ann Ardoin

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Fais Do-Do to "Hippy Ti-Yo":
Dance Halls of South Louisiana

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Fais Do-Do to "Hippy Ti-Yo": Dance Halls of South Louisiana

by

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Departmental Report

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of

The University of Texas at Austin

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Dedication

To my “Paw Paw,” Calvin Ardoin, who danced to his own beat.

Acknowledgements

My gratitude goes first and foremost to my parents: To my mother, whose love, dedication and support got me here. To my father, who tolerated years of teenage eye rolls toward his love for Cajun music before I grew up . I hope this makes up for it.

To my committee members: Gregory Smith, for his generous time and expertise, and Dr. Michael Holleran, who has been an anchor of support during the past two years of graduate studies.

I would like to thank John Sharp with the Center for Louisiana Studies, who spearheaded the effort to research and document Louisiana dance halls and whose work sparked my interest in the project. Your research and insights made it possible to complete this document in one short year. I hope it will be a valuable contribution to the effort to preserve these buildings.

To Ray Vidrine, Eugene Manuel, D.L. Menard, Tante Sue, and all those who shared their insight about individual buildings, music, and everyday life during the period of study.

Finally, to all of my family and friends who supported me, kept me laughing, and believed in my ability to do this work and do it well. A special thank-you to those who generously sacrificed their time to dance in the name of research.

Abstract

Fais Do-Do to "Hippy Ti-Yo": Dance Halls of South Louisiana

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The University of Texas at Austin, 2014

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Music is an essential piece of the culture of south Louisiana. Three genres – Cajun, Zydeco, and Swamp Pop – grew up in this region. The genres developed as separate cultures, primarily Cajun and Creole, developed and blended before entering a period of cultural assimilation in the early twentieth century. The music, and the social dancing that accompanies it, took place at weekly gatherings in rural residences in the eighteenth century. Commercial dance halls began to appear in the state around 1900 and have evolved throughout the century. The evolution of dance halls and their use follows a cultural evolution from relative isolation to assimilation and eventually cultural awareness and promotion as tourism blossomed in the state.

Despite their significant place in the region's history, dance halls are not yet recognized in any official capacity, including the National Register of Historic Places. The Center for Louisiana Studies is collecting information about the extant and demolished buildings to advocate for preservation of dance hall culture and extant

buildings. I am contributing to this advocacy effort with a National Register of Historic Places Multiple-Property Documentation Form for extant historic dance halls. The form will discuss the historic contexts of Cajun, Zydeco, and Swamp Pop music and establish typical and variable characteristics, both physical and associative, for dance hall buildings. Registration requirements based on significance and integrity will establish criteria for eligibility of extant buildings for the National Register of Historic Places.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The culturally diverse mix in south Louisiana, particularly the twenty-two parish region recognized by the state as Acadiana,[1] is unparalleled in the United States. Groups of settlers from around the world, including France, Spain, Africa, the Caribbean, Germany, and elsewhere, have populated the region in combinations of times and numbers and combined influences to result in two distinctly recognized peoples: Cajuns and Creoles. "Cajun," adapted from "Acadian," refers to the culture that developed beginning with a group of Acadian exiles from Nova Scotia who settled in the region in the mid-eighteenth century. The Acadians settled in a relatively isolated region, though Anglo Americans as well as immigrants from France, Germany, and elsewhere in Europe also occupied the area. These additional groups eventually adopted the dominant Acadian cultural norms, which in turn were influenced by the others. "Creole," which has carried different definitions for different regions and groups over time, in this case refers to descendants of African slaves as well as free people of color from Haiti who settled in the rural parishes of southwest Louisiana in the late eighteenth century and blended with other early settlers in the region. These cultures have in turn alternately influenced and paralleled one another, and their development to the present is deeply intertwined.

The development of the Cajun and Creole cultures has received varying degrees of influence from the mainstream American culture. This influence accelerated with various developments including interstate highway construction, television and radio,

[1] Chapter 3 includes a detailed description of the geographic boundary of this study.

World War II, and the oil industry. The rise and fall of favor of the French language, both in government and social circles (each also influenced by the other), helped to create an ebb and flow of cultural assimilation throughout the twentieth century.

These variations can be observed through the development of the musical genres born in the region. As musician and author Ann Savoy has noted, "Describing Cajun music would be like summarizing one hundred years of the evolution of a people."[2] Cajun and Creole music carry varying degrees of influence from their own influences, from each other, and increasingly from the rest of the United States. Music is one of the most recognizable products of the cultural development of rural south Louisiana, and both cultures carry a similar tradition of community gathering around music and dancing. Cajun and Creole communities paralleled each other in many ways and developed parallel traditions and musical exchanges. Both were mainly farmers, some sharecroppers, isolated and marginalized by outside society (though in varying degrees). Both groups gathered in house dances that gradually moved to public halls. Each culture's music has influenced the other. Both use accordions, fiddles (mostly discontinued in Creole music), share some specific songs, and refer to their respective music as "French music." While Creole music has more Afro-Caribbean and blues influence, Cajun music has more country western influence. The experience and development of Cajun and rural Creole music took place in three major types of venues: Residences, both as very small and informal gatherings and as larger, planned *bals de maison*; public halls and lounges; and outdoor gathering spaces for festivals and other

[2] Savoy, *Cajun Music*, xi-xii.

special events. Recording studios also expanded the availability of the music, further affecting its development.

Some of the public halls mentioned above are halls meant for social gathering with music and dancing as a secondary purpose. These include church halls and community organization halls, such as the Knights of Columbus and other {social} organizations. Others are lounges which often hosted live music and dancing but are relatively small and were not intended primarily for this purpose. The halls in this study are dance halls, also sometimes called nightclubs or clubs (particularly those built or frequented after the 1940s), that were built or renovated specifically to host live music and dancing and are known to have primarily hosted music of one or more of the three genres considered indigenous to south Louisiana. Gathering in dance halls had a large part in the music's evolution away from traditional sounds. Most halls also hosted other genres and gave local populations access to other types of music (including western and blues/rhythm and blues) that influenced their own styles, and the nature of playing in larger public halls with larger crowds encouraged the adoption of more instruments and elements such as electric amplifiers when they became available. The economic incentive of a commercial hall also encouraged both owners and musicians to cater to popular tastes. This is especially evident in the as some traditional Cajun musicians such as Joe Falcon reportedly left the dance hall scene in the 1930s in favor of smaller house

gatherings and returned for a short time after World War II when their musical style regained popularity.[3]

Today, the advanced cultural assimilation in younger Cajun and Creole generations has spawned deliberate efforts to preserve earlier cultural influences, language, and music. The state-sponsored Council for the Development of French in Louisiana (CODOFIL) and other public and private organizations have introduced several initiatives, including French immersion education in public schools and French-language publications, radio stations, and other media. Unprecedented cultural awareness and a growing tourism industry resulted in a new form of dance hall, the dine-and-dance hall, likely beginning with Mulate's in 1980. This appears to be more heavily a Cajun phenomenon, but the now-shuttered Creole Zydeco restaurant in Henderson might have provided the same model for Creoles (look into this). Otherwise, Cajun and Creole music continue to thrive today at music venues of all kinds, countless festivals around the state and the world, and heritage-focused alternative venues such as the Liberty Theater and Savoy Music Center in Eunice. Some of the dance halls that fostered community gathering through most of the twentieth century are still in use today. Though many of these older dance hall buildings remain, many more are vacant or have been renovated to accommodate changes in use. Still more, likely hundreds, have been demolished.

The Center for Louisiana Studies is a research organization based at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. Founded in 1973, the center is dedicated to research related to Louisiana culture and history. Beyond archival resources, the organization also

[3] Savoy, *Cajun Music*, 14.

includes the Center for Cultural and Eco-Tourism and the University of Louisiana at Lafayette Press. Assistant Director of Research John Sharp began in 2011 collecting information about current and former dance halls in an effort to promote awareness of them and their contribution to the music and cultural development of the region. Plans for the larger, multi-year research project include a film documentary, a website to make accessible information and locations of extant dance halls, and a series of individual nominations for the National Register of Historic Places. The National Register portion is already underway with a nomination for the Southern Club, a 1950s dance hall located in Opelousas, under review by the Louisiana State Historic Preservation Office as of March 2014. My contribution to this effort will be a National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form that will help to streamline the individual nomination process in the future. In the process of completing the form, I hope to gain a better understanding of the National Register process as well as contribute to the general understanding of the dance hall buildings as a type, their similarities and differences among genres, and their significance in the development of both music and culture.

Chapter 2: National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Forms

The National Register of Historic Places[4] is a nationwide listing of significant buildings, sites, structures, objects, and districts in the United States. Administered at the federal level by the National Park Service with participation by federal agencies, and Tribal and State Historic Preservation Officers, the National Register lists individual resources, contiguous districts of resources, and noncontiguous groups of related resources. While listing on the National Register does not provide legal protection for alteration and demolition, both listing and eligibility allow for review under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act for projects involving federal funding, approval, or agency action. Additional benefits include eligibility for federal income tax credits for rehabilitation and additional financial benefits provided by some state and local governments and private organizations.

The Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPD) applies to noncontiguous groups of related resources. An MPD does not nominate individual resources but serves as an umbrella form for resources with common history, use, and features. Individual resources can be nominated simultaneously or later using the MPD. The form includes one or more historic contexts establishing the shared history or histories by which the significance of the resources is evaluated. Property descriptions establish categories for resources based on physical and associative characteristics. An MPD establishes one or

[4] More information is available at http://www.nps.gov/nr/.

more property types which may include subtypes. A concise description of the building type identifies common characteristics as well as possible variations. Each building type then is assigned a set of regulation requirements, which serve as guidelines for determining National Register eligibility of individual resources. Registration requirements establish the criteria[5] under which individual resources can be considered eligible for the National Register. Requirements may include relative significance, location, age, and integrity. Individual nominations may refer to one or more historic contexts as well as an existing MPDF.

My goal is to write the property descriptions and registration requirements to be as inclusive as possible. Relatively few dance halls remain, as many of the frame buildings on smaller communities were lost to either fire or neglect once they were no longer used. During my research, I visited 32 extant dance hall buildings throughout south Louisiana. Of these, nine were active dance halls. Six had been adapted to serve other purposes, and seventeen were vacant. Five were in poor condition and appeared to be in danger of collapse. In addition to these concerns, the dance halls in this study are not well suited to strict categorization or requirements. Many were converted from other building types and expanded and renovated as necessary. Regarding associative characteristics, the dance halls were commercial enterprises and, though they did primarily host the indigenous genres in most cases, they also catered to large audiences. This sometimes meant hosting different types of bands, especially during periods of

[5] A detailed description of National Register of Historic Places Criteria for Evaluation is available at http://www.nps.gov/nr/publications/bulletins/nrb15/.

lower popularity for local music. For these reasons, registration requirements outline common characteristics that might be found in dance halls but are not required for National Register eligibility.

Chapter 3: Scope and Evaluative Criteria

Choosing the scope of the MPD came with several challenges. The first is related to the music itself. The cultural mix of south Louisiana has contributed vastly to musical development, and thousands of music venues of different types exist or have existed in the state. Due mainly to time restrictions, it was necessary to limit my study and leave open the possibility of future additions. The most notably absent genres here are jazz and rhythm and blues. Rhythm and blues in particular has been vital to the evolution of the three genres I've tackled here, especially Zydeco and Swamp Pop. These genres certainly were not absent in the rural regions represented in this study. In Opelousas alone, two 1950s dance halls (primarily associated with swamp pop) hosted such notable musicians as Fats Domino and B.B. King. New Orleans, however, was the cradle of development for both of these genres. I limited my focus to the music whose development is centered on the rural prairies of southwest Louisiana.

For this reason and others, determining the geographic boundary for the study was especially important. Dance halls in general are certainly not unique to Louisiana, and the physical characteristics of most of the buildings in this study are not entirely distinct from dance halls and nightclubs elsewhere in the United States. Exceptions to this include the *cage aux chiens* and *parc aux petites* found in very early Cajun dance halls, of which none are known to remain, and perhaps the common separation of the bar room from the dance hall. Overlap of genres within the dance halls further contributes to associative ambiguity for the building type. For the purposes of this study, the geographical area

includes the twenty-two Louisiana parishes recognized by the Louisiana state legislature in 1971 as Acadiana (Acadia, Ascension, Assumption, Avoyelles, Calcasieu, Cameron, Evangeline, Iberia, Iberville, Jefferson Davis, Lafayette, Lafourche, Pointe Coupee, St. Charles, St. James, St. John the Baptist, St. Landry, St. Martin, St. Mary, Terrebonne, Vermillion, West Baton Rouge). These parishes are also informally known as the "French-speaking parishes" of Louisiana. Though the official name of Acadiana presents a bias toward the Cajun culture, these same parishes include the concentrated rural Creole population that facilitated the development of rural Creole and zydeco music. Because cultural boundaries are loose, dance halls outside the defined geographical boundary can be nominated using this form if they can be linked strongly to one or more of the genres in this study.

Another scope question relates to period of study. Though the dance hall tradition continues today, it has evolved. The most meaningful difference in the use of dance halls today relates to the cultural self-awareness that developed in earnest beginning in the 1960s. As a result of a growing tourism industry and the decline in dancing as an everyday activity, places and activities geared toward cultural self-promotion and tourism have become popular since the 1980s. Noted Louisiana historic Barry Ancelet described the effect on restaurants: "We now eat 'Cajun food' in 'Cajun restaurants,' where before we just ate étouffé at Thelma's or gumbo at Don's." Some of these restaurants belong to the dine-and-dance halls that are now common throughout the state, including large cities with historically low Cajun populations such as Baton Rouge and New Orleans. This cultural shift was gradual, but was recognized in the 1960s when the state established the

Council of the Development of French in Louisiana (CODOFIL) in 1968, (add more). The period of significance, therefore, extends loosely into the 1970s. Eligibility is better determined by the intended purpose of the building when it was constructed. Though dine-and-dance halls are not included in the MPD at this point, they should be considered in the future for their contribution to the story as well as their role in the reintroduction of children to the dance hall experience.

Though the rural Creole culture has not experienced the same level of tourism promotion, Zydeco music in particular has become popular outside the state. This renewed popularity reached a peak in the early 1980s, and local clubs continued to open through the 1970s and 1980s. Zydeco dance halls opened or renovated during through the 1980s are within the period of study. Swamp pop has the clearest period of significance, covering a ten-year period roughly covering the mid-1950s to the mid-1960s.

Chapter 4: National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form: Dance Halls of South Louisiana

The following section contains the National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPD) to be submitted as a standalone document to the Louisiana State Historic Preservation Office. The document format conforms to the National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form (10-900b)

NPS Form 10-900-b OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form

This form is used for documenting property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form* (formerly 16B). Complete each item by entering the requested information.

_____ New Submission _____ Amended Submission

A. Name of Multiple Property Listing

Cajun and Creole Dance Halls of Rural South Louisiana

B. Associated Historic Contexts

(Name each associated historic context, identifying theme, geographical area, and chronological period for each.)

Cajun Music and Cultural Development in Rural South Louisiana, 1750-1980
Creole Music and Cultural Development in Rural South Louisiana, 1900-1985
Swamp Pop Origins and Development in Rural South Louisiana, 1955-1965

C. Form Prepared by:

Name:	Emily Ardoin, graduate student, Master of Science in Historic Preservation			
Organization:	The University of Texas at Austin			
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City or town:	Austin	State: Texas	Zip code:	78705
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Telephone:	(337) 962-2103		Date:	January 28, 2014

D. Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation.

_____ _____ _____
Signature of certifying official Title Date

_____
State or Federal Agency or Tribal government

I hereby certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.

_____ _____
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

Table of Contents for Written Narrative

Create a Table of Contents and list the page numbers for each of these sections in the space below.
Provide narrative explanations for each of these sections on continuation sheets. In the header of each section, cite the letter, page number, and name of the multiple property listing. Refer to *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form* for additional guidance.

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).
Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 250 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, PO Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

E. STATEMENT OF HISTORIC CONTEXTS

Introduction

This Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPD) addresses privately owned dance hall buildings in rural south Louisiana communities, particularly the twenty-two parishes comprising the Acadiana region due to their relatively large concentrations of French-speaking settlers. The dance halls are significant for their contribution to the development of regional music, particularly the Cajun, Creole/Zydeco, and Swamp Pop genres. Cajun and Creole music are associated with their respective cultures in the region.

The Cajun culture is associated with Acadian exiles from Nova Scotia who settled in the region in the mid-eighteenth century as well as Anglo Americans and immigrants from France, Germany, and elsewhere in Europe who also occupied the area during this time. “Creole,” which has carried different definitions for different regions and groups over time, in this case refers to descendants of African slaves as well as free people of color from Haiti who settled in the region in the late eighteenth century and blended with other early settlers in the region. The musical styles of both cultures share many elements, including style, instrumentation (heavy use of accordions and fiddles), and French language. While Creole music has more Afro-Caribbean and blues influence, Cajun music has more country western influence. Swamp Pop is a musical style adapted from 1950s American rock ‘n’ roll, western swing, and blues.

Dance halls included in this MPD were constructed between 1900 and approximately 1981. Dance hall buildings in the region have been identified as early as the mid-nineteenth century, but no pre-1900 buildings are known to be extant. This MPD incorporates surveys and research in progress by the Center for Louisiana Studies.

The dance halls in this study are thematically linked by the following characteristics:

1. All are located in the Acadiana region of south Louisiana.
2. All were privately owned, commercial properties.
4. All served as venues for live music and dancing including Cajun, Creole/Zydeco, or Swamp Pop music as well as other genres.

Overall, the extant resources are in relatively fair or poor condition. Modifications and expansions were common for these resources, many of which were converted to dance halls from other building types. Many, especially those in more remote locations, have sat vacant for long periods of time. Others have been adapted to other uses or used for storage. Those that have remained in use for their original purpose have been modified in varying degrees.

Cajun Music and Cultural Development in Rural South Louisiana, c. 1900 to c. 1980

The Cajuns of southwest Louisiana are descendants of a group of Acadian people from Nova Scotia who were exiled in the mid-eighteenth century. The Acadians originally settled in relatively isolated regions in southwest Louisiana, primarily west of the Mississippi River, and remained somewhat culturally and socially isolated until the twentieth century,[1] though they did experience some degree of influence in the nineteenth century from others in the region.[2] As noted Louisiana historian Barry Ancelet describes,

> Within a generation, these exiles had so firmly reestablished themselves as a people that they became the dominant culture in South Louisiana and absorbed the other ethnic groups around them. Most of the French Creoles (descendants of early French settlers), Spanish, Germans, Scots-Irish, Afro-Caribbeans, and Anglo-Americans in the region eventually adopted the traditions and language of this new society which became the South Louisiana mainstream. The Acadians, in turn, borrowed many traits of these other cultures, and this cross-cultural exchange produced a new Louisiana-based community, the Cajuns.[3]

Cajun music evolved through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, often reflecting larger cultural patterns in stylistic changes that occurred over time. In her book *Cajun Music: A Reflection of a People,* Ann Savoy identifies five distinct chronological periods: Early Cajun Music, String Band Era, The Return of the Accordion, A Return to Traditional Fiddle Music, and Modern Cajun.[4]

In the eighteenth century, most Acadians were subsistence farmers or, in some cases, cattle ranchers. Music at the time reflected the hardships of isolation and adaptation to an often hostile climate, and old French ballads as well as others from European and American settlers became standards.[5] A strong culture of social dancing developed separately from the Acadians who remained in Canada, who were under stricter religious supervision.[6] *Bals de maison,* or house dances, were typical among these communities for one of the only available opportunities for gathering and entertainment after weeks of long agricultural work. Several eighteenth-century accounts of these dances exist from visitors to the communities. At this time families attended dances together, children included, and most courting occurred at the dance itself accompanied by strict social rules (see Statement of Significance). Music typically was performed by two musicians playing fiddle, which had accompanied the Acadians from Canada and was the instrument of choice at the time.[7] The dance gatherings are believed to have contributed to the development of the sound of Cajun music from early on, as the need to

[1] Conrad, *The Cajuns: Essays on Their History and Culture,* 1-19.
[2] Conrad, *The Cajuns: Essays on Their History and Culture,* 95-108.
[3] Ancelet, *Cajun and Creole Music Makers,* 22.
[4] Savoy, *Cajun Music,* table of contents.
[5] Ancelet, *Cajun Music,* 22.
[6] Comeaux, “The Cajun Dance Hall,” 38.
[7] Savoy, *Cajun Music,* 4.

remain audible over the dancing crowds led musicians to develop a distinctive vocal and instrumentation style. This need for volume also contributed to the popularity of the diatonic accordion, which appeared in the region in the late nineteenth century.[8]

Though cultural assimilation was gradual, it accelerated in the twentieth century with transportation, communication, and economic developments. The second decade of the century brought a symbolic turning point when spoken French was outlawed in Louisiana public schools in 1916. This coincided with World War I and a growing influx of Anglo-American settlers following the growing oil industry in the state, both of which increased exposure to the surrounding American population. On a non-institutionalized level, stigma associated with the French language and Cajun culture was growing.[9] Still, Cajun music continued to thrive. By the 1920s, the diatonic accordion and guitar were popular mainstays at Cajun dances, which were increasingly occurring in commercial dance halls that had appeared in the state as early as the 1860s.[10] This period also brought the first commercial recording of Cajun music by Joe Falcon in 1928 in New Orleans, followed shortly after by black Creole accordion player and singer Amédé Ardoin and others.

By the early 1930s, the popularity of the accordion dwindled in favor of western swing, brought in with the new Anglo-American residents as well as increasing availability of radios.[11] Lack of availability of the German-made instruments also contributed.[12] This coincided with continuing migration of Cajuns to southeast Texas, a pattern that had begun in earnest with the emergence of the oil industry at the beginning of the century and would continue with the growth of the shipbuilding industry.[13] This new western style was increasingly performed by Cajun musicians in dance halls, often in French but increasingly in English. By World War II, the western-leaning sound reached a peak and bands often included steel guitar and drums and began to use electronic amplifiers.[14]

After World War II, a sense of cultural pride and longing for home accompanied returning soldiers, and the accordion surged in popularity again. The return to traditional Cajun music, largely pioneered by Iry Lejeune and attracting former musicians such as Joe Falcon and Nathan Abshire back to music performance, nonetheless retained later American influences.[15] They played often, some almost every night, and played with a tighter orchestration that kept "the successive eight or sixteen bar instrumental rides learned from swing and bluegrass music."[16]This Americanized Cajun music with varied instrumentation prevailed mainly in dance halls and is commonly called "Dancehall Cajun" for that reason. *Bals de maison,* still occurring

[8] Ancelet *Cajun and Creole Music Makers,* 22.
[9] Ancelet *Cajun and Creole Music Makers,* 25.
[10] Comeaux,"The Cajun Dance Hall, 41.
[11] Ancelet, *Cajun Music,* 26, 28.
[12] Ancelet, *Cajun Music,* 28.
[13] Brasseaux, "Cajun Lapland."
[14] Savoy, *Cajun Music,* 13; Ancelet, *Cajun and Creole Music Makers,* 26.
[15] Ancelet, *Cajun and Creole Music Makers,* 28.
[16] Ancelet, *Cajun Music: Its Origins and Development* ,35.

at the time, and less formal gatherings of musicians in homes were more likely to feature traditional songs and smaller, simpler bands.

By the 1960s, increasing cultural awareness nationwide set the tone fora new appreciation for Cajun music and the culture as a whole. This occurred both outside and within the state. Several Cajun musicians, including Dewey Balfa, performed at the Newport Folk Festival in Rhode Island in 1964 and were very well received despite the negative sentiment toward Cajun culture still prevailing in some places in Louisiana.[17] This festival is generally credited with spurring a new interest in the Cajun culture from those outside the state.[18] It also inspired Balfa to advocate for culture and music within the state.[19] The Council of Development of French in Louisiana (CODOFIL), established in 1968, showed a growing institutional interest in the preservation and promotion of the French heritage in south Louisiana. CODOFIL hosted the Tribute to Cajun Music Festival in 1974, kicking off a trend of local cultural festivals that helped to introduce younger Cajuns to the music. Because they had not been allowed inside dance halls for some time, this was a new experience that inspired many youth to learn and carry on the development of Cajun music. This effect was boosted by a series of dine-and-dance halls that opened in the 1980s and 1990s beginning with Mulate's in Breaux Bridge. Influenced in part by the tourism boom caused by increasing interest in Cajun culture from outside the state, these combined restaurants and dance halls provided another opportunity for children to listen and dance to live Cajun music.[20]

Approximately ten Cajun dance halls from the period of significance are known to remain. The oldest, though heavily modified in the interior, dates to the 1901, and the newest dates to the 1970s. Between two and four remain open as music venues. The rest are vacant, are in use for storage, or have been adapted for other uses. Integrity is variable. A few retain high levels of integrity, but many have been modified.

Creole Music and Cultural Development in Rural South Louisiana, c. 1900 to c. 1985

Though the word "Creole" has carried different definitions for different regions and groups over time, the Creoles of rural southwest Louisiana today are generally considered to be descendants of African slaves as well as free people of color from Haiti who settled in the rural parishes of southwest Louisiana in the late eighteenth century and blended with other early settlers in the region. This cultural mixture has resulted in a rich musical tradition, also heavily influenced by the Cajuns who also settled in the region. In general, though Cajun music and the similar-sounding accordion-based early twentieth-century Creole music (including zydeco) are both commonly referred to as "French music" by both cultures, Creole music tends to carry a heavier influence from African and rhythm-and-blues music. The earlier African influence is often traced to *jure*, a style of primarily religious rhythmic singing and chanting accented by

[17] Ancelet, *Cajun Music: Its Origins and Development,* 37-38.
[18] Blank, *J'ai Été au Bal*.
[19] Ancelet, *Cajun Music: Its Origins and Development,* 38.
[20] Ancelet, *Cajun Music: Its Origins and Development* ,41.

stomping and clapping commonly practiced by slaves in the region prior to the Civil War. This style of singing was common alongside ballads passed down loosely from French and Spanish settlers. Black Creoles are believed to be the first to have used the diatonic accordion when it became available, gradually developing a style that sounded similar to the Cajun music developing at the time. Mutual musical influence between the two groups continued, fostered in part by black Creole musicians' participation in white Cajun *bals de maison*. [21] Many contend that Creole French music possessed a rhythm that differs slightly from the Cajun French music of the same time.[22] Creole French music also uses a distinctly different instrument that later became an essential piece of a zydeco band: the *frottoir*, adapted from earlier use of metal washboards.

In a tradition that might have begun as early as Saturday night gatherings in slave cabins,[23] the house dance, or *bal de maison* (also sometimes called country dances), was a regular occurrence for black Creoles in rural south Louisiana communities and into Texas[24] halfway through the twentieth century. Families, many working as sharecroppers, participated together in close-knit community activities and aided one another in difficult times. House dances took place regularly on Saturday nights and were central to community social interaction.
The dance-oriented French music common during this time was informally known as "La-La" or "pic-nic."[25] The music had by the turn of the twentieth century gained heavy influence from Cajun music, including some overlap of specific songs between the two cultures. Gradually through the 1940s, emerging rhythm and blues music exerted heavier influence: "As zydeco became a more urban-sounding music mixed with rhythm and blues, the house dances were increasingly replaced by public night clubs and dance halls."[26] This was happening by the 1940s, and increasing attendance at clubs led to a decrease in house dances.[27] Clubs were constructed without a deliberately distinct style, (though many of them conform roughly to vernacular commercial architecture in the region at the time). At least one house was relocated and converted to a club,[28] and of the extant zydeco clubs, at least two are at this point known to have been converted from previous uses.[29]

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[21] Savoy, *Cajun Music,* 304-305.
[22] Spitzer, *Zydeco*.
[23] Tisserand, *The Kingdom of Zydeco,* 23.
[24] A notable Louisiana Creole (and Cajun) population extends west as far as Houston (primarily along the I-10 corridor), where some families moved after the 1927 flood in Louisiana and for industrial jobs through the 20th century. The Houston neighborhood of the Fifth Ward/Frenchtown has at least one extant Zydeco club, the Silver Slipper. Clifton Chenier had a residence in Houston and spent some of his time there. (*Zydeco!* 43)
[25] Savoy, *Cajun Music,* 305.
[26] Spitzer, *Zydeco*.
[27] Tisserand, *The Kingdom of Zydeco,* 37.
[28] Tisserand, *The Kingdom of Zydeco,* 37.
[29] According to my interviews with Eugene Manuel and Bernard Daire, Papa Paul's in Mamou was originally a store building next to City Hall which was relocated and converted to a zydeco club in the 1950s. Also, Spitzer's *Zydeco* features an interview with Slim Gradney of Slim's Y-Ki-Ki in Opelousas in which he describes buying the building with the original intent to operate it as a store and later expanding it a total of four times to convert it into a dance club.

An evolution in the social structure associated with Creole dancing and gathering led to the gradual move to commercial clubs. Clubs were larger than houses and therefore could accommodate more people and larger bands with more instruments.[30] They also were less tied to individual tight-knit communities and attracted patrons from a wider region. As the Zydeco genre developed and became more popular, the faster style took over Saturday night sets and resulted in a more energetic atmosphere. As Mama Lena Pitre described, "The way they was dancing a long time ago, you could dance all night sundown to sunup. Because they was dancing the waltz different, the two-step different, you could dance all night. And now they jump a lot. When they jump, jump, jump, they get tired."[31] Dance halls continued to gain popularity as Creole music continued to take in influence from rhythm and blues and zydeco music in its present form began to emerge. Clifton Chenier, widely known as the "King of Zydeco," moved to east Texas in 1947, a common move for Louisiana Creoles (and Cajuns) looking for industrial work. Around that time, Chenier began to usher in the new music style with a piano key accordion. Chenier ultimately divided his time between Houston and the Opelousas area and enjoyed increasing success through the 1980s.[32]

Though 1970s tourism interest from outside Louisiana tended to focus on Cajun music and culture (and often falsely included Creole culture under this label), Creole music experienced a similar pattern of cultural self awareness. "In the midst of economics and social change, there's been pressure for many creoles to identify with black American society beyond French Louisiana; yet, among the more landed Creoles of color, there is a strong cultural continuity based on a shared history and maintained through family ties, church congregations, and social clubs."[33] By the 1980s, Zydeco music and dance hall culture was regaining popularity among younger Creoles. In a 1984 documentary: "Dances and dance halls help define the social boundaries of the Creole community. They provide the setting for dates and for meeting marriage partners. Thus, it is especially significant that many young Creoles have returned to the French dance hall in recent years [as of 1984]. This renewed interest in zydeco music *jure* and dances suggests a broader resurgence in Creole culture and consciousness in general."[34] In 1985, Rockin' Sidney released a single called "Don't Mess with my Toot Toot." The song became a national hit and went on to win a Grammy award more than twenty years before the a short-lived special category for Zydeco and Cajun music was established in 2008. According to Dikki Du Carriere, a Zydeco musician in 2013, this song virtually singlehandedly brought zydeco back into favor with what was then the Creole youth of south Louisiana.[35]

[30] Tisserand, *The Kingdom of Zydeco,* 37.
[31] Tisserand, *The Kingdom of Zydeco,* 33. Several descriptions of Zydeco dance halls from different sources describe the floors as "bouncy." I've only seen this description once in reference to a Cajun dance hall. Judging from the halls I've visited, there appears to be no fundamental difference in the dance floors. This description probably has more to do with the nature of the dancing than the floor itself.
[32] Sandmel, *Zydeco!* 30-63.
[33] Spitzer, *Zydeco.*
[34] Spitzer, *Zydeco.*
[35] Personal interview, Dikki Du Carriere.

In the 1970s,a new tradition of Zydeco trail rides became popular. The trail ride tradition pays tribute to Creole cattle ranching as well as the *boucherie,* a tradition that involved community gathering centered on cooking all parts of a hog to provide meat for the community.[36] Trail rides typically took place on weekends and consisted of group rides on horseback through the countryside with several stops at bars and dance halls, culminating in a dance at the end of the ride. Though this ritual became less common as food storage and preparation improved through the twentieth century, the gathering tradition was revived beginning in the late 1960s. Trail rides evolved to become highly structured events culminating in a large dance at the end of the ride. Though dances sometimes take place in barns or outdoors, many occur at large zydeco dance halls. [37]

Approximately fifteen Creole dance halls from the period of significance are known to remain. The oldest dates to the 1930s, and the newest was expanded and converted to a dance hall from a small bar in the early 1980s. Between five and seven are known to remain open as music venues. The rest are vacant or in use for storage. Integrity is relatively high with few adapted for other active uses. Most have had various interior and exterior materials replaced gradually over time.

Swamp Pop Origins and Development in Rural South Louisiana, c. 1955 to c. 1965

World War II was a significant driving force in the accelerated cultural assimilation of south Louisiana Cajuns. Young men from the region were shipped off to war and subsequently exposed to other parts of the country and the world all at once. They also formed close relationships with fellow GIs who hailed from different parts of the United States. After the war, traditional Cajun music enjoyed a surge in popularity as homesick soldiers longed for signs of home. At the same time, further increasing use of television and other new forms of entertainment were contributing to a decline in dance hall attendance among families.[38] This was especially true for the younger generation, the teenagers of the 1950s, who discovered Elvis Presley right along with the rest of American teenagers.[39] Traditional Cajun music more or less fell completely out of popular favor as the youth became interested in rock 'n' roll and created what would eventually be known as Swamp Pop.

As historian Shane Bernard describes in his book on Swamp Pop music, "Teenage Cajuns and black Creoles from Acadiana and southeast Texas began to experiment with big-city rhythm and blues (especially the New Orleans variety), combining it unwittingly with country and western and Cajun and black Creole elements to create swamp pop music."[40] The term "swamp pop" is retroactive, first used by British music writers in the 1970s.[41] When it originated in the early 1950s, it was not intended to be a distinct genre. The music originated with black

[36] Tisserand, *The Kingdom of Zydeco*, 255-260.
[37] Spitzer, *Zydeco!* 79-82
[38] Bernard *The Cajuns: Americanization of a People*, 41.
[39] Bernard, *The Cajuns: Americanization of a People*, 44.
[40] Bernard, *Swamp Pop*, 177-186.
[41] Ibid. 14-15.

Creole teenagers in southwest Louisiana and was quickly adopted and emulated by white Cajun teenagers. Though these early Creole origins are not as well researched as the later bi-racial development of the music, Bernard describes: "The genre evidently originated in the early 1950s among black Creoles playing a distinctive rhythm and blues style (a sort of proto-swamp pop) in largely rural and small-town south Louisiana nightclubs." [42] These clubs likely are not distinct from those in the area associated with zydeco and rhythm and blues or rock 'n' roll music. [43]

The musical style became popular as rhythm and blues gained popularity, leading to some more traditional bands changing styles – and, in some cases, adopting new names – as they witnessed the growing crowds at dance halls with swamp pop acts and dwindling for Cajun bands.[44] Several individual musicians also adopted American-sounding stage names for themselves.[45] Swamp pop was particularly popular in recorded form, which resulted in more frequent entertainment by jukebox in smaller lounges.

"Although today few south Louisiana and southeast Texas nightclubs sponsor live swamp pop music, the swamp pop club scene thrived in the late 1950s and early '60s. Most of these nightclubs, however, were Cajun swamp pop clubs in which both Cajun and black Creole swamp pop groups appeared." "Many were rough-and-tumble joints, where some male clubgoers from rival towns or rural districts often gathered for the sole purpose of fighting." Bernard's interview with swamp pop musician Phillip Comeaux demonstrated of New Iberia's Teche Club: "And boy, when you had a fight there, I mean, this was a war, it was a big to-do….And [the owner would] tell us when a fight broke out, he'd say 'Pick out a fast number and don't stop 'til I tell ya.' And, man! We'd be playing for 45 minutes!"[46]

Swamp pop recordings became popular and were made mostly at small regional recording studios in southwest Louisiana and southeast Texas, with a few others in New Orleans. The style eventually gained popularity outside the state.[47] The swamp pop sound did not evolve with changing styles as its Cajun and Zydeco counterparts did. Largely for this reason, its heyday was short lived, and it had lost its popularity by the late 1960s.[48] The genre retained a cult following, however, in Louisiana as well as England and Japan. Swamp pop music has experienced small revivals through the years, one of the most notable being Rod Bernard's

[42] Ibid., 20.
[43] In an interview with Slim Gradney, founder of Slim's Y-Ki-Ki in Opelousas (now known as one of the most iconic Zydeco clubs), the club (which opened in 1947 or 1949, depending on the source) originally hosted what he calls rock 'n' roll music, later using Cookie and the Cupcakes as an example. This would have been what is now known as Swamp Pop. He began hiring Creole bands (the term "Zydeco" didn't exist yet – he refers to it as "French music") after the rock 'n' roll no longer attracted a large enough crowd. See statement of significance for more information.
[44] Bernard, *Swamp Pop,* 45.
[45] Ibid.
[46] Ibid. 55.
[47] Ibid. 60-61.
[48] Bernard, *Swamp Pop* 20

series of reunions at the Southern Club in Opelousas in the 1990s. Some swamp pop artists continue to perform today, typically in lounges or at regional festivals.

Approximately six dance halls primarily associated with swamp pop are extant. Only one of these dance halls remains in use as a music venue, and it currently opens only once annually. Overall, however, their condition is relatively good. One has been re-clad on the exterior, and two have been renovated to serve as event venues. The amount of interior modification for these renovations is unclear. One has been heavily altered and converted to a mixed-use building.

F. ASSOCIATED PROPERTY TYPES

Dance Hall Property Type

Because of the broad range of characteristics present in extant dance halls associated with each genre and the overall similarities among those associated with different genres, all dance halls are grouped together as one loosely defined building type. In this case, a dance hall is a building constructed for the purpose of social gathering via music and dancing in Cajun or rural Creole communities. A dance hall would have regularly hosted Cajun French, Creole French/Zydeco, or Swamp Pop music and would not have been constructed primarily for tourism. "Dance hall" dos not need to be included in the name for a property to be considered eligible. Buildings considered dance halls for the purpose of this nomination might also be informally called nightclubs, clubs, or lounges.

Dance halls can be distinguished by primary genre but also by race (particularly Cajun and Creole), some physical characteristics, and some associative characteristics (see descriptions). In general, distinctions are based primarily on associative characteristics. The three genres contain considerable overlap within the music itself and in the use of dance halls. For example, Shane Bernard explains in his book: "Whether the swamp pop sound first appeared around Lake Charles or Opelousas and Eunice (or both simultaneously), its earliest development still appears to owe much to the northern prairie region's black Creole nightclubs. These almost forgotten clubs include the [Gin]-Side Inn in Lawtell and Bradford's White Eagle in Opelousas; three early black clubs, Slim's Y Ki Ki in Opelousas, Richard's in Lawtell, and Paul's Playhouse in Sunset, survive to the present as popular zydeco nightspots."[50] As of March 2013, all the buildings survive except Paul's Playhouse. The Gin-Side Inn was resurrected as Roy's Offshore Lounge, a zydeco club, around 1981. Bradford's White Eagle is vacant and, according to long-time neighbors, never hosted zydeco music. There is considerably less overlap between Cajun and Creole dance halls, primarily due to racial segregation; however, at least two dance halls constructed in the 1960s are known to have served both Cajun and Creole patrons in separate rooms.[51]

Physical Characteristics: Form, Construction and Exterior Materials

Within the dance hall building type, there are several common characteristics as well as a few distinct variations. Most dance halls are one-story rectangular frame buildings with pier-and-beam foundations and gable roofs. They are most commonly oriented either parallel or perpendicular to the street. Exterior materials vary and are likely to have changed over time. As it was not uncommon for a dance hall to be expanded over time or converted from a different building type (most commonly store buildings), variations can be extensive. At the same time, rural vernacular construction for commercial buildings in this region is fairly straightforward and does not result in much specialization of building types. Roofs might also

[50] *Swamp Pop* 52
[51] The Little Mushroom, Arnaudville (extant) and Paul's Playhouse, Sunset (demolished)

be hipped or flat. Many include shed roof additions on one or both sides of the original structure.

Dance halls constructed before c. 1950 are most likely to be clad in wood clapboard siding. This remains common in later years, but more variation in cladding material occurred beginning around the 1950s. Dance halls of brick and CMU construction have been identified, and alternate cladding materials may include wood shingles or shakes, asphalt or asbestos shingles or panels, asbestos shingles or panels, and others. Roofs are most commonly covered with corrugated sheet metal or asphalt shingles. Some dance halls, especially those constructed or renovated after World War II, have decorative parapets (most commonly stepped, half round or mansard) and more decorative finishes on the primary (street-facing) façade. Dance halls constructed or renovated during the 1950s or 1960s might include neon signage.

Other common exterior features include ventilation or air conditioning equipment. Most dance halls constructed before the 1950s were ventilated with attic fans or box fans in exterior walls to draw warm air out of the building. Dance halls were commonly retrofitted with wall air conditioners beginning in the 1950s. These units are typically installed in haphazard rows along the longer sides of the dance hall space. In some cases, central air conditioners might also be present.

Physical Characteristics: Interior Arrangement, Materials and Characteristics

Dance halls typically include a large open floor space for dancing and a stage that might be separated from the dance floor by elevation or division with a low balustrade. Most, but not all, also contain a bar area. In many cases the adult-only bar area is completely closed off from the child-friendly dance hall space. In dance halls constructed or altered in later years, it is more common for the bar and dance hall to share a single open space. Space for seating is commonly located around the dance floor and is distinguished only by the placement of movable furniture. Seating might take the form of benches around the perimeter (more common earlier) or simple tables and chairs (more common in later years). Larger swamp pop dance halls dating to the 1950s and 1960s might have more complicated interior configurations, including raised mezzanine levels, multiple bars, and backstage areas such as dressing rooms for musicians.

Interiors often include wood strip dance floors and low ceilings either with wood panels or acoustical material. Dance halls with attic fan ventilation might retain attic fans in the ceiling. Box fans in exterior walls might also be visible from the interior.

Many Creole dance halls, particularly those constructed or altered in the 1980s, include small kitchens with service windows open to the dance hall spaces. Gumbo, jambalaya, red beans

and rice, and fried chicken are common fare. Creole dances also commonly included barbecue by the 1980s. This was more commonly prepared in a pit outside the dance hall building.

Setting and Use

Dance halls historically have been located in several different types of settings. Many cities, towns, and communities within the area of study had at least one dance hall located in or near the city center near stores, restaurants, and other entertainment venues such as cinemas. In primarily Cajun communities, Creole dance halls will be centrally located where the Creole population was concentrated and often had a separate set of businesses. This type of setting is especially common for older dance halls. Another common location is along parish, state, or interstate highways just outside city limits or between communities and along bayous or other bodies of water. In this case, access might be possible by boat as well as by car. They also might be located within motor courts as well as recreational complexes such as resorts, campgrounds, or amusement parks. In these cases, the dance hall on each site functioned similarly to those in permanent community centers, serving as the main gathering spot for the community of visitors. Though most dance halls are stand-alone buildings serving one function, some are located in mixed-use buildings. Some known configurations include two-story commercial frame or brick buildings with retail or offices below and the dance hall on the second floor as well as large one-story frame buildings with separate businesses sharing a common façade.[52] These buildings are most likely to be located in community centers. Another mixed-use configuration is the dinner club, with a separate but attached restaurant space considered part of the club, most commonly found in large swamp pop dance halls of the 1950s.

[52] The only known extant dance hall in this configuration is the Lee Brothers Dance Hall in Cut Off.

Significance

Dance hall buildings will most often be eligible under Criterion A for their contribution to the development of the indigenous music of south Louisiana. This may be directly related to one or two genres if the individual property can be associated with them specifically, or it may be limited to one period of development of a genre or rural south Louisiana music overall. Many dance halls can be associated with a primary genre but often were not limited to one genre. For example, jazz, blues, rock 'n' roll, and other types of American music such as western and swing were often heard in the same dance halls that hosted regular Cajun or Creole music, depending on what was popular at the time. This mixture undoubtedly contributed to the evolution and creation of the genres themselves. Buildings might be eligible at the state level for contribution to the overall development of the music or the local level for their role in the presence of this music in a social context within a particular community. They may be considered contributing structures in historic districts with any other unrelated types of buildings, and specific music-related districts can be created where several dance halls or lounges exist in close proximity.

Additional levels of significance could be related to community or cultural development in general. Many dance halls, particularly those located in a single community, played an important role in community gathering and socialization.

Cajun Dance Hall Significance

In earlier years and as late at the early 1960s in some communities, weekly dances served as important events for courtship. Dances were family affairs, with parents present to chaperone and to dance themselves and young children who typically were left to sleep in a separate area or room, sometimes called the *parc aux petites*. The practice of bringing small children to dances and leaving them to sleep is believed to have given rise to the term *fais do-do,* an informal Cajun French term meaning "go to sleep" and more recently used as a name for a Cajun dance. Social customs were strict. In Cajun dance halls, patrons paid admission and received a ribbon stapled to their clothing or another form of proof of admission. In many cases guests were allowed into the separate bar area free of charge but paid admission to enter the dance hall space. Young men were confined to a separate area, sometimes called a *cage aux chiens* or bullpen, between dances. Young women were expected to stay inside the dance hall between dances, and most rested on wood benches placed around the perimeter of the room.

In his study of the evolution of Cajun dance gatherings, Malcolm Comeaux includes a late 1880s description of a Cajun dance in a dance hall:

> The ball room was a large hall with galleries all around it. When we entered it was crowded with persons dancing to the music of three fiddles. I was astonished to see that

> nothing was asked for entrance, but I was told that any white persons decently dressed could come in. The man giving the entertainment derived his profits from the sale of refreshments... We went together to the refreshment room, where there were beer and lemonade, but I observed that the favorite drink was black coffee, which indeed was excellent. At midnight supper was served; it was chicken gombo (sic) with rice, the national Creole dish.
>
> After supper my friend asked me if I wanted to see *le parc aux petits*. I followed him without knowing what he meant, and he took me to a room adjoining the dancing hall, where I saw a number of little children thrown on a bed and sleeping. The mothers who accompanied their daughters had left the little ones in the *parc aux petits* before passing to the dancing room, where I saw them the whole evening assembled together in one corner of the hall and watching over their daughters. *Le parc aux petits* interested me very much, but I found the gambling room stranger still. There were about a dozen men at a table playing cards. One lamp suspended from the ceiling threw a dim light upon the players who appeared at first sight very wild, with their broad-brimmed felt hats on their heads and their long untrimmed sunburnt faces. There was, how ever (sic) a kindly expression on every face, and everything was so quiet that I saw that the men were not professional gamblers. I saw the latter a little later, in a barn near by (sic) where they had taken refuge. About half a dozen men, playing on a rough board by the light of two candles. I understood that these were the black sheep of the crowd, and we merely cast a glance at them.
>
> I was desirous to see the end of the ball, but having been told that the break-up would only take place at 4 or 5 o'clock in the morning, we went away at one o'clock. I was pleased with my evening, and I admired the perfect order that reigned, considering that it was a public affair and open to all who wished to come, without any en? trance fee. My friend told me that when the dance was over the musicians would rise, and, going out in the yard, would fire several pistol shots in the air, crying out at the same time: *le bal est fini.* [53]

As time passed, these social customs evolved. By the 1970s, children were seldom allowed in dance halls. Newly constructed buildings were more commonly larger and located between communities, both leading to and resulting from broader social interaction. This also continued the common occurrence of territorial fights among teenage and adult men, for which many dance halls were notorious. [54]

Additional activities commonly took place in Cajun dance halls. These included gambling, primarily a card game known as bourré, and cockfighting. Some extant dance hall buildings retain auxiliary spaces, often separate rooms, once used for gambling. Upscale dance halls, most often large swamp pop halls, might include separate dressing room or backstage areas

[53] Comeaux, “The Cajun Dance Hall,” 41.
[54] Bernard, *Swamp Pop,* 55.

for bands. Some functioned as dinner clubs and included attached restaurant spaces with kitchens. Dance halls often served double duty for other community functions. Some known examples include polling places, auctions, and wedding receptions.

A dance hall might be eligible under Criterion B if a significant musician or band either owned it or performed regularly as the house band. Though additional significant musicians may be identified, the following list includes those most commonly named in major sources on the development of south Louisiana music.

Though no known extant buildings retain the distinct physical characteristics common to Cajun dance halls in the early twentieth century, including the *cage aux chiens* and *parc aux petites*, a dance hall exhibiting these features would be eligible under Criterion C.

Creole Dance Hall Significance

The Kingdom of Zydeco, a 1998 book by Michael Tisserand, compiles quotes from a series of interviews with Creoles who attended early *bals de maison*. The quotes, arranged thematically, give a broad picture of the atmosphere and social norms associated with these house dances.[55] According to the collection of these firsthand accounts, families alternated hosting the dances at their homes. Dances were announced by word of mouth, either passing from person to person or announced by a member of the community traveling around, and might be attended by up to forty people. Hosts typically charged admission and served food (usually including gumbo) and alcohol (beer, wine and whiskey are mentioned), sometimes charging for food and drink as well. The dances typically were held in the front rooms of rural two-room houses with outdoor kitchens and no electricity. Furniture was removed and replaced with benches lining the walls, in some cases covered with sheets. The small houses became crowded and hot during dances. Musicians set up in a corner and played Creole music, primarily on diatonic accordion or fiddle and metal washboards or *frottoirs* for percussion. Manners were held in high regard, with men extending handkerchiefs to women to invite them to dance. Parents frequently kept watch over their dancing children. Older men might gather elsewhere on the property to drink and play cards. Women were expected to remain indoors and sit on benches when they were not dancing. Children generally were not allowed in.[56] Dances frequently lasted through the night until early Sunday morning hours.[57]

Some Creole dance halls are also associated with the cultural practice of group trail rides that began in the late 1960s and continues today. Trail rides consist of a planned route ridden on horseback culminating in a dance. These are more likely to be located in rural areas and surrounded with large feels and sometimes amenities for horses. Some, though not all, contain the word “ranch” in the name.

[55] Tisserand, *The Kingdom of Zydeco,* 23-38.
[56] *J’ai Ete au Bal* includes an anecdote about Rockin’ Dopsie attending house dances with his parents but being forced to watch through the windows because he was too young to go inside.
[57] Tisserand, *The Kingdom of Zydeco* , 37.

Swamp Pop Dance Hall Significance

Though the swamp pop genre is associated with the Creole and Cajun cultures, its identity is less culturally dependent and more closely related to the musical style itself. As mentioned before, this is evident in several Creole dance halls that hosted early swamp pop music and have since become better known for zydeco. Still, several dance halls have been identified that were built in the 1950s or early 1960s during the height of swamp pop's popularity and are strongly associated with swamp pop music specifically. The relatively large size of these dance halls as well as their locations, commonly on state highways outside city limits, are representative of this particular time period in the development of south Louisiana music overall. This time period is considered the peak of assimilation of the cultures in general before the period of cultural self-discovery that began later in the 1960s. By this time, patrons were traveling longer distances by car to visit dance halls, and many of these hosted nationally or internationally well-known musicians from outside Louisiana as they traveled between larger cities. These dance halls tend to exhibit more upscale finishes and configurations

Segregation and Race Relations

Cajuns and rural Creoles developed their music with heavy influence from each other. If both had not coexisted so closely, neither would exist as it is today. This close interaction, however, did not extend to social gathering. "Dances became the most segregated events in Southwest Louisiana. 'They played ball against one another in the pasture, but they decided to go dancing among themselves,' recalls Creole accordionist Walter Polite. 'That was around '26 or '27, before the high water.'"[58] Tales about racism in early twentieth century dance halls are prevalent, ranging from violence toward blacks who appeared in white dance halls[59] to an often-repeated story about a dark-skinned black Creole musician forced to stand outside and play accordion through the window wearing gloves at a house dance for lighter skinned Creoles.[60] A dance hall known to exhibit the latter was the Triangle Club (extant) in Frilot Cove, a somewhat isolated biracial community where social class was to some extent determined by lightness of skin color.[61]

In the 1960s, segregation remained in dance halls. At least two dance halls in St. Landry Parish – The Silver Slipper in Pecaniere[62] (demolished) and the Little Mushroom near Arnaudville[63] – were divided, with separate dance floors for black and white. *The Kingdom of*

[58] Tisserand, *The Kingdom of Zydeco,* 4.
[59] Ibid, 5.
[60] Ibid*,* 3; Spitzer, *Zydeco.*
[61] Jones, "The People of Frilot Cove: A Study of Racial Hybrids."
[62] Tisserand, *The Kingdom of Zydeco,* 125.
[63] Personal interview with club owner Sterling Speyrer. Though the building still stands, the owners plan to demolish it soon. A large portion of the side of the club designated for African Americans has already been demolished.

Zydeco, describing the atmosphere of the former, which was frequented by zydeco musician Clifton Chenier, describes,

> Chenier would perform on the white side of the club one week, and for the blacks the next. 'You could hear the music on both sides,' recalls Wilbert Levier, a frequent patron of the club. 'But coming up in our time, the blacks couldn't go in there. They might be good friends with a white family, and they might dance with one another on the porch. Or you could be army buddies, both in the same platoon. You'd come home…and go to the dance, and you'd be on that side, and you on this side. You understand that, because that's the way it was.[64]

The book also notes the difference in Chenier's playing style on each of the two sides: "At the black dances he'd play more slow. The black people used to like to dance tight."[65]

By the 1970s, as zydeco music became more popular among white listeners, the informal segregation had begun to soften, almost exclusively for whites in the beginning. In the 1980s, either Hamilton's Place[66] or the Bon Ton Rouley[67] in Lafayette began regularly booking the Red Beans and Rice Revue, a band that tended to attract white patrons, one night per week. The evening became informally known as "White Night." Though the racial barrier gradually began to soften, tensions were proven still high in 1995 when an African American visitor from Chicago was denied entry to La Poussiere, a Cajun dance hall in Breaux Bridge, because of her race.

Significant Musicians, Chronological by Genre

Cajun

1. Joe and Cleoma Falcon: Popular Cajun dance hall musicians primarily in the 1920s. The Falcons performed one of the first-ever Cajun recordings, "Allons à Lafayette," in 1928.
2. Sady Courville: Early Cajun fiddler, one of the earliest recorded. Played often with Dennis McGee and Amédée Ardoin.
3. Dennis McGee: Early Cajun fiddler, one of the earliest recorded. Played often with Sady Courville and Amédée Ardoin.
4. Hackberry Ramblers: Exemplified western swing style of the 1930s and 1940s.Iry Lejeune: Instrumental in the popular return of traditional accordion music between World War II and 1955, both as a live performer and in recorded music.

[64] Tisserand, *The Kingdom of Zydeco,*125.
[65] Ibid.
[66] Fuller, "A Sense of Place." http://www.theind.com/cover-story/183.
[67] Tisserand, *The Kingdom of Zydeco,*125.

5. Nathan Abshire: Instrumental in the popular return of traditional accordion music between World War II and 1955, both as a live performer and in recorded music. Performed at the Newport Folk Festival in 1964.
6. D.L. Menard: Wrote "*La Porte d'en Arriere*," one of the most famous modern Cajun songs. Heavily influenced by country music, particularly Hank Williams.
7. Dewey Balfa (Balfa family): Instrumental in the returning popularity of traditional fiddle music in the 1960s. The Balfa Brothers performed at the Newport Folk Festival in 1964. They are internationally well known.

Creole/Zydeco

1. Amédée Ardoin: Early Creole musician who was very popular with both black and white audiences. Credited with heavily influencing the sound of Cajun music today.
2. Canray Fontenot: Fiddle player well known for playing old-style Creole music.
3. Alphonse "Bois Sec" Ardoin: Fiddler well known for playing old-style Creole music. Nephew of Amédée Ardoin.
4. Bébé Carrière: Fiddle player well known for playing old-style Creole music. Played house dances from the 1930s to 1940s.
5. Clifton Chenier: Internationally famous Creole musician; credited with introducing the musical style now widely considered to be zydeco. Began the King of Zydeco tradition.
6. Boozoo Chavis: Popular zydeco musician who began in the 1940s playing "la-la" music on the diatonic accordion.
7. Rockin' Dopsie: Popular zydeco musician in the 1950s.
8. John Delafose: Popular zydeco musicianfrom the 1970s until his death in 1994.
9. Roy Carrier: Popular zydeco musician and owner of Roy's Offshore Lounge. His son, Chubby Carrier, won a Grammy award for a zydeco album in 2011.
10. Rockin' Sidney Simien: Wrote and recorded "My Toot Toot," the song widely credited for spurring a zydeco renaissance in the 1980s.
11. Terrance Simien: First winner of a Grammy award in the "Zydeco or Cajun Music Album" category in 2001.

Swamp Pop

1. Boogie Ramblers/Cookie and the Cupcakes: Likely the first swamp pop band. Signed in Lake Charles in 1952; first single released in 1954 or 1955.
2. Bobby Charles: Early Swamp Pop musician. Wrote "See You Later Alligator," later made internationally famous by Bill Haley and His Comets.
3. King Karl and Guitar Gable: Prominent early Swamp Pop musicians.
4. Jimmy Clanton: Gained national fame; performed on *American Bandstand,* recorded several Billboard Top 10 songs, and starred in two movies during the 1950s and 1960s.

5. Roy Perkins: Prominent early Swamp Pop musician.
6. Johnnie Allan: Began playing in traditional Cajun bands and changed his style after seeing Elvis Presley perform. Recorded “Lonely Days and Lonely Nights.”
7. Warren Storm: Popular Swamp Pop musician who continued to perform after the 1960s and enjoyed a resurgence in popularity in the 2000s.
8. Rod Bernard: Recorded “This Should Go On Forever” as well as Swamp Pop versions of several Cajun songs, including “Colinda” and “Diggy Liggy Lo.”
9. Gene Terry: Prominent early Swamp Pop musician. Recordings include “Cindy Lou.”
10. Bobby Page and the Riff Raffs: Prominent early Swamp Pop musician. Recordings include “Hippy Ti Yo.”
11. Johnny Preston: Prominent Swamp Pop musician. Recordings include “Running Bear.”

Dance Hall Registration Requirements

Dance halls nominated under either Criterion A or B must only possess good integrity of association. They must retain evidence of their use as a dance hall. The interior layout is the most important feature, followed by retention of major interior features and materials such as a bar (not necessarily the original) and dance floor. The layout need not match the original layout of the building, allowing for subsequent renovations, but it must be recognizable as a dance hall. Separation of the bar and dance hall areas is desirable, particularly for older buildings, but is not required as this was likely to be altered if a dance hall remained in use over a long period of time. The typical atmosphere is frequently described as crowded, dimly lit, and hot due to low ceilings and lack of adequate air conditioning. Because the buildings were continually renovated and expanded and often converted from other building types, exterior appearance and materials are less important. Because older materials are reflections of their time, however, they should be retained when possible.

Additional Property Types for Future Consideration

The development of Cajun, Zydeco, and Swamp Pop music occurred in countless types of places. Though dance halls are the most recognizable resources due to their construction primarily for the purpose of live music and dancing, a comprehensive list might include the following additional property types:

1. Lounges
   Lounges are distinguishable from dance halls primarily by their smaller size, always-integrated bar, and common lack of designated areas for music performance and dancing. It is important to note that a lounge should be distinguished from a dance hall by its size and characteristics instead if by its name as the names of several extant dance halls contain the word “lounge.” A lounge might also be referred to as a club or bar. Though the typical design is less conducive to dancing than their dance hall counterparts and they may or may not have been constructed with live music and dancing in mind, lounges are a significant resource type due to the music and dancing that did nonetheless happen there. Lounges are especially {important} for Swamp Pop, as music of this genre was often experienced via jukebox.

   An ideal lounge example is Fred’s Lounge in Mamou, Louisiana. Originally opened in 1946 (the current building dates to 1960), Fred’s Lounge was never intended to serve as a dance hall. This is illustrated by one of several remaining signs written by the late Fred Tate outlining the rules of the lounge. The sign reads: “This is not a dance hall. If you get hurt dancing, we are not responsible.” Despite this written warning, longtime manager Sue Vasseur admits that Cajun dancing has been a part of the Fred’s experience since the beginning. Fred’s Lounge retains its integrity of use today with the continuation of a weekly Saturday morning live radio broadcast in place since 1962.

2. Recording Studios
   Recorded Cajun, Creole/Zydeco, and Swamp Pop music played a significant role in the popularity of these genres both within and outside the region of study. Though some bands recorded in New Orleans or outside of Louisiana, several local recording studios opened throughout the twentieth century and became hubs for recording local music, sometimes establishing their own record labels specifically for these genres.

3. Residences
   Though no extant residences known to have hosted *bals de maison* have been identified, these could potentially be eligible under Criterion A if identified in the future. Also, homes or businesses of significant musicians could be eligible under Criterion B.

4. Community and Church Halls
   Dances commonly took place in church halls or grounds or in halls for social organizations such as Woodmen of the World. As these halls were not constructed exclusively for dancing, dances are considered a secondary use.

5. Festival Grounds
   Local agricultural festivals existed in the state at least as early as the 1930s, and live music and dancing were often featured. In more recent years, festivals focused primarily on music are more common. The festival tradition is considered one of the major factors that has encouraged younger generations to hear and play the music of the region after the 1960s.

6. Dine-and-Dance Halls
   Beginning in 1980, when Mulate's opened in Breaux Bridge, combination restaurant and dance halls became a popular and significant new building type, reaching a peak in the 1990s. These buildings are more commonly located in larger cities such as Lafayette, Baton Rouge, and New Orleans, and are more oriented toward tourism than older traditional dance halls. This is primarily a Cajun phenomenon, though Zydeco and Swamp Pop bands commonly perform and at least one distinctly Creole dine-and-dance hall is known to have existed. Dine-and-dance halls typically include one large space with tables arranged around a dance floor and stage to allow diners to see the music and dancing while they eat. Most strive to recreate the appearance of traditional dance halls, some including features such as bleachers and benches for resting dancers. Dine-and-dance halls are significant both for their contribution to the continued dance hall experience and the reemergence of Cajun music and dancing as a family experience. Because these properties function primarily as restaurants, children are allowed.

G. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

The development of Cajun and Creole music has taken place in regions of significant Cajun and Creole settlement in south Louisiana and southeast Texas. For Cajun music and heritage, the geographical area includes the twenty-two Louisiana parishes recognized by the Louisiana state legislature in 1971 as Acadiana (Acadia, Ascension, Assumption, Avoyelles, Calcasieu, Cameron, Evangeline, Iberia, Iberville, Jefferson Davis, Lafayette, Lafourche, Pointe Coupee, St. Charles, St. James, St. John the Baptist, St. Landry, St. Martin, St. Mary, Terrebonne, Vermillion, West Baton Rouge). Though the official name of Acadiana presents a bias toward the Cajun culture, these same parishes include the concentrated rural Creole population that facilitated the development of rural Creole and zydeco music. Because cultural boundaries are loose, dance halls in Louisiana but outside the defined geographical boundary can be nominated using this form if they can be linked strongly to one or more of the genres in this study. Though the geographic area extends into Texas as far west as Houston, dance halls in Texas should be nominated individually in that state. See Figures.32 for further geographical data.

H. SUMMARY OF IDENTIFICATION AND EVALUATION METHODS

I began with a few partial resources provided by John Sharp, Assistant Director of Research for the Center for Louisiana Studies at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette in Lafayette, Louisiana. The Center for Louisiana Studies is working on a large, long-term project to assemble all known information about dance halls and lounges related to Louisiana's musical heritage within the state of Louisiana. This includes a list of names, locations, and any additional available information of dance hall buildings in Louisiana. Sharp collected this information from references in books, song titles, newspaper articles and advertisements, photographs, and other archival sources. He also collected references through interviews with musicians and long-time residents of the region as well as social media, primarily through a Facebook group he established titled "Dancehalls of South Louisiana." I supplemented this information with additional references from books, documentaries, interviews, and Sanborn maps.

I then completed a partial survey of extant dance hall and lounge buildings, excluding those known to have been demolished. I focused on buildings for which I knew precise locations and had heard from at least one informant through word of mouth or social media that the building likely was extant. I completed preliminary confirmations of extant status and additional searches using Google Earth, both current and historical imagery as it was available. I then conducted site visits to gain information on construction type, character-defining features, materials, current use, and condition. I visited a total of 33 buildings. Of these, I viewed the interiors of 14 buildings. As I visited, I stopped and took preliminary photographs of buildings along the way that appeared to be dance halls or lounges for future evaluation. I attended dances at one zydeco dance hall and one Cajun lounge. Through this survey work I was able to distinguish the dance hall building type from the lounge building type and establish overall standards of integrity based on the relative integrity and condition of extant buildings.

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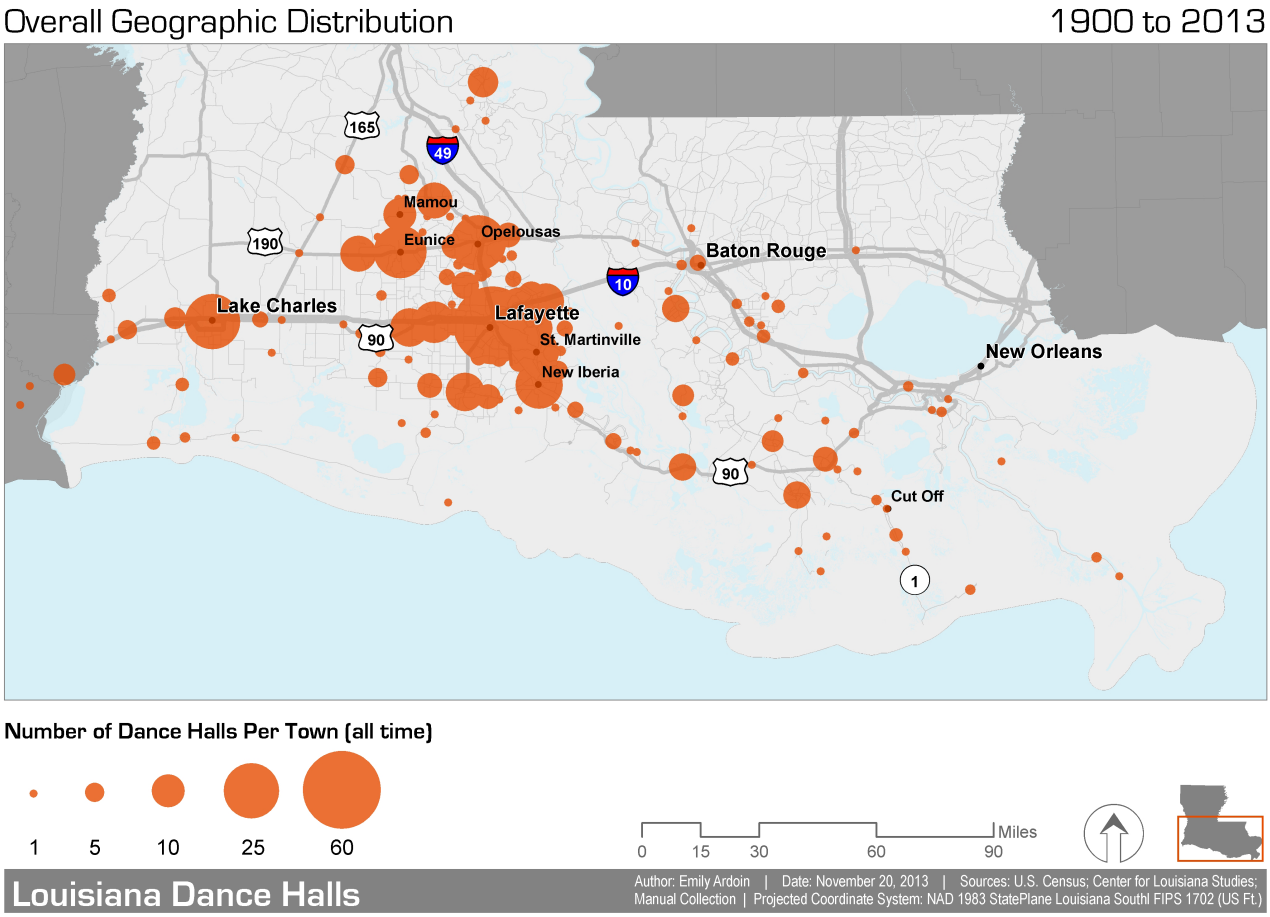
Louisiana State Museum



This map, created with preliminary information from a survey in progress, shows the approximate geographic distribution of related dance halls.

"Men's section at fais-do-do near Crowley, Louisiana. Note ticket taker"
Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, FSA/OWI, LC-DIG-fsa-8b20704
http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/fsa2000012840/PP/

This 1938 WPA photograph shows a Cajun dance near Crowley, Louisiana. Visible in the photo are the ticket taker in the foreground left, patrons resting on benches in the center with the *cage aux chiens* behind, and the stage with musicians at the far right.

"Fais-do-do dance near Crowley, Louisiana."
Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, FSA/OWI, LC-USF34-031590-D
http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/fsa2000012761/PP/

This 1938 WPA photograph shows a Cajun dance near Crowley, Louisiana. Visible in the photo are couples dancing in the foreground with women standing on benches behind.

"Fais-do-do near Crowley, Louisiana."
Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, FSA/OWI, LC-USF34-031640-D
http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/fsa2000012813/PP/

This 1938 WPA photograph shows a Cajun dance near Crowley, Louisiana. Visible in the photo are couples dancing in the foreground with a man, women, and children resting on benches behind.

"Cajun orchestra at fais-do-do dance near Crowley, Louisiana."
Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, FSA/OWI, LC-DIG-fsa-8b20678
http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/fsa2000012812/PP/

This 1938 WPA photograph shows the band playing at a Cajun dance near Crowley, Louisiana. The instruments, which include guitars and do not include an accordion, are typical of this time period when Cajun music exhibited heavy influence from hillbilly music and western swing.

"Corner of dance hall reserved for checking children while parents dance fais-do-do dance. Crowley, Louisiana"
Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, FSA/OWI, LC-USF34-031615-D
http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/fsa2000012787/PP/

This 1938 WPA photograph shows a Cajun dance near Crowley, Louisiana. The photograph shows a woman leaving children to sleep in a designated area sometimes called the *parc aux petites.*

"Fur buyers grading muskrats at auction sale in dance hall in Delacroix Island, Louisiana" Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, FSA/OWI, LC-DIG-fsa-8c31082 http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/fsa2000037827/PP/

This 1941 WPA photograph shows an auction occurring inside a dance hall.

"Spanish muskrat trappers have a round of drinks after each lot is sold at the fur auction held in a dance hall on Delacroix Island, Louisiana"
Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, FSA/OWI, LC-DIG-fsa-8c31086
http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/fsa2000037831/PP/

This 1941 WPA photograph shows an auction occurring inside a dance hall.

"Spanish muskrat trappers waiting in dance hall during fur auction sale. Delacroix Island, Louisiana"
Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, FSA/OWI, LC-DIG-fsa-8c31081
http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/fsa2000037826/PP/

This 1941 WPA photograph shows an auction occurring inside a dance hall. Visible in the photo are built-in benches along the exterior wall and the bottom of a 7UP advertisement.

Photo by Emily Ardoin

Levy's Place, Abbeville, Louisiana .Example of a 1930s Creole dance hall with common features such as a front-gable roof, decorative parapet, wood clapboard siding, and shed roof additions.

Photo by Emily Ardoin

Interior of Levy's Place, Abbeville, Louisiana.

Photo by Emily Ardoin

Lee Brothers Dance Hall, Cut Off, Louisiana, a 1930s Cajun dance hall building that includes mixed use commercial at the far end.

Photo by Emily Ardoin

Interior of Lee Brothers Dance Hall, Cut Off, Louisiana. The building received restoration work in 2002 for use as a film set.

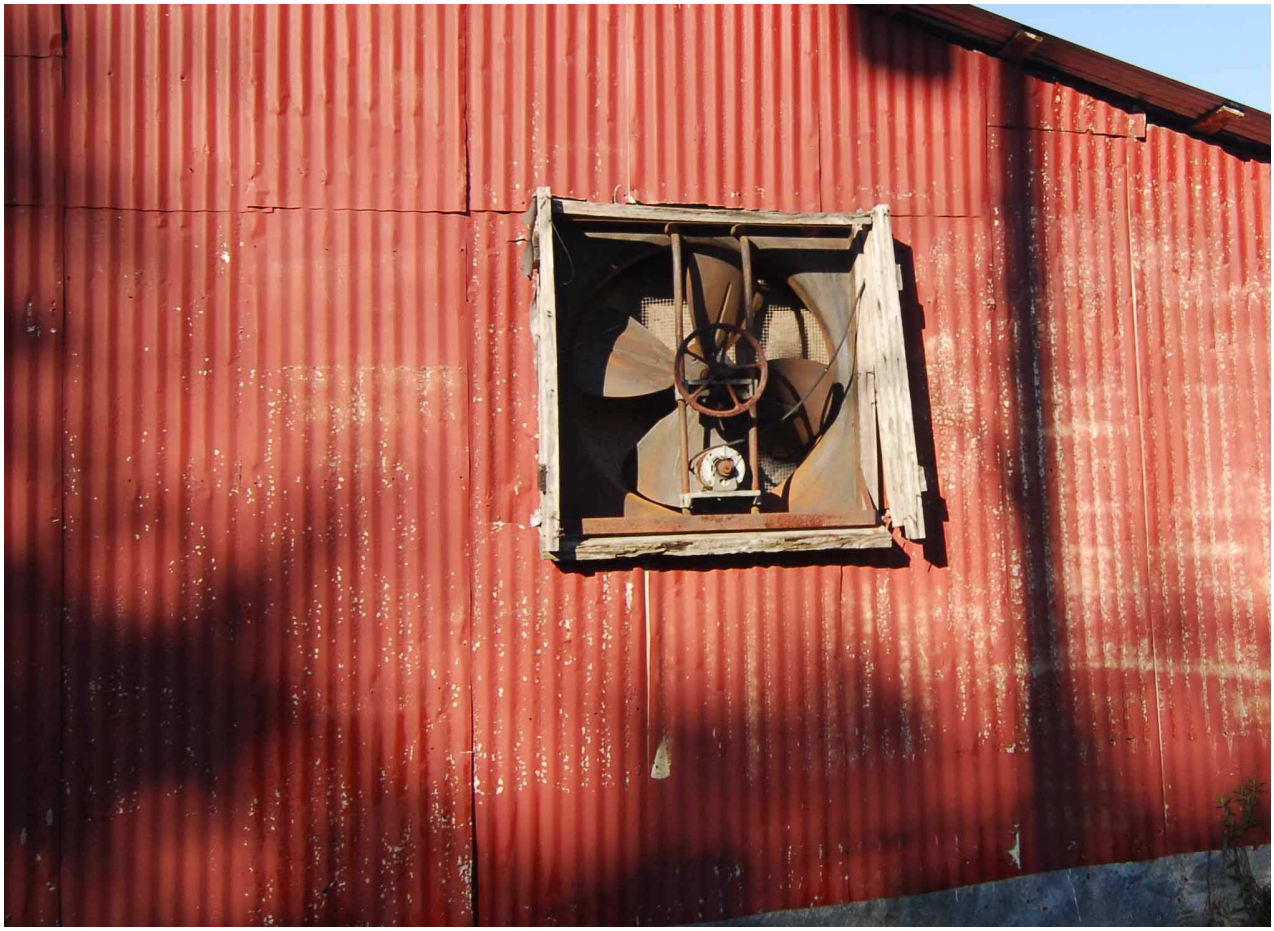


Photo by Emily Ardoin

Box fan at Roy's Offshore Lounge (formerly the Gin-Side Inn), a Zydeco dance hall in Lawtell, Louisiana. The dance hall was built in the 1950s and renovated in 1981.

Photo by Emily Ardoin

Interior of Roy's Offshore Lounge (formerly the Gin-Side Inn), a Zydeco dance hall in Lawtell, Louisiana. The dance hall was built in the 1950s and renovated in 1981. Renovations included demolition of a separate bar space, construction of a new bar inside the dance hall (visible in background), addition of a second stage (visible at left), a kitchen with service window (visible at right), and interior restrooms.

Photo by Emily Ardoin

Exhaust fan in use at Slim's Y Ki Ki, a late 1940s Creole dance hall in Opelousas, Louisiana.

Photo by Emily Ardoin

Exterior of Slim's Y Ki Ki, a late 1940s Creole dance hall in Opelousas, Louisiana. The building began as a store and was expanded and converted to a dance hall for swamp pop music. Zydeco music eventually took over, and the dance hall remains active today.

Photo by Larry Primeaux

The Southern Club, Opelousas, Louisiana. This early 1950s dance hall located on Highway 190 was a popular place for Swamp Pop music. The street-facing façade originally was clad in wood shakes. Also visible are remnants of a neon sign.

Appendix A: Survey of Extant Dance Hall Buildings

	Name	Parish	City	Address	Previous Name(s)	Genre	Cajun or Creole	Setting	Date Opened	Date Closed	Historic Use	Status	New Use	Construction	Roof	Parapet	Foundation	Dance Floor	Clg. Finish	Bar	Exterior Condition	Integrity Notes	Notes
1	**Rainbow Inn**	Assumption	Pierre Part	Hwy 70	none	unknown	Cajun	Cajun Community Center	1930s	N/A	Dance Hall Only	Open	N/A	Frame	Front gabl e/ cape bonnet	Stepped	unknown	Wood strip	unknown	unknown	unknown	Unknown. Appears mostly unaltered.	Original building was store and bar in 1920s.
2	**Thibodeaux's Hall**	Calcasieu	Lake Charles	626 Enterprise Blvd. (at Franklin)	Walker's Hall	Zydeco	Creole	Creole Community Center	unknown	unknown	unknown	Vacant	N/A	unknown		N	unknown	unknown	unknown	unknown	Poor (Condemned)	Interior unknown. Exterior appears altered.	
3	**Triangle Club**	Evangeline	Frilot Cove	713 Frilot Cove Rd.	none	Zydeco	Creole	Cajun Community Center	unknown	unknown	Dance Hall Only	Change in use	Storage	unknown	Hip, metal	N	unknown	unknown	unknown	unknown	Fair	Unknown; exterior appears unaltered.	Not mentioned in 1951 article about Frilot Cove (names all buildings in the community. Does mention dancing & dances - may or may not be house dances).
4	**Abe's Palace**	Evangeline	Eunice	100 S 2nd St.	none	Cajun	Cajun	Cajun Community Center	1901	1940	Comm. Mixed Use	Change in use	Apartments	Masonry (brick)	Flat/Pent Roof	Straight	Concrete slab	Wood strip	Pressed tin	None	Excellent (restored/renovated)	Interior completely altered. Exterior: paint and removal of the original exterior stair to the 2nd floor. Interior: Added stairwell; second floor (dance hall portion) has been completely renovated and converted into four apartments. The original floor remains, and the original pressed tin ceiling has been removed and repurposed as a ceiling and wainscot finish in some of the apartments.	2-story brick commercial building that originally was a department store on the first floor & dance hall on the 2nd. Closed July 1940 by fire marshal for lack of egress; city council denied a permit to open a new dance hall in its place in Aug 1940.
5	**French Casino**	Evangeline	Mamou	1144 Brud Ln.	Jambalaya; Pearsall's	Cajun	Cajun	Rural (originally Community Center)	Built unknown; Moved 1969	1980s	Dance Hall Only	Vacant	N/A	Frame	Front gabled, metal	Half Round (removed)	Concrete pier	Wood strip	unknown	Separate	Fair	Relocated in 1969 and entire primary façade replaced, including half-round parapet. Original bar, stage, ceiling and floor remain.	Was the Fais Do Do in Mamou. Hosted cock fights in 1970s. Various other uses; shelving remains from video rentals
6	**Papa Paul's**	Evangeline	Mamou	Poinciana & 2nd St.	none	Zydeco	Creole	Creole Community Center	1950s	1990s	Dance Hall Only	Vacant	N/A	Frame	Stepped gable, metal	Stepped	concrete pier	Wood strip	unknown	Same room	Fair	Exterior mostly unaltered. Stage and bar have been removed inside.	
7	**Clifton Chenier Club**	Iberia	Loreauville	2116 Fernand Crochet Ln.	none	Zydeco	Creole	Rural	1970s	N/A	Dance Hall Only	Active	N/A	Metal	Front Gable	N	concrete slab	Acoustic tile	unknown	unknown	unknown		
8	**Club La Louisiane**	Iberia	New Iberia	5509 Hwy 14	none	Swamp Pop	Cajun	Highway	1950s	unknown	Dance Hall Only	Change in use	La Louisiane Banquet Hall	Masonry (brick)	Flat	N	concrete slab	Wood strip	unknown	unknown	Good	Unknown	
9	**Lakeshore Club**	Jefferson Davis	Lake Arthur		none	Swamp Pop	Cajun	Waterfront	1950s	unknown	Dinner Club	Vacant	N/A	Masonry (brick, CMU)	Side gabled, metal	N	concrete slab	unknown	Acoustic tile	Same room	Good	Fair. Some interior finishes have noticeably been altered, but 1950s bar and concrete screen in restaurant portion remain. Integrity of dance hall space unknown.	
10	**The Red Rose**	Jefferson Davis	Lake Arthur	810 Iowa Ave.	none	unknown	Cajun	City/Town Edge	unknown	N/A	Dance Hall Only	Active	N/A	Frame	Front Gabled, metal	N	unknown	unknown	unknown	unknown	Fair/Good	Unknown	
11	**El Sid O's**	Lafayette	Lafayette	1523 N. St. Antoine St.	none	Zydeco	Creole		1985	N/A	Dance Hall Only	Active	N/A	unknown	Side gabled	N	unknown	unknown	unknown	unknown	Good		"It's the first zydeco club that has ever been built from the ground up in Lafayette." - Sid Williams, *Kingdom of Zydeco* p. 178
12	**Hamilton's Place**	Lafayette	Lafayette	1808 Verot School Rd.	none	Zydeco	Creole	Rural	1956	2005	Dance Hall Only	Vacant	N/A	Frame	Front gabled	Stepped	concrete pier	Wood strip		Same room	Good	Unknown. Appears mostly unaltered.	
13	**Antlers**	Lafayette	Lafayette	555 Jefferson Street	unknown	Cajun	Cajun	Cajun Community Center	Unknown	unknown	Comm. Mixed Use	Change in use	Antlers Restaurant	Masonry (brick)	Flat	Straight	unknown	unknown	unknown	unknown	Good	Unknown	
14	**Lee Brothers Dance Hall**	Lafourche	Cut Off / La Coupe	Hwy 1 (W Main) & W 62nd	none	Cajun	Cajun	Cajun Community Center, Waterfront	1930s	1953	Comm. Mixed Use	Vacant	N/A	Frame	Gable-On-Hip (Dutch Gable), metal	N	concrete pier	Wood strip	Wood strip	Separate	Fair/Poor	Appears unaltered (I haven't seen this one in person yet)	Pool hall 1930s-40s, then dancehall/restaurant
15	**Club Leon**	Loreauville	St. Martinville	Cemetery Rd. & Neuville Anthony Rd.	none	unknown	Creole	Highway	unknown	after 2000	Dance Hall Only	Vacant	N/A	Frame	Front gabled	Mansard	concrete pier	unknown	unknown	Same room	Fair	Unknown. Appears mostly unaltered.	
16	**The Little Mushroom**	St. Landry	Arnaudville	LA Hwy 93 & Mushroom Rd.	none	Cajun	Both (Split)	Rural	1963	1994	Dance Hall Only	Vacant	N/A	Frame	Side gabled, metal	N	concrete pier	unknown	unknown	Same room	Poor		Owned by Sterling Spire who lives next door. Says originally was split race club - black & white. Little Kenny, BB King on black side. LaRoux, French bands white side. Became all white with law or pressure to keep businesses completely segregated - need to confirm. Original black side partially demolished. Plans to demolish whole building in 2014 or 2015. Some fire damage; roof collapsing inside.
17	**Purple Peacock**	St. Landry	Eunice	3284 Hwy 190	none	Swamp Pop	Cajun	Highway	1964	N/A	Dance Hall Only	Closed (opens once annually)	N/A	Frame	Side gabled, metal	N	concrete pier	Wood strip	unknown	Same room	Good (maintained, some renovations. Integrity issue)	Overall interior layout is mostly the same, but the original bar was removed and two new bars were added. Some interior finishes have been altered, but the owner says the carpet on the walls is original (has been painted black). Exterior now clad with corrugated metal panels; rumored to have been wood siding originally.	Unique layout: Multi-level space
18	**Lakeview Club**	St. Landry	Eunice	Lakeview Park & Beach: 1717 Veterans Hwy	none	Cajun	Cajun	Recreation	Park opened 1963	c. 1990	Two bars	Vacant (awaiting rehab)	N/A	Frame	Cross gabled, metal	N	concrete pier	Wood strip	Removed	Same room	Good (restoration/renovation in progress; integrity issue)	New owners are preparing to restore. Applied for a grant a few years ago based on historic significance (don't know from whom) and was denied because too much of the original material had been removed. Siding and roof have been changed; porch removed or added/closed in. Some of the original flooring is removed. Ceiling is removed. Partition between dance hall and restaurant removed. Original dance hall was reportedly assembled from two bars relocated from Basile in the 1960s. Original attic fans, bars and bathrooms are there.	Siding & roof are new with minor modifications in floor plan. Original ceiling removed. Anecdote about hole cut in original ceiling because Marc Savoy was so tall
19	**Miller's Zydeco Hall of Fame**	St. Landry	Lawtell	11154 Hwy 190	Richard's Club	Zydeco	Creole	Highway	1947	N/A	Dance Hall Only	Active	N/A	Wood frame	Front gabled, metal	N	concrete pier	Wood strip		Same room	Good (maintained)	Full extent unknown. Appears siding has been changed and porch entry has been added after 1984.	

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	Name	Parish	City	Address	Previous Name(s)	Genre	Cajun or Creole	Setting	Date Opened	Date Closed	Historic Use	Status	New Use	Construction	Roof	Parapet	Foundation	Dance Floor	Clg. Finish	Bar	Exterior Condition	Integrity Notes	Notes
20	**Frank Ranch**	St. Landry	Lawtell	9190 Hwy 190	none	Zydeco	Creole	Highway	unknown	unknown	Dance Hall Only	Vacant	N/A		Front gabled	N				unknown	Fair	Unknown	
21	**Roy's Offshore Lounge**	St. Landry	Lawtell	103-127 Par Road 6-40-1	Gin Side Inn	Zydeco	Creole	Creole Community Center	1950s (became Offshore Lounge in 1980s)	2010	Dance Hall Only	Vacant (awaiting rehab)	N/A	Frame	Side gabled, metal	N	concrete pier	Wood strip	Plywood panels	Same room	Fair	Several alterations made when Roy Carrier when it reopened as Roy's Offshore Lounge around 1981. All information is from the current owner (Carrier's son); I don't have historic photos. A separate bar room attached to the front of the building was removed, and a new bar was constructed inside the main dance hall space. A second stage was added, and a portion of the space was partitioned off for an added kitchen and restrooms.	Originally called the Gin-Side Inn and associated with Swamp Pop. Closed after owner's death. Family is raising money w/benefit concerts to repair septic system; hope to reopen by 2015
22	**Bourque's**	St. Landry	Lewisburg	152 Leo Ln.	none	Cajun	Cajun	Cajun Community Center	unknown	2006	Dance Hall Only	Vacant	N/A	Frame	Bonnet/gable, metal	N	unknown	Wood strip	Wood strip	Separate, convertible	Poor	Uncertain; appears to be unaltered. Siding might have been replaced at some point.	
23	**Bradford's White Eagle**	St. Landry	Opelousas	813 Blanchard St.	none	Swamp Pop / R&B	Creole	Creole Community Center	Before 1948	unknown	Dance Hall Only	Vacant	N/A	Frame	Cross gabled, metal	Stepped	unknown	unknown	unknown	unknown	Good (boarded)	Unknown	Appears on 1948 Sanborn map. Part of an area of Opelousas known as "The Back," with several R&B/blues/disco clubs. Most are vacant today. "The Front" is one or two blocks away.
24	**The Southern Club**	St. Landry	Opelousas	Hwy 190 & Blake St.	none	Swamp Pop	Cajun	Highway	1949 -1953	1996	Dinner Club	Vacant	Toby's Lounge and Reception Center	Frame	Front gabled asphalt shingle	Scalloped	concrete pier	Wood strip	Acoustic tile	Separate	Fair/Poor (boarded, NR in progress, rehab pending)	Mostly unaltered. Alterations have been maintenance related: Roof shingles replaced in 1993; wood shakes on primary façade removed in 1990s. Shingles on parapet and neon sign were replaced once, probably in 1960s. Original canopy over porch was damaged and replaced in early 1980s. Some auxiliary spaces were altered over time (pool table room opened and telephone booth in bar space relocated)	NR nomination in progress; owners hope to restore & reopen
25	**Toby's Little Lodge**	St. Landry	Opelousas	132 Toby's Ln.	Toby's Supper Club	Swamp Pop	Cajun	City/Town Edge	1954?	unknown	Dinner Club	Change in use	N/A	unknown	unknown	unknown	unknown	Wood strip	unknown	unknown	Good (maintained)	Unknown	
26	**Slim's Y-Ki-Ki**	St. Landry	Opelousas	8471 Hwy 182	none	Zydeco	Creole	City/Town Edge	1947	N/A	Dance Hall Only	Active	N/A	Frame, masonry (brick) front façade	Front gabled	Mansard	unknown	Wood strip	Plywd. Panel / acoustic tile	Same room	Good (maintained, integrity issue)	Uncertain. Building was expanded four times early on to create a dance hall space. Appears the siding (not primary façade) has been changed since 1984. A side entrance with ramp has been added. Interior alterations unknown.	Originally Swamp Pop, moved to Zydeco when SP craze died down. Have added on 3 times since the beginning.
27	**La Poussiere**	St. Martin	Breaux Bridge	1301 Grand Pointe Hwy	none	Cajun	Cajun	Parish Highway	1955; New building 1975	N/A	Dance Hall Only	Active	N/A	Masonry (brick)	Side gabled, metal	N	Concrete slab	Wood strip	unknown	Same room	Good	New building constructed in 1975 across the street from original building, which was torn down for street widening. Original building was a 1920s grocery store converted to a dance hall in 1955.	
28	**Davis Lounge**	St. Martin	Cecilia	2655 Main Hwy	Blue Gardenia	Zydeco	Creole	Parish Highway	1981	2013	Dance Hall Only	Vacant	N/A	Frame	Front gabled, metal	N	concrete slab	Concrete	unknown	Same room	Good	Opening date unknown.	
29	**Caffery's Alexander Ranch**	St. Martin	Cecilia	Zin Zin Rd. & Latiolais Loop	none	Zydeco	Creole	Rural	unknown	N/A	Dance Hall Only	Active (Intermittent)	N/A	Frame	Front gabled, metal	N	concrete slab	Plywood	Gyp. Board	Same room	Fair	Poor condition but good integrity. Expanded into a dance hall in 1981.	Maybe originally The Blue Gardenia with current building constructed around it.
30	**Webster's**	St. Martin	Cecilia	2685 Grand Pointe Hwy	none	Cajun	Cajun	Parish Highway	1947	1969	Dance Hall Only	Change in use	Webster's Meat Market	Frame	Side gabled, metal	N	concrete pier	Wood strip	unknown	unknown	Fair. Cut in half, change in use. Integrity issue.	Building cut in half and converted to a meat market. Original dance hall floor.	Dancehall cut in half when converted to meat market. Traces of original dance hall might be visible inside the business.
31	**PB Dee's Classic Club Valentine**	St. Martin	Parks / Promiseland	Resweber Hwy & Promise Land Dr.	unknown	Zydeco	Creole	Creole Community Center	1955	N/A	Dance Hall Only	Open	N/A	Frame	Front gabled, metal	N	concrete pier	Wood strip	Plywd. Panel / acoustic tile	Same room	Good.	Interior has been altered with continuous use. Bars have been added; original bar removed.	Last remaining dance hall of several in the Promise Land community.
32	**Signorelli's**	St. Martin	St. Martinville	1717 N. Main St.	Louis Champagne Bar	Swamp Pop	Cajun	Highway	1942 (became Signorelli's 1964)	unknown	Dance Hall Only	Change in use	Mixed use salon, office & bar/ event hall	Frame	Side gabled	unknown	unknown	Wood strip	unknown	Separate	Good (renovated)	Heavily altered. Bar space in front converted to a hair salon. Siding replaced. Dance hall space has been altered to an unknown extent.	
33	**Casino Club**	St. Martin	St. Martinville	S. Main & W. Denbas	Casino Inn	unknown	Creole	Creole Community Center	1950s	unknown	Dance Hall Only	Vacant	N/A	Frame	Front gabled	Mansard	concrete pier	Wood strip	unknown	Same room	Good	Unknown. Appears mostly unaltered.	
34	**Tee's Connection**	St. Martin	St. Martinville	S. Main & Honore	unknown	Zydeco	Creole	Creole Community Center	Unknown	unknown	Dance Hall Only	Open	N/A	Frame	unknown	unknown	unknown	unknown	unknown	unknown	unknown	Unknown	
35	**Levy's Place**	Vermilion	Abbeville	6309 Albert Rd.	none	Zydeco	Creole	Rural	1930s	2010	Dance Hall Only	Vacant	N/A	Frame	Front gabled	Half Round	concrete pier	Wood strip	Wood strip (acoustic tile on additions)	Same room	Fair/Poor	Excellent. Still furnished. Christmas decorations remain.	Closed recently. Owners live on property. Had trail rides.
36	**Smily's Bayou Club**	Vermilion	Erath	2206 Veteran's Memorial Dr.	none	Swamp Pop / Cajun	Cajun	Highway	1978	N/A	Dance Hall Only	Open	N/A	Masonry (brick)	Hip, asphalt shingles	N	concrete slab	Wood strip	unknown	Same room	Good		

Appendix B: Images of Extant Dance Hall Buildings

All photos are by the author unless otherwise noted.

Figure 1: Thibodeaux's Hall, Lake Charles, Louisiana.

Figure 2: Triangle Club, Frilot Cove, Louisiana. Photo by Calvin Ardoin.

Figure 3: French Casino, Mamou, Louisiana.

Figure 4: Papa Paul's, Mamou, Louisiana.

Figure 5: Lakeshore Club, Lake Arthur, Louisiana.

Figure 6: The Red Rose, Lake Arthur, Louisiana.

Figure 7: Lee Brothers Dance Hall, Cut Off, Louisiana.

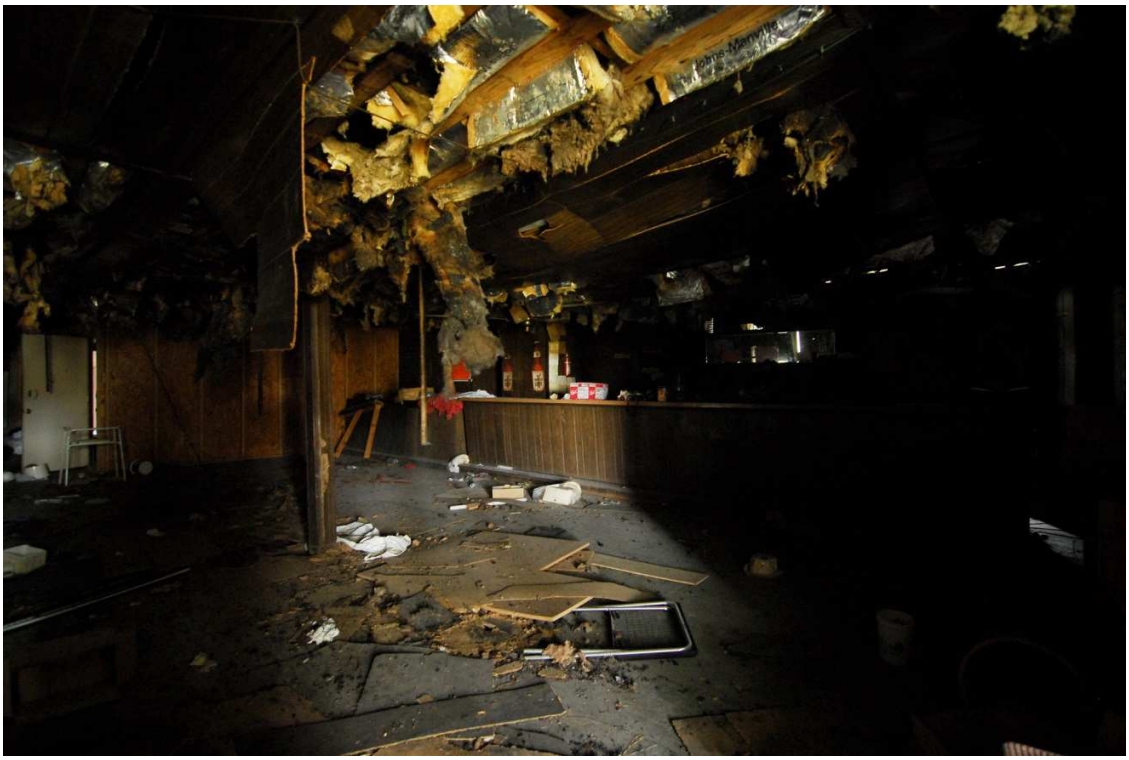

Figure 8: The Little Mushroom, Arnaudville, Louisiana.

Figure 9: The Purple Peacock, Eunice, Louisiana.

Figure 10: Lakeview Club, Eunice, Louisiana.

Figure 11: Miller's Zydeco Hall of Fame (formerly Richard's Club), Lawtell, Louisiana.

Figure 12: Roy's Offshore Lounge, Lawtell, Louisiana.

Figure 13: Bourque's Club, Lewisburg, Louisiana.

Figure 14: Bradford's White Eagle, Opelousas, Louisiana.

Figure 15: The Southern Club, Opelousas, Louisiana. Photo by Larry Primeaux.

Figure 16: Slim's Y-Ki-Ki, Opelousas, Louisiana.

Figure 17: Davis Lounge, Cecilia, Louisiana.

Figure 18: Caffery's Alexander Ranch, Cecilia, Louisiana.

Figure 19: Webster's, Cecilia, Louisiana.

Figure 20: PB Dee's Classic Club Valentine, Parks / Promiseland, Louisiana.

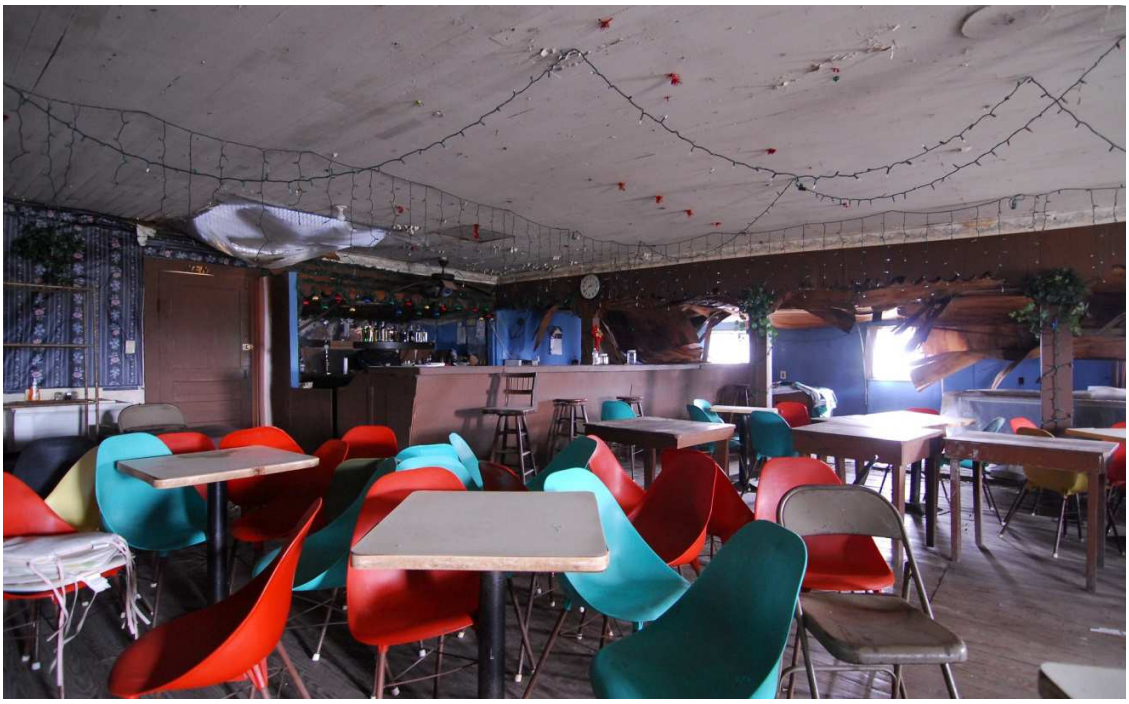

Figure 21: Levy's Place, Abbeville, Louisiana.

Figure 22: Smily's Bayou Club, Erath, Louisiana.

Glossary

Bal de maison Weekly Cajun or rural Creole community gathering at a residence with live music and dancing. These were common through the early twentieth century and eventually were replaced with gatherings at commercial dance halls.

Cage aux chiens Separate area inside a Cajun dance hall for patrons who wished to watch a dance but did not pay admission to dance.

Fais do-do Cajun French informal term meaning "Go to sleep;" commonly used in later years to refer to a dance gathering.

Frottoir Percussion instrument modeled after a metal scrub board.

Parc aux petites Separate room or reserved area for children in a Cajun dance hall.

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Vita

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