



Several exhibits depicting culture and traditions in communities along the Louisiana Great River Road, including transportation, religion, Voodoo, material culture (baskets, tools, utensils), Mardi Gras, funerals and river trading towns (Lemann Store in Donaldsonville).









HORSE-DRAWN FUNERAL CARRIAGE



The horse-drawn funeral carriage shown in the above photo is from Robertson Funeral Home of Baton Rouge, and is on display here.



At the end of the Civil War, Charles F. Robertson, a cabinetmaker by trade, found himself making more caskets than funeral directors and set a family precedent of responding to the public's need.

Charles Ferdinand Robertson (1838 - 1883)



Charles and Cassie Robertson had five sons: Court F and Alva G., who carried the business into the 20th Century.

Caroline M. Robertson wife of Charles (1826 - 1894)



ORIGIN OF "THE BASKET CASE"

During the Civil War, the soldiers that had their legs amputated because of battlefield injury or disease were carried around in a wicker basket and were treated as if "basket cases." Therefore the deceased were lowered from their place of death in a wicker basket.

After the Civil War, and during the Victorian era, wicker baskets were used in the funeral business, mostly for women, and occasionally for funerals. They were popular for 1880s.

Victorian-era wicker baskets, would have been used by an undertaker to hold a body after it was prepared and placed in the coffin. When they thought someone had died, they'd put the body in the coffin and set it outside. The wicker would keep the flies and animals off the body and allow the air to circulate so the person wouldn't get stinky.

The wicker coffin-carrying baskets were used in the 1880s to transport the dead from their homes to the funeral home. An undertaker placed the body in the wicker basket and carried it to the funeral home. The wicker basket would be placed in the back of a hearse or a carriage. They also could have been used as a transportation device if only for a short time and would have had a separate compartment for water to keep the body cool.







Photos of the pedestrian bridge crossing over River Road to the levee



Figure 10-10





Steamboat mural once in a Jazz club inside of the Empire State Building in New York.