

Whitney Plantation

Description

Within the boundaries of the “Habitation Haydel”, as the Whitney Plantation was originally known, the story of the Haydel family of German immigrants and the slaves that they held were intertwined.

In 2014, the Whitney Plantation opened its doors to the public for the first time in its 262 year history as the only plantation museum in Louisiana with a focus on slavery.

Through museum exhibits, memorial artwork and restored buildings and hundreds of first-person slave narratives, visitors to Whitney will gain a unique perspective on the lives of Louisiana's enslaved people.

The Whitney Plantation



History

The Whitney Plantation, originally known as Habitation Haydel, is located less than an hour from New Orleans, on the historic River Road in Wallace, Louisiana. Ambroise Heidel (1702-ca.1770), the founder of this plantation, emigrated from Germany to Louisiana with his mother and siblings in 1721. He became a modest farmer on the east bank with, at one time, a single pig for livestock. In 1752 Ambroise bought the original land tract of this plantation and became a wealthy owner engaged in the business of indigo. Jean Jacques Haydel Sr. (Heidel's younger child) transitioned the plantation from Indigo to sugar in the early 1800's before passing it to future generations. After the Civil War (1867) the plantation was sold to Bradish Johnson of New York, who named the property after his grandson Harry Whitney.

In 1946, in the middle of one of the many shifts in ownership, the Big House on the plantation was described as “one of the most interesting in the entire South” by Charles E. Peterson, senior landscape architect of the United States Department of the Interior. According to Jay Edwards, a professor of anthropology and an historian of architecture at Louisiana State University, the Big House is one of the finest surviving examples of Spanish Creole architecture and one of the earliest raised Creole cottages in Louisiana. Moreover, it is one of the very few Historic American houses known to have received decorative wall paintings on both its exterior and its interior. Whitney Plantation is also significant because of the number of its historic outbuildings which were added to the site over the years, thus providing a unique perspective on the evolution of the Louisiana working plantation.

The Whitney Plantation Historic District is on the National Register of Historic Places. Whitney Plantation is a genuine landmark built by African slaves and their descendants. As a site of memory and consciousness, the Whitney Plantation Museum is meant to pay homage to all slaves on the plantation itself and to all of those who lived elsewhere in the US South.



Whitney Plantation

5009 Louisiana Highway *(located less than 1 hr north of New Orleans off of I-10)*

Wallace, LA 70049

Tel: 225.265.3300

Admission: \$22/ \$15 for seniors

Open: 9:30a to 4:30p, closed Tuesdays/ by tour only