

Woodlawn Plantation Oaks

Downtown Houma East

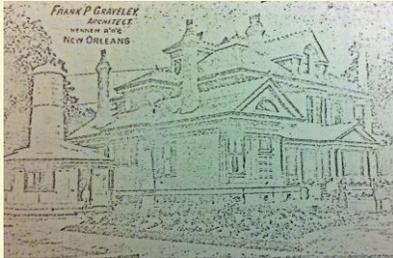
104 Jim Bowie Road

Houma, LA

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So many plantation homes no longer exist such as Woodlawn Plantation, but some of the sites maintain their beauty through their landscape architecture and designs. The trees and plantings can only reveal to us how far into detail the builders and owners would go.



Original owners of Woodlawn, the C. B. Maginnis, family had 14 gardeners working full time to keep up with their lawn needs. He also owned Ashland and Aragon

plantations as well as being the President of the Lower Terrebonne Refining and Manufacturing Company.

(Architectural Sketch, I Dug Up Houma Terrebonne, Wurzlow)

The trees of Woodlawn are recognized by the sheer number of Live Oaks and their beautifully draped limbs that form web patterns and politely allow the sunlight to dribble in the luscious green grasses growing under their canopies.

Along with these Live Oaks mingle old Magnolias and camellias on the residence of Louis Saia III. The original plantation home built by Frank P. Graveley before 1900 and described as magnificent in a 1901 Southern Manufacturer article which proclaimed the home as a massive three story structure with a ball room built on the top floor. The home adorned with hand carved wooden windows adds beauty to the structure.

Surrounded with many pillows and topped with a roof of hand-built cypress shingles, this home displayed elegance.

The smell of the magnolia blossoms would have permeated the air on Louisiana nights when balls and galas celebrated coming of age parties, Christmas, New Year's, birthdays and other special events. The sight from atop the home of all the beauty of its landscape would have been awe inspiring. A three-tiered cistern adorned the side of the home assisting and transporting water to the three stories of this large structure.

A little way, passed the home, there sits a cemetery adorned with ancient trees which are much older and larger. The cemetery became popular in the 1940's as high school's seniors would gather there in the night to get a glimpse of a mummified man in a glass-sealed coffin a former owner named Cage who was buried. Jos grave raided a couple of times a year resulted in the coffin's relocation after family and officials could not stop the yearly event.

While the amount of acreage for sugar cane crops and corn were immense, there remain only a few acres with the site today. The site is better viewed from the East Woodlawn Ranch Road or on Grand Caillou Road at Redmond or Shaffer Roads.

The corporate headquarters for Saia Motor Freight stands on the corner of Grand Caillou and E. Woodlawn Ranch Roads. Story written by Trudy Voisin Hebert



Photos by Trudy Voisin Hebert

