

FILIPINO LOUISIANA

Philippine-Louisiana Historical Society



The Philippine-Louisiana Historical Mural depicts the life of the Filipinos who settled in coastal Louisiana. The mural includes Manila Village in Barataria Bay (top left), the dried shrimp industry (bottom left), the settlement at St. Malo in Lake Borgne (top right).

First Settlement

St. Malo

In the early 19th century, the first Filipino community in the US was established along the banks of Bayou St. Malo. Filipino sailors established the village after leaving their Spanish vessels for a better opportunity. The southern shore of Lake Borgne offered a bounty of fish to catch and ship to New Orleans. By the end of the century the Manilamen moved to higher ground, where they could be closer to their families and integrate into Louisiana society.



Houses at St. Malo were built on stilts to protect them from rising tides and storm surges.

Entrepreneurship

Manila Village

Established in the late 1800's Manila Village was one of several Filipino shrimp drying facilities in Barataria Bay. Part shrimp processing plant and town, the facilities housed workers and their families in cottages around the edges of large shrimp-drying platforms. Skills in net making and fishing, allowed Filipinos to thrive in the industry and helped make Manila Village a symbol of the growing Filipino presence in the region.



Dancing the Shrimp, stepping on dried shrimp separated the shell from the flesh.

Community

New Orleans

By the 20th century, New Orleans was the center of Filipino community life in Louisiana. Over 2,000 Filipinos lived in and around New Orleans. Some were recent immigrants, but many were descendants of Manilamen. New Orleans boasted a number of Filipino American community organizations to strengthen bonds within the Filipino community and connect members with the local community. They participated in local events like Mardi Gras.



Community floats in the 30's and 40's highlighted pride in being Filipino and American.

HISTORY & COMMUNITY



FILIPINO La. FACTS

1763, St. Malo established as early as beginning of Spanish colonial period, considered earliest known Filipino settlement in the US

1807, Augustin Felicano, first known Manilaman to settle in Louisiana, other Filipinos said to arrive as early as 1763

1870, Sociedad de Beneficencia de los Hispanos Filipinos, first Filipino American organization in the US

1900, Louisiana, largest Filipino population in the US

1930's, 1,500 Filipinos employed in shrimp industry in Barataria Bay

1935, Caballeros de Dimas-Alang's entry in the Elks Krewe of Orleanians' first Mardi Gras parade wins prize for best decorations

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Philippine-Louisiana Historical Society (PLHS) was established in 2012 to promote the history of Filipinos in Louisiana. The organization joins members from community organizations around the state in a shared mission to preserve and share the history of the Manilamen and all of the Filipino community groups that followed.

Manila Village and Clark Cheniere Historical Markers

Shortly after the formation of the PLHS, community members set-out to create a site to commemorate the Manilamen who lived and worked in the Barataria Bay region. We established historical markers for Manila Village and the Clark Cheniere dried shrimp facilities. You can see the markers in front of the town hall in Lafitte, La.

Filipino American History Month Symposium

In 2016, PLHS hosted its first Filipino American History Month (FAHM) Symposium at Xavier University of Louisiana. The day-long event featured talks by renowned Filipino American scholars and was highlighted by the unveiling of the Philippine-Louisiana Historical Mural.

St. Malo Marker

PLHS is currently working on a marker to commemorate the settlement at St. Malo. The St. Malo marker will be erected at the Los Islentos Museum Complex in St. Bernard. We are looking for support from the community to help us raise funds for this important project.

JOIN AN ORGANIZATION

Philippine-Louisiana Historical Society (PLHS)

Philippine-American United Council (PAUCLA)

Kapitbahay of Greater New Orleans (KBGNO)

New Orleans Filipino American Lions Club

Filipino-American Association of St. Tammany (FAAST)

Filipino Educators Federation of La. (FEFL)

Filipino-American Association of Greater Baton Rouge (FAAGBR)

Filipino-American Fellowship Church (FAFC)

Filipino Acadiana, Lafayette

Filipino American Association of Central La., Alexandria (FAACL)

Philippine American Association of Northeast La., Monroe (PAANEL)

Filipino-American Association of the ARKLATEX, Shreveport

Filipino American Pine Belt Association, Hattiesburg, MS

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