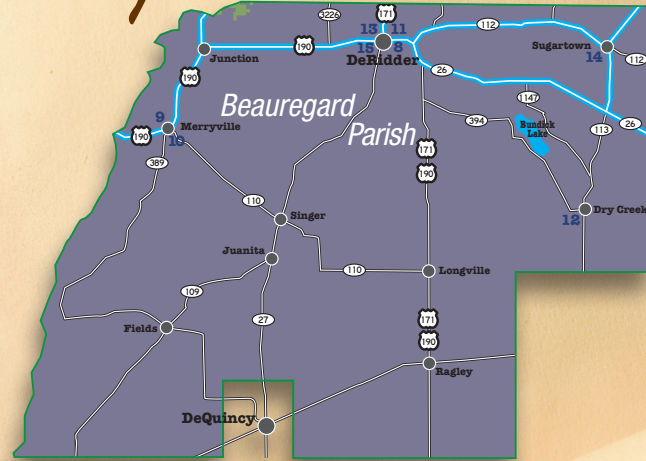


Beauregard Parish



Bundick Lake

Bundick Lake is a reservoir teeming with all sorts of things to do. You can live like the pioneers! One of my favorite things to do is go fishing in the early morning in my pirogue—which is a Cajun style canoe. You can catch all kinds of goodies like catfish, bass, and perch. Good eatin'! I don't mean to blow, but I caught a huge catfish the last time I was out there. I blackened it and in true pioneer style, threw it in a cast iron skillet over an open fire.

Nah, one thing you have to watch out for in the lakes around here are the Caimons. You know what they are – huge, scaly reptiles with massive teeth. You might know them as alligators. There's no bigger blowhard and bait thief than the Caimon. But beyond the fishing and alligators, you can go for a swim or even try to spot one of the bald eagles that have made this lake their home. I recommend pitching a tent and experiencing the grand wilderness and everything else Bundick Lake has to offer.

Story of Leather Britches Smith

Down in Merryville, there's a story 'bout an outlaw who was given the name Leather Britches Smith. Now, it all came about after a strike of non-union workers faced off against mill workers at Galloway Lumber Co. Charles "Leather Britches" Smith was part of this mess and fired a whole heap o' bullets into the mill, then run off into the woods. A posse set out to hunt Smith down, and eventually killed the man. According to Deputy Charlan, Leather Britches was armed and waiting for 'em, and when the deputy called out for him to surrender, Smith lifted his rifle. The men unloaded their rifles and Leather Britches was killed.

Some said he was stayin' out at the Pump House Branch, others say a union worker betrayed him, and still others say that Leather Britches gave up. Still, no matter what version is the truth, the end is always the same. People say he wasn't given a fair shake, and that he was a victim. Well, they shipped his body to Merryville packed in some ice and leaned the box up against the outside of the Merryville Jail so folks could see for themselves that Leather Britches had been killed.



Many people in Merryville suspected that Leather Britches was a man named Ben Myatt, a known Texas criminal, but a Texas deputy said that Ben Myatt and Leather Britches had two different eye colors.

Some folks wanted Smith to be buried in the Merryville Cemetery, and some didn't. According to many accounts, they compromised by putting him right on the fence line and marked the spot with a cedar board. A headstone was put up some time around 2010 that mimicked the original marker, but years later some locals replaced one in stone so that the legend of Leather Britches Smith would never be forgotten.

That there is one mysterious tale.

Lois Lofton Doll and Tall Timbers Museums

The Lois Lofton Doll and Tall Timbers museums are something you gotta see if you're passin' through Beauregard Parish. They're located right next to each other in DeRidder. These folks, Lois and Albert Loftin collected more than 3,000 dolls! In Cajun French, we call 'em "bebelles." Now, don't be confusing "bebelles" with "bebettes," which are them itty bitty critters. No one wants to see those vermin. This museum of beaucoup "bebelles" is within the Old Kansas City Southern Depot that was built in 1927.



To learn all about this section of the tri-parish area, head next door to the Beauregard Parish Museum. You see, these museums are in an old train depot because this was an important area for the railway. Now, there isn't any major railway through here anymore, but it used to be dreadfully busy parts with trains. The railway went all the way from Kansas City down to Port Arthur.

The Gothic Jail

Now, this is a real spooky place to visit, seein' as how people believe it's haunted and all. There's a heap of rumors, but the main one is that the ghost of an old jailer stands on the front porch, smoking his pipe and drinking coffee in his blue jean overalls and white-bibbed shirt.



Besides the rumors, the jail is known for its unique design. At one time, it held more than 50 prisoners, included a jailer's quarters, as well as a tunnel leading from the courthouse to the jail that was used to transport prisoners for trial. The jail was closed in 1984, but it earned its nickname when two men were hanged for the murder of a taxi driver in 1926.

The Gothic Jail – aka The Hanging Jail – is a true legend! It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and has been featured on The Travel Channel.

CM Farms

Handsome young Archer Clark Redmond Turner was reported to have been standing not ten feet away from General Robert E. Lee at the surrender ceremony ending the Civil War. The young soldier returned home to his family in Calcasieu Parish, where he married neighbor (and possible childhood friend) Jane Gill. They built a home near Archy's parents' house, likely on land owned by Stephen and Mary Turner. This is the home where they raised children and farmed.



Current day CM Farms is located over there in Dry Creek, Louisiana, 'bout 20 miles south of DeRidder and definitely worth packin' your plunder and headin' down to see rows and rows of beautiful farmland. Go on and play in the bull wagon or turn back the clock and visit the historic Turner farmhouse. There ain't no shortage of things to do out here!

No one knows a good challenge like a pioneer. CM Farms offers one that any pioneer-in-training can master– the corn maze. Imagine a 12-acre labyrinth of twists, turns, and dead ends all made from giant walls of corn stalks. People come from miles around to experience this remarkable landmark.



Old Campground: A Waypoint Through the Years

Flat and shady, Old Campground was a natural place for any feller or lady to camp before or after crossing the stream. Coushatta traded here and Texans rested here during their cattle drives. Old Campground was just right for a meetin', seein' as how it was real shady, had water just a'flowin' from Sugar Creek, and had a bunch o' room for folks to gather. All the tents outlined the whole campground, and food, wagons, and livestock were stored behind 'em 'round the outside.

Old Campground is the oldest documented cemetery in southwestern Louisiana. Over the years, supporters have kept the cemetery in shape, even adding a replica of an early church and a 10-acre wildlife refuge that is home to the endangered red-headed woodpecker.

8. **WWII Army Airbase/Grabow Shootout**
D. Street, DeRidder, LA 70634
9. **Atakapa Coushatta Trace Visitors Center**
703 N. Bryan Street, Merryville, LA 70653
10. **Charles "Leather Britches" Smith**
649 Hennigan Street, Merryville, LA 70653
11. **Gothic Jail**
301 W. 1st Street, DeRidder, LA 70634
12. **Old Campground Cemetery and Nature Walk**
309 Old Campground Road, Dry Creek, LA 70637
13. **Old Hoy Cemetery and Nature Reserve**
Hwy. 26, DeRidder, LA 70634
14. **Sugartown Watermelon Stand**
200 Old School Road, Sugartown, LA 70662
15. **Timber Museum**
102 S. Washington Street, DeRidder, LA 70634