



Phil Menard

Phil Menard was born in Carencro, Louisiana on September 6, 1923. He was married to Georgia Mary Leger in 1942, and they have 3 sons and one daughter. Phil and Georgia reside in Lake Charles, Louisiana.

He started playing the accordion when he was 21 years old and played off and on in the late 50s and early 60s. Phil had a 7-piece band for about 10 years during the height of his career. He played 3 to 4 dances a week then including 10 straight years at the V.F.W. Post #2130 in Lake Charles. In 1969, he formed the Louisiana Travelers and played regularly for 26 years. Most of his engagements were between Houston, Texas and Eunice, Louisiana. He made 15 single records, two albums, 3 eight-track tapes and 3 cassette tapes, and he played the accordion on two Johnny Janot albums.

Mr. Menard played many festivals, including the Houston International Festival and the World's Fair in New Orleans. He also played at Folk Life Festivals in Baton Rouge, New Orleans, Lafayette, Louisiana and in Kerrville, Texas several times. He went to France and Italy with a group of 345 people and was their interpreter for the group. He also played his accordion while they were there. Mr. Menard went on tour with his band to St Louis, Missouri and Corpus Christi, Texas, and also went on tour with D.L. Manard and "Blackie" Forestier.

While in business for himself for over 40 years, he always used a Cajun DJ for advertising. He spent hundreds of hours teaching the accordion and never charged anybody. He was an Optimist Club member for over 30 years and was chairman of all Cajun activities including Optimist Cajun Days. He so played many benefit dances and has played for many school and nursing home activities. Mr. Menard had been very

active and dependable member of CFMA since 1984 when Eunice was the only CFMA chapter.

In 1985, he received the Louisiana Entertainment Association's award as Accordion Player for 1984. January 18, 1987 was proclaimed The Phil Menard Day by then Mayor Ed Watson. On February 26, 1989, the Texas Longhorn Club held its Cajun Music Awards Program and Mr. Menard was chosen as the traditional Cajun Artist of the last decade. His two big hits are "*La Sha Cheree*," song of the year in 1973, and "The Heritage Waltz," song of the year award in 1988 and 1989. Mr. Menard also won the first Heritage Award given by the *Le Cajun Awards Show and Festival* in Lafayette, Louisiana in 1989 and gives credit to "The Heritage Waltz" for this award.