



Lionel Leleux

Lionel grew up in the Leleux community south of Crowley, Louisiana. He was a barber, traditional Cajun fiddle player, fiddle maker and *raconteur* (a keeper of oral tradition). His first fiddle came from Sears in 1924 at a cost of a little more than \$4.00. As a teenager in the 1920's he built fiddles with the folk method of cigar boxes and strands of screen door wires. He began repairing fiddle bows in 1925, fiddles in 1927 and making fiddles in 1941. He traveled to many festivals and cultural events with his fiddle demonstration kit and would always dazzle listeners with his lengthy oral history accounts.

He was interviewed by many TV stations, newspapers, and National Geographic. He appeared on Portrait of America TV program, CBS Dateline America with Charles Kuralt and featured in the Louisiana Life Magazine.

Lionel performed with many Cajun greats in the early 30's when a Model-A automobile parked outside the window next to the band stand was used to provide electricity to operate the amplifier. Since then, with his unique fiddle style (not tuned down as most Cajun

fiddles are tuned) and his gentle manner, Lionel along with other Cajun musicians performed at many festivals and musical tours taking him throughout the United States, Canada and Europe. He played with numerous bands and notables such as Nathan Abshire, Aldus Roger, and Walter Mouton. He recorded music with many of the most popular Cajun musicians such as Joe Falcon, Lawrence Walker, and Eddie LeJeune.