



Alphonse "*Bois Sec*" Ardoin

Alphonse "*Bois Sec*" Ardoin was born the son of a sharecropper in *L'Anse de Prien Noir*, Louisiana, November 16, 1915. He spent his entire life in the same community living next door to the house where he was born. When he was four years old his father passed away leaving his mother to raise the children. She raised her children by taking in laundry and planting a small crop.

According to *Bois Sec*, his name was related to his habit of seeking shelter under an old dry wood tree to keep from getting wet in the rain. When the farmer noticed that he was always dry because he stayed under the tree, he coined the name *Bois Sec* or "Dry Wood" which remained with him for his entire life.

*Bois Sec* showed musical talent at a very young age. When he was seven he used to climb up on the barn and play his brother's accordion while his brother was at work. He didn't realize how the sound of his accordion would travel across the prairie. Recognizing the talents of his little brother, Houston allowed him, to play the accordion whenever he wanted.

*Bois Sec* married Marscline Victorian in 1934. They raised 14 children out of which 5 boys became musicians and began a family band. The tradition continues as it was passed onto his grandsons who are keeping the tradition alive even though they prefer playing zydeco. They can also play traditional Creole music.

*Bois Sec* began playing music at dances when he was about twelve. During much of that time he played with the great fiddler, Canray Fontenot. In 1966, they were invited to the Newport Folk Festival and there they recorded their first album. They have won many prestigious awards including the National Heritage Fellowship from the National

Endowment of the Arts in 1986.

*Bois Sec*, a highly respected Creole musician, traveled with his unique rhythmic style of French music out of the bayou and has exposed it to the world; Canada, France, Germany, New York, West Virginia, Maryland, Illinois, Georgia, Texas, Nevada, California and in Carnegie Hall.

This man contributed his whole life to something he loved and has invited the world to embrace Creole Music and its culture.