



Milton Vanicor

On June 15, 1918, Milton Vanicor was born in Prairie Hayes a few miles from the town of Church Point, Louisiana, the third child of Jules and Hermina Vanicor. As a young child, he was inspired by Cajun musicians at the *bals de maison* his family and he attended.

He began playing the fiddle in the mid-1920s. His first fiddle was a stick fiddle he fashioned himself. He soon bought a cigar-box fiddle, eventually acquiring a “real” fiddle. In 1937 he married Odile Bellard and they reared four children. After a move to Lake Charles, Louisiana, in 1939, he settled in Ardoin Cove south of Lacassine, Louisiana. Service in the U.S. Navy followed and after WWII he returned to Ardoin Cove where his music career would take a new turn.

It was this time Iry LeJeune came to live with the young couple and the group, “The Lacassine Playboys” was born. Around 1950, the group cut six sides with Iry for Eddie Shuler's record label. Within a year, the group disbanded but Milton continued to play with Iry, Alfred Cormier, and Cliff Newman and eventually cut sides at the first recording session at Iry's kitchen. Following Iry's death, Milton played with Deama Granger and John Oliver.

His ability to play Cajun music traditional style created interest in many. He worked with David Greely, Chris Miller, Clint Ward and many others passing his love for Cajun music and culture to a new generation of musicians. He played at festivals and music camps and served three years on staff at the Centrum American Fiddle Tunes Festival in Port Townsend, Washington. He was a featured artist in the Balfa Cajun Music Camp, at the New Orleans Jazz Festival, Festival Acadiennes, Lafayette, Louisiana, and Liberty Theater, Eunice, Louisiana. In 2013, Offbeat Magazine featured an article “Cajun Iron

Horse.” In order to preserve his traditional style of fiddling, members of his family along with Chris Miller, producer, released his music CD, “*Un Souveni de Milton Vanicor.*” He was 95 years old.