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[www.brec.org/index.cfm/park/detail/112](http://www.brec.org/index.cfm/park/detail/112)



## Magnolia Mound Plantation

**Magnolia Mound Plantation** BREC's Magnolia Mound Plantation is a rare survivor of the vernacular architecture influenced by early settlers from France and the West Indies. This venerable landmark is unique in southern Louisiana not simply because of its age, quality of restoration, or outstanding collections, but because it is still a vital part of the community. Through educational programs, workshops, lectures, festivals, and other special events, Magnolia Mound's mission is to illustrate and interpret the lifestyle of the French Creoles who formed the fascinating culture which still influences and pervades life in southern Louisiana.

The plantation house, now surrounded by an urban setting, was once the center of a 900-acre operation with frontage on the Mississippi River. The main house was built in 1791 as a small settler's house and as prosperity came to the lower Mississippi Valley, the house was enlarged and renovated in 1802-05, to become the elegant seat of a major landowner. Spanning the colonial era and early statehood, Magnolia Mound's collection of furnishings and decorative arts include one of the foremost public groups of Louisiana-made objects, in carefully restored and documented settings. The object collection includes locally made furniture from Louisiana's colonial period, as well as French pieces that illustrate the ties of the sophisticated planter with his family in France. Inventory records and accounts from the period indicate that prosperous local planters purchased fashionable Federal-style objects from the eastern seaboard. Decorative art items also include English and French ceramics, crystal and furniture obtained through the major port of New Orleans and locally made textiles. The collection includes objects that help to convey the distinctive taste of this large Catholic family in south Louisiana. Of the 900 original land-grant acres, we retain 16 acres.

### Structures on the property include:

- **Historic House Museum-** BREC's Magnolia Mound Plantation, a historic house museum, is accredited by the American Association of Museums. The original section of the Main House was built c. 1791. The house was expanded to its present size at the beginning of the 19th century. It is constructed of cypress beams with bousillage-entre-poteau and the original cypress flooring. Furnishings include period Federal, Greek Revival and locally made artifacts.

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- **Open-Hearth Kitchen-** Reconstructed separate outdoor kitchen is authentically furnished with vintage utensils, such as spider pots, a clock-jack, sugar nippers, waffle iron, olla jar and reflector ovens.
- **Overseer's House-** Original to the plantation c. 1870 and home to the man who was responsible for the success or failure of the plantation's various operations.
- **Quarter House-** A double slave cabin c. 1830 has one living quarter furnished appropriately to the period. The adjoining section contains an exhibit of slave life on a Louisiana plantation.
- **Crop Garden-** Our crop garden contains indigo, tobacco, cotton, and sugar cane in order to depict all of Magnolia Mound's cash crops throughout our history.
- **Pigeonnier-** A small structure c.1825, to house squab and various game birds, featuring a new collection of live pigeons.
- **Carriage House-** A collection of vintage tools, as well as a weaver's workshop that depicts plantation chores c.1800-1820.

This project is also part of BREC's Imagine Your Parks, a project funded by a parish-wide \$3.25 million property tax that voters approved in November 2004. BREC and the Friends of Magnolia Mound Plantation had several nationally recognized historic property experts examine, assess and report recommendations for improvement to the more than 200-year-old historic house.

Now that construction is completed, the house is open for tours and is periodically dressed c. 1800-1820 for occasions such as weddings, funerals, Christmas, Lent and summer.