



CITY OF NEW ORLEANS

Historic District Landmarks Commission

Irish Channel Historic District



*Designated 2002
Jurisdiction:
New Orleans
Historic District
Landmarks
Commission
The street
boundaries of
the Irish Channel
Historic District
are Magazine
Street,
Delachaise
Street,
Tchoupitoulas
Street, and
Jackson Avenue.
Above Chippewa
Street, all lots
fronting Jackson
Avenue are
included in the
Lower Garden
District Historic
District.*

Although the District is called the Irish Channel, in the 19th century it was home to working class people of varied origins, including German, Irish and Italian immigrants, as well as native-born Americans, and free people of color. The origin of the neighborhood's name has been the source of debate, as has what truly constituted the center of the Irish population of New Orleans at any given time. It is, however, home to one of New Orleans' most distinctive parade traditions, the Irish Channel St. Patrick's Day Parade, which adds cabbages, potatoes and carrots to customary parade throws like beads and moon pies.

Most of the area known today as the Irish Channel was a part of the City of Lafayette, incorporated in 1833. A number of townhouses and raised center hall cottages built in the area in this antebellum period remain. In 1852, the City of Lafayette became a part of New Orleans.

Between 1833 and 1852 the working waterfront in the City of Lafayette flourished, providing a major source of jobs. The 1840s saw a large number of Irish immigrants to New Orleans, as many fled the ravages of the potato famine in Ireland. The Irish and other immigrants in this area

primarily worked along the bustling docks that sprang up in Lafayette. The working class dock-hand origins of the neighborhood can still be seen in the architectural fabric of the area, which is composed primarily of simple houses, including many single and double shotgun cottages and a number of warehouses and other dock-related structures. Most of these buildings date to the second half of the 19th century.

Many significant jazz musicians of German, French, Irish and Italian descent were born and reared here. All the members of the Original Dixieland Jazz Band, the first jazz band to make a phonograph record and to go to Europe, were from the Irish Channel. True to its roots, the Irish Channel continues to be home to well-trafficked corner stores, bars, restaurants and places of entertainment.¹

¹ Information taken from the Irish Channel National Register of Historic Places nomination, HDLC materials and information from the Preservation Resource Center.



The Egyptian Revival 2219 Rousseau Street was Lafayette's courthouse



Parasol's Bar is an example of a corner commercial building



Magazine Street is home to small, local stores

LOCAL CULTURE

- The building at 2219 Rousseau Street is of outstanding architectural importance because of its rare Egyptian Revival detailing and its early construction date of 1836; it was originally built as the courthouse for the City of Lafayette, and while it has suffered several remodelings, it still retains its distinctive shape and winged solar disks above the door and windows
- The former home of Nick LaRocca, bandleader for the Original Dixieland Jazz Band, is located in the District
- Magazine Street, between Washington and Louisiana Avenues, is a shopping corridor comprised of locally owned boutiques, antiques stores and restaurants, most housed in converted historic buildings, some originally commercial and others built as residences



In some areas, rows of shotguns are identical



Shotgun houses show various stylistic details, featuring stock millwork of the time



Tchoupitoulas is mix of industrial and residential types/uses in the District

URBAN FORM

Setting/Landscape

- The Irish Channel is predominantly low scale with a very dense pattern of building, typically on 30' x 120' lots
- Large portions of the area are characterized by houses with small front yards without fencing, a passage space on each side and a back yard, often with a shed
- Most residential lots are narrow, with no space for off-street parking

Massing/Form

- The adherence to basic building forms and the use of similar detailing make the area a remarkably uniform character
- Many streets have variations on the same architectural typology and consistent setbacks and roof heights
- Some streets are home to groups of identical buildings constructed at the same time by the same builder

Styles/Types

- Most of the buildings in the Irish Channel area are Greek Revival or Victorian in style, although examples of Creole, Egyptian Revival and Italianate are present
- Buildings in the district display an enormous variety of Victorian stock millwork
- Typically, stylistic details are concentrated on the front façade of residential buildings

Public Spaces

- A neighborhood park is located at 3rd and Annunciation

Commercial/Industrial

- A comparatively large number of corner stores, bars, and restaurants, many still used for their original purpose, are scattered throughout the area
- Along the riverside, Tchoupitoulas Street features small residential buildings interspersed with industrial uses and warehouses

This material is based upon work assisted by a grant from the Department of the Interior, National Park Service. Any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of the Interior.

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