

## Ardoin, Alphonse "Bois-Sec"



Alphonse Ardoin, better known as Bois Sec, was born in the 1920's in Prien Noir, Louisiana, and resided in Eunice, Louisiana. He died May 16, 2007. He was of African-French descent, and his family is one of the better known families associated with Louisiana music. For instance, his cousin Amede Ardoin was the first black accordion player to record Creole music. And his grandson Chris is a member of the Zydeco band, Double Clutchin'. Bois Sec is a pretty fair musician in his own right. In 1986, Ardoin was presented with the National Heritage Fellowship Award. This award has been presented to such music greats as Bill Monroe and John Lee Hooker

Bois Sec paid three dollars for his first accordion, and he learned to play it by watching his cousin Amede play. He and his long time friend and fiddler, Canray Fontenot, played old-time Creole music as performed by French-speaking blacks from the Cajun, Afro-Caribbean, Old World French, and Afro-American styles. Bois Sec first presented his music outside of Louisiana in 1996, at the Newport Folk Festival. He performs at the Festivals throughout the state of Louisiana including the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival and the Festival Acadian.

Not only was Bois Sec an accomplished musician, but had several children who are musically talented as well. Bois Sec, the father of fourteen, encouraged his children's talents. His son Morris, who operates a family dancehall, often joined him on guitar. Several of his other children play music and the entire family participates in the social activities of the rural Creole settlement of Prien Noir. These activities included Saturday night dances, bouscheries, and the Annual Mardi Gras Run.

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