



### **Musician and Cajun Foodways**

Harry LaFleur was born on October 23, 1933, in the small community of Swords near Eunice, Louisiana. He now lives with his wife and family in Eunice. Mr. LaFleur's interest in the fiddle began when he was a boy of approximately 6-7 years old. He learned from his grandfather, Frank Brown, who was a cousin of the renowned Cajun fiddler Dennis McGee. Harry's older brother, Raymond, played music with the legendary Ira LeJeune. Both Raymond and Ira influenced Harry's playing style. LaFleur is a talented musician who not only plays the fiddle but also the piano and guitar as well. Early in his career, 1959, he hosted a radio show on the KSLO station. He was able to demonstrate his command of both French and English languages.

Soon after becoming a professional musician, LaFleur became one of the original members of the *Pine Grove Boys*, the late Nathan Abshire's band. Harry is also a songwriter. Among his songwriting credits include two songs written for a film entitled *Allie Baines Meets the Cajun* that was released in England. He has also performed with legendary Cajun musicians such as Dennis McGee, Ira LeJeune, Leopold Manuel, Wallace "Cheese" Reed, and many others. Over the years, Harry and his music have been used in various music documentaries to promote Cajun music. He was one of the founders of the Cajun French Music Association, which is active in all areas of the Cajun Culture. Harry never tires of educating people about the Cajun music and culture. His picture can be viewed in a local museum exhibit that honors various Cajun pioneer musicians who were responsible for his musical heritage. Although, many of these musicians are deceased, Harry as well as others continues to entertain and to teach the younger generation about their heritage. Mr. LaFleur is also known as a very good cook. He has participated in the Louisiana Folk life Festival in Monroe, Louisiana, the art of outdoor cooking.

Harry is known for his love of French music and he continues to tour periodically. He played at the 1982 World's Fair in New Orleans as well as a number of festivals in Louisiana, including various universities through out the country. As a master fiddler, he was recently awarded a Folklife Apprenticeship Grant to teach Cajun fiddling. Occasionally Harry performs with, Larry "Bubba" Frey, a friend and student, at the Acadian Cultural Center in Eunice.

Master Cajun fiddler Harry LaFleur is one of the few remaining Cajun musicians who can still play the traditional reels-all mazurkas that were part of Cajun musicians' repertoires in the early twentieth century.

Updated March 23,2017 by Natchitoches-NSU Louisiana Folklife Center Staff