

Oak Street, New Orleans:

A History

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Introduction

In a city replete with walkable historic commercial corridors, Oak Street stands alone, being at once traditional and contemporary, local yet worldly, ensconced yet accessible, and urbane as well as quaint—a city shopping and dining district with the look and feel of a small-town Main Street.

Located in the heart of the Carrollton neighborhood in uptown New Orleans, Oak Street measures 1.12 miles in length and spans eighteen blocks, starting from the Broadway entrance to Tulane University's Newcomb College campus and terminating by the Mississippi River levee at the Orleans/Jefferson parish line. While its lower (downriver) half transects a tranquil residential neighborhood much like the rest of uptown, its upper commercial half bustles with locally owned shops, bistros, venues, services, offices, and other enterprises catering to neighbors and visitors alike—all within steps of the St. Charles Avenue Streetcar Line.

How did Oak Street happen? How has it changed and persisted over time? What, and who, make it special? This monograph recounts the history, geography, businesses, buildings, and people of the eight commercial/residential blocks of historic Oak Street, numbered 8100 to 8800, from South Carrollton Avenue to the parish line, from precolonial times to the present.

Indigenous Occupation and French Colonization

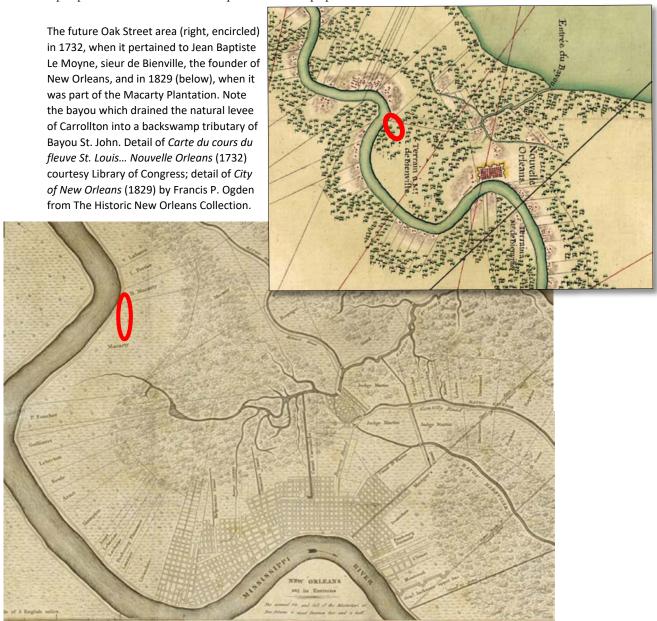
Oak Street occupies the natural levee, a topographic feature abutting the Mississippi River which forms the higher terrain of the deltaic plain—four to five feet above sea level, beneath 8100-8800 Oak. Historically, dense hardwood forests of oak, sweetgum, hackberry, sycamore, willow, and locust trees grew here, with an entanglement of briar, elderberry and other vines and shrubs in the understory. Soils on the natural levee would have been damp but not swampy, and seasonal overflows of the Mississippi would have run off this relatively high terrain toward Lake Pontchartrain. The further back one went—to present-day South Claiborne and the Earhart Expressway—the less that those muddy overflows were able to deposit sediment, thus yielding lower terrain with more finely textured soils. Water thus got impounded in those lower-elevation rear sections, forming an impenetrable backswamp of cypress and tupelo trees.

Because of its favorable riverside geography, the present-day Oak Street area became an important indigenous space known as *Les Chapitoulas*. It is unclear whether this term referred to members of a native tribe, their encampment, or this sharp river bend known for a deep-water fishing hole. What is clear is that "the Chapitoulas Coast" was a major landmark in the early 1700s, frequently appearing in French communiques and maps (and later giving rise to Tchoupitoulas Street, which originated as the road to the Chapitoulas Coast.) Among the indigenous tribes that circulated in this vicinity were the Annochy, Acolapissa, Quinapisa, and Mugulasha, among others. So varied were their languages and trading routes that natives collectively called this region *Balbancha*, a Choctaw word meaning "land of many languages." That is to say, New Orleans was diverse from the beginning—and so was the Oak Street area.

With the establishment of New Orleans in 1718, French colonials initiated a process of indigenous displacement to bring these lands into their imperial domain. They used everything from gifts and alliances to violence, enslavement, and forced removal, though it was probably European diseases that claimed the most lives. Concessions—that is, land grants—were then made to empowered colonists, who each obtained legal title to a surveyed section of the fertile natural levee. By giving *concessionaires* title to potentially valuable land, French imperialists turned selected colonists into stakeholders in the Louisiana project, and gave them a leg up in becoming the elite planter class in this newly forming society. Following the 1719 arrival of the first enslaved Africans, mostly from the Senegambia region of West Africa, planters put enslaved workers to the task of converting these subtropical forests into commodity plantations where rice, tobacco, indigo, and later sugar cane would be raised for generations to come.

The first *concessionaire* of the future Oak Street area was none other than the founder of New Orleans, Jean Baptiste Le Moyne, sieur de Bienville, who in 1719 audaciously granted himself all of present-day uptown including Carrollton, plus much of the West Bank. The selfish act put Bienville at odds with his superiors in Paris, and in the years ahead, he was forced to dispense with some parcels, rent out others, and eventually relinquish everything.

The tract upon which Oak Street now sits came into the possession of M. de la LaFrénière, one of three brothers who had obtained similar grants to nearby lands. By 1726, a Franco-African-Indigenous society had formed in this vicinity, in which plantations became the premier system for production, and on which enslaved people accounted for over 90 percent of the population.¹



Turmoil and Turnover

By the 1750s, LaFrénière's son Nicholas had inherited the plantation and prospered from its operation, becoming an ardent defender of the French regime. Like other French Creole planters, Nicolas Chauvin de LaFrénière despaired to learn of the secret 1762 treaty in which King Louis XV of France transferred Louisiana to King Carlos III of Spain. But unlike most other colonists, LaFrénière conspired with fellow French loyalists to resist the Spanish regime. In 1768, he led an ill-fated insurrection against the incoming Spanish governor, the failure of which led to LaFrénière's arrest and execution, along with a number of other insurgents—an incident that later inspired the naming of "Frenchmen Street" in the Faubourg Marigny.

To further dissuade defiance, Spanish authorities confiscated the properties of the conspirators' surviving family members. This act had a profound impact on the future of uptown, including Carrollton and

Oak Street, because a number of insurgents happened to be neighboring planters in this region. We would have a very different history and geography of uptown New Orleans and neighboring Jefferson Parish had the insurgents' families retained control of these lands, and had their descendants made subsequent development decisions.

What instead transpired was the transfer of land titles to figures supportive of the Spanish regime. In the 1770s, future Carrollton came under the control of the Lebreton family, which used its land more for timber harvesting and lumber production than for crops. In 1781, the area around Oak Street came into the possession of a French-speaking Scotts-Irishman named Barthelemy Daniel de Macarty, whose family would reign here for the next half-century. It was Barthelemy's son Jean Baptiste Macarty, born in New Orleans in 1750 and a captain in the Spanish militia as well as a successful merchant, who formed a major enslaved sugar cane plantation here. According to Robert J. Cangelosi Jr., "the Macartys were one of the first planter families to adopt sugar as their cash crop after it was successfully refined by Etienne de Boré in 1795," in a series of experiments carried out around what is now Henry Clay Avenue.

After Jean Baptiste Macarty died in 1808, three of his children took over operations. If we were to go back to the space of Oak Street in this era, we would see fields of sugar cane tended by enslaved field hands, while nearby would be "a sugar house, hospital [likely an infirmary for workers], mill, stable and dwelling house," as well as a sugar refinery at what is now Cherokee Street by Leake Avenue.² The lower boundary of the Macarty Plantation was the aptly named Lowerline Street, while the upper boundary was today's Orleans/Jefferson parish line, at Monticello Street, and the rear boundary crossed through the backswamp into what is now Mid-City. The Macarty Plantation was one of the largest landholdings in the area—32 arpents (an old French unit equating to 192 English feet, thus 1.15 miles along the riverfront)—and most of its administration and agricultural production took place at the river-end of the expanse, in what is now the Riverbend, Black Pearl, and Pigeon Town neighborhoods, including future Oak Street.

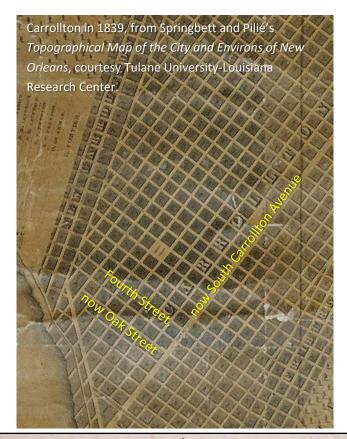
In May 1816, a crevasse (breach) opened in the levee fronting the Macarty plantation, sending sediment-laden river water across the plantation into the backswamp, and inundating New Orleans from the rear. Flood control would remain a challenge for the rest of the nineteenth century, but this particular incident did not come without benefits. "The receding water," historian Wilton P. Ledet noted, "filled the low terrain with alluvial deposits, enriching the soil as well as elevating the swamp sections." To this day, South Carrollton Avenue is slightly higher than adjacent parts of the natural levee, and beneath Oak Street there is probably a thin layer of sediment deposited by the 1816 crevasse.³

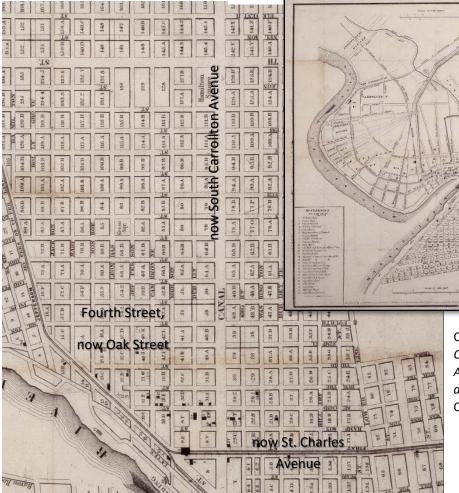
Urban Expansion

During the 1820s, the population of New Orleans nearly doubled, and many planters who owned land close to the city proper decided to hire surveyors to lay out street grids and sell parcels for urban expansion. Else, inheritors made the subdivision decision following the death of the elder planter, opting to cash out rather than running the plantation themselves. Midway through this decade, the state legislature carved a new parish out of Orleans Parish, starting at Felicity Street and heading upriver, including the Macarty Plantation, which thence became part of Jefferson Parish (1825). Despite that they were now in a different jurisdiction, Macarty family members took note of the strident upriver development emanating out of New Orleans proper, and realized they were sitting on prime suburban real estate—spacious, elevated, accessible with a long riverfront, and well-aligned with the expanding metropolis.

In 1831, the Macartys sold their land to a group of investors including the New Orleans Canal and Banking Company, an "improvement bank" designed to build infrastructure (rather than make loans) and run it for profit. The company wanted the Macarty land to use its rear flank for a navigation canal they envisioned building to connect New Orleans with Lake Pontchartrain. Similarly, other partners in the acquisition aimed to build a railroad to connect with New Orleans, and in the process steer the path of future development in their direction. In 1833 the team hired the railroad's designer, German engineer and surveyor Charles F. Zimpel, to also sketch a street plat for their new urban development. The investors named their new subdivision "Carrollton," probably for Gen. William Carroll, who had his Kentucky militia camp here prior to engaging the British at the Battle of New Orleans. Thus was born the enclave of Carrollton, in the middle of mostly rural Jefferson Parish, five miles upriver from the City of New Orleans.







Carrollton in 1853, from Map of Carrollton, Greenville & New Carrollton, Accompanied by a Chart of New Orleans and Vicinity, courtesy The Historic New Orleans Collection.

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Zimpel's 1833 plan for Carrollton is readily recognizable to today's neighborhood, but there were initial differences. For one, Zimpel laid out the squares four times the size of today's blocks, and ascribed different street names. South Carrollton Avenue was initially "Canal Avenue;" St. Charles Avenue was "First Street;" and because of the supersized blocks, streets behind First got their numerical names at an increment double the distance of the streets behind St. Charles Avenue today. Thus, counting off in doubles starting from St. Charles Avenue (First Street), present-day Maple Street was originally "Second Street," Freret Street was "Third Street," and present-day Oak Street was "Fourth Street." Our Oak Street would retain this rather functional name for the next 61 years, 1833 to 1894.

Zimpel's system also explains why there is a 17th Street Outfall Canal in Lakeview. The rear-most street of Zimpel's layout for Carrollton was enumerated "Seventeenth Street," and because of its low elevation, a drainage canal was dug here to steer runoff to the backswamp. In time, that drainage canal got extended to the lake, by which time one section became known as the Palmetto (Washington Avenue) Canal, and an adjoining section the 17th Street Canal. Years later, after the superblocks were quartered, street names changed, and Carrollton annexed into New Orleans, people still called the outfall canal by its old name. When this canal's floodwalls failed during Hurricane Katrina in 2005, causing catastrophic flooding from Lakeview to Carrollton, Zimpel's obsolete "Seventeenth Street" made international news.

Antebellum Carrollton and the Origins of Oak Street

The 1830s were a busy time in Carrollton. Zimpel's New Orleans & Carrollton Railroad began service in 1835, and remains in operation today as the St. Charles Avenue Streetcar Line. The New Orleans Canal & Banking Company's New Basin Canal (now the I-10 corridor) was dug during 1832 to 1836, and soon hosted steady barge and schooner traffic bringing building materials and other cargo in and out of both Carrollton and New Orleans. By 1840, Carrollton was buzzing as a bedroom community, transportation hub, and a resort for the crowded metropolis five miles downriver.

The economic activity led residents to want more control over their community, and many pressed state legislators to allow them to become a municipal entity. As a result, Carrollton incorporated as a town in 1845, after which the manager of the New Orleans & Carrollton Railroad, John Hampson (namesake of today's Hampson Street) became its first mayor. After Jefferson Parish's City of Lafayette (that is, today's Irish Channel, Garden District, and Central City) merged with New Orleans in 1852, Carrollton became the seat of Jefferson Parish. It needed a courthouse for the Third Judicial District Court, for which architect Henry Howard designed a stately Greek Revival edifice. Construction on the Carrollton Courthouse was completed in 1855, and four years later, the state legislature redesignated the town of Carrolton as a city. The former Carrollton Courthouse, which remained in service as a public school into the 2000s, is currently being renovated into a senior living facility.

Antebellum Carrollton was a community of many descriptions. It was at first a mere enclave, then a town, then a city and parish seat, complete with its own public-school system, fire station, police, levee and drainage systems, public market, churches and cemetery. It was also a small port with a ferry to the West Bank (known as the Right Bank at the time), an important railroad depot, and a light-industrial economy specializing in lumber milling. Steamboats, flatboats and other vessels docked at Carrollton Landing, and it was along this riverfront in 1850 that Gen. Andrew Atkinson Humphreys established the headquarters of the Delta Survey, a predecessor of the modern-day district headquarters of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, home to the Carrollton Gauge.

Additionally, Carrollton was something of a weekend getaway with a tourism economy, offering hotels, gardens, amusements, race tracks and sixteen liquor outlets catering to pleasure-seekers from New Orleans. Carrollton was also a bedroom community for those who earned incomes in the big city but preferred to reside in a country town, using the New Orleans & Carrollton Railroad to commute (drawn alternately by mules or a light steam engine, until it was electrified in 1893).

By 1861, according to the historian Ledet, Carrollton was home to 2776 people, with German, Anglo-American and French surnames predominating. Sixty-three white families owned a total of 248 enslaved African Americans; there were also 99 free people of color. Most residents lived in the

neighborhoods we now call the Riverbend, Black Pearl, Pigeon (Pension) Town, East Carrollton and Leonidas.⁴

What of Oak Street in this era? What's remarkable about antebellum Fourth Street—that is, present-day Oak Street—is how *unremarkable* it was. The artery was not the "Main Street" we know today; it was more akin to its present-day lower section—that is, residential, with the occasional corner store but no more. The reason was that most of the commercial action in antebellum Carrollton was along Levee Street, fronting the river roughly along today's Leake Avenue, and around the present-day intersection of St. Charles and South Carrollton avenues, extending inland. In 1846, the town erected a market pavilion with a picturesque belfry, for the sale of foodstuffs which had long taken place in open air on Dublin Street between Hampson and Maple. The "Carrollton Market" brought all the more foot traffic and cash flow to what is now the heart of the Riverbend neighborhood, and explains the present-day cluster of businesses in and around Dublin. This economic locus did not leave much retail activity for interior blocks such as Fourth Street, which was around 2000 feet inland from the bustling riverfront. As a result, future Oak Street in the antebellum era was a tranquil, mostly residential artery, rather indistinguishable from its neighboring streets—a fine place to live, but not a place for business.

Fourth Street Becomes Oak Street

Old Fourth Street transformed into today's Oak Street during the 1870s through 1890s. One major driver, for both the street and the community as a whole, was Carrollton's annexation in New Orleans in 1874. The story of Carrollton's annexation, which followed New Orleans' takeover of the City of Jefferson (present-day uptown) in 1870 and of the City of Lafayette in 1852, unfolded in two acts. The first came during the politically charged years following the Civil War, when Louisiana had a federally supported biracial Republican state government whose legitimacy was contested by Democrats in local jurisdictions, such as Jefferson City, where lived many former Confederates. A key moment in this political tension came with the 1868 formation of the Metropolitan Police, a state-backed racially integrated constabulary granted authority in New Orleans and adjacent municipalities, despite that some, to their understanding, had their own police forces.⁵

In the case of neighboring Jefferson City, the arrival of the Metropolitan Police was met with a violent street at Napoleon and Magazine streets, to which an incensed Gov. Henry Clay Warmoth responded by replacing Jefferson City's representatives with his own political appointees. He eventually eradicated the defiant city by merging it with New Orleans courtesy an 1870 act of the state legislature, and at the same, also annexing Algiers (previously an unincorporated part of Orleans Parish) into the City of New Orleans.

An earlier version of the bill also including Carrollton in the merger. But it was later dropped, probably because Carrollton's police force, unlike Jefferson City's, did not defy the Metropolitan Police. Additionally, Carrollton's Democratic voters might have upset the expected balance of likely Democrats and Republicans that Jefferson and Algiers, respectively, would have brought to New Orleans' ballot boxes. So Algiers was retained in the 1870 Jefferson City annexation legislation, while Carrollton was dropped, giving the little city a new lease on life—at least for now.

The second act in Carrollton's impending annexation came in 1874, and this one was motivated by both politics and geography. New Orleans had at that time 60 times more people, and they yearned for Carrollton's rail-accessed high riverfront land. New Orleans also had far more clout, politically and financially, and would benefit by absorbing Carrollton's potentially competing assets. To illustrate New Orleans' hunger for land, when the city's Republican Senator A. E. Barber introduced an annexation bill to the state legislature in February 1874, it aimed to absorb not just old Carrollton, but, according to the *Daily Picayune*, "all the city of Carrollton and Jefferson Parish up as far as St. Charles Parish." Had his bill passed, the City of New Orleans today would span from Kenner to the Rigolets, and Jefferson Parish would be solely on the West Bank. Instead, the bill was trimmed back to annex only the original limits of Carrollton, from Lowerline to Monticello.⁶

At first, Carrollton residents protested, citing pragmatic concerns such as possible tax increases without accompanying improvements. But others saw benefits in annexation, including the transfer of Carrollton's debt to New Orleans' ledger. Public sentiment shifted when the *Carrollton Sentinel*, reversed itself

and declared "we are now strongly in favor of annexation." In its final weeks of existence, the City of Carrollton raced to pave streets, build *banquette* (sidewalk) curbs, dig wells and make other internal improvements, knowing well all invoices would soon be sent downtown.

On March 23, 1874, Barber's bill became law, and the City of Carrollton in Jefferson Parish became the neighborhood of Carrollton in the City of New Orleans, as well as Orleans Parish's Sixteenth and Seventeenth wards and Seventh Municipal District. Their borders to this day align perfectly with those of antebellum Carrollton, and of the colonial-era Macarty Plantation.⁷

Political annexation is one thing; administrative, economic, and cultural absorption is quite another, and would take more time. Carrollton retained the look-and-feel of a separate town, as it does to this day, but it was no longer master of its own destiny. Decisions once made locally were now emanating from City Hall and its various departments and boards.

In 1891, for example, authorities in the Orleans Parish Levee Board decided to realign the levee fronting Carrollton, leading to the elimination of famous Levee Street and its many stores. In 1893, the former New Orleans & Carrollton Railroad—now the St. Charles Streetcar line—was electrified, putting Carrollton in easier reach of downtown, and catalyzing development as well as the creation of spur lines and shuttles into adjacent neighborhoods. In 1900, one such shuttle, known as the Southport Shuttle for its service to the Southport community across the Jefferson Parish line, opened on Oak Street. This streetcar, which ran until 1929, looped from South Carrollton up Willow Street to Gen. Ogden Street to Leake Avenue, then down all eight blocks of commercial Oak Street, and back onto South Carrollton Avenue. This streetcar service—which after 1929 became the city's very first "trackless trolly" (that is, an electric bus) was a major impetus for the development of commerce along Oak Street. Streetcar tracks remained in place until the Oak Street Merchants' Association petitioned the city in 1948 to have them removed.8

The renaming of Oak Street had come about when, for the sake of efficiency, the city in 1894 passed an ordinance to rename dozens of streets, including those which had originated in the once-separate cities of Jefferson and Carrollton. Out went Zimpel's old numbering system, in favor of more colorful toponyms featuring trees and foliage. Why? It so happened that some streets in the old Greenville subdivision—laid out in 1836 between Walnut and Lowerline—already had streets named for trees, including Chestnut (now Audubon), Oak, and Pine streets. These and other descriptive names clashed with the numerical names of old Carrolton, some of which had previously been changed to tree names, such as Plum and Cypress. The July 9, 1894 ordinance aimed to harmonize the two clashing systems, and specifically stipulated the extension of Greenville's existing four-block-long "Oak Street" clear across through Carrollton's Fourth Street. The problem was that New Orleans already *had* an "Oak Street," a three-block-long stretch deep in Sixth Ward. So the ordinance renamed that downtown strip "Orchid Street," and changed Carrollton's Fourth Street into "Oaks Street." It is unclear if that odd plural form was intentional or simply a typographical error, and it's worth pointing out that there is no euphonic difference between "Oaks Street" and "Oak Street." In any case, we've been calling it—and spelling it—"Oak Street" ever since.9

Also in 1894, another ordinance ridded the city of the confusing house-numbering system that had been in place since 1852, and replaced it was a decimal system (also known as the Philadelphia system), in which blocks increment by 100 per their distance from a certain starting point, namely Canal Street or the Mississippi River. By the end of 1894, addresses on newly renamed Oak Street were the same as they are now, 8100 to 8800, terminating at the parish line.

Oak Street Goes Commercial

By the earlier 1900s, a commercial cluster had begun to form among the houses on Oak, from South Carrollton and continuing upriver, and the artery began to develop the "Main Street" character of today. Why? Why Oak Street and not, say, Freret or Plum or Jeanette?

A number of factors explain the commercial transformation of Oak. For one, retail activity in Carrollton had shifted inland on account of the 1891 destruction of old Levee Street and the disappearance of maritime activity at Carrollton Landing, coupled with the interior expansion of the neighborhood thanks to the 1874 annexation and the 1893 street electrification. This put Oak Street in a more convenient and centralized position with regard to the consumer population. Importantly, Oak Street above South Carrollton

Avenue measures about ten feet wider than its parallel streets, making it wide enough for two-way traffic plus parking—an issue now, in this new automotive age. Oak Street also happened to be the one artery that directly linked the River Road at Southport (itself a bustling little port) with the heart of Carrollton, without any awkward jogs or turns. That made Oak Street a key ingress for much of the East Bank of Jefferson Parish—at a time when Metairie was still mostly swamp—to get into Carrollton and uptown New Orleans. "All out of town traffic is rout[ed] through Oak street," advocates for Oak Street pointed out in 1921, making it ideal for entrepreneurs and less so for residential living. Oentrally located, sufficiently wide, well-accessed, with a railroad and river at one end, an electrified streetcar at the other, and its very own shuttle streetcar, all within walking distance for local consumers: now we can see why entrepreneurs favored setting up shop on Oak Street.

It probably helped that Oak Street, unlike a number of other streets in uptown and Carrollton, had no ordinances specifically *forbidding* business establishments, namely food markets, which were viewed as potential nuisances. (This explains why, to this day, there are so few food stores throughout the Audubon/University area). ¹¹ This was before the era of city planning and zoning, when just about any business could open anywhere, and neighbors could either tolerate them, sue them, or cajole local representatives to legally ban them. What resulted was a tangled mess of city ordinances banning this or that land use from specific areas.

What was needed instead was a city master plan and zoning map, where land uses were predesignated for residential, commercial, industrial, or other potentially conflicting uses. When the City Planning Commission was established in 1923 and the first zoning ordinances followed in 1929, planners surveyed the cityscape, drew lines around already-commercialized areas, and designated them to be commercially zoned. In this manner, the commercial development that had spontaneously gravitated to Oak Street during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century became officially zoned as such after 1929, along with a fair number of residential lots as well.

Oak Street has had an interesting mix of land uses ever since—part residential, to various densities; part commercial, within limits, and part light industry—and over the years, its citizens have stewarded its success through organizations such as the Oak Street Improvement League (which in 1921 called for the paving of the street, up till them either planked or graveled), the Oak Street Merchants' Association, the 17th Ward Civic League, the Carrollton Businessmen's Association, and today's Oak Street Merchants, Residents and Property Owners Association. 12

Oak Street Today

In recent decades, Oak Street has seen nearly as much dynamism as stability, such that one may find, in its eight commercial blocks, evidence of both family-oriented traditionalism as well as recent "NOLA culture"-style gentrification. One major catalyst for Oak's recent success was the 2007 launch of the Po-Boy Festival. Wildly popular from the outset, the November event drew over 50 vendors and 50,000 people by 2013, helping Oak Street "grow dramatically" in the process, and ever since, "the street has been booming." In many people's minds, Oak Street is the Po-Boy Festival, in the same way that the Fair Grounds and Jazz Fest have become synonymous, and the event serves as an annual citywide promotion of the quaint corridor. "Always the 'main street' of Uptown's Carrollton neighborhood, the stretch of Oak between Leake and Carrollton avenues is home to more than 60 independent businesses and the popular Po-Boy Festival," wrote journalist Rich Collins recently in *Biz New Orleans*. "Merchants here enjoy lower prices per square foot than in some other New Orleans commercial areas and they gain foot traffic from the Carrollton Avenue streetcar line and proximity to Jefferson Parish. Some businesses, like Haase's Shoe Store, have been here for generations while others, like Oak St Brewery, [have recently] opened their doors." 14



A Stroll on Oak Street, Then and Now: 8100 Oak, South Carrollton to Dublin

Our stroll up historic Oak Street begins at its commercial gateway, at South Carrollton Avenue by the St. Charles streetcar stop. If you proceeded along this 8100 block in 1908, you would have seen on your left a corner drug store at 8100 Oak, an early "moving pictures" theater at 8114 Oak, a bank at 8130 Oak, and a furniture store at 8140 Oak, while on the lake side of the block were an office, plumbing shop, machine shop, and a small wire screen factory (8101-8113 Oak), and a department store at the far corner, 8143 Oak. Today, over a century later, two imposing former banks frame the artery, almost like an entrance gate. On the left (1140 South Carrollton, or 8100 Oak) is the Rue de la Course Coffee House, a popular café known for its classical music and capacious interior. Built in 1926 where the drugstore had once stood, this Renaissance Revival edifice originally housed the Marine Bank and Trust Company until it was sold in 1930 to the Canal Bank and Trust Company to serve as its Carrollton branch. Ten years later, Canal Bank sold the building to a local family who operated the Ritzi Clothing Shop here into the 1980s. Across the street at 1200 South Carrollton Avenue (or 8101 Oak) is a larger former bank, also designed in the Renaissance Revival style, built in 1921 as a branch of the Whitney Central Trust and Savings Bank, a predecessor of today's Hancock-Whitney Bank. It remained a Whitney branch until 2004, after which it housed the New York Deli & Poor-Boys and Rose Nails salon and spa. Today it is home to PhoBistreaux.

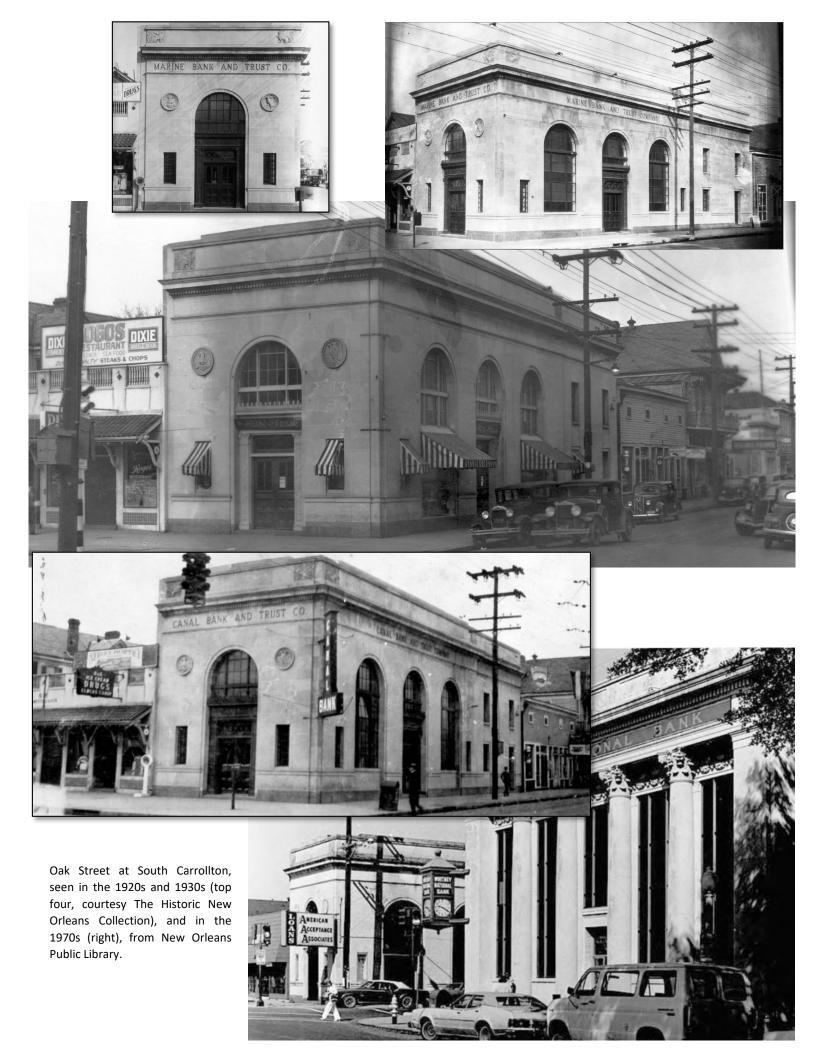
Adjacent to today's PhoBistreaux, along the lake side of the 8100 block of Oak and past the brick-faced apartments affiliated with the Mater Dolorosa Catholic Church around the corner, we have a sequence of historic structures which in the 1930s housed the Kogo Brothers Meat Market (8115 Oak) and Restaurant (8117 Oak). Here, Gus, Peter, Sam, George and Angelo Kogo served locals with butchered meats and prepared food from 1924 to 1944, and their inscription may still be seen above the Truburger Restaurant (previously Gelato Caffé), which now occupies the building.

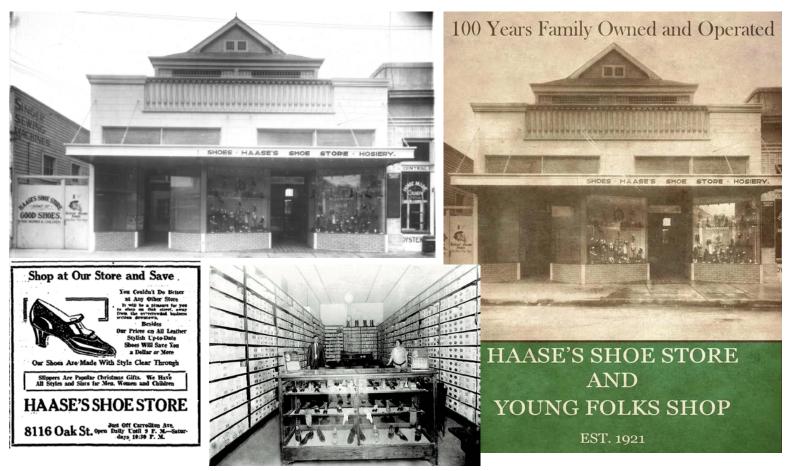
Continuing downriver in the 1930s was Haase Boris Shoe Store and Haase Boris Women's Clothing store in 8119-8121 Oak; the Oak Street Hardware Store at 8123 Oak; Gertrude W. Corwin's Women's Clothes (8127 Oak—a Renaissance Revival-style commercial building designed by Weiss and Dreyfous and built in 1922); Carrollton Shoe Repair Shop at 8129 Oak; three residential apartments at 8131 Oak; David Schneider's Men's Furnishings at 8133 Oak, Arthur Gensburger Liquors at 8135 Oak, and on the corner of Dublin, Capitol Grocery at 8141 Oak.¹⁷

By the 1960s, Kogos had become Claire's Beauty Salon (8117 Oak); Haase's remained at 8119-8121 Oak; the Oak Street Hardware Store operated at 8123 Oak (until recently home to the Louisiana Running & Walking Co./Southern Runner apparel, now the new home of Blue Cypress Books); Beatrice's Women's Clothing occupied 8127 Oak; a Community Finance Corps was in 8129 Oak; 8131 Oak was vacant; Spanier's Men's Clothing occupied 8133 Oak, and Leed's Shoes held the corner at Dublin, 8141 Oak, now home to Paul's Framing. 18

In testimony to local commitment, Haase is still owned by the same family for a century, opened in 1921 by Boris and Della Haase as a shoe store which later expanded to clothes and now specializes in grade-school uniforms for neighborhood children. According to the family, "in 1922 Boris and Della purchased a house across the street from the original location and had it raised. They opened the store on the lower level and raised their family above the store." Today you can still see the original framehouse behind the storefront. Haase family members ran the stores—including the shoe store and a "Young Folks Shop"—for six generations. "In 2010 Vera May Haase's youngest son Kevin Caliva and his wife, Judy, took over[;] Vera May, however, stayed on board and finally retired at the age of 96 in 2013. She passed away just months before her 99th birthday in 2015. Today, Haase's Shoe Store and Young Folks Shop are owned by Kevin and Judy Caliva." ¹⁹

Across Oak, on the river side of the 8100 block, in the 1930s one would have strolled from Canal Bank past William H. Haemer's Barber Shop at 8112 Oak; Vito Cangelosi's Shoe Repair at 8114 Oak; Mae Waterman's Beauty Shop at 8116 Oak; the H.G. Hill Department Store at 8118 Oak; Pierre Morere's Law Office at 8120 Oak; Joseph Hummel's Auto Repair at 8124 Oak; George Sladovich's Hardware at 8130 Oak (previously Bienville Market in the 1920s, late a sewing machine shop); Eliza Cousin's Jewelry Store at 8134 Oak; and Marie Walder's bakery at 8140 Oak corner Dublin.





Haase's Shoe Store and Young Folks Shop, exterior (note house in rear) and interior, courtesy Haase's. Newspaper ad at left is from 1924, when the family business was three years old. It is now over 100 years old.



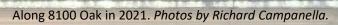
Family Barber, 8112 Oak Street, run by 96-year-old Lynward L. "Bud" Adams since shortly after serving in the U.S. Navy and Army in World War II. *Photos courtesy Family Barber / Haircut Harry*.



By the 1960s, a similar mix of shops operated here. At 8112 Oak was the Family Barber Shop—with Dotty's "Sno Balls" at 8112½—and Giochino Montalbano's Shoe Repair at 8114 Oak. Next door was the Oak Street Beauty Shop at 8116 Oak, also home to Oak Electric appliance repair (dating to around 1945); the Oak Street Hardware Store at 8118 Oak; Oak Tailors at 8120 Oak; Eschette & Naquin Auto Repairs at 8122 Oak; Anthony Alessandra's Dancing School at 8124 Oak; Blum & LaLanne, Inc. Jewelers at 8126 Oak; a Christian Science Reading Room at 8128 Oak (built in 1906 as the Carrollton Savings and Trust Building); Arthur Williams Credit, Inc. at 8130 Oak; Reid's Beauty Salon at 8136 Oak; Punch's Super Market at 8130 Oak; and McKenzie's Pastry Shoppe at 8140 Oak corner Dublin.

Well into the 2000s, the shoe repair shop remained in business at 8110 Oak, and the Family Barber Shop at 8112 Oak is still open, run by 96-year-old Lynward L. "Bud" Adams, a U.S. Navy and Army veteran of World War II who attended barber school after the war and has been cutting hair on Oak Street ever since. Next door we find Anne Wolfe Certified Public Accountant at 8114 Oak; a former ice cream parlor at 8116 Oak; the Oak Restaurant at 8118 Oak where the hardware store used to be; the office of First Class Studio & Production at 8120 Oak where the tailor shop once was; Ale on Oak at 8124 Oak (previously home to One Stop Scooter Shop, vendor of medical equipment); Blue Cypress Books, formerly at 8126 Oak (previously home to Little Dave's Alterations, a tailor shop) until its expansion across the street to 8123 Oak in the summer of 2021; the Ra Shop Tobacco & Gifts shop at 8128 Oak where the Christian Science Reading Room used to be; the New Orleans Bike Shop at 8136 Oak (which decades ago had been was Expert Alterations Custom Tailoring Shop); Crescent City Apothecary Health & Wellness at 8138 Oak, where, decades ago, Expert Alterations Custom Tailoring had once been; and at 8140 Oak corner Dublin, the Live Oak Café, previously Oak Street Café, McKenzie's for decades, Walder's Bakery in the 1930s, and the New Orleans Pure Food Bakery in the 1940s, at which time the structure sported a spacious wooden gallery.





KOGOS BROTHERS MARKET



8200 Oak, Dublin to Dante

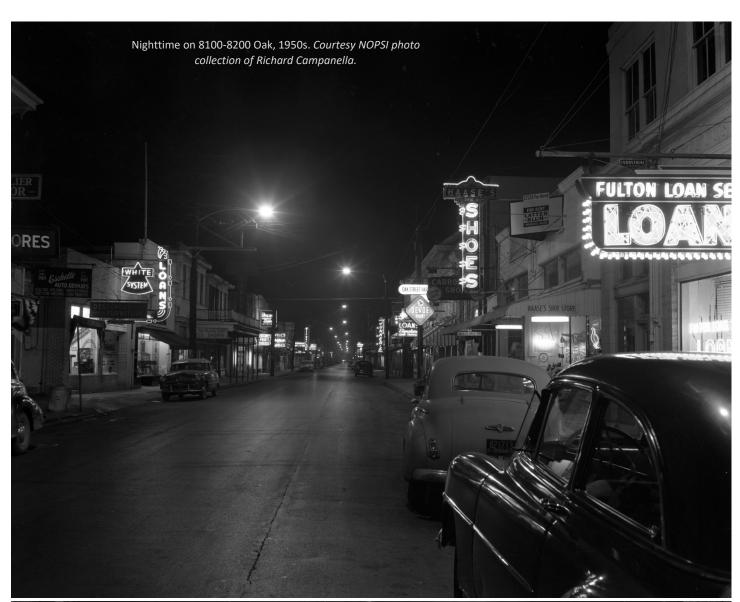
Across Dublin Street at 8200 Oak, where now operates More Fun Comics, was a blacksmith and wagon shop in the 1890s, at which time these and adjoining blocks were "partly planked" with scrap lumber, and "graveled" by the early 1900s.²⁰ By the 1930s, the corner building was home to Daniel Duncan's Barber Shop, adjacent to C.H. Botnick Co. Dry Goods Store at 8204 Oak (now Live Oak Dance). By the 1960s, a Sherwin-Williams Paint Store occupied 8200 Oak, and the Beneficial Finance Company used 8204 Oak for its office. Aubrey J. Weil's Shoe Store was at 8206 Oak in 1938, and Valentine Cotton's paint store occupied the 8208-8210 Oak addresses where Z'otz Café now stands; in the 1960s, these two addresses were home to Schiro Brothers Shoes and Tony's Barber Ship. The frame structure where C4 Tech & Design currently occupies (8212 Oak) was Warren Athen's Cleaners and Dyers in 1938, which by 1965 had the same name but had been bought out by Harry Wong. Wellsley Whitely's jewelry store (1938) and Eva's Alteration Shop (1965) had the now-modernized front at 8216 Oak where One 2 One Salon and Spa now stands. The adjacent driveway is the site of a demolished building, 8218-8220 Oak, which in the 1930s was Oak Appliance Electrical Supplies and the 1960s was an office pertaining to John Bordelon. The Tabletop Gaming Café at 8228 Oak was home to Marix's Specialty Shop for women's clothes, and above were three apartments, one occupied by the Marix family, in the tradition of "living above the store." The rest of the riverside 8200 block was occupied by a series of small businesses in a sort of early strip mall, all within the space of today's Castellon Pharmacy. In the 1930s they included the Colgate-Palmolive-Peet Premium Store (8232 Oak), Standard Glass and Mirror Works (8234 Oak), John Guzzardo Meats (8236 Oak), the Singer Sewing Machine Company (8238 Oak), and two vacant units up to the Dante intersection. In the 1960s they included the Adams Home and Auto Shop (8232 Oak), Voisel Building Supply Company at 8238 Oak, Quality Trophies at 8240 Oak, and the Oak Street Restaurant at 8242 Oak. All these stores were later demolished for the construction of the building now housing Castellon Pharmacy.

Walking down the lake (odd-numbered) side of 8200 Oak in the 1890s, most of the block would have been empty, except for the corner building. By the 1930s, from Dublin to Dante, we would have seen the A & P Food Store at the corner, 8201 Oak (now Coastal Cajun Kitchen, and in the 1990s-2000s, the Super 10 Discount), and the Woolworth's Department Store at 8207 Oak, the two of which would have accounted for some of the busiest foot traffic on Oak. This latter unit is today's Oak Street Brewery. Upstairs, at 8203 Oak, were apartments and offices pertaining to Earnest Drackett Real Estate, Carrollton Securities, Dr. Gaston Songy (dentist), Fulton Loans Service, and Dr. Robyn W. Hardy (physician). Adding to the economic activity was Junker's Department Store at 8211 Oak (now Eclectic Home Décor; previously, Going, Going, Gone Resale), Harry Spiro's Shoes at 8217 Oak, Louis Talluto's Shoe Repair at 8219 Oak, Pat Lane's Hardware at 8225 Oak, Frank Ferrera's Shoe Repair at 8227 Oak adjoining John Terracina's Restaurant at 8227½ Oak, the Oak Appliance Shop at 8229 Oak, Talluto's Beauty Shop at 8235 Oak (this family also lived above or behind the store), a residence at 8239 Oak, and at the corner of Dante, John Fourment's Drug Store.

By 1965, the A&P had closed, and the Woolworth had expanded into 8201-8207 Oak (now Coastal Cajun Kitchen and Oak Street Brewery; previously Super 10), while Junker's remained at 8211 Oak (Eclectic Décor). After a few vacancies, there was Meisel's Fabric Store (retail and wholesale, 8225 and 8225a Oak; now Rabbit Ears Vintage) on either side of Oak Shoe Repair at 8227 Oak (now 14 Parishes Jamaican Restaurant, previously Mellow Mushroom Pizza). Next door, at 8229 Oak, was the Peterson's Children's Clothes Shop, Joyner Sewing Machine at 8235 Oak (now Dynamic Ceramics); and The Fabric Shop (opened 1945) at the corner, 8237-8241 Oak (now MM Hair Stylist, Coutelier NOLA, and Uptown Home Shop décor).









-The-

BIENVILLE MARKETS

FOR YOUR

HOLIDAY PORK ROASTS

301 ROYAL ST. 8130 OAK ST. 231 N. LIBERTY ST.

and and the curcular

1924 ad for Bienville Market, 8130 Oak

SHRIMPS CRABS SEALOOD STERILIZED Packed In Neat Convenient Packages Ready For the Table Dry Shrimps and Crabs Our Specialties Creole Gumbo Sterilized and Hand-Dried Fillet Shrimps and Crabs F. H. MILLET 8319 OAK STREET

1924 ad for Millet's Seafood. 8119 Oak

> Woolworth's ad, 8207

> > Oak.

1-8185 . 8616 OAK ST.

1958

For HTH or Amy Swimming Pool Problem:

1965 ad for Meisel's Fabric Shop at 8225 Oak

EXPERIENCED SALESLADY Apply in person. Ask for Mr. Meisel MEISEL'S FABRIC SHOP 8225 OAK ST

1964 ad for Fiesta

Pools, 8616 Oak

stating Oak Street to be "out of the high rent district"

1929 ad





CANAL & BOURBON CANAL & RAMPART 3112 GENTILLY BLVD.

2014 MAGAZINE 4318 MAGAZINE BLVD. 802 METAIRIE ROAD 4507 C WESTSIDE SHOPPING CENTER, GRETNA

8207 OAK ST. 2039 AIRLINE HWY 4507 Chef Menteur Hwy.

Sail out of Summer and into Fall with YANKEE CLIPPER 45" Wide 1 98

It is woven in a blend of the finest man-made and natural fibers. It is constructed to give the utmost in performance. The Crompton name is your ossurance of quality. AUTOMATIC WASH AND WEAR.

Fabric Snop Corner DANTE

lay Thru Saturday 9 to 6

OAK ST.

Ħ

1966 ad (above) for the Fabric Shop,

8241 Oak



Suede & Leather Geaners

KID GLOVES

Cleaned and Repolished 24-HOUR SERVICE Mail Orders Given Prompt Aftention
Glove Buttons Available

8500 OAK ST. UN 1-4691

1965 ad for 8500 Oak cleaners

1948 ad (right) for The Fabric Shop, 8241 Oak. Note

"Parking Spaces Always."

riline vieux Carre, naving as ner Marvelous Materials for GRADUATION PROM DRESSES



STARCHED CHIFFON RAYON

45 inches wide. White, pink, blue, meize, green, eque, orchid.

YARD\$1.39

RAYON TAFFETAS

42 inches wide and 44 inches wide. Blue, maize, white, red, Nile green, aque, navy blue, black, orchid.

YARD....\$1.39 & \$1.69

RAYON NET

2 yards wide. White, peach, pink, black, nile green, red. YARD.....79c & \$1.39

Many other outstanding values in an unusually large selection of exquisitely beautiful remnants.

WE TAKE PLEASURE IN SUPPLYING GORGEOUS MATERIALS

Including nets, veiling, teffetes and FOR WEDDINGS

> PATTERNS RY SIMPLICITY ADVANCE McCALL

The Fabric Shop 8241 OAK ST. WA 9653

Parking Space Always

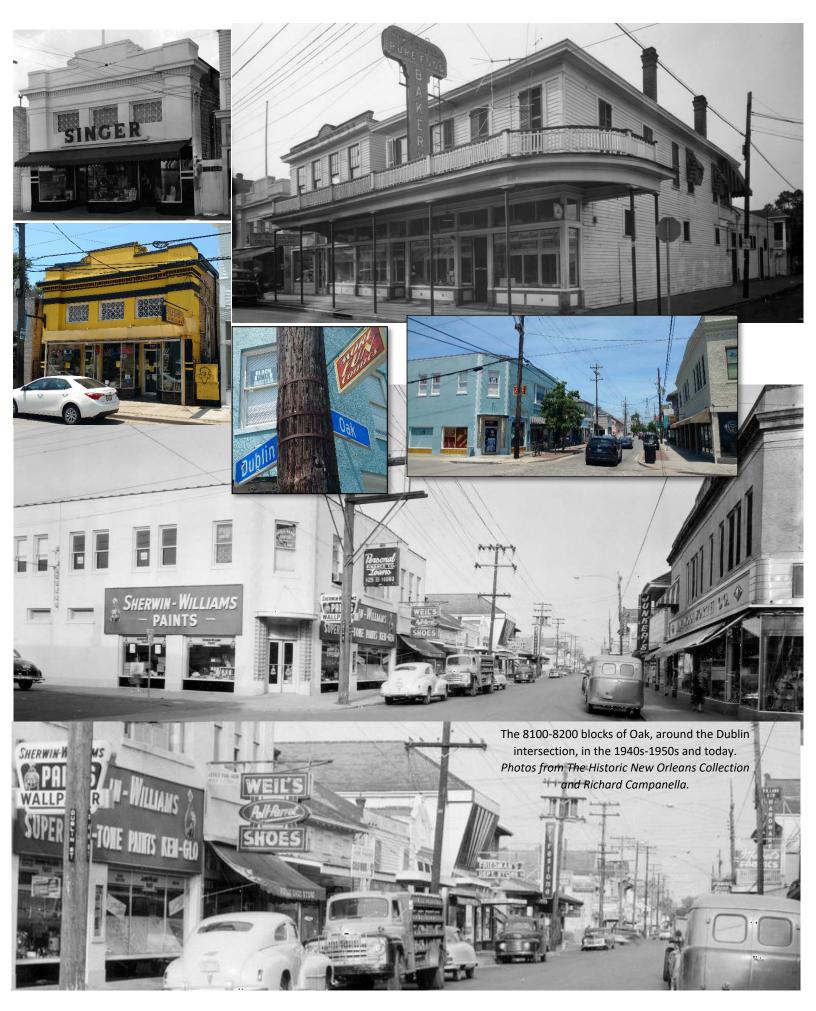
Open Saturdays 9 A. M.



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December 26th

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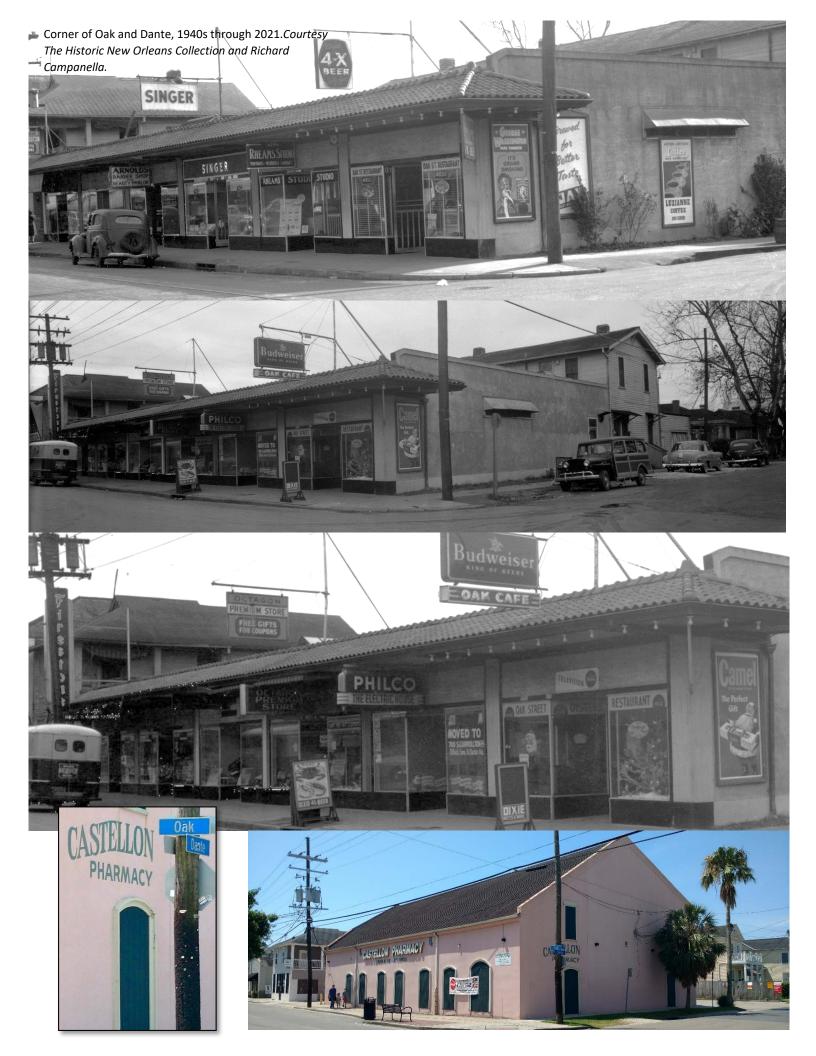


8300 Oak, Dante to Cambronne

The river side of Oak's 8300 block stands out for its open corner yard, a space used by the recently closed Chiba Sushi Restaurant (8312 Oak) for parking, and before that, for an importer of Mexican ironworks and outdoor furniture. But in the 1930s, it was a residence (8304 Oak), and the adjoining buildings were home to Early Whitely's Liquors (8310 Oak) and Theodore Herman's Furniture (8312 Oak). Two doors down was Henry Bentz's Bicycle Repair (8316 Oak), followed by Bell Tea and Coffee (8318 Oak), Bertha Caplina's Beauty Shop (8324 Oak), Marcov Peter's Restaurant (8228 Oak), Whitney Adams Barber at 8334 Oak, and Douet Dry Goods at the corner of Cambronne, 8338 Oak. By the 1960s, the corner of 8300-8304 was vacant, possibly indicating that it had already been demolished, or was soon to be. Victor's Furniture Wholesalers occupied 8310-8312 Oak; Garret's Bicycles was at 8314 Oak (now the French Art Gallery); the Oak Street Washerette ("self serve") occupied 8316 Oak (now the Maple Leaf Bar, a musical Mecca since 1974, and according to local architect Min Yang, "the soul of the street and its cultural center of gravity"21). Next door, 8318 Oak was home to the American Cancer Society volunteer center, while a residential apartment had the 83181/2 address; Garret Wholesalers occupied 8320 Oak while another residential apartment was at 83201/2 and Adolpho's Restaurant & Bar operated at 8324 Oak (the popular Jacques-Imo's Restaurant now occupies 8320-8324 Oak, and since 1996 has been a major draw for people citywide as well as visitors to come to Oak Street). The Best Doughnut Shop was at 8328 Oak; Adams Barber was at 8334 Oak; and near the corner of Cambronne was a St. Vincent de Paul used merchandise store (8338 Oak; more recently an ACE Hardware Store, and now Flawless bridal/hair as well as Yes Yoga).

Along the lake side of the 8300 block we start to see the transition of **Oak** from a predominately commercial to a partially residential street, a relic of its original land, which mostly comprised single-family wooden houses and doubles. Here, as in other blocks closer to the river, we still see mostly wooden structures originally built as homes, and now either businesses or homes or both. At 8301 Oak is Oak Taste Buds Catering and Events; at 8309 Oak the CFO 1 Source Accounting Office; at 8313 Oak a residential house; at 8317-8319 Oak are vacant spaces in a former house (the latter of which, 8319 Oak, was the F. H. Millet seafood packing business, specializing in "shrimps, crabs...Creole gumbo, fillet [and] dry shrimps")²²; and at 8315 Oak is the office and parking lot of the Disability Advocacy Center. Interestingly, the block in the 1930s had roughly the same admixture of living and working as we see today. People lived at 8309, 8311, and 8313 Oak, whereas people worked at 8301 Oak (Kabacoff Grocery), 8315 Oak (Philip Accardo Barber), Sam Lee Laundry (8317 Oak), Walter Baudier Electrical Contractor (8319 Oak), Ezelle Landry Poultry (8321 Oak), Dominick Amato clothes cleaning (8323 Oak), Irwin Bienn furniture (8325 Oak), and William Niemaber Liquors at 8335 Oak. It is likely that some of these entrepreneurs lived where they worked, in a rear or side apartment. Little had changed by the 1960s, when a comparable mix prevailed here: residences at 8301, 8309, 8311, 8313, 8315, and 8317 Oak, and businesses at 8319-8325 Oak (Bienn's Furniture). This last address was, in the 1920s, the Oak Street Automobile Company (8325-8327 Oak), which advertised in 1929 that "Our cars are right in price and quality—There is a Reason We Are Out of the High Rent District." ²³







8400 Oak, Cambronne to Joliet

The 8400 block manifests the historical residential nature of Oak as we get farther from South Carrollton, in that we see here turn-of-the-century wooden frame houses set back from the street and spaced apart for gardens, all evidence of lower land values with less commercial viability. In the 1930s, for example, the entire block from Cambronne to Joliet was residential, with only two listings mentioning vocations—Charles Betz & Sons Funeral Directors at 8416 Oak (an 1894 shotgun house remodeled in 1913) and Thomas Walsh, vulcanizer, at 8438 Oak (now Entablature Realty Office). By the 1960s, the 8400 block was virtually unchanged, with a different mix of neighbors but the same two businesses and the same residential predomination. Today, it's a bit different, but not enormously. The just-opened Seafood Sally's Restaurant at 8400 Oak is an example of a residential-to-business conversion in what was clearly originally a house; until recently, a restaurant named "La Casita" ("The Little House") operated here (previously Squeal Bar-B-Q). The subsequent lots (8408 through 8420 Oak) were cleared of their houses probably in the 1970s and replaced by a contemporary apartment complex, iterating the residential zoning of this area, while the next four structures are all early-1900s wooden houses converted into offices, at 8422 Oak (Uptown PMR Chiropractor Office), 8428 Oak (Whiteoak Productions), 8434 Oak (PRG Policy & Research Group office), and 8438 Oak (Entablature Realty Office), whose front porch has been remodeled into a commercial front. Across the street, at 8403 Oak, we see a fine example of a residential frame house on one of the largest grassy lots on this part of Oak, with no outward sign of commercial activity. Architect Robert Cangelosi describes this "two-story residence [as] built in 1881 for Adam Mehn," a member of an early Carrollton family, "which remained in the family until 1940.... The column capitals are typical for the 1880s." Adjoining are three comparable if smaller historic houses, at 8409, 8411-8413 ("a Southern Colonial Revival shotgun...built in 1910 for Daniel Geary," the latter now home to N.O.B.S. at 8413 Oak), and 8425 Oak ("a 1903 Queen Anne cottage which once had a twin at 8433 Oak"). 24 That twin, the last house on the block, has since been raised, expanded, and converted to commercial use, having hosted the Ninja Japanese Restaurant and Karaoke Bar.



8500 Oak, Joliet to Leonidas

Crossing Joliet brings us to the 8500 block of Oak, where today we find Driscoll's Antiques and Restoration at **8500 Oak** (which was Anna Berot's cleaning and pressing service from the 1930s through the 1960s, specializing in kid gloves, when women wore gloves to go out on the town), the Simple Title Company at **8518 Oak** (which was Alf Firmin's Grocery in 1938, Carrollton Exclusive Diaper Service and the OK Printing Company in 1965, and now the K. Jefferson Jones' Attorney Office), a vacancy and a residence (including John Porter's radio repair at **8522 Oak** in 1938 and Prince Radio and TV Repair in 1965), and a

rambling corner building with apartments above and Top Notch Billiards (8528 Oak) and Another New Orleans Café Soul Food at 8536 Oak. This multi-use corner building at the Leonidas intersection, which was all residences in the 1930s, was by 1965 home to Anita Barber Shop (8528 Oak) and Jerry's Trophy Shop at 8539 Oak, both with residences upstairs.

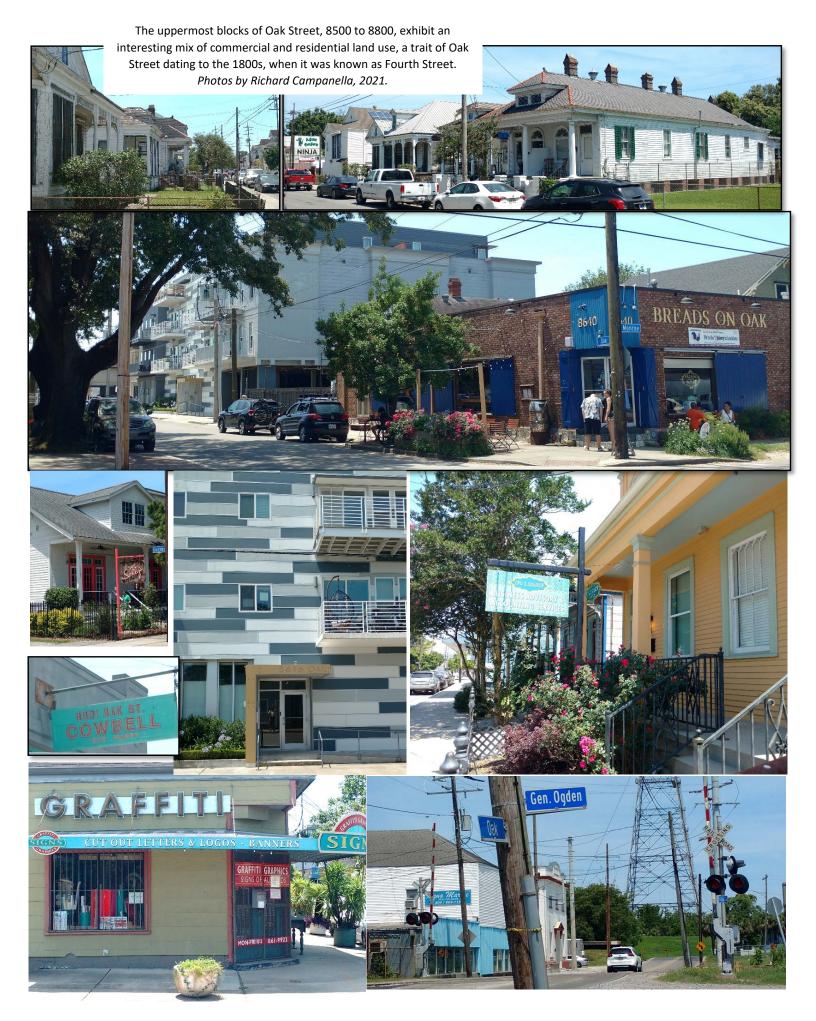
Across Oak, on the lake side of 8500 Oak, residences occupied every parcel in the 1930s with the exception of 8539 Oak corner Leonidas, which was John Schneller's filling station. By 1965, the block has shifted to the more mixed land use it has today, as 8501 Oak became a JD's Body and Fender Works (now LJ's Body Shop), 8509 Oak became the United Auto Supply Company (more recently Transform NOLA Yoga, now Bombshell Waxing), 8527 Oak was Joseph Fazzio's contractor office, and 8530 Oak was the Oak Street Service Station (until recently the Oak Super Discount Market, now JSK Discount and CBD-N-More vaping shop). In recent years, a couple of houses have been converted to commercial use, among them 8519 Oak (until recently Ann Bishton Design decorative painting, and now undergoing a massive renovation) and 8523 Oak (now vacant but formerly The Inkwell Press, and before that Apffel's Bicycle and Lawn Mower Repair), followed by Monarch Contractors at 8527 Oak.

8600 Oak, Leonidas to Monroe

Crossing Leonidas onto the 8600 block of Oak Street, the two-story frame structure at the corner which is now home to Chenevert Architects and Payne Fabrics offices (8600 Oak, now also home to the Oak Street Merchants, Residents and Property Owners Inc., led by architect Min Yang) had been, in 2007, the Decorative Oriental Rugs store; in 1965, Flair & Company janitorial supplies, and in the 1930s, a New Orleans Fire Department fire house, home to Engine No. 25 and Truck Co. No. 7. This corner building had been a firehouse at least since 1908, when the Sanborn Fire Insurance Map labeled a similarly shaped building as home to the horse-drawn Engine No. 25.

In that decade, the rest of this side of the block was residential, comprising mostly single-family wooden homes or doubles. This was also the case into the 1960s, with some exceptions: the parcels at 8616 Oak had become Fiesta Pools Contractors (now Weill Consulting Group Office), and 8622-8624 Oak had become Frank Beier Radio, Inc. Together, these businesses accounted for the demolition of the residential houses that had previously occupied these spaces, such that by the 1990s and early 2000s, they became used for outdoor-oriented businesses, including Armann & Associates garden nursery. The lots were cleared in 2015, after which the residential condominium complex currently occupying the parcels was erected, a case of the reconversion of former commercial space back into residential use-only now for higher-income residents. Next door, at 8640 Oak, Breads on Oak operates in the corner building at Monroe Street which had previously been Accardo's Appliance Parts; in the 1960s the home of Melton Leeman; and in 1938 the home of Jacob Engelbracht (a single shotgun at the time, since demolished and replaced with the extant structure). Opened in 2012 by Sean and Chamain O'Mahony, Breads on Oak is a popular eatery specializing in "creative vegan meals, giant iced brioche buns and other treats." The O'Mahonys selected a historically appropriate spot for her business, because the corner of Oak and Monroe had been a baking "hotspot" at least since the 1890s. The Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps of 1896 show a bake house and oven located across the street, behind 8637 Oak, and a larger corner bakery at 8701 Oak, diagonally across from Breads on Oak, which had grown even larger by 1908. This was Bohl's Bakery, offering "Bread at All Times, of Best Quality; Raison Bread our Specialty... Cakes, Rolls, and Pies." 26

Back at **8601 Oak**, where now stands the m2 Studio for Architectural and Interior Design (with a residence in the rear), there had been Jacques LeVois' delicatessen in 1938, and in 1965, the Stewart In-Fra-Red Commissary sandwich shop. Residences predominated for most of the rest of the block, with the exceptions of Charles Apffel Barber at **8619 Oak** in 1938, and, in 1965, Foley Furniture at **8613-8617 Oak** and the Cupid Beauty Shop at **8623 Oak**. Recently, this side of the block is or was home to Symphony Book Fair (**8605 Oak**), Tiny Buffalo custom T-shirts at **8611 Oak**, four homes, and NauticStar Boats at **8647 Oak**. In the spring of 2021, a large new house went under construction at **8625 Oak**.





Engelbracht home and family members on Monroe Street corner Oak, around 1950, and same scene today (right). According to Chamain O'Mahony, who with Sean O'Mahony owns Breads On Oak, "the previous owners (Accardo's Appliance) added a warehouse up to the front of the house (eliminating the front porch). The Accardos lived in the house and worked in their warehouse. When Sean and I bought the property in 2011, we converted the warehouse to the bakery and rented the house.... We [later] converted the house into additional seating for Breads On Oak, and that's how it is today." 1950s photos courtesy Engelbracht and O'Mahony families; modern photo by R. Campanella.



3AKERY. 87010

(above). At bottom, an unidentified shed or barn on Oak,

probably close to the levee. Photos courtesy late Carrollton-area historian Michael Mizell-Nelson.

8700 Oak, Monroe to Eagle

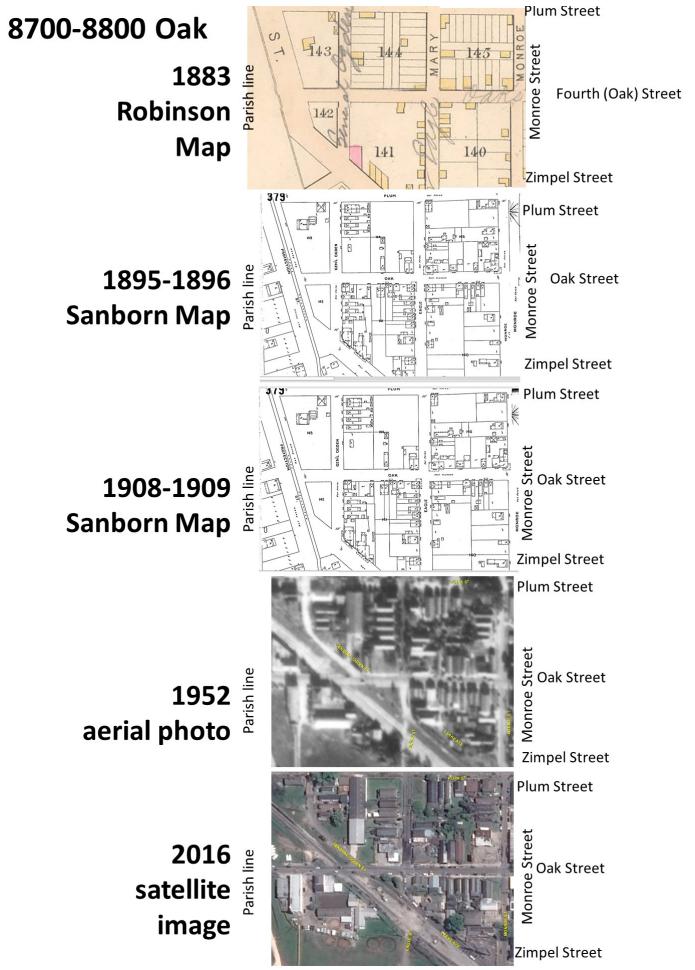
Crossing Monroe brings us to the final full block of Oak, the 8700 block to Eagle, after which the railroad tracks deter most foot traffic. This was not the case in the 1890s and prior, before the tracks were laid, when Oak ("partly planked") went straight to the levee past Gen. Ogden Street, surrounded by a smattering of small wooden houses in a semi-rural setting. By 1908, this part of Oak was gravelled, the Illinois Central and New Orleans Public Belt railroad passed through, and the entire block was residential. This remained the case into the 1930s, but for three small Italian-owned businesses, which probably operated out of houses: Anthony Campagno's grocery at 8725 Oak, Luke Malone's barber at 8726 Oak, and Anthony Pizzuto's grocery at 8739 Oak. By 1965, residences still prevailed, as new businesses shared the street: Jude's Beauty Shop at 8713 Oak, Apex South Company washing machine parts at 8725 Oak, William Huey & Company manufacturing agency at 8725 Oak, and Herbert Wellman's Grocery at 8739 Oak. Today, we have at 8704 Oak Faubacher's Upholstery, at 8706 Oak the Oak Street Medical Office, at 8710 Oak the Oak Street Postal/FedEx Office, a residential house at 8714 Oak, the FT office at 8718 Oak, Aguilar's Upholstery at 8722 Oak, Euphorbia Kava Bar and Plant Gallery at 8726 Oak (formerly Sun Finance Company), Howl Studios at 8730 Oak; a former service station at 8701 Oak, now empty lot; a residential house at 8717 Oak, an office at 8721 Oak, Skincare Lounge Nola at 8723 Oak, Salon Alphonse Beauty/Barber/Makeup Salon at 8725 Oak, and Graffiti Graphics & Signs at 8739 Oak.

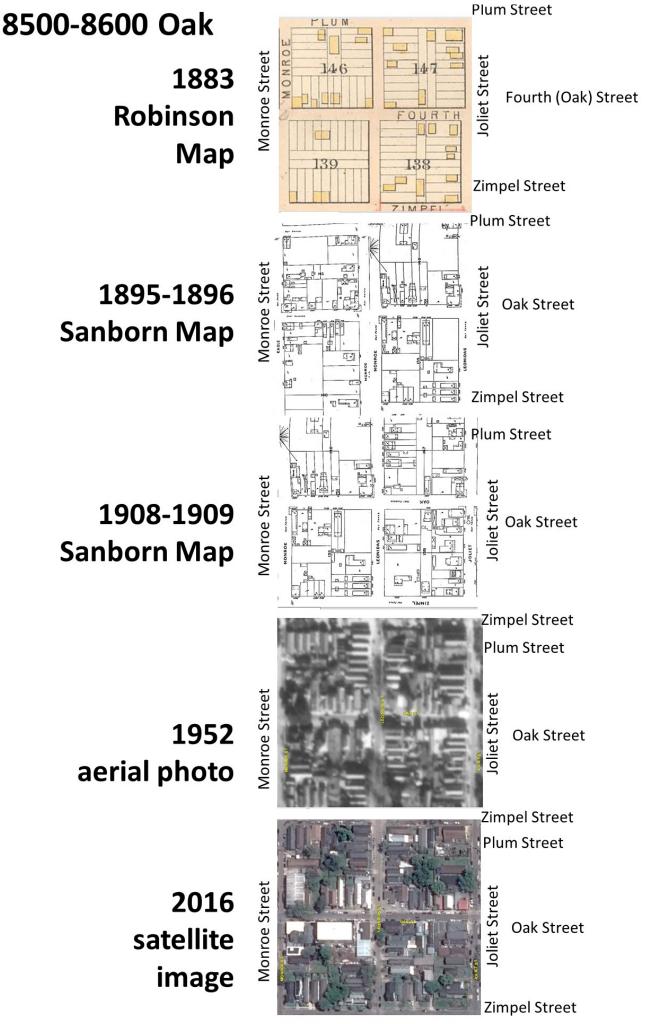
8800 Oak, Eagle to General Ogden and Monticello

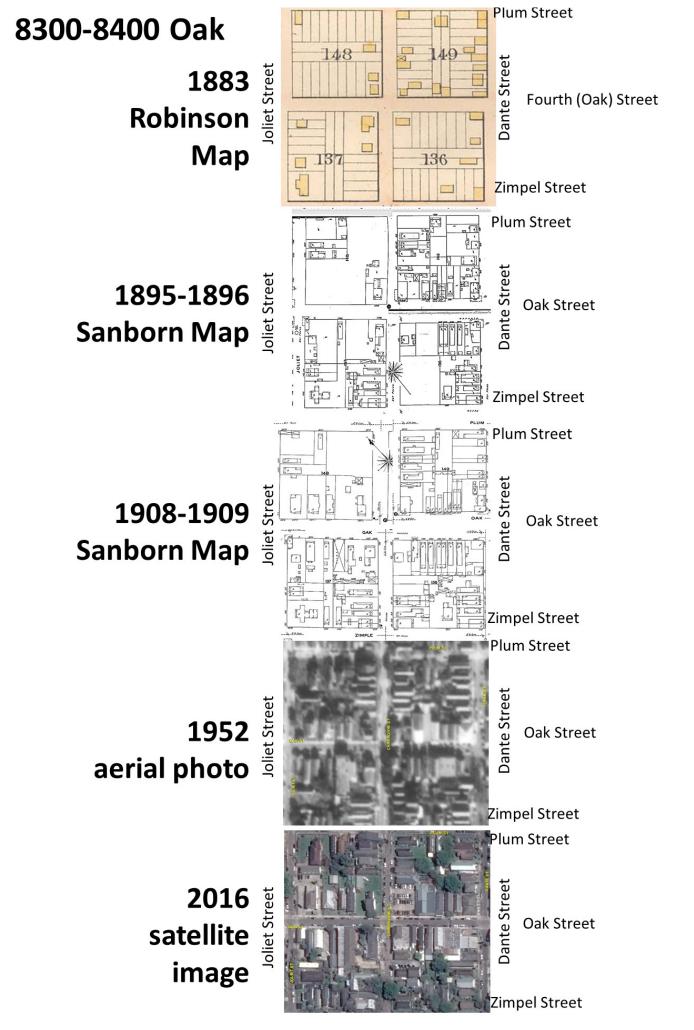
Crossing Eagle brings us to the **8800 block of Oak**, where in 1904 the New Orleans Public Belt Railroad as well as the Illinois Central line sliced the square into four irregular polygons. Today they are occupied by the popular Cowbell Restaurant at **8801 Oak**, the Krewe of Carrollton den (first founded in 1924 as the Seventh District Carnival Club, which initially paraded from 8800 Oak Street to South Carrollton and on to South Claiborne) at **8811 Oak**, and Agua Marine at **8840 Oak**, which has been in business for over fifty years.²⁷ In the 1930s and for at least twenty years prior, the remainder of Oak Street was residential—about seven small wooden abodes—except for the Oak Street Station of the New Orleans Sewerage & Water Board, which still operates as a back-up source for the city's water treatment plant on South Claiborne Avenue. By 1965, the Gulf Coast Oil Company service station operated at **8801 Oak**, now home to Cowbell. For years during the 1930s through 1960s, the very last business on Oak was the well-known Ackermann Refrigeration, at **8901 Oak** by Monticello Street, the Orleans/Jefferson parish line since 1874, and earlier the Carrollton city limits and the border of the old Macarty plantation.

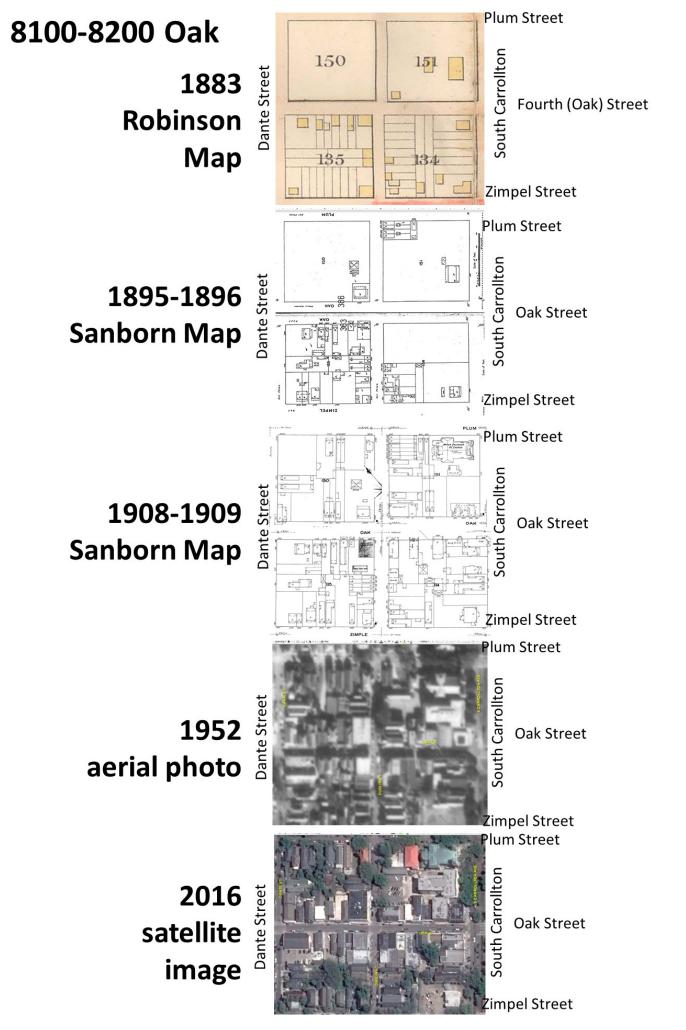
That centuries-old line is also the terminus of Oak Street, a 1.12-mile stretch of eighteen blocks which encompasses the best of uptown residential and commercial New Orleans, featuring eight historic blocks of local businesses serving neighbors and newcomers alike. As one Oak Street shopkeeper put it, "We try to get food from other local restaurants as much as possible. We have to keep this city going. This city runs on independent businesses, family businesses, small businesses. We're colloquial. We shop like Europeans. We walk to the grocery every day."²⁸

This history was made possible by a generous grant from the Oak Street Merchants, Residents and Property Owners Association and the National Trust for Historic Preservation in Washington, D.C. Special thanks to Chamain O'Mahony and Min Yang for their leadership and stewardship of this project. Richard Campanella, a geographer with the Tulane School of Architecture, is the author of "The West Bank of Greater New Orleans—A Historical Geography" (LSU Press), "Bourbon Street: A History," "Bienville's Dilemma," and other books. He may be reached at reampane@tulane.edu, http://richcampanella.com, or @nolacampanella on Twitter.



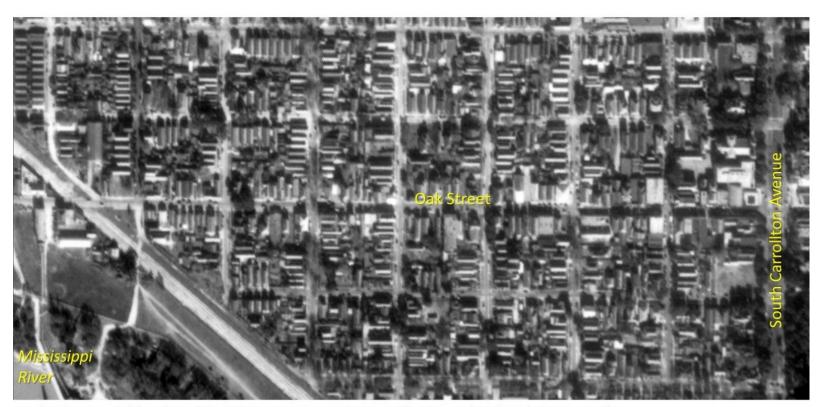








Oak Street neighborhood in 1940, courtesy private collection of Richard Campanella



Oak Street neighborhood in 1952, courtesy private collection of Richard Campanella



Oak Street neighborhood in 1989, courtesy private collection of Richard Campanella



Oak Street neighborhood in 2014, courtesy private collection of Richard Campanella

- ⁴ Wilton P. Ledet, as cited by Richard Campanella in "The Annexation of Carrollton," New Orleans Times-Picayune, September 8, 2017.
- ⁵ Richard Campanella, "The Annexation of Carrollton," New Orleans Times-Picayune, September 8, 2017.
- ⁶ Richard Campanella, "The Annexation of Carrollton," New Orleans Times-Picayune, September 8, 2017.
- ⁷ Richard Campanella, "The Annexation of Carrollton," New Orleans Times-Picayune, September 8, 2017.
- ⁸ Letter from Oak Street Merchants' Association to Mayor and Commission Council, March 8, 1948, Louisiana Research Collection of Tulane University; Louis C. Hennick and E. Harper Charlton, *The Streetcars of New Orleans* (Gretna, Louisiana: Firebird Press Book / Pelican Publishing Company, 1965; reprinted 2000), pages 90-91.
- ⁹ Ordinance, No. 9411 Council Series, Mayoralty of New Orleans, July 9, 1894, as reproduced in *The Daily Item*, July 25, 1894, page 3. ¹⁰ "Petition Circulated To Pave Oak Street' Citizens Ask Permanent Improvement for Out-of-Town Traffic," *Times-Picayune*, October 2, 1921, page 31.
- ¹¹ Robert J. Cangelosi Jr., "Residential Parks," New Orleans Architecture, Volume VIII: The University Section (Gretna, Louisiana: Friends of the Cabildo/Pelican Publishing Company, 1997), pages 65-68.
- ¹² "Petition Circulated To Pave Oak Street," *Times-Picayune*, October 2, 1921, page 31.
- ¹³ Pauline Trujillo, as quoted by Elizabeth Heideman, "Po-Boy Attracts Many to Uptown," *Times-Picayune*, December 4, 2013, community news section.
- ¹⁴ Rich Collins, "If Oak Street is a Microcosm of N.O. Economy, the Outlook is Encouraging," *Biz New Orleans*, September 3, 2020, https://www.bizneworleans.com/if-oak-street-is-a-microcosm-of-n-o-economy-the-outlook-is-encouraging/
- ¹⁵ Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, 1908-1909 edition.
- ¹⁶ Robert J. Cangelosi Jr., New Orleans Architecture, Volume IX: Carrollton (Louisiana State University Press, 2020), page 192.
- ¹⁷ R.L. Polk & Company New Orleans City Directory of 1938, reverse listing section, under Oak Street; Robert J. Cangelosi Jr., New Orleans Architecture, Volume IX: Carrollton (Louisiana State University Press, 2020), page 235.
- 18 R.L. Polk & Company New Orleans City Directory of 1965, reverse listing section, under Oak Street.
- ¹⁹ "About Us," *Haase's*, https://www.haaseshoestore.com/pages/about-us, visited May 17, 2021.
- ²⁰ Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, 1896 and 1908-1909 editions.
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- ²² Millet advertisement, New Orleans States, December 14, 1924, page 97.
- ²³ Advertisement, *Times-Picayune*, May 5, 1929, page 77.
- ²⁴ Robert J. Cangelosi Jr., New Orleans Architecture, Volume IX: Carrollton (Louisiana State University Press, 2020), page 235.
- ²⁵ Rich Collins, "If Oak Street is a Microcosm of N.O. Economy, the Outlook is Encouraging," *Biz New Orleans*, September 3, 2020, https://www.bizneworleans.com/if-oak-street-is-a-microcosm-of-n-o-economy-the-outlook-is-encouraging/
- ²⁶ From Bohl's Bakery sales receipt, courtesy Michael Mizell-Nelson, Sean O'Mahoney, and Chamain O'Mahoney; Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, 1896 and 1908-1909 editions.
- ²⁷ Ed Turnstall, "Carrollton, Organized in 1924," Times-Picayune, February 22, 1984, page 79.
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² Robert J. Cangelosi Jr., New Orleans Architecture, Volume IX: Carrollton (Louisiana State University Press, 2020), page 7.

³ Wilton P. Ledet, as quoted by Richard Campanella in "The Annexation of Carrollton," New Orleans Times-Picayune, September 8, 2017.