



Lake Charles (Images of America)

Janet Allured, Jessica Hutchings, Debbie Johnson-Houston

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Isolated from the main transportation routes during the early 19th century, Lake Charles was a backwater of 500 people when incorporated in 1867. The arrival of the schooners and the railroad integrated it into the corridor between Galveston, Houston, and New Orleans, and Lake Charles grew rapidly after the Civil War. Streams of migrants from Europe, nearby communities in Texas and Louisiana, and northern states moved here and built a booming lumber industry. Though beset by fires, storms, and floods, the city rebuilt many times, and in the 20th century, Lake Charles and its environs became an important petrochemical center. Today, the city sponsors annual festivals that celebrate its heritage. Lake Charles supports many fine public schools, a regional university, and artistic endeavors of which it is justly proud, including a symphony, a community band, and a variety of choruses, theater associations, and dance companies--all of which are pictured within the pages of Images of America: Lake Charles.

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