

Sarah Dunn Gagne Oak

Downtown Houma East
8326 Main Street
Houma, LA

[Google Maps](#)



The live oaks at the Sarah Dunn Gagne home were possibly planted by Joseph A. Gagne, father of Sarah Gagne. The tree stands near the south side of the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway, near the intersection of Bayou Terrebonne and the Waterway.

The Gagne home is one of the oldest surviving homes in Houma. Sarah Dunn was the wife of Joseph A. Gagne, they married in 1851 in Houma. The Gagne family consisted of ten children. Sarah's father, J.B. Dunn, owned the Dunn Brickyard and Dunn Street in Houma is named for him. This property is located on the Honduras Plantation once owned by Jim and Reason Bowie.



Photo courtesy of Helen Wurzlow's How I Dug-Up Houma, Terrebonne book series. Terrebonne Parish Library

The Gagne House and grounds containing the Sarah Gagne oak were purchased by the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1919 for the operation of a "French work" Wesley House. The property included some 18 acres at the time of the sale. Miss Ella Hooper and Mrs. Laura White operated the school. As the school grew, by 1921, additional buildings were added on the campus, and the campus named changed to the MacDonnell French Mission, but did not interfere with the Sarah Gagne Oak or the Gagne House. The name MacDonnell was in recognition of the work of Tochie MacDonnell.

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Sarah Gagne Oak registered in 1864 measured 20 ft 8 in.

In 1949-1953, the mission of the facility changed from that of a boarding school to a school for Indians. The school ceased operation in 1953 and became a home for dependent children. The property surrounding the Gagne Home and Sarah Gagne Oak evolved into the MacDonnell United Methodist Children's Services, an agency dedicated to caring for children from broken families and single parents.

Today it operates as a residential treatment facility for children removed from abusive or unsafe domestic settings while waiting for court-placement in safe, permanent family environments. It is appropriate that the Gagne House and the 'Sarah Gagne Oak' continue to shelter and protect children, much as it did when Sarah and Joseph Gagne were raising their ten children on the site. The Sarah Gagne Live Oak is on private grounds, but is visible from the street, at 8326 Main Street, Houma. <http://www.macdonellchildren.org/tour.html>

Named for Sarah Dunn Gagne, the great-great grandmother of Dorothy Trotter Robichaux, this tree is located on the campus of the MacDonnell School next to the National Historic 'Westley Home.' Rumor has it that previous owners were frightened off by visits from the ghost of Sarah Dunn Gagne which ended when the home was purchased by the church in 1919 to be operated as a school. Story written by Laura Browning



Photos by Trudy Voisin Hebert

