

Meet England Oaks Resident Historian Alice Scarborough

England Oaks Adult Living Community resident Alice Scarborough never intended on speaking in public to people from all over the world, much less becoming the director of a major historical landmark. But from the moment she stepped foot in Kent House, almost 20 years ago, all that changed. "It just kind of took over my life," Alice explains.



Completed in 1800 on a 1796 Spanish land grant, Kent House is one of the oldest standing structures in Louisiana. Together with its outbuildings, the plantation represents a homestead typical of a Creole family in Louisiana during the period between 1795-1855.

Although Alice grew up in Alexandria, it wasn't until she began working on her master's degree in history at Northwestern State University, that she became aware of Kent House's significance. She decided to sign up as a volunteer tour guide.

"At the time the idea of doing tours made me very nervous, I didn't even like giving speeches in front of the class!" As a budding historian, however, she was fascinated by the antebellum period and the Creole culture with its mixture of French, Spanish and American influences. She was also excited by the possibility of educating visitors in ways that history books can't. "We tell the story of the lives of the people that lived here. Our mission is really

education.”



After two years of volunteering, she took over as the director, and the rest she says, “is history.” Alice’s enthusiasm for telling the story of the inhabitants of Kent House has been contagious, and she counts many family members and friends among her volunteers. “I’ve actually hired several people from England Oaks and they’ve been absolutely wonderful.”

Alice moved to England Oaks from Nantachie Lake Grant Parish a few years ago, in part, because of the short commute to her job, but she quickly began to make friends. “It’s a great community, everyone is super nice. There’s always someone out walking their dog, while I’m working in my garden.” The convenience of having an attentive staff on site to handle maintenance issues is also appealing to Alice, who works six days a week at Kent House. “They’d probably come over to change a lightbulb if I asked them to. All I have to do is call.”