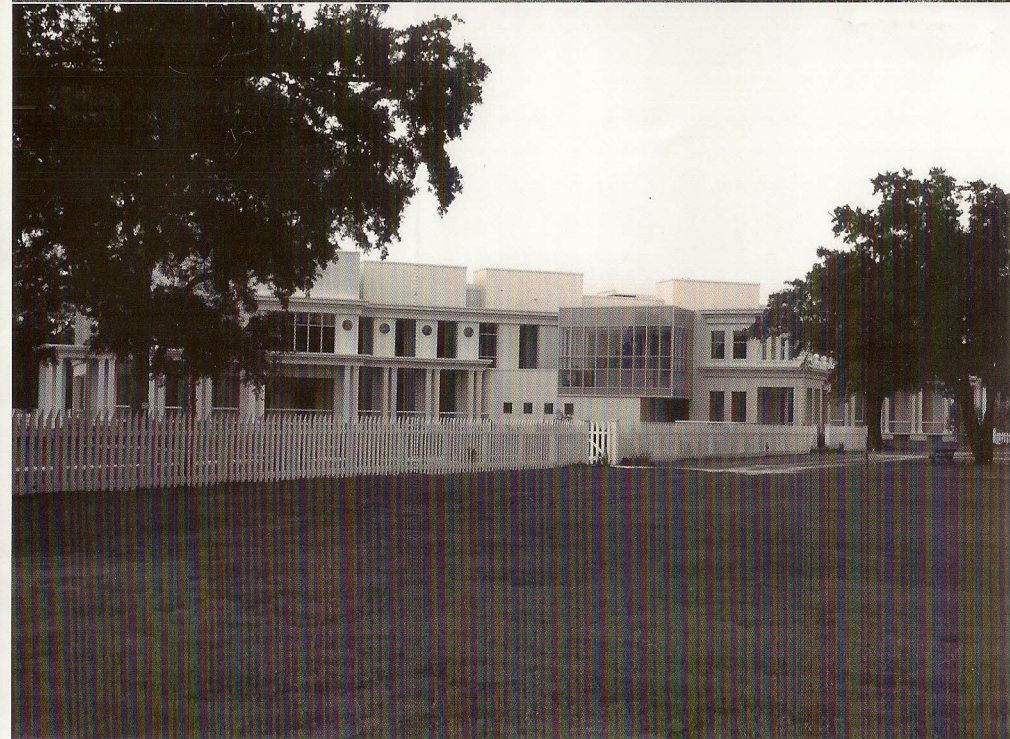
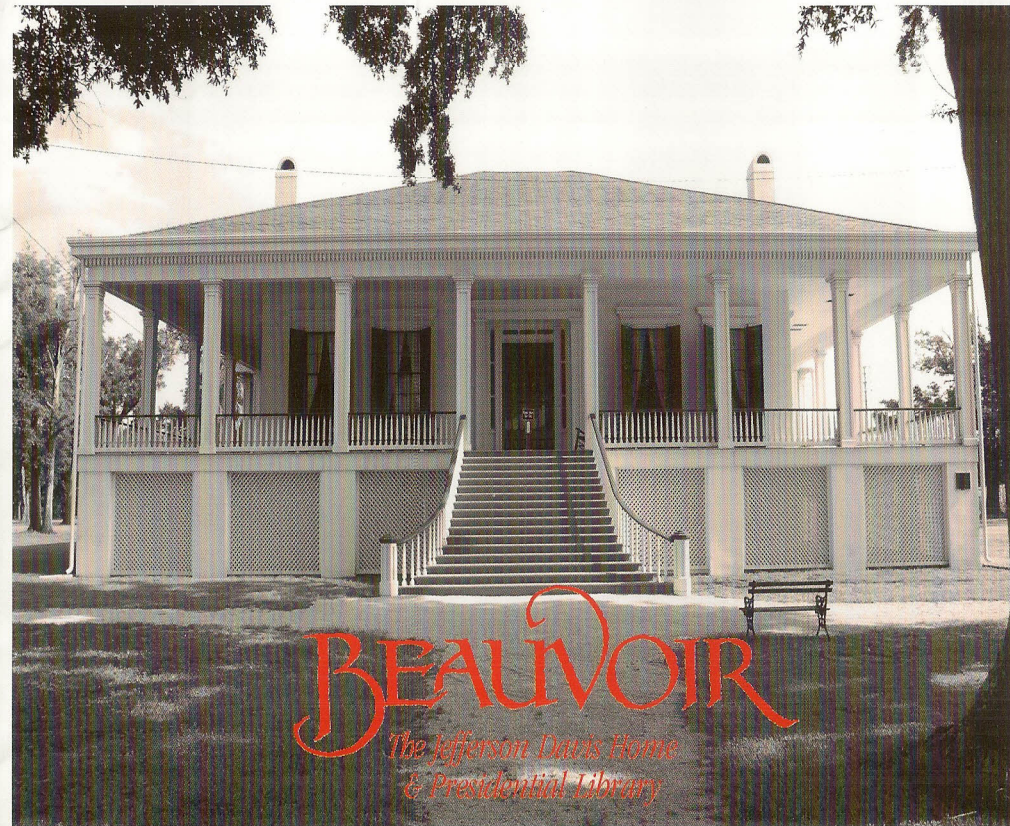
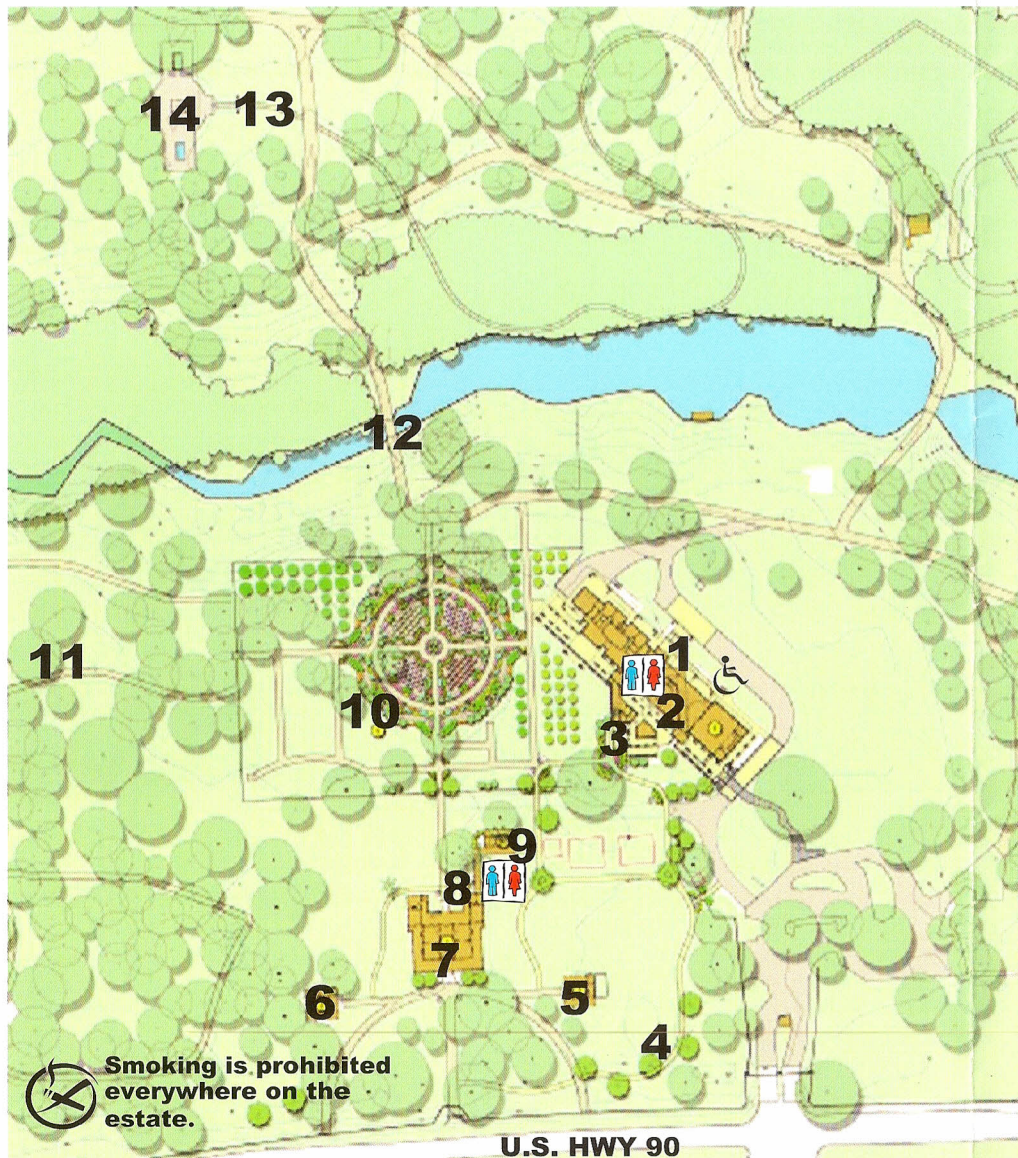


**2244 Beach Blvd.  
Biloxi, MS 39531  
(228) 388-4400  
www.beauvoir.org**

**Beauvoir, A Mississippi Historic Landmark and a National Historic Landmark, is dedicated to preserving and interpreting the legacy of American Statesman and Confederate President Jefferson Davis and the Confederate Soldier. Owned and operated by the Mississippi Division, United Sons of Confederate Veterans, Inc., a non profit organization, Beauvoir must rely upon admission receipts, gift shops sales, and contributions for its funding.**

**BEAUVOIR**  
*The Jefferson Davis Home  
& Presidential Library*





## POINTS OF INTEREST

1. Entrance to Presidential Library and Museum
2. Gift Shop & Admissions
3. Jefferson Davis Statue. This statue stood in the original library before Hurricane Katrina.
4. Jefferson Davis & Sons Statue. The life size bronze statue depicts Jefferson Davis, his adopted black child Jim Limber, and his son Joseph Davis. The statue was created by Gary Casteel a world-renowned sculptor from Virginia who was honored in 2000 by the National Civil War Memorial Commission. The statue was commissioned by the SCV and donated to Beauvoir in 2009.

5. **Library Pavilion.** (Reproduction—original destroyed by Hurricane Katrina). James Brown used this cottage as a schoolroom for his children. Jefferson Davis rented it for \$50 a month from Sarah Dorsey from 1877 to 1878. Davis enclosed the eastern porch for additional living space and lined the original room with bookcases. Here Davis, with the help of his wife Varina, wrote the *Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government*.
6. **Hayes Pavilion.** (Reproduction—original destroyed by Hurricane Katrina). James Brown built this cottage as a haven for itinerant Methodist circuit riders. The building derives its name from its later use by the family of Margaret Davis Hayes, the elder daughter of Jefferson and Varina.
7. **Beauvoir House.** James Brown, using slave labor and hired craftsmen, built this Louisiana raised cottage as a summer home from 1848 to 1852. The single-story home was constructed of cypress and heart pine, with a roof of Welsh slate. The raised design, along with the porches, tall windows, high ceilings, and the arrangement of the rear wings, promoted ventilation. The house was elevated on 62 eight-foot-tall brick piers to provide antebellum air conditioning—not to avoid high water. But, elevating the house saved it from the storm surge of Camille and Katrina. The heavy slate roof is sealed around the edges and so constructed that high winds blow the slate roof down on the house rather than up and away. The structure has withstood eighteen hurricanes since it was built.
8. **Cistern.** (Reproduction—original destroyed by Hurricane Katrina). The 500-gallon wood and brick cistern collected rainwater from the roof as a source of fresh water for the home.
9. **Kitchen.** (Reproduction). The kitchen was a four-room wooden structure separated from the house because of the heat and the potential fire hazard associated with cooking. Food prepared in the kitchen was taken through the door by the cistern, up the adjacent small staircase, and into the butler's pantry, where final preparations were made for serving.
10. **Varina's Rose Garden.** (Reconstructed from a hand-drawn chart made by Varina Davis). The garden covers an area in excess of an acre. It is named for the variety of roses it contains, but it also contains many other types of flowers as well as a kitchen vegetable garden. Flanking the garden are orchards of Satsuma oranges and fig trees. (The original name of Beauvoir in the period it was owned by James Brown was "Orange Grove.")
11. **Jefferson Davis Oak.** Jefferson Davis often read his Bible and other books under this dual-trunk live oak. The southern trunk of this tree collapsed without warning in April 1991 and was removed.
12. **Oyster Bayou Bridge.** Built in the 1950s to provide a connection between the north and south portions of the property, the bridge spans Oyster Bayou, which is named for the oyster beds once found at its mouth.
13. **Tomb of the Unknown Confederate Soldier.** This grave contains the remains of an unknown Southern soldier killed in battle. Dedicated in 1981, the marble tomb bears an inscription by Abram Ryan, "poet-priest of the Confederacy," and symbolizes all unknown Southern dead from 1861 to 1865.
14. **Confederate Soldiers' Home Cemetery.** Established in 1903 as part of the Jefferson Davis Soldiers' Home. Approximately 780 Confederate veterans, wives, and widows, together with some members of the Davis Family and other civilians are buried in this historic cemetery.

### Notable burials include:

- A. **Samuel Emory Davis.** A Revolutionary War veteran and father of Jefferson Davis, whose remains were reinterred here in 1942.
- B. **Prentiss Ingraham.** A Confederate veteran and soldier of fortune whose dime novels publicized the exploits of Buffalo Bill.
- C. **Varina Howell Droege.** A niece of Varina Howell Davis who is buried beside her husband.



Winnie Davis

Beauvoir was built by wealthy Mississippi planter-entrepreneur James Brown. In 1848, Brown purchased land fronting the Mississippi Sound and began construction of a single-story Louisiana raised cottage. The house, completed in 1852, was the center of a complex which included two pavilions, a kitchen, a carpenter's shop, a carpenter's residence, a foreman's house, a maid's quarters, a chicken coop, a barn, a carriage house, and a harness shop.

Beauvoir was located between the village of Biloxi, five miles to the east, and Handsboro, four-and-one-half-miles to the northwest. The Brown estate could be reached by steamboat from both Mobile and New Orleans. The estate both gained and lost acreage through additional purchases and title disputes. The Browns continued to live at Beauvoir until they fled inland for safety with the outbreak of the War Between the States. Financial problems following the death of James Brown (1866) forced the sale of the property by court auction in 1873. Frank Johnson, the new owner, kept the estate less than two months before selling it to Sarah Ann Ellis Dorsey, a classmate of Varina's from their school days in Natchez and a great admirer of Jefferson Davis. Dorsey named her new home Beauvoir, (French for "beautiful view") because of the vista it afforded of the Mississippi Sound. She also improved access to the site by arranging for the establishment of Beauvoir Station on the New Orleans and Mobile Railway, which had begun operation through the property in 1870.

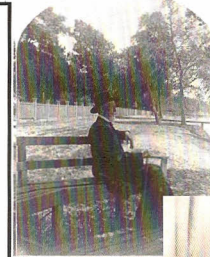


Margaret Davis  
(on her wedding day to  
Addison Hayes )

### THE DAVIS YEARS

Jefferson Davis, former president of the Confederacy, visited Beauvoir in 1875 and again in 1876. Impressed by its natural beauty and serenity, the aging leader accepted Sarah Dorsey's invitation to write his memoirs at the estate. Davis moved into the Library Cottage in February 1877. In addition to his literary pursuits, Davis also took great interest in the raising of citrus and grapes on the property.

Varina Davis joined her husband at Beauvoir in 1878, following her return from Europe and after a visit with elder daughter Margaret in Memphis. The next year the couple purchased the estate, including some furnishings. Jefferson Davis' memoirs were published in 1881 titled, *The Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government*. In that same year the Davis' younger daughter, Winnie, joined them at Beauvoir. In 1889 Jefferson Davis traveled upriver to his plantation Briarfield near Vicksburg. On the return trip he contracted bronchitis and died in New Orleans on December 6. The following year Varina published a biography of her famous husband titled *The Memorial Volume of Jefferson Davis*. Unable to properly maintain the Beauvoir estate with their meager income, Varina and Winnie placed the property in the hands of a caretaker and moved to New York City where they accepted positions as writers for noted newspaper editor Joseph Pulitzer.



Jefferson  
Davis at  
Beauvoir



Above: Jefferson & Varina Davis,  
daughter Margaret, grandchildren, and  
servant at Beauvoir, c. 1885



Varina Davis

Right (Top): Frank Childress, (left) and Nathan Best, residents of the Soldiers' Home circa 1933.

Right (Bottom): Women tourists and two old soldiers with Soldiers' Home mule in front of the Library Cottage circa mid 1930s.

Below: Residents of the Confederate Soldier's Home, circa 1926.



### THE JEFFERSON DAVIS SOLDIERS' HOME

Despite lucrative offers from hotel promoters to purchase the estate, Beauvoir remained in the hands of the Davis family until 1903, when Varina sold it for the giveaway price of \$10,000 to the Mississippi Division, United Sons of Confederate Veterans. The sale was arranged by family friend Mary Hunter Southworth Kimbrough, who, for a decade, had championed the cause of preserving Beauvoir. The terms of the sale required the USCV to maintain the site as a memorial to Jefferson Davis and the Confederacy and required it be used as a home for Confederate veterans, their wives, widows, servants, and orphans.

The Jefferson Davis Soldiers' Home opened at Beauvoir on December 2, 1903. Initially a private effort, primary responsibility for the soldiers' home operation soon passed to the State of Mississippi. The rapidly increasing population filled the original buildings to capacity, ultimately necessitating the construction of a dozen dormitories, two hospitals, a dining hall, an assembly hall, a chapel, and several support buildings.

The Soldiers' Home had a maximum capacity of 288 residents. During its 54-year existence, the facility cared for approximately 1,800 individuals. Almost half of those residents are buried in the Jefferson Davis Soldiers' Home Cemetery on the property. In 1940, with the number of residents dwindling rapidly, the soldiers' home operation was reduced in size and concentrated in the southeastern portion of the property. State support for the care facility was withdrawn in 1956, and the home closed the following year.

## Jefferson Davis Facts

- ◆ June 3, 1808, Jefferson Finis Davis, the tenth of ten children of Samuel Emory Davis and Jane Cook Davis was born in Christian County, Kentucky, being named after his father's hero, Thomas Jefferson.
- ◆ 1812 the Davis family moved to their final home, Rosemont Plantation near Woodville, Wilkinson County, Mississippi Territory.
- ◆ 1815 Samuel Davis sent his son to St. Thomas Aquinas School in Kentucky.
- ◆ 1818 Jefferson Davis entered Jefferson College at Washington, Mississippi.
- ◆ October 21, 1821, he entered Transylvania College in Lexington, Kentucky.
- ◆ July 4, 1824, his father died, and his older brother, Joseph, became a strong figure in his life.
- ◆ September 24, 1824, the 16-year-old Davis entered the US Military Academy at West Point, New York, as a cadet.
- ◆ July 1, 1828, Davis graduated 23rd in a class of 33 and was appointed as brevet second lieutenant in the US Infantry and assigned to Fort Crawford, Wisconsin.
- ◆ 1832 Davis served in the Black Hawk War, and so did Abraham Lincoln.
- ◆ March 1835, Jefferson, having fallen in love with Sarah Knox Taylor (his commanding officer's daughter), faced a dilemma. Zachary Taylor did not wish his daughter to be an army wife. Jefferson took a furlough to talk to his brother, Joseph, at Davis Bend on the Mississippi River south of Vicksburg. Joseph advised him to resign from the army, marry Knox (as Jefferson called her), and become a cotton planter. Jefferson followed his brother's advice.
- ◆ June 17, 1835, Jefferson Davis and Sarah Knox Taylor were married.
- ◆ July 1835 Joseph divided his 4,000 acre plantation at Davis Bend in half. He retained the southern half as Hurricane Plantation, while Jefferson and Knox took the northern half as Brierfield Plantation.
- ◆ August 1835 both Jefferson and Knox were stricken with malaria. In hopes of escaping the worst effects of the disease, the couple journeyed to Jefferson's sister's plantation (Locust Grove) near St. Francisville, Louisiana.
- ◆ September 15, 1835, Knox died only three months after her wedding and was buried in Locust Grove Cemetery.
- ◆ Late 1835 Davis, heartbroken, withdrew from public life and spent most of the following decade as a planter at Brierfield.
- ◆ February 26, 1845, Jefferson Davis, in a match engineered by his brother Joseph, married Varina Banks Howell at The Briars in Natchez.
- ◆ November 4, 1845, he was elected to the US House of Representatives.
- ◆ June 1846 he resigned his seat to lead troops in the Mexican War.
- ◆ February 22, 1847, as colonel of the Mississippi Rifles, Davis heroically led his men in the Battle of Buena Vista and was shot in the foot.
- ◆ July 12, 1847, Davis mustered out of the US Army.
- ◆ August 10, 1847, Davis was appointed to the US Senate to fill the unexpired term of a deceased Mississippi Senator.
- ◆ February 1850, Davis was elected to a full six year term as a US Senator.

- ◆ March 7, 1853, Davis took the oath of office as Secretary of War under newly elected President Franklin Pierce.
- ◆ May 1856, Davis engineered the importation of 33 camels for use by the US Army in the desert Southwest.
- ◆ March 4, 1857, Davis, having been elected again to the US Senate, tendered his resignation as Secretary of War.
- ◆ November 6, 1860, Abraham Lincoln was elected US President.
- ◆ December 20, 1860, South Carolina became the first Southern state to secede.
- ◆ January 9, 1861, Mississippi became the second state to secede from the Union. Davis, who opposed secession in practice but supported it in principle, resigned from the US Senate and returned home to support his state.
- ◆ February 18, 1861, Jefferson Davis was sworn in as President of the Confederate States of America in the Confederate capital city of Montgomery, Alabama.
- ◆ April 12, 1861, the War Between the States began when Confederate forces fired on US Army occupied Fort Sumter located in the harbor of Charleston, South Carolina.
- ◆ May 8, 1861, Richmond was named capital of the Confederacy due to Virginia's demands for this honor. The Davis family moved to Richmond 21 days later.
- ◆ April 3, 1865, the Davis family evacuated the Confederate capital as Union forces approached Richmond.
- ◆ April 9, 1865, Confederate General Robert E. Lee surrendered his Army of Northern Virginia to Union General U. S. Grant at Appomattox County Courthouse, Virginia.
- ◆ May 10, 1865, Jefferson Davis, Varina, and three of their children were captured by Union forces near Irwinville, Georgia.
- ◆ May 19, 1865, Davis was incarcerated at Fort Monroe, Virginia. He spent two years in prison on charges of treason. Despite his demands for a trial, he was never tried.
- ◆ May 1867, he was released on bail funded by notable northerners, including Horace Greely and Cornelius Vanderbilt.
- ◆ December 25, 1868, the US government dropped all charges of treason against Davis fearing that secession might be declared Constitutional in a trial.
- ◆ January 1, 1876, Davis' daughter, Margaret, married Memphis banker Joel Addison Hayes. (Since Margaret was the only one of Davis' six children to marry, she and her husband gave their children the name "Davis-Hayes." The name was later termed "Hayes-Davis" in order to preserve the Davis surname.)
- ◆ February 1877 Davis visited Sarah Ellis Dorsey at her home, Beauvoir, on the Mississippi Gulf Coast and rented a small cottage on the grounds of Beauvoir. Varina joined him there later to aid him in writing his memoirs.
- ◆ February 19, 1879, Davis purchased the Beauvoir property from Sarah Dorsey for \$5,500, and Dorsey moved to New Orleans.
- ◆ 1881 Davis, with Varina's help, completed his two-volume *Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government*.
- ◆ December 9, 1889, Jefferson Davis died in New Orleans, Louisiana, and was buried in Metairie Cemetery.
- ◆ May 31, 1893, his body was reinterred in Richmond's Hollywood Cemetery in what then became the Davis Family Plot.
- ◆ October 17, 1978, Davis' citizenship was restored by an Act of Congress signed by President Jimmy Carter and deemed retroactive to December 25, 1868—the date he had been denied a treason trial.