



The Lincoln Theater opened in 1949 as one of only three major theaters African Americans could go to in Baton Rouge. Dr. A.L. Chatman, a local physician, was the brainchild behind the theater which sat five hundred people and also housed a pharmacy, barber shop, dentist office, laundromat and attorneys' offices. Louis Armstrong and Otis Redding are among the many artists to perform here. The Lincoln often hosted voter registration drives and was at the epicenter of meetings between local civil rights leaders. The United Defense

League used the building as a meeting place to organize the Baton Rouge Bus Boycott of 1953. In 1986, the Lincoln shut its doors due to lack of business. In recent years, there's been a resurgence in efforts to restore the building. The East Baton Rouge Redevelopment Authority has renamed the area a cultural district allowing for special tax incentives. Future plans include renovating the theater and establishing office and exhibit spaces with the Louisiana Black History Hall of Fame being built next to it.