

NEW ORLEANS JAZZ TOUR (#2)

RIDE THE CANAL STREET/ALGIERS POINT FERRY
FROM THE FRENCH QUARTER
ACROSS THE MIGHTY MISSISSIPPI RIVER TO

HISTORIC ALGIERS, “THE BROOKLYN OF THE SOUTH”

TAKE A FREE SELF-GUIDED WALKING TOUR, AND VISIT
THE FORMER HOMES OF ALGIERS’ JAZZ MUSICIANS,
THE VENUES THEY PLAYED IN,
AND THE ROBERT E. NIMS JAZZ WALK OF FAME,
AND GET THE BEST VIEW OF NEW ORLEANS’ SKYLINE

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Jazz musicians of the 1920s referred to Algiers as “over da river” or the “Brooklyn of the South,” the latter for its proximity to New Orleans as compared to New York and Brooklyn, both separated by a river. This tour straddles the Algiers Point and Algiers Riverview neighborhoods, both integral parts of historic Algiers, and both having a long, rich history of African American, French, Spanish, German, Irish, and Italian/Sicilian residents. This was the site of the slave holding areas, newly arrived from Africa, and the powder magazine of the early 18th century. John McDONOGH, the richest man in New Orleans, lived here. The earliest account of music on the West Bank is to be found here.

The Riverview area contains many African American churches, and some have over one hundred-year histories, one of which was the scene in days gone by of the fiery sermons of “Black Billy Sunday,” and many Jazz funerals, held for musicians, and benevolent society members. Several of the local musicians are interred in the nearby St. Bartholomew, St. Mary, and McDonogh cemeteries.

Some of the earliest brass bands that influenced the birth of Jazz, including the Pickwick, the Excelsior, and the Pacific, employed Algiers’ musicians. Buddy BOLDEN and Louis ARMSTRONG were two of the many Jazz luminaries that paraded through these streets. Another Jazz legend, Lester YOUNG, lived in Algiers, and his father, Willis Handy YOUNG, paraded with Henry ALLEN, Sr.’s Brass Band. Blues legend, Elizabeth DOUGLAS, better known as “Memphis Minnie,” was born here, and sings of Algiers in her 1940 recording, “Nothing In Rambling.”

Algiers was famous countrywide in the African American communities for its “Voodoo” and “Hoodoo” practitioners, and celebrated in song by Willie BRYANT, Roosevelt SYKES, Charlie SPAND, George WILLIAMS and Bessie BROWN, Brownie McGHEE (recorded as “Blind Boy” FULLER), “Kid” Thomas VALENTINE, Henry “Red” ALLEN, Billie and Dee Dee PIERCE, and J. B. LENOIR.

This tour concentrates on the often-unsung heroes, the African American musicians, who played such a great part in the history of New Orleans Jazz, and in some small way salutes their contribution to Jazz, and their rich culture. Although Algiers’ musicians played a major part in the history of Jazz and Blues, these genres of music were not born in Algiers...or were they?

Kevin HERRIDGE.

WE ENCOURAGE YOU TO USE GOOD JUDGEMENT AND COMMON SENSE IN TAKING THIS TOUR (OR ANY TOUR) IN AN URBAN AREA – New Orleans Jazz Commission.

Take the Canal Street ferry to Algiers (leaves quarter to, and quarter past the hour from the foot of Canal Street). Turn right from the ferry terminal, and come downhill onto Bouny St., towards the Dry Dock Café & Bar.

The street to your left is Delaronde. Frankie DUSON (1878-1936) trombonist, and leader of the remnants of Buddy BOLDEN’s Band (under the new name of the Eagle Band), lived at number 162 (no longer standing) from 1894-1897. He also played on the “*S.S. Capitol*,” with the E.R.A. Orchestra in the Depression, and with Louis DUMAINE. He was musically active until the mid-1930s.

Continue on Bouny St. and turn left onto Alix St.

331 Alix St. - Manuel MANETTA (1889-1969), bandleader, multi-instrumentalist, and music teacher, lived at 331 Alix from 1913-1923. His career started in 1906 with Tom ALBERT, and before 1910 had played with Buddy BOLDEN, Frank DUSON, and Edward CLEM. Around 1908 he was solo pianist at Willie Piazza’s Basin Street brothel. He played with the Original Tuxedo Orchestra until 1913, played briefly in Chicago, but soon returned home to New Orleans to join with “Papa” CELESTIN and Joe HOWARD at the Villa Cabaret during World War I. In 1919 he was working with Kid ORY in California, and played saxophone with Manuel PEREZ in the 1920s. A member of a notable extended musical family including the ADAMS and DOUROUX families, he spent over 50 years as a music teacher. His signature feat was the ability to play trumpet and trombone simultaneously, and in harmony. His more famous home and studio were at 408-410 LeBoeuf.

333 Alix St. - Home to Louis DOUROUX (1875-1850?) and family, including his daughter, Dolly DOUROUX (later ADAMS) (1904-1979) in 1920. Pianist, and mother to Jazz musicians Placide, Justin, and Jerry ADAMS. Related to the MANETTA family.

Double back to Bouny St., turn left, continue to Opelousas Ave., turn left

425 Opelousas Ave. - Built in 1925, the fire station replaced an earlier station. Fire stations were important in the growth of Jazz in New Orleans as they often had halls above them that were used for social gatherings, and dances. The Sons of Firemen Band played here in 1928.

431 Opelousas Ave. - The home of Oscar (1895-1956) and Mickey MARCOUR (1989-1961). Oscar lived here from 1917-1919. He was an early Jazz violinist and bandleader, and a highly acclaimed musician. According to Bert PECK, another local musician, Oscar was known as the “RUBINOFF of Algiers.” His band included brother Mickey, Emmett HARDY, and Norman BROWNLEE, and they played together from about 1916-1922. Mickey (real name Milton) lived here from 1919-1927.

501-509 Opelousas is the Love’s Outreach Christian Church, formerly the Metropolitan Tabernacle (First Baptist Church of Algiers). This fabulous old building was formerly Philip FOTO’s Folly Theater, a venue that opened in 1915 presenting vaudeville, silent movies, minstrel, and musical acts including the Algiers Juvenile Orchestra, featuring a young Emmett HARDY, who played here in 1916. Many Jazz musicians played in minstrel and vaudeville shows. The Folly was built on the site of Algiers’ first playground that had opened in 1913 to the sounds of “Papa” Jack LAINE’s Reliance Band. This band had many local listings. The theater originally seated 900 people, but as its popularity grew, Mr. FOTO expanded the building to hold 2000 in 1920.

Delcazal Playground was originally the DUVERJE family cemetery. The playground opened in 1916 after the family tombs had been transferred to Metairie Cemetery. Bands that played here included DETROIT’s Band in 1918, and the General Staff Band of Mexico City in 1925. The unimaginatively named Laundry & Dry Cleaning Service, Inc. Band, under the directorship of Harry MENDELSON, played here in 1928, and 1929.

648 Opelousas Ave. - Formerly the Sts. John Masonic Temple, built in 1925. This monumental brick building was also the second Algiers post office. Jazz bands that played here regularly in the 20s were VIRGET’s Serenaders, the “Bats” Orchestra, Bert PECK’s Bad Boys, and Leslie STURTEVANT’s Peppermint Orchestra.

Turn left onto Vallette St.

607 Vallette St. - The home of Charles DEVERGE, bandleader and music teacher, from 1895-1897. He taught Charlie LOVE, Manuel MANETTA, and Peter BOCAGE.

603 Vallette St. - The home of clarinetist Albert “Dude” GABRIEL (c.1875-1970?) from 1907-1912. He played with Tom ALBERT in 1910, and with the Pacific

Brass Band from 1910-1912. He also played with some ragtime bands around this time with Manuel MANETTA.

Double back to Slidell Ave., turn right

615 Slidell Ave. - The home of cornet and baritone-horn player George HOOKER (1882-1929?) from 1911-1914. HOOKER was a brass band musician who worked with the Pacific Brass Band about 1900, and the Tuxedo Brass Band in the mid-1920s. He worked regularly until the Depression with Henry ALLEN's Brass Band and occasionally with the Excelsior Brass Band.

Turn left onto Verret St.

525 Homer St. (corner of Verret St.) - This home replaced the Ladies of Hope Benevolent Association Hall, a two-story building constructed in 1904, the scene of many dances and social gatherings through the years. In February, 1915, the Eagle Eye Aid and Pleasure Club, and the Love Entwiners Pleasure Club held a supper at the hall and "little Henry ALLEN, Jr., the young nine year old musician, rendered many pretty selections on the cornet." "Kid" Thomas VALENTINE, Harrison and Emile BARNES, Charlie LOVE, Louis NELSON, George LEWIS, Louis GALLAUD, Albert JILES, and Barry MARTIN all recorded in the hall.

900 Verret St. - The site of an older house where Jimmy PALAO (1879-1935) lived with his grandmother, Clara SPRIGGS, who raised him. Jimmy was also known as Jimmy SPRIGGS. He appears in the 1901 city directory at this address, and is listed as a "musician." This was probably the year he played with Buddy BOLDEN. A violin player (who also played sax and alto horn) with some very important early Jazz bands – Buddy BOLDEN's Band and the Imperial Orchestra in 1906. He was in Storyville to 1912, and then toured with the Original Creole Orchestra with such luminaries as Freddie KEPPARD, George BAQUET, Bill JOHNSON, Norwood WILLIAMS, Dink JOHNSON, and fellow Algerine Eddie VINCENT. Eddie lived on Villere Street (now Morgan St., near the Courthouse). Jimmy then went up to Chicago then to California with King OLIVER. Around 1924 joined Fess WILLIAMS in Chicago.

921 Verret St. - The home of legendary brass band leader and cornet player, Henry ALLEN, Sr. (1877-1952) and his son, Henry "Red" ALLEN (1906-1967) from 1918-1922. It would probably be a shorter list to say who did not play with Henry ALLEN's Brass Band! Many Algiers' musicians played with him, as did such Jazz luminaries as Buddy BOLDEN, Joe "King" OLIVER, Louis ARMSTRONG, Sidney BECHET, and "Papa" CELESTIN.

1006 Verret St. - The home from 1924-40 of another cornet player, Charlie LOVE (1885-1963), the son of James LOVE of the Pickwick Brass Band. Charlie played in and around New Orleans from about 1900, playing with the Cado Brass Band in Shreveport, and with Henry ALLEN's Brass Band. He worked in Storyville for Tom ANDERSON, and was a barman in 1921 for Lulu WHITE, the famous "Sporting House"

keeper. LOVE started playing regularly in New Orleans in 1925 with the Lyric Theater pit band led by John ROBICHAUX, and was part of the W.P.A. Band in the late 40s and 50s as well as playing in parade bands, most notably the Tuxedo Brass Band.

Double back to Newton St, turn right, then left onto Vallette St.

825 Vallette St. - The home of “Kid” Thomas VALENTINE (1896-1987) in 1928. He played in the HALL family band in Reserve until about 1923, when he moved to Algiers, and joined the Elton THEODORE Band. He led his own band from 1926, and remains, along with George LEWIS, one of the most famous Algiers’ musicians.

Double back and cross Newton St.

1006 Vallette St. - The home of trumpeter and violinist, Peter BOCAGE (1887-1967), from 1927 until his death. He began his career in 1906, and played with the Original Superior Orchestra (1909), the Original Tuxedo Orchestra (1910-1913), and the Onward Brass Band with Joe “King” OLIVER at Lala’s. He was with Fate MARABLE’s “S. S. Capitol” Orchestra in 1916, but after 1918, joined the A. J. PIRON Orchestra. He composed “Mama’s Gone, Goodbye,” and introduced “Shimmy Like My Sister Kate.” His own band, the Creole Serenaders, recorded for Riverside in the 1960s.

Double back and turn right

717 and 719 Newton St. - Were the homes, sporadically through the 1910s-1930s, of drummer and trombonist Bill MATTHEWS (1899-1964), and his brothers Nathaniel “Bebe” MATTHEWS (c.1890-1961), and Ramos “Brown Happy” MATTHEWS (c.1886-1958), both drummers. Bill first played in 1917 with the Excelsior Brass Band, and in the dance orchestra of Jack WILLIAMS. He worked in Storyville with Sidney DESVIGNE just before it was closed down, and then played odd jobs with Frankie DUSON, Sam MORGAN, and Joe HOWARD. Bill began playing trombone in the early 20s, studying with Vic GASPARD. He headed west with Nat TOWLE’s Orchestra in 1926, touring with “Jelly Roll” MORTON, and then returning to New Orleans, with DESVIGNE on the “S. S. Island Queen.” In 1927 he played with “Bebe” RIDGLEY’s section of the Original Tuxedo Orchestra, and recorded with Oscar “Papa” CELESTIN. He played frequently at the Paddock on Bourbon Street from 1945-1963, usually with “Papa” CELESTIN until 1952. Nathan played drums with Henry ALLEN’s Brass Band, the Onward Brass Band, and the “Bebe” RIDGLEY Orchestra. Ramos was with the ALLEN Brass band from 1912-1925, and also played with Louis DUMAINE, the Tulane Brass Band, the Eureka Brass Band, and the Young Tuxedo Brass Band.

Double back towards the river

623 Newton St. - The Greater Providence Baptist Church, was organized in 1898. “Black Billy” Sunday (Rev. J. Gordon McPHERSON) was Pastor here in the late 1920s/early 1930s. A famous preacher of his day, he served in the Spanish-American

War, and treated yellow fever stricken soldiers with his magical “healing hands.” His recorded sermons are available on CD.

501-503 Newton St. - From the 1950s to 1970s, known as the Greystone Voter’s League, was the place for Rhythm & Blues shows. Such greats as Ray CHARLES, and B. B. KING played here as well as a host of local talent, including “Professor” Longhair, Deacon John, Bobby MARCHAN, and the NEVILLE Brothers. The building’s musical history goes way back. Trombonist Harrison BARNES (1889-1960) lived here from 1919-1925. He was a pupil of Professor James HUMPHREY when he lived on Magnolia Plantation. BARNES played with the Eclipse Brass Band (1906), Henry ALLEN’s Brass Band (1907), Chris KELLY (until 1918), the NOLA Band (1923), and John ROBICHAUX (1924). He recorded with the Zenith Brass Band in 1946 and with “Kid” Thomas in 1951. John LINDSAY (1891-1950) lived at 503 Newton from his birth until 1900, when his family moved to 1019 Verret around the corner. LINDSAY was one of the true giants of Jazz, and started his career in Storyville in 1910, and played through the 1920s with John ROBICHAUX, A. J. PIRON, and “Papa” CELESTIN. In 1924, he was in Chicago playing with Joe “King” OLIVER, Willie HIGHTOWER, and Carroll DICKERSON. He recorded on bass and trombone with A. J. PIRON, “Jelly Roll” MORTON, the Harlem Hamfats, Jimmie NOONE, and Richard M. JONES. He toured and recorded with Louis ARMSTRONG. John’s brother, Herb LINDSAY (1888-?), a violinist, lived here during the same period. Like his brother, he started playing in Storyville about 1909, and a year or two later was playing with bands that included Freddie KEPPARD and “King” OLIVER. He played with the Primrose Orchestra in 1912, and went to Chicago in 1917 where he occasionally played with Lawrence DUHE. Brother Joe LINDSAY played drums, influenced by “Happy” BOLTON, and led his own “Kid” LINDSAY’s Jazz Band in 1916. Joe was said to be the first to employ a young Louis ARMSTRONG. He played with the Dixie Jazz Band after World War I, was with Bob LYONS in 1919, and “Kid” RENA periodically throughout the 20s. He left New Orleans for Chicago in 1931 until his return in 1939. The boys’ sister, Mamie, toured with the Merry Macs, being William McBRIDE and his wife, the former Mary THACKER, another Algerine. This venue was destroyed in Hurricane Katrina.

429 Newton St. - Mount Pilgrim 4th Baptist Church, one of Algiers’ oldest churches is sometimes pictured in Jazz funerals. The Eureka Brass Band were featured in one such photo.

414 Newton St. - The birthplace of trumpeter Henry “Red” ALLEN, one of Algiers’ most famous Jazz musicians. He started playing with his father’s brass band, and later played with the Excelsior, and Eureka brass bands. In the 1920s he played with the bands of Chris KELLY, “Kid” RENA, and Sidney DESVIGNE, then worked on the riverboats with Fate MARABLE and Walter PICHON. In 1927 he joined the “King” OLIVER Orchestra in New York, and in the 1930s recorded with Luis RUSSELL, Fletcher HENDERSON, “Lucky” MILLINDER, Louis ARMSTRONG, and “Jelly Roll” MORTON. He led his own orchestra from 1940 onwards, and made many recordings.

400 Newton St. - The site of Whitey's Ballroom, owned by Roy DOLLINGER, a white trombone player, who would provide entertainment by playing along with the jukebox. This was earlier the site of the Manhattan Saloon, often called Frankie DUSON'S "headquarters."

At the end of Newton St., turn right

926 Brooklyn Ave. - The home of Peter BOCAGE in 1912.

836 Brooklyn Ave. - (no longer standing) The site of the "Ping Pong Club" where a young Manuel MANETTA was taken by his brother to see Augustus "Gussie" NEIL, the first man he had ever seen play piano. Around 1913/14 the joint was known as "Glad-U-Kum."

Turn right onto Homer St., then right again on Teche St.

922 Teche St. - is the site of the Pride of Algiers Masonic Temple, an African American Masonic Hall since 1952. Many Jazz and Rhythm & Blues bands played here including "Kid" Thomas and George LEWIS.

Double back and turn right onto Homer St.

423 Homer St. - was the home of trombonist Eddie PIERSON (1904-1958) in 1922. He played on the riverboats with Sidney DESVIGNE in the early 1930s and worked with a group that included Louis BARBARIN and Emmanuel SAYLES. He was also in the Sunny South Orchestra, A. J. PIRON's Orchestra, the Young Tuxedo Orchestra, and the Great Lakes Naval Station Band. He is mainly associated with "Papa" CELESTIN from 1951 until CELESTIN's death in 1954, when he took over the leadership of the band's remnants.

426-428 Homer St. - The family home of drummer Freddie KOHLMAN (1918-1990). He played with A. J. PIRON, Joe ROBICHAUX, "Papa" CELESTIN, "Kid" ORY, the MORGAN Band, and the Onward Brass Band. In the 1930s he moved to Chicago, and played with Earl HINES and Lee COLLINS. He recorded with Thomas JEFFERSON and Willie HUMPHREY in the 1950s, toured with Louis ARMSTRONG, was a frequent performer at Preservation Hall, and toured internationally with many bands.

414 Homer St. - KOHLMAN's Tavern (aka the Casbah), was successively a bar, fish stand, ice cream parlor, a "soft drinks" establishment in Prohibition days, and club, was owned by Freddie's father, Louis KOHLMAN. A popular music venue in the 50s and 60s, "Kid" Thomas recorded here in 1968 with Emanuel PAUL, Louis NELSON, Charlie HAMILTON, Joseph "Kid Twat" BUTLER, and Sammy PENN.

404-408 Homer St. - The former site of a dance pavilion, described as "old" on a map of 1909.

Turn right onto Teche St.

At the side of the Central Market on Teche was the entrance to Philip FOTO's Market Theater from 1910-1915. It offered silent movies and vaudeville acts to an audience of up to 700 people until FOTO opened the Folly Theater on Opelousas.

Turn left at the end of Teche St. onto Opelousas Ave.

The **300 block of Opelousas** was the former home of several dance venues – the Nemo Theater, the Avenue Dance Academy, and the Westside Carnival Club. Many Jazz bands played here between 1909 and 1930 including Norman BROWNLEE, Manuel MANETTA's Jazz Band, the Triangle Jazz Band, "Happy" SCHILLING, WHITACKER's Jazz Band, "Papa" Jack LAINE, the Six Toddle Kings, and the Original Dixieland Jazz Band.

Turn right at the end of Opelousas Ave. onto Powder St.

536 Powder St. - was the BOCAGE family home. They were a family of prize winning boat builders as well as musicians. The boat yard was established next door at 530 Powder by Octave BOCAGE, Sr. His son Leopold (also known as Paul) BOCAGE, played guitar with Jim DORSEY's Band, which included one of Manuel MANETTA's uncles, and Henry DEFUENTES, Peter BOCAGE'S first music teacher. All the band members were light-skinned Creoles of Color. Paul's three sons, Peter (1887-1967), Henry (1894-1980) and Charles (1900-1963), were members of Peter BOCAGE's Creole Serenaders. Henry played tuba, string bass and trumpet, and performed with A. J. PIRON after World War I. Charles played banjo and guitar, and was a vocalist. He joined his brother to play with A. J. PIRON. Peter did not consider himself a Jazz player, rather a ragtime musician. He was a multi-instrumentalist, playing violin, as well as mandolin, guitar, banjo, trumpet, baritone horn, xylophone, and trombone.

416 Powder St. - was the birthplace and home of a young Manuel MANETTA. The family then moved to 331 Alix, which was the first home on our tour, in 1913.

Bear right onto Pelican Ave., and turn left back to the ferry terminal, and don't miss the Robert E. NIMS Jazz Walk of Fame on the levee. It begins at the statue of Louis ARMSTRONG, and ends at Mardi Gras World. The batture (river side of the levee) has suffered many "crevasses," or cave-ins, over the years, and much has fallen into the river. Most of the research for this tour covers the period up to 1939.

Now try the "**OVER DA RIVER,**" TO HISTORIC ALGIERS self-guided walking tour of Algiers Point. Downloadable at www.algiershistoricalsociety.org.

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WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT ALGIERS' MUSIC?

Contact Kevin Herridge for additional information and tours at (504)368-1123 or 335 Pelican Ave., New Orleans, Louisiana 70114 USA or cockney@bellsouth.net.

When in New Orleans, visit the William Hogan Jazz Archive at Tulane University, or the Williams Research Center, 410 Chartres St.

Visit the Louisiana Music Factory, 210 Decatur St., for the best selection of recorded Louisiana music in the world - www.louisianamusicfactory.com, or GHB Jazz Foundation at www.jazzology.com.

Read: “The Song For Me: A Glossary of New Orleans Musicians” – privately printed by Brian WOOD – tbw504@aol.com; “Fallen Heroes: A History of New Orleans Brass Bands” by Richard KNOWLES; check the Society website for suggested reading or watch out for my forthcoming book on Algiers’ Jazz up to 1939 - “Over Da River.”.

HISTORIC ALGIERS – “THE BROOKLYN OF THE SOUTH” - Is a FREE self-guided walking tour researched and written by Kevin HERRIDGE. (2015 Copyright).

KEVIN HERRIDGE is an avid researcher of all genres of music in Algiers (New Orleans), Louisiana, and always interested in locating articles, interviews, photographs, personal recollections, memorabilia and artifacts of Algiers music and musicians, and Algiers history from any time period. If you have something to share, please feel free to contact him.