

NEW ORLEANS JAZZ TOUR (#1)

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

“OVER DA RIVER” - TO HISTORIC ALGIERS

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 concentrates on the Algiers Point neighborhood, that has a long, rich history of African American, French, Spanish, German, Irish, and Italian/Sicilian residents. Algiers, the second oldest neighborhood in New Orleans after the French Quarter, was the site of the slave holding areas, newly arrived from Africa, the powder magazine, and slaughterhouse of the early 18th century. John McDONOGH, the richest man, and largest landowner in New Orleans, lived here.

Algiers was famous countrywide in the African American communities for its “Voodoo” and “Hoodoo” practitioners, and is celebrated in songs on this subject.

The earliest bands containing Algiers’ musicians included the Pickwick Brass Band (1873-1900s), the Excelsior Brass Band (1880-1928), Jim DORSEY’s Band (1880s), Prof. MANETTA’s String Band (1880s), BROWN’s Brass Band of McDonoghville (1880s), and Prof. A. L. TIO’s String Band (aka the Big Four) (1880s), the Pacific Brass Band (1900-1912), and Henry ALLEN’s Brass Band (1907-1940s). These dates are approximate, as very little evidence has been found of definite dates.

Other Algiers’ bands included the Tom ALBERT Band, the Algiers Brass Band, the Algiers Naval Station Band, Mervin BUDGE’s Band, Peter BOCAGE’s Creole Serenaders, the Norman BROWNLEE Band, the Charles DEVERGE Band, George LEWIS’ Ragtime Jazz Band, Billy LUFT’s Band, Bert PECK’s Princeton Revellers, the Sam ROSS Orchestra, Leslie STURTEVANT’s Band, the Elton THEODORE Orchestra,

Charlie LOVE's Band, Sam MORGAN's Band, and "Kid" Thomas VALENTINE's Algiers Stompers, to name a few.

Jazz, Blues, Rhythm & Blues, and Rock & Roll artists were born, lived or played on the right bank of the Mississippi River from the Magnolia Plantation in Pointe a la Hache to Westwego, and beyond. Algiers and Gretna has been the birthplace of, or home to, a long list of musicians including the ADAMS family, Tom ALBERT, Henry ALLEN, Sr., Henry "Red" ALLEN, Harrison BARNES, Ronnie BARRON, Nick BENINATE, the BOCAGE Family, the BROWNLEE family, the BRUNIS family, Mervin BUDGE, Joseph "Kid Twat" BUTLER, the DAST family, George DAVIS, Henry DEFUENTES, Charles DEVERGES, the DOUROUX family, Frank DUSON, Bill EASTWOOD, Albert "Dude" GABRIEL, Wendell GREEN, Emmett HARDY, Clarence "Frogman" HENRY, George HOOKER, Edward "Son" HOUSE, Joe JAMES, the JOHNSON family, the LINDSAY family, Charlie LOVE, George LEWIS, Joseph "Bobo" LEWIS, Billy LUFT, the MANETTA family, the MARCOUR family, the MATTHEWS family, Elizabeth "Memphis Minnie" DOUGLAS, Bobby MITCHELL, Jackson MOLAISON, Sam MORGAN, Eddie MORRIS, the MOSLEY family, Louis NELSON, Jimmie NOONE, Jimmie "SPRIGGS" PALAO, Bert PECK, Alphonse PICOU, Eddie PIERSON, Sam ROSS, Ovide "Tete" ROCHON, George SIMMS, Louis SINO, Leslie STURTEVANT, Joe "Brother Cornbread" THOMAS, Bennie TURNER, "Kid" Thomas VALENTINE, Eddie VINCENT, the YOUNG family, to name a few!

Many of the Jazz venues have long since disappeared, as have many of the musicians' homes. Most of the saloons, and dance halls are all but forgotten now by the modern-day Algiers' residents. Gone are the days of Jazz funerals every week, the sound of dancing feet in the juke joints, and dance halls, and corner saloons. Relive the "Jazz Days" of Algiers with either of the self-guided walking tours that can be found online at www.algiershistoricalsociety.org.

THE TOUR

As you leave the ferry terminal, turn left towards the Courthouse

225 Morgan - Algiers Courthouse, was built in 1896 on the site of the DUVERJE plantation home, which burned in the Great Algiers Fire of 1895. This fire destroyed over 200 homes and businesses from the river to Alix and Lavergne Sts. The present Courthouse is the third continuously used courthouse in Louisiana, and is the home of the Second City Court, and other city offices.

Turn right as you leave the Courthouse

237 Morgan - The first home rebuilt after the 1895 fire, was the home of Emmett HARDY (1903-1925) from 1920-1923. Hardy, born upriver in Gretna, is said to have been one of the greatest cornet players. Louis ARMSTRONG reportedly called him "The King" after HARDY beat him at a "cutting contest." By the time he died at age 22, he had toured with Tony CATALANO's band, and played in Chicago with the New Orleans Rhythm Kings. He played in Davenport, Iowa, with Carlisle EVANS' band, influencing

the young Bix BEIDERBECKE. In New Orleans he played principally with the Norman BROWNLEE Orchestra, and was replaced by Johnny WIGGS.

Cross Bermuda St.

307 Morgan - Oscar & Milton MARCOUR lived here from 1914-1916. Oscar (1895-1956) was a trained violinist and bandleader who frequently worked in bands with top musicians. Milton (1898-1961) was an active Dixieland pianist during the 20s playing with the Halfway House Orchestra, and in a quartet with Abbie BRUNIES, Buck ROGERS, and “Stalebread” LACOUME at the Bucktown Tavern.

Double back and turn left onto Bermuda St. then left onto Delaronde St.

407 Delaronde - Home to Norman BROWNLEE from 1912-1919. BROWNLEE (1896-1967), a native Algerine, was a pianist and bass-violinist. The Norman BROWNLEE Orchestra played in New Orleans in the 20s and 30s, and recorded on the Okeh record label in January, 1925. BROWNLEE moved to Pensacola, Florida in 1932 where he continued his musical career, and was the secretary-treasurer of the local musicians’ union.

415 Delaronde - Bill EASTWOOD (1899-1960) lived here from 1900-1922. A member of Norman BROWNLEE’s Orchestra in the early 20s and later with the Halfway House Orchestra, he played banjo, guitar and saxophone. EASTWOOD was the business agent for the American Guild of Variety Artists later in life.

Continue on Delaronde, and turn at Larkin Park (Amann St.) then right on Patterson St.

545 Patterson - A bar has been on this site since at least the 1840s, although then called a “Coffee House.” The Old Point Bar is one of the premier music joints in New Orleans today featuring live music on several nights per week. Check them out at www.oldpointbar.com. During the late 19th century, there were nine bars serving railroad and shipbuilding workers along the six block stretch of Patterson and Lavergne.

601 Patterson - A corner store building with residential units above, was a grocery with Algiers’ first soda fountain. It is the original site of Michaul’s Cajun Restaurant and dancehall that operated in the 1980s where Andrew HALL and Barry MARTYN held a regular spot.

Turn right on Olivier St.

228 Olivier - Alonzo CROMBIE (b. 1891), a Dixieland-style drummer after World War I, lived here from 1920-1923. CROMBIE mainly played with the Norman BROWNLEE Orchestra, and with Emmett HARDY.

302-308 Olivier was built as a Masonic Hall, but also housed a police station and a recorder’s court in the 1890s. This was the sight of many Jazz sessions on the upper

floor that featured Jack LAINE's Reliance Band, "Happy" SCHILLING, Norman BROWNLEE, and Oscar MARCOUR.

311 Olivier - Home to Norman BROWNLEE in 1911.

334 Olivier - Home to Bill EASTWOOD in 1926.

342 Olivier has been home to the Santa Maria Council No. 1724, Knights of Columbus since 1915. Many Jazz greats played here including MARCOUR's Band, the Magnolia Jazz Band, BROWNLEE's Jazz Band, "Kid" Thomas VALENTINE, Nick LARocca, and Bert PECK.

Turn right on Alix St.

The property that the Holy Name of Mary Church (to your left) stands on, before the Civil War, was the site of Voodoo ceremonies.

Continue to Bermuda St., turn right

436 Bermuda - The great clarinetist, Alphonse PICOU (1878-1961), lived here in 1898. He organized the Accordiana Band in 1894, and the Independence Band in 1897. He played with Oscar DUCONGE in 1899, and then the Olympia, the Excelsior, and the Onward Brass Bands. Then with the Tuxedo Brass Band, and the Camellia Orchestra. Later with Manuel PEREZ, John ROBICHAUX, and Kid RENA. Was with Papa CELESTIN in the late 1940s, and led his own band in the early 1950s.

428 Bermuda - Bert PECK (1906-1984) was born here, and resided within four blocks of this address his entire life. PECK, a Dixieland piano player in the 1920s, played with the Cloverleaf Jazz Orchestra, the Princeton Revellers, PECK's Bad Boys, Johnny BAYERSDORFER, and Leon PRIMA. He continued to perform in his later years, playing on the 'Delta Queen' steamboat in 1982.

420 Bermuda - Although destroyed by fire, the Pythian Hall once stood here, and was one of the premier Jazz venues in Algiers in its time. Among the bands that played there were WEBERT's Concert Band, the Peerless Orchestra, "Papa" Jack LAINE's Reliance Band, "Happy" SCHILLING's Band, the Princeton Jazzolas, and "Kid" Thomas. The BOSWELL Sisters sang a benefit here in 1925.

Turn left at Pelican Ave.

335 Pelican - The House of the Rising Sun Bed & Breakfast. Built in 1896 after the original home of 1870 was destroyed in the Great Fire of 1895. No Jazz significance at all apart from the fact the author of this tour owns the house and lives here.

312 Pelican - The home of trumpeter Urbin “Cricket” SCHERNBECK (1930-2003) from 1935-1949. At age 16 he got his first job playing with Billy LUFT’s Band, and was a regular member of that band.

239 Pelican - Home to “Professor” Manuel MANETTA in 1906. MANETTA (1889-1969) was born in Algiers, and was a member of a notable extended musical family that included the ADAMS and DOUROUX families. A multi-instrumentalist, bandleader, and music teacher, he taught many New Orleans’ musicians how to play in a career spanning over fifty years. His music career began in 1906 at the age of 17 with Tom ALBERT. Before 1910 he had played with Buddy BOLDEN, Frankie DUSON, and Edward CLEM. Around 1908 he was the solo pianist in Willie Piazza’s Basin Street brothel, and he played with the Original Tuxedo Orchestra until 1913. He was lured to Chicago to play during this period, but soon returned to New Orleans. During World War I, he played with Papa CELESTIN, and Joe HOWARD at the Villa Cabaret, and later traveled to California to play with “Kid” ORY, and played saxophone with Manuel PEREZ in the 1920s. MANETTA was famous for his ability to play trumpet and trombone simultaneously, and in harmony.

235 Pelican - Home to Louis DOUROUX in 1900. DOUROUX (b. 1875) played cornet in the Pickwick Brass Band. He married Olivia MANETTA in 1894, and was the father of Dolly DOUROUX (later ADAMS), another Jazz musician.

228 Pelican - Martin BEHRMAN (1864-1926) was the only Mayor of New Orleans from Algiers, and the Mayor serving the longest term in office (1904-1920, 1925-1926). He built this house soon after the fire of 1895. BEHRMAN was reportedly a great Jazz fan. He certainly knew many of the musicians that lived and played in his beloved Algiers. It is possible that BEHRMAN used his influence as Mayor to have Buddy BOLDEN declared insane, and moved from jail in New Orleans to the mental hospital in Jackson, Louisiana in 1907, after his breakdown.

Turn right at Bouny St. towards the ferry terminal and the Robert E. NIMS Jazz Walk of Fame that runs along the levee from the statue of Louis ARMSTRONG to Mardi Gras World.

Now try the **ALGIERS, “THE BROOKLYN OF THE SOUTH”** walking tour. Downloadable from www.algiershistoricalsociety.org.

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