

# AFRICAN AMERICAN NEW ORLEANS



## FAUBOURG TREMÉ

located on a portion of the Morand - Mor  
plantation sold by Claude Tremé in 1810  
the city of New Orleans. It became  
city's first subdivision and is consider  
to be America's oldest existing Afric  
American neighborhood. It was home  
diverse mix of residents including fr  
people of color and Europeans th  
prospered as craftsmen, artists,  
musicians, entrepreneurs, doctors a  
teachers. Historical sites within Trem  
include Louis Armstrong Park,  
Square, and St. Augustine Ch

**A Guide to 100  
Civil Rights, Culture  
& Jazz Sites**

**Kevin J. Bozant**

African American New Orleans

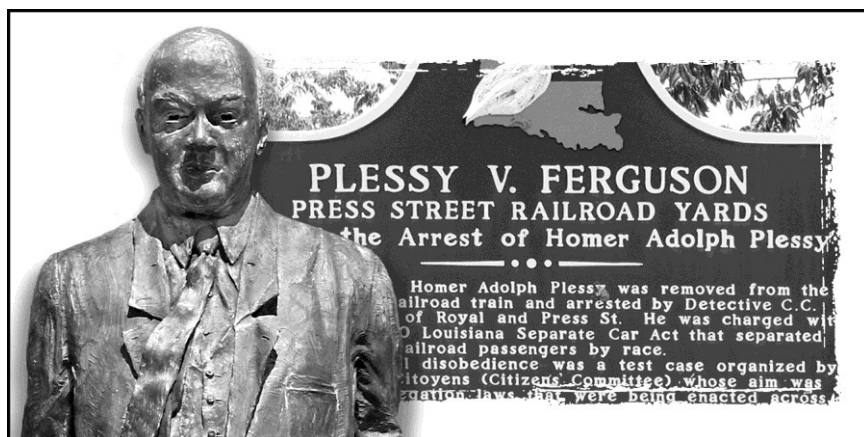
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Po-Boy Press - New Orleans



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## INTRODUCTION

No other city in America appreciates and celebrates the African American cultural landscape as does New Orleans.

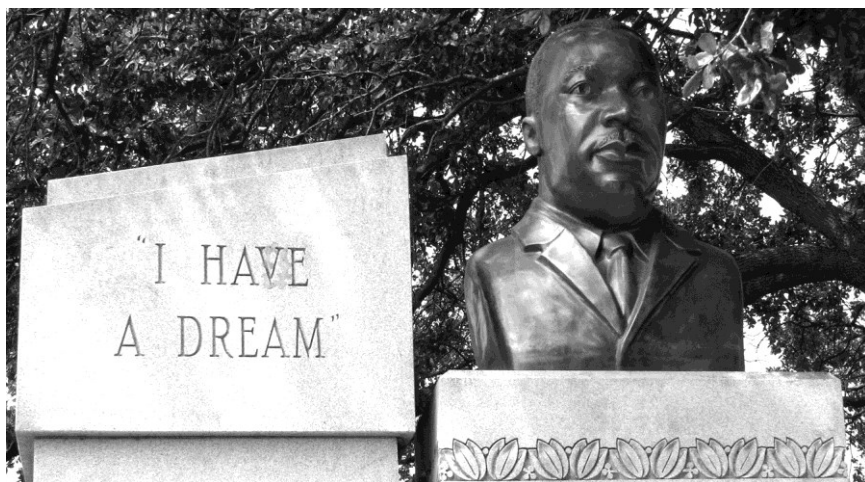
There are 73 distinct neighborhoods in the Crescent City. In three adjacent neighborhoods alone – Faubourg Tremé, Faubourg St. Mary and the French Quarter – there are more than fifty statues and historic sites honoring African American contributions to the cultural and civil rights history of New Orleans. In the fifteen neighborhoods mentioned in this book, there are well over one hundred.

*African American New Orleans* is an essential and valuable reference for everyone visiting New Orleans; especially during Mardi Gras, Audubon Zoo Soul Fest, New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival, The Essence Music Festival, Juneteenth, Satchmo Summerfest, The New Orleans Blues & BBQ Festival, The Bayou Classic and Kwanzaa. It is also a guide for residents of the New Orleans area who may not be aware of the history surrounding them.

Volumes have been written about New Orleans civil rights history. Library shelves overflow with extensive works about the origins of jazz and the unique culture of the Crescent City. This book, however, is written with the visitor in mind by providing over 100 photographs accompanied by concise, informative text describing the significance of each site. In addition, neighborhood and street addresses are provided which can be quickly located via your smart phone map application. There is also a convenient neighborhood index on page 127 to help you find sites close to your current location.

This book also serves as a helpful study guide for New Orleans school students and teachers; providing a framework for discussion and further research into the fascinating social and multi-cultural fabric of African American New Orleans.

## I HAVE A DREAM



### **DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.**

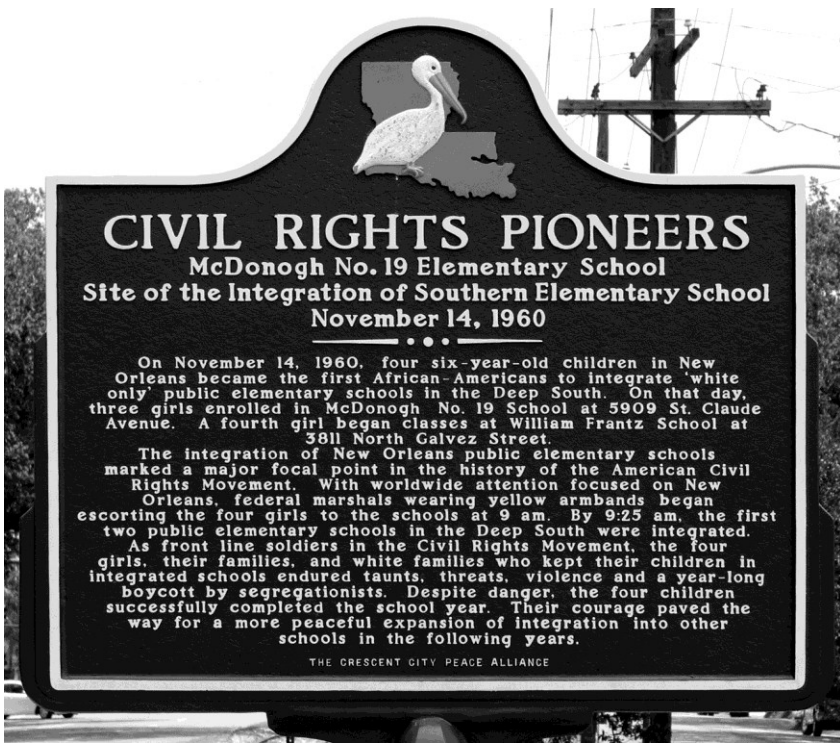
**Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Plaza  
S. Claiborne Ave. & MLK Blvd., Central City  
Nancy Johnson – 1981**

This life-size bronze bust of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was dedicated on January 15, 1981, and includes the inscription, “I Have A Dream.” The original inscription read, “I Had A Dream,” but was eventually corrected. The monument is: “Dedicated to Dr. Martin L. King Jr. – Founder SCLC – Organized February 14, 1957, at New Zion Baptist Church – 2319 Third Street in New Orleans. Dr. King decided that the greatest homage he could pay to truth was to use it. He kept his fears to himself and shared his courage with others.”

#### **Others listed on the monument who gave their lives for freedom and equality:**

Medgar Evers - Malcolm X  
Rev. James L. Reeb - Mrs. Viola Gregg Liuzzo  
Jimmie Lee Jackson - Rev. George Lee  
Andrew Goodman – James Chaney  
Michael Schwerner

## THE PROBLEM WE ALL FACE



### **McDONOGH #19 SCHOOL MARKER 5909 St. Claude Avenue, Lower 9th Ward**

McDonogh #19 School (renamed Louis Armstrong) and William Frantz School were the first integrated elementary schools in the Deep South following Reconstruction. On the court-ordered first day of school desegregation in New Orleans, November 14, 1960, six-year-olds, Gail Etienne, Tessie Prevost and Leona Tate, registered at McDonogh #19.

At the same time, Ruby Nell Bridges entered the doors of William Frantz School. This incident was captured by Norman Rockwell in his famous painting, *The Problem We All Face* published in *Look Magazine*. It was quite a spectacle as four little children had to be ushered into school by federal marshals.



**MARTIN LUTHER KING MEMORIAL**  
**Oretha Castle Haley & MLK Blvds., Central City**  
**Frank Hayden – 1976**

This eight-foot-tall memorial to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was dedicated on August 6, 1976. The interior of the egg shape sculpture is inscribed with a passage from Dr. King's "I Have A Dream" speech. Hands and arms extend from both sides of the oval and reach across towards the center symbolizing Dr. King's lifelong quest to bring all people together to achieve peace and understanding.

*"Now is the time to make justice a reality  
for all of God's children."*  
**- Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.**





**MAHALIA JACKSON**  
**Louis Armstrong Park**  
**N. Rampart and St. Ann Streets, Tremé**  
**Elizabeth Catlett – 2010**



African American New Orleans

## **SATCHMO**



**LOUIS ARMSTRONG**  
**Louis Armstrong Park**  
**N. Rampart and St. Ann Streets, Tremé**  
**Elizabeth Catlett – 1976**

## African American New Orleans

Born in Back O'Town, Louis "Satchmo" Armstrong, 1901-1971, became the most influential jazz musician of the 20th century. His music career began at age twelve when he was sent to a waifs' home for firing a gun into the air on New Year's Eve. The home's bandleader taught him the cornet and how to read music. He eventually took lessons from another local musician, Joe "King" Oliver. While playing in London he acquired the name "Satchelmouth" and became known as "Satchmo."

This beautiful bronze statue was financed with donations from more than 1000 admirers from 26 countries. It was dedicated by Lucille Armstrong in 1980.



### **LOUIS ARMSTRONG PARK ENTRANCE N. Rampart and St. Ann Streets, Tremé**

Louis Armstrong Park was carved out a central portion of the Tremé neighborhood. The park is adjacent to Congo Square and together they form a large public space filled with jazz sculpture, bridges, gardens and fountains.

The New Orleans Jazz National Historical Park is also located inside Armstrong Park and has become ground zero for efforts to promote and preserve jazz history.

African American New Orleans

## **THE KING OF JAZZ**



**CHARLES "BUDDY" BOLDEN**  
**Louis Armstrong Park**  
**N. Rampart and St. Ann Streets, Tremé**  
**Kimberly Dummons – 2010**



**BLACK FEATHER BIG CHIEF LIONEL DELPIT  
Funeral Carriage - July 16, 2011**

**JAZZ FUNERALS**

This honorary funeral procession through the streets of New Orleans is generally reserved for deceased musicians, Indian Chiefs and other prominent residents of New Orleans.

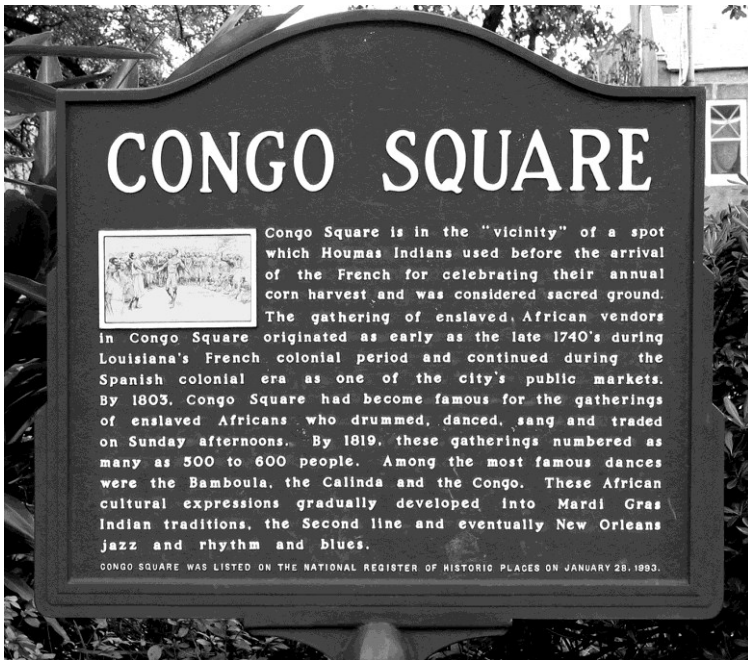
A grand marshal leads fellow musicians and mourners with a dirge. Following the burial, the music becomes more joyful and spirited. A “second line” traditionally follows with umbrellas and waving handkerchiefs. The Yoruba, according to John Scott, believed that if they bury you in the rain it is a sign that you lived a good life. This may explain the tradition of dancing and parading with umbrellas.

There is a saying that when someone dies in New Orleans you book a brass band - then you call the coroner!

*“In New Orleans, we’re born with music.  
We live with music. They bury you with music.”*

**- John Scott**

## CONGO SQUARE



### **CONGO SQUARE MARKER** **N. Rampart and St. Ann Streets, Tremé**

Congo Square, once called "Place de Negres," was one of the few areas in the South where slaves and free people of color were allowed to congregate in public prior to the Civil War. They gathered on Sundays to socialize, play music, dance and pass down their African traditions and rituals to the next generation. As many as 600 people would gather here to sing and dance. It is believed that the meeting of classically trained Creole musicians with slaves who sang a form of the blues led to the creation of that distinctly American phenomenon called jazz.

After the Civil War, Congo Square became a venue for rallies, funerals and other civil rights activities. The square now includes the Municipal Auditorium and sits adjacent to Louis Armstrong Park.

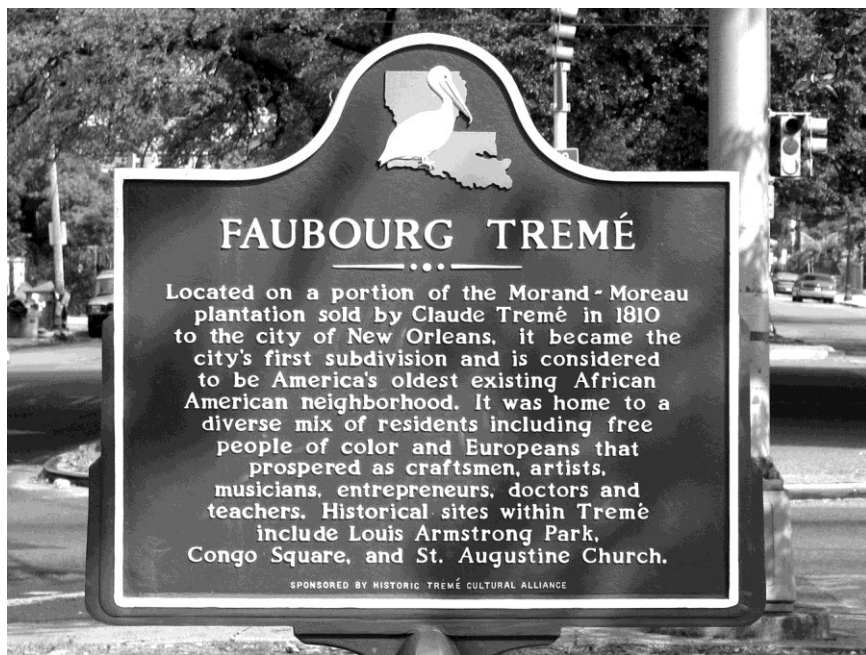


**HENRIETTE DELILLE MARKER**  
**6901 Chef Menteur Highway, New Orleans East**

Delille was born a free woman of color in New Orleans in 1812. She specialized in social work and education. She and fellow St. Augustine Church member, Juliette Gaudin, taught religion to slaves. Delille eventually helped build a home for sick, elderly and poor black residents of New Orleans.

This plaque, on the neutral ground in New Orleans East, marks the current location of the Sisters of the Holy Family.

*"I want to live and die for God."*  
**- Henriette Delille**



## **FAUBOURG TREMÉ**

Tremé is the oldest urban African American neighborhood in the country. Since the 1700s, former slaves and free people of color purchased property in this neighborhood. Tremé is the birthplace of many of New Orleans' most notable African American residents and continues to preserve the traditions of the local culture.

In the 1800s, Tremé was a prosperous, ethnically diverse community which included a thriving African American business district along Claiborne Avenue.

Tremé is home to many of the African American institutions and traditions listed in this book including Congo Square, second lines, The African American Museum, St. Augustine Church, Mardi Gras Indians, The Tomb of the Unknown Slave, jazz funerals, Armstrong Park, New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Foundation, Backstreet Cultural Museum and the Mahalia Jackson Performing Arts Center.



## African American New Orleans



### **MONUMENT TO KATRINA VICTIMS AND SURVIVORS**

**Tennessee St. & N. Claiborne Ave., Lower 9**

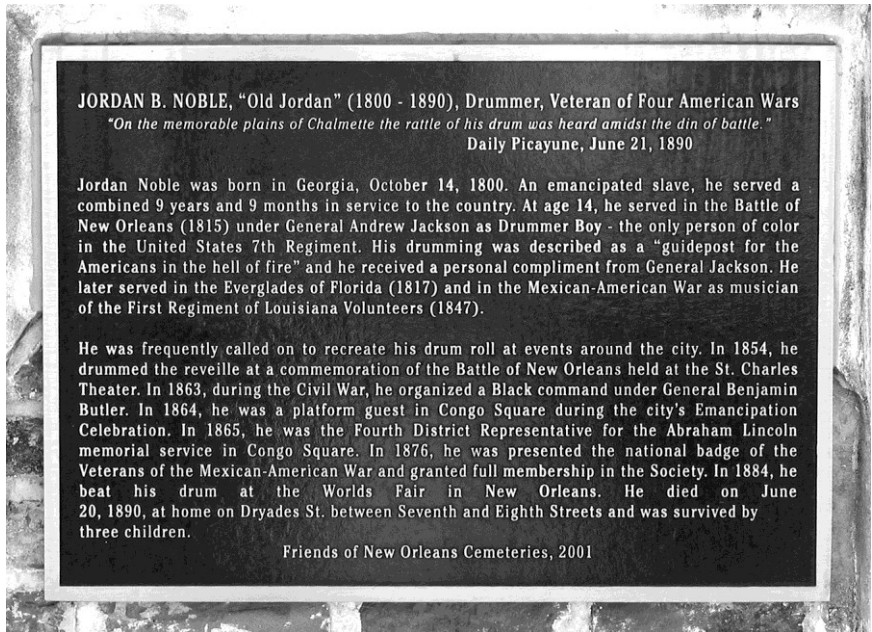
Rock and roll legend Fats Domino spent most of his life in the Lower 9. Kermit Ruffins grew up in the 9<sup>th</sup> Ward, as did poet Kalamu ya Salaam and Marshall Faulk.



### **FATS DOMINO'S HOUSE**

**Caffin Avenue and Marais Street, Lower 9**

## “GUIDEPOST ... IN THE HELL OF FIRE”



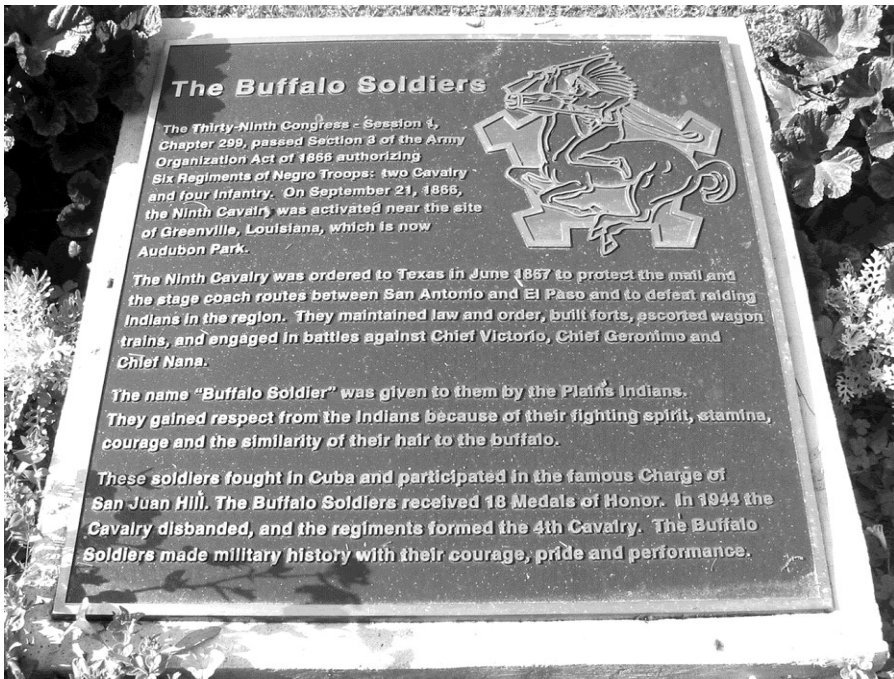
### “OLD JORDAN” NOBLE TOMB St. Louis Cemetery #2, Square #3 N. Claiborne Avenue at Bienville Street, Tremé

Jordan B. Noble, a 14-year-old emancipated slave, was responsible for drumming the long roll at the Battle of New Orleans. He was the only African American to serve in the 7<sup>th</sup> Regiment under the command of General Andrew Jackson.

Noble also served as principal musician during the Mexican War with the 1<sup>st</sup> Regiment, Louisiana Volunteers. He died in 1890, a veteran of four American wars. A drum owned by Noble is among other military artifacts on display at the Louisiana State Museum.

*“... the rattle of his drum was heard  
amidst the din of battle.”*  
- Daily Picayune, June 21, 1890

## WE CAN, WE WILL



### **BUFFALO SOLDIERS MARKER** **6700 St. Charles Avenue, Audubon Park**

On July 28, 1866, an act of Congress finally allowed African Americans to officially join the Regular Army. Congress permitted the creation of six regiments “composed of colored men.” On August 3, 1866, Major General Philip Sheridan was authorized to raise one regiment of colored men to be called the 9<sup>th</sup> Regiment of the United States Cavalry. The regiment was organized in New Orleans near what is now Audubon Park. They enlisted for five years at \$10-\$13 per month.

The regiment was eventually dubbed the “Buffalo Soldiers” by Native Americans who were impressed by their fighting skills. The regiment’s motto is, “We Can, We Will.”

Many of the Buffalo Soldiers are buried in the Chalmette National Cemetery adjacent to the Chalmette Battlefield.

African American New Orleans



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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Kevin J. Bozant was born in the Upper 9<sup>th</sup> Ward of New Orleans – as luck would have it – just a few blocks from Huerstel’s Bar and Little Pete’s Seafood Restaurant. He is a local author, photographer and digital graphic designer for his publishing company, Po-Boy Press – New Orleans.

His professional experience includes Warner Brothers, CW and ABC television affiliates in sales, marketing, promotional graphics and special events coordination. He eventually became senior graphic designer for the news, sports and weather departments. He was font operator for fifteen seasons of *Friday Night Football* as well as *Saints Sideline* with Ed Daniels. Kevin provided technical assistance on location shoots for *Real New Orleans* with Ronnie Virgets, *Crescent City Country* with Kim Carson, co-produced *New Orleans after Midnight* with Bernie Cyrus and developed and co-produced *The Southern Garden* for Vitascope Television. He also served as studio graphics manager and question writer for Brandon Tartikoff’s popular New Orleans trivia game show *N.O. It Alls*.

Kevin showcased his warped opinion of local politics and culture as writer and editor of the “Crescent City Crier” a political cartoon published by Gambit Weekly. He is author and editor of *Port & Burgundy 1840-1990: A Pictorial History* covering 150 years of St. Paul German Lutheran Church and Faubourg Marigny; *Quaint Essential New Orleans: A Crescent City Lexicon*; *African American New Orleans: a Guide to 100 Civil Rights, Culture and Jazz Sites*; *Crescent City Soldiers: Military Monuments of New Orleans* as well as *Music Street New Orleans: A Guide to 200 Jazz, Rock and Rhythm & Blues Sites*.

Kevin’s favorite cultural experience was serving as personal assistant to Dr. Momus Alexander Morgus for his Halloween appearances at the Audubon Zoo.