8. CONGO SQUARE. Armstrong Park. Congo Square is one of many names used over the years for the once-much-larger commons in front of the Municipal Auditorium. Its most legendary use was as a recreational area where slaves were allowed to perform African and Caribbean dances. It was also an area where Choctaw Indians played a Lacrosse-like game, military troops drilled, and circuses performed. When the original city was surrounded by fortifications, it was the site of Fort St. Ferdinand. Its other names over time were Place D'Arms, Place Publique, Circus Square, and Beauregard Square.

Statue in Armstrong Park

9. THE COMMEMORATIVE TREE GROVE. Armstrong Park. This was planted as a memorial to twelve jazz musicians including Jelly Roll Morton, King Oliver, and Leon Roppolo. This grove is tucked away in a seldom-visited quiet corner of the park near the former site of the turning basin for the old Carondelet Canal which connected the city to Bayou St. John and Lake Pontchartrain.

10. NORMA WALLACE'S HOUSE. 1026 Conti St. This brick structure was the site of the last operating house-of-prostitution in the once-thriving Tango Belt. The Tango Belt was the corner of the Vieux Carre bounded by and including Iberville, Dauphine, St. Louis, and Rampart Sts. Once an area of respectable theaters and cabarets, it quickly supported of the milder side of the "sporting life:" prize fighting, proto-jazz music, alcohol, and dance halls. When Storyville's future became uncertain, sub-rosa drugs and prostitution completed the picture here.

11. PETE HERMAN'S CLUB. 942 Conti St. Here was another Tango Belt fixture. It's many names over the years included the Ringside Cafe, the Plantation Club, and possibly the Orchard, and the Black Orchid. Herman, whose real name was Peter Gulotta, was twice the world bantamweight boxing champion, and for a time was married to Norma Wallace. For a while she operated her business in the rooms above the nightclub.

12. LULU WHITE'S SALOON. 237 Basin St. This is one of three remaining structures from Storyville, the legendary, legalized red-light district. Storyville was, much to his chagrin, "named" after Alderman Sidney Story, a straight-laced Victorian who devised the plan in order to restrict vice to one specified and regulated area. The legalized district lasted from 1897 to 1917, when Secretary of the Navy Josephus Daniels ordered it closed, claiming it posed a hazard to servicemen stationed in New Orleans. Lulu White was Storyville's most famous madame, and her elaborate Mahogany Hall stood to the immediate left of her corner saloon building, which lost its second floor during Hurricane Betsy in the 1960's.

Lulu White's saloon.
Photo Provided Courtesy of the Special Collections at the Howard Tilton Memorial Library at Tulane University.

13. "MY PLACE" SALOON. 1214 Bienville St. Frank Early's "My Place" Saloon is another of the three remaining Storyville structures (the third is Joe Victor's Saloon at St. Louis and Villere Sts.). The famous entertainer, composer, and pianist Tony Jackson lived above the saloon and composed his hit song Pretty Baby, while residing on the premises.

14. NEW ORLEANS ATHLETIC CLUB. 222 N. Rampart St. Originally the Young Men's Gymnastic Club, this has been a mainstay in athletic and musical circles for over a century. The members of both Tom Brown's Band From Dixie and the Original Dixieland Jazz Band played here before heading north. The Boswell Sisters were "discovered" while singing here and immediately signed to a tour on the Orpheum Circuit. The current imposing structure on N. Rampart St. with its stunning ballroom, is the newest of four structures in the complex. Designed by Diboll & Owen in 1929, it replaced a earlier mansion on the same site.

15. ALAMO DANCE HALL. 113 Burgundy St. The Alamo Dance Hall was a second-floor dance emporium which was entered from a side staircase on Burgundy St. on the edge of the Tango Belt. The dancehall space overlooked Canal St., and featured bands with many New Orleans musicians including guitarist and banjoist Danny Barker.

NUMBER TWO OF THE JAZZ HISTORY WALKING AND MOTOR TOUR SERIES
Sponsored by the New Orleans Jazz Commission

WE ENCOURAGE YOU TO USE GOOD JUDGEMENT AND COMMON SENSE IN TAKING THIS TOUR AS IT IS IN AN URBAN AREA.

NEW ORLEANS JAZZ COMMISSION