

# Big Easy Musicians

by Don Neal



It's nearly impossible to come up with a comprehensive list of all the talented musicians who have called New Orleans (a.k.a. the birthplace of jazz) home over the years. Natives and transplants have been drawn to its music scene of various genres for centuries. This one-page exhibit focuses on a select group of "Big Easy" musicians who have been honored on a stamp.



**Charles Joseph "Buddy" Bolden** (September 6, 1877 – November 4, 1931) was an American cornetist who was regarded by contemporaries as a key figure in the development of a New Orleans style of ragtime music, or "jass", which later came to be known as jazz.



Mentor to Louis Armstrong and pioneer of what would become known as the Harmon trumpet mute, **Joseph Nathan "King" Oliver** (December 19, 1881 – April 8/10, 1938) was a key figure in the first period of jazz history. His most significant ensemble, King Oliver's Creole Jazz Band, was a live sensation and also the

**Edward "Kid" Ory** (December 25, 1886 – January 23, 1973) was born to a Louisiana French-speaking family of Black Creole descent. He was an American jazz composer, trombonist, and bandleader. He was one of the early users of the glissando technique and helped establish it as a central element of New Orleans jazz.



**Dominic James "Nick" LaRocca** (April 11, 1889 – February 22, 1961), was an American early jazz cornetist and trumpeter and the leader of the Original Dixieland Jass Band, who is credited by some as being "the father of modern jazz". He is the composer of one of the most recorded jazz classics of all-time, "Tiger Rag."



Born Ferdinand Joseph La Menthe, "**Jelly Roll Morton**" (c. September 20, 1890 – July 10, 1941) was a composer, vocalist, pianist, and arranger. He made a permanent mark on the world of jazz music with compositions that include "Wolverine Blues," "Dead Man Blues," "Jelly Roll Blues," and "Harmony Blues."



**Sidney Joseph Bechet** (May 14, 1897 – May 14, 1959) was an American jazz saxophonist, clarinetist, and composer. He was one of the first important soloists in jazz, and first recorded several months before trumpeter Louis Armstrong. His erratic temperament hampered his career, and not until the late 1940s

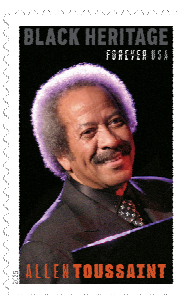
Even before he was a teenager, **Louis Armstrong** (August 4, 1901 – July 6, 1971) learned to play the trumpet and the cornet. His mentor was Joe "King" Oliver, and at the age of 17 he joined "Kid" Ory's New Orleans band. In 1925, Armstrong started recording with his own band.



**Louis Leo Prima** (December 7, 1910 – August 24, 1978) was an American trumpeter, singer, entertainer, and bandleader. While rooted in New Orleans jazz, swing music, and jump blues, Prima touched on various genres throughout his career.



**Mahalia Jackson** (October 26, 1911 – January 27, 1972), an American gospel singer, widely considered one of the most influential vocalists of the 20th century. With a career spanning 40 years, Jackson was integral to the development and spread of gospel blues in Black churches.



**Allen Richard Toussaint** (January 14, 1938 – November 10, 2015) was an American musician, songwriter, arranger, and record producer. He was an influential figure in New Orleans rhythm and blues from the 1950s to the end of the century, described as "one of popular music's great backroom figures."