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New Orleans swing dancers honor Lindy Hop pioneer Frankie Manning

Posted by [Keith I. Marszalek](#), NOLA.com April 28, 2009 9:39AM

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Before there was "Dancing with the Stars," "So you think you can Dance!," "Step it up and Dance" and yes, even that Gap commercial, there was Frankie Manning.

Manning, "The Ambassador of Lindy Hop," passed away early Monday morning at the age of 94, less than a month from his 95 birthday party.

Manning was an icon and vanguard of a dance he is credited with creating some 70 years ago, the "Lindy Hop."

During its peak popularity, the dance craze swept the nation and could be found from the Savoy Ballroom in Harlem, New York to Balboa Island in southern California. Its social dominance created a generation of dancers that set the tone for movies, music and pop culture for nearly thirty years.


Over the past decade, Manning had traveled the globe, sharing his love of music and dance with a new generation of swing dancers. He had visited New Orleans a handful of times since the dance's resurgence, conducting weekend long workshops with fellow Savoy Ballroom dancer Norma Miller and Jazz historian Ernie Smith as part of Tulane University's annual summer dance program.

Monday night, local swing dancers, musicians and friends of Frankie Manning joined a nation wide moment of remembrance for their mentor by holding a traditional New Orleans second line through the Marigny.




Keith I. Marszalek / NOLA.com
Peter Loggins and Amy Johnson hold up a sign remembering Lindy Hop pioneer Frankie Manning who passed away Monday, April 27, 2009.


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The parade started at the "R" Bar on Royal street, headed down to Frenchmen Street, (a popular hangout for dancers who are often seen swining-out to the traditional Jazz sounds of The Loose Marbles and New Orleans Jazz Vipers) and then returned to the "R" Bar for a night of dancing in the street.

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Posted by **jindyhopr** on [04/28/09 at 11:05AM](#)

This was very well done. Thank you Keith and Amy!

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Posted by **feeltheswing** on [04/28/09 at 6:14PM](#)

Thanks for the fine article and the celebration pictures. Keep swingin'!

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Posted by **feeltheswing** on [04/28/09 at 6:16PM](#)

Thanks for the fine article and the celebration pictures. Keep swingin'!

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Posted by **feeltheswing** on [04/28/09 at 6:16PM](#)

Thanks for the fine article and the celebration pictures. Keep swingin'!

Inappropriate? [Alert us.](#) [Post a comment](#)

Posted by **jfswing** on [04/28/09 at 6:27PM](#)

Good article and great pictures. What a nice way to say farewell to

Frankie Manning. Thanks to Amy for organizing this second line and to the Loose Marbles for the music.

Glad to be in that neighborhood and of course, Keep swingin'!

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Posted by **wowster** on [04/28/09 at 10:00PM](#)

The street dancers are bringing the JOY of jazz back to New Orleans.

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Posted by **sfindyhop** on [04/29/09 at 2:05AM](#)

What a great tribute and beautiful pictures! What a legend Frankie Manning was. He will be so sadly missed by all.

We are San Francisco lindy hoppers coming this weekend for the Jazzfest and we can't wait! We are wondering where do the lindy hoppers hang out during Jazzfest? Would love to meet up with some. We came to the Jazzfest 8 years ago and danced with Keith - if he still remembers!!!

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Posted by **jfswing** on [04/29/09 at 5:40AM](#)

The Economy Tent, where they play traditional jazz and have a dance floor, is usually a good bet to find lindy hoppers at Jazz Fest.

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