



Extra Special Supplement
to the Great R&B Files 2020
The R&B Pioneers Series
















edited by Claus Röhnisch

Is this the Top Ten "Super Chart" of R&B Hits?

Ranking decisions based on information from Big Al Pavlow's, Joel Whitburn's, and Bill Daniels' popularity R&B Charts from the time of their original release, and the editor's (of this work) studies of the songs' capabilities to "hold" in quality, to endure the test of time, and have "improved" to become "classic representatives" of the era (you sure may have your own thoughts about this, but take it as some kind of subjective opinion - with a serious try of objectivity). *Note: Songs listed in order of issue date, not in ranking order.*

Host: Roy Brown - "Good Rocking Tonight" (DeLuxe) 1947 (youtube links)

| | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| <p>1943</p> <p>1.</p> | <p>Don't Cry, Baby (Bluebird) - Erskine Hawkins and his Orchestra <i>Vocal refrain by Jimmy Mitchell (sic)</i></p>    <p>Written by Saul Bernie, James P. Johnson and Stella Unger (sometimes listed as by Erskine Hawkins or Jimmy Mitchell with arranger Sammy Lowe). Originally recorded by Bessie Smith in 1929. Jimmy Mitchell actually was named Mitchelle and was Hawkins' alto sax player. Brothers Paul (tenorsax) and Dud Bascomb (trumpet) played with Hawkins on this. A relaxed piano gives extra smoothness to it. Erskine was a very successful bandleader and played trumpet.</p> <p>Hawkins was born in Birmingham, Alabama. Savoy Ballroom "resident" in New York for many years. Song recorded in April, 1942 in New York City. Entered July 31, 1943 - spent 14w at #1 from August 14 on Harlem Hit Parade chart (29w total), Pop #11.</p> |
| <p>1946</p> <p>2.</p> | <p>Choo Choo Ch` Boogie (Decca) - Louis Jordan And His Tympany Five</p>    <p>Written by Vaughn Horton, Denver Darling and producer Milton Gable. Featuring fr.l. Eddie Byrd, dms; Aaron Izenhall, tp; new seventh member of the group Carl Hogan ("T6"), elgtr; Wild Bill Davis, pno; Louis Jordan, vcl/as; Po Simkins, b; and John Jackson, ts; This was even bigger than his 1945 hit of "Caldonia" - a sextet with Jordan accompanied by Idrees Sulliman, tp; Freddie Simon, ts; William Austin, pno; Al Morgan, b; and Alex Mitchell, dms.</p> <p>Jordan was born in Brinkley, Arkansas, Superstar in New York. Song recorded on January 23, 1946 in New York City. Entered August 17, 1946 - spent 18w at #1 from August 24 on Juke Box Race Records chart (26w total), Pop #7.</p> |
| <p>1949</p> <p>3.</p> | <p>Trouble Blues (Aladdin) - Charles Brown Trio</p>    <p>Written by Charles Brown, who sings and plays the piano with Charles "Chuck" Norris, gtr; and Eddie Williams, bass. This was one of the first recordings by Brown after leaving Johnny Moore's Three Blazers. His vocals with them included another big seller, "Driftin' Blues" of 1946, with Johnny Otis as featured "guest" on drums.</p> <p>Brown was born in Texas City, Texas. Worked in California clubs (<i>the second Nat "King" Cole</i>). Song recorded on January 14, 1949 in Los Angeles. Entered April 23, 1949 - spent 15w at #1 from June 4 on Best Selling Retail Race Records chart (27w total) (changed to Best Selling Retail Rhythm & Blues Records chart on June 25).</p> |
| <p>1950</p> <p>4.</p> | <p>Double Crossing Blues (Savoy) - Johnny Otis Quintette - <i>Vocals By The Robins And Little Esther</i></p>     <p>Written by Johnny Otis with "inspiration" from Jessie Mae Robinson. The Quintet was Otis on vibes, Devonia Williams, pno; Pete "Guitar" Lewis, gtr; Mario Delagarde, bs; and Leard Bell, dms. The Robins were Bobby Nunn, lead bass (center in group image) w. "Ty" Terrell Leonard, and Billy and Roy Richard. Little Esther Jones (later Phillips) was to be 14 on Dec 23, 1949. Producer: Ralph Bass. Esther was born in Galveston, Texas. The Robins were formed in Watts, Los Angeles in early 1949.</p> <p>Otis was born in Vallejo, California by Greek parents. "Godfather of R&B". Song recorded on December 1, 1949 in Los Angeles. Entered Febr 4, 1950 - spent 9w at #1 from March 4 on Best Selling Retail Rhythm & Blues Records chart (22w total).</p> |

Top Ten "Super Chart" of R&B Hits? - pt.2

1951

Sixty-Minute Man (Federal) - The Dominoes

5.



Written by coach/arr Billy Ward (from Georgia, raised in Philadelphia) and manager/agent Rose Marks. Top fr.l. Joe Lamont, baritone and co-founder; Billy Ward, founder, arranger and pianist; Bill Brown, bass singer (lead on this); center bottom Clyde McPhatter, high tenor and intro; and Charlie White, tenor. Producer: Ralph Bass. McPhatter had already sung lead on "Do Something For Me" on the groups' debut, and had a great 1952 lead with them on "Have Mercy Baby" in January 1952 (when James Van Loan had succeeded White). Soon also Brown left to join Charlie White's new group the Checkers, with David McNeil new bass in the Dominoes.

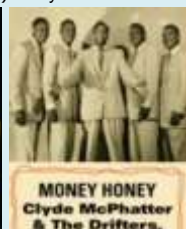
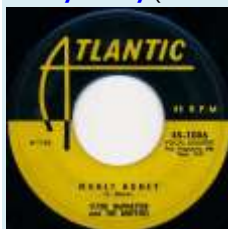
The group was formed by Billy Ward in New York in 1950 and ended their career in Las Vegas.

Song recorded on December 30, 1950 in New York City. From late 1952 the group was billed Billy Ward and His Dominoes. Entered May 26, 1951 - spent 14w at #1 from June 30 on Best Selling Retail Rhythm & Blues Records chart (30 w total), Pop #17.

1953

Money Honey (Atlantic) - Clyde McPhatter and The Drifters

6.



Written by arranger Jesse Stone. Clyde on top (lead singer) w. fr.l. Bill Pinkney, Gerhart Thrasher, Willie Ferbie (bass singer, who died shortly after this), and Andrew Thrasher. Featuring Stone or poss. Harry Van Walls, pno; Mickey Baker, gtr; and Sam Taylor, tenorsax. Producers: Ahmet Ertegun and Jerry Wexler. Clyde born in Durham, North Carolina.

Group formed by Clyde in New York in 1953 and soon managed by George Treadwell for many years.

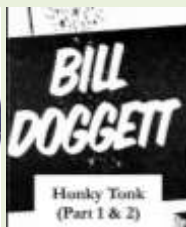
Song recorded on August 9, 1953 in New York City.

Entered Oct 31, 1953 - spent 11w at #1 Nov 21 - Jan 30, 1954 on Rhythm & Blues National Best Sellers chart (21w total).

1956

Honky Tonk (Part 1 and Part 2) (King) - Bill Doggett

7.



Written by Doggett-Shepherd-Butler-Scott. Produced by Henry Glover, who later wrote lyrics to this. Bill Doggett's Combo were Doggett on organ (bottom right) w. fr.l. Carl Pruitt, bs; Clifford Scott, tenorsax, Shep Shepherd, dms; and Billy Butler, gtr. Part 1 had a great feature from Scott and Part 2 from Butler. Both sides were credited on the charts.

Doggett was born in Philadelphia, Pa. Arranger for many famous jazz/blues/R&B superstars from 1938.

Instrumental recorded on June 16, 1956 in New York City.

Entered Aug 18, 1956 - spent 13w at #1 from Aug 25 on R&B Best Sellers in Stores chart (28w total), Pop #2.

1957

Searchin' (Atco) - The Coasters

8.



Written and produced by Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller. Eng: Abe "Bunny" Robyn. Manager: Lester Sill. The group on this recording were fr.l. Carl Gardner (leader of the group and tenor); Billy Guy (lead singer here & baritone); Bobby Nunn (bass); and Young Jessie (subbing for Leon Hughes, who is the one in the photo), plus Adolph Jacobs on gtr. Featured musicians: Stoller; pno; Barney Kessel, gtr; Ralph Hamilton, bs; Jessie Scales, dms; and Joe Oliveira, perc (plus poss Chico Guerrero, cga). Both sides of the single were listed as hits. Both Gardner and Guy were born in Texas.

Group formed by Carl Gardner, Leiber-Stoller & Lester Sill in Los Angeles October 12, 1955. Moved to New York in early 1958, and recorded the classic "Yakety Yak" in March with Will "Dub" Jones and Cornell Gunter replacing Nunn and Hughes.

Song recorded on February 15, 1957 in Los Angeles. The flip "Young Blood" (Carl Gardner, lead - rec same day or poss Febr 12).

Entered May 13 (flip May 6) - spent 13w total at #1 (incl first week with "Young Blood" listed as A-side) from June 3 on R&B Best Sellers in Stores chart (21w total), "Searchin'" Pop #3, "Young Blood" Pop #8.

Top Ten "Super Chart" of R&B Hits? - pt.3

1959

9.

Lonely Teardrops (Brunswick) – Jackie Wilson Chorus & Orchestra Directed by Dick Jacobs



Written by Berry Gordy Jr, Tyron Carlo (aka Roquel Billy Davis), and Gwendolyn Gordy. Producers: Nat Tarnopol and arranger Dick Jacobs. Featured on guitar: Dave Hamilton. This was the hit that generated the money for Gordy to start his Detroit empire. Wilson never joined Motown Records, due to his "hard" contract with Tarnopol.

Wilson was born in Detroit. Started his career around 1951 and joined the Dominoes in 1953.

Went solo in 1957. Worked in Detroit, New York City, and later Chicago.

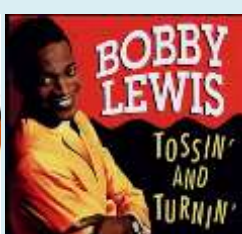
Song recorded on October 5, 1958 in New York City.

Entered Nov 11, 1958 – spent 7w at #1 Dec 15 - Jan 26, 1959 on Hot R&B Sides chart (22w total), Pop #7.

1961

10.

Tossin' And Turnin' (Beltone) – Bobby Lewis Orchestra Conducted by Joe Rene



Written by Ritchie Adams and Malou Rene. The record was distributed by King Records. Produced at Beltone Studios (went bust in 1963). Musicians: King Curtis, tenorsax mouthpiece; Haywood Henry, baritonesax; Paul Griffin, pno; Ritchie Adams and Eric Gale, gtrs; Bob Bushnell, bsg; Sticks Evans, dms; and a girl chorus. Lewis was a friend of Jackie Wilson's, and shortly also managed by Nat Tarnopol.

Lewis was born in Indianapolis, moved to Detroit and later New York.

Song recorded late 1960 in New York City (prob issued ca February 1961 or poss December 1960).

Entered May 29, 1961 – spent 10w at #1 from July 3 on Hot R&B Sides chart (19w total), Pop #1 for 7w.

THE SUPER CHART of R&B HITS

Are you a DJ? -

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The History of Rhythm & Blues -

"From Roy Brown to James Brown"

Check pages 24-27 for a further 23 "Super Chart" R&B Hits!

Plus 3 bonus tracks (All 36 with youtube links)





The Atlantic Records Story

By David Edwards and Mike Callahan

Last update: February 20, 2000 [from Both Sides Now](#) (slightly edited)

Atlantic was formed in October 1947 by Ahmet Ertegun and Herb Abramson in New York City. Atco and Cotillion were subsidiary labels and Clarion was a budget label. Atlantic recorded rhythm and blues, jazz, blues, country and western, rock and roll, gospel, and comedy.

Ahmet Ertegun was born in 1923 in Turkey, and came to the United States at the age of 11 when his father was appointed the Turkish Ambassador to the United States. Ahmet fell in love with the United States, particularly the music. He and his older brother Nesuhi (born 1918) collected over 15,000 jazz and blues 78s. Ahmet went to St. Johns College to study philosophy, and did post graduate work at Georgetown in Washington, DC. During this period, Ahmet and Nesuhi hired halls and staged concerts by Lester Young, Sidney Bechet and other jazz giants. When Ahmet's father died in 1944, his mother and sister returned to Turkey, and Nesuhi went to California. Ahmet stayed in Washington and hung around the Waxie Maxie (Max Silverman's) Quality Music Shop to learn as much as he could about the record business. Ahmet had an aspiration to make records.

Herb Abramson was born in 1917, went to high school in Brooklyn, and was also a jazz and blues record collector. During World War II he promoted jazz concerts, some of them in association with the Ertegun brothers. In 1944, he became a part time record producer for National Records while attending New York University, where he was studying to become a dentist. Because of his jazz background, Herb started producing artists like Joe Turner and Pete Johnson. He signed Billy Eckstine to the National label and produced two big hits, "Prisoner of Love" and "Cottage for Sale" with him. He also produced a big hit with black comedian Dusty Fletcher called "Open the Door Richard". After a couple of years with National, in May, 1946, Abramson started the Jubilee Record label. Shortly afterwards, Jerry Blaine was brought into Jubilee as a partner. The original intention was to record jazz and gospel music, and Abramson did produce one record by gospel singer Ernestine Washington, but Jerry Blaine started making very successful Jewish comedy records which were of no interest to Herb. He asked Blaine to buy him out in September, 1947.

When Ahmet Ertegun decided to go into the record business, he knew he needed to collaborate with someone with a solid background in record production. He thought of Herb Abramson. Ahmet went to New York and stayed with Herb and his wife Miriam. In October, 1947, Ahmet and Herb formed Atlantic Records with financial backing from a Turkish Dentist, Dr. Vahdi Sabit. Herb Abramson was President and Ahmet Ertegun was Vice President of the new company.

From the beginning, Atlantic was different from other independent record companies. Their financier/dentist did not put pressure on them for immediate return on his investment, so Herb and Ahmet were free to make decisions based on their own good musical judgment. They did not cheat performers, as many of the other independent labels did. They gained a reputation for being honest, and that reputation as much as anything was the foundation for the success of the company. Many talented performers were willing to sign long term contracts with Atlantic because they believed that their royalties would be paid. Atlantic's business practices allowed them to hire the best musicians in the business. When it was industry practice to pay royalties below 2 percent -- or in the case of many black artists, no royalties at all -- Atlantic was paying 3 to 5 percent.

The early Atlantic roster was eclectic, to say the least. It included Stan Kenton band members Art Pepper, Shelly Manne, and Pete Rugolo, guitarist Tiny Grimes, vocal groups such as the Delta Rhythm Boys, the Clovers, and the Cardinals, rhythm and blues singers Ruth Brown, Stick McGhee and Joe Turner, pianists Erroll Garner and Mal Waldron, progressive jazz artists Howard McGhee, James Moody and Dizzy Gillespie, jazz singers Jackie & Roy and Sarah Vaughan, blues singers Leadbelly and Sonny Terry, and café society singers Mabel Mercer, Sylvia Syms and Bobby Short. In spite of this impressive roster, Atlantic was getting most of its revenue from the rhythm and blues recordings by Joe Turner (e.g., "Chains of Love," "Honey Hush," "TV Mama") and Ruth Brown (e.g., "So Long," "Teardrops From My Eyes," "I'll Wait for You").

Atlantic was among the first to record Professor Longhair, the legendary piano player from New Orleans. One of the songs "Fess" recorded at his first Atlantic session was "Mardi Gras in New Orleans" which has since become the theme song for the Mardi Gras. On February 17, 1949, Atlantic released "Drinkin' Wine Spo-Dee-O-Dee" by Stick McGhee, a blues novelty number that became a big hit. This was followed in October, 1950, by Laurie Tate and Joe Morris' #1 R&B record of "Anytime, Anyplace, Anywhere". In 1951, Ahmet wrote "Don't You Know I Love You" for the Clovers and it also was a #1 R&B hit. Ruth Brown notched their third #1 R&B hit with "5-10-15 Hours" in 1952.

Atlantic entered the 33 1/3 rpm long play record business very early, issuing it's first album in March of 1949. Ahmet was well aware that a rhythm and blues album had little chance of success, since 78 rpm records dominated that genre. So even though Atlantic was successful with rhythm and blues recordings, their first foray into the album market was with a poetry album, Walter Benton's *This Is My Beloved*. John Dall provided the narration and Vernon Duke provided the background music. This 10-inch album carried the number 110 which stood for "one 10-inch disc." The matrix numbers on this disc were TLP 11213/11214. The same material was released simultaneously as three 12-inch 78 rpm discs with the catalog number 312-S. The 312 stood for "three 12 inch discs," and the "S" stood for standard speed which at that time was 78 rpm. The individual 78 rpm records were numbered 1201, 1202, and 1203. Atlantic rather quickly dropped this unwieldy numbering system and issued their second and third LPs in May, 1950, as ALS-108 by Joe Bushkin and ALS-109 by Erroll Garner. The first 12 inch LP issued by Atlantic (January, 1951) was ALS-401 which was a recording of scenes from Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet" performed by Eva LaGallienne and Richard Waring.

Prior to 1953, Atlantic was basically a three person operation. Herb Abramson was President, Ahmet Ertegun was a Vice President, and Herb's wife Miriam was a Vice President who kept the accounts, paid the bills, and managed the office. Herb Abramson was drafted into the Army in 1953, and although he was away from Atlantic, he stayed on full salary and kept his title as President of the company. With the pending loss of Herb, Atlantic required additional help. Herb and Ahmet brought Jerry Wexler into the company.

Jerry Wexler was born in New York City in 1917. Wexler became interested in black music and started frequenting the jazz nightclubs in Harlem. In 1941, he was drafted into the US Army. During his time in the Army, Wexler started taking correspondence courses from Kansas University, and after his discharge he went to the University full time to obtain a Journalism degree. While at Kansas University, he started writing for the school paper. After obtaining his degree, he and his wife went back to New York City where he got a job at the *Billboard* magazine, a music trade publication. Writing for *Billboard*, Wexler introduced the term "Rhythm and Blues" as a replacement for the term "Race Music" in referring to black music. Through his work at *Billboard*, Wexler came in contact with Ahmet Ertegun, who asked him to come to work for Atlantic as a producer. Wexler was made a Vice President of Atlantic, and as part of the deal allowed to purchase 13 percent of the company for \$2,063.25. The instruction Ahmet gave Wexler was to produce rhythm and blues music specifically for sale to the black population. Initially, Ahmet had no illusions about crossover hits.

During that same year, Ahmet Ertegun went to the Birdland nightclub to see Billy Ward and the Dominoes, mostly to hear Ward's lead singer Clyde McPhatter. When the Dominoes performed, Clyde McPhatter was missing so Ahmet went backstage to find out where he was. Billy Ward informed him that he had fired McPhatter for breaking group rules. Ahmet left to find McPhatter, and an hour later he located McPhatter in a rented room in Harlem rehearsing a new group. Ertegun signed Clyde McPhatter and his new group, which Ahmet named the Drifters. The Drifters debut release was a song written by Jesse Stone called "Money Honey," and it was huge success in February, 1953. The Drifters -- with many personal changes -- had hits for the next thirteen years on Atlantic.

During the period between 1953 and 1955, a new musical trend developed that had a major impact on Atlantic Records. Pop singers began covering R&B records for the pop market. The pop singers tried to copy the R&B singers, but they sang the songs in a smoother, less soulful manner than the original singers. In fact, the first artist Jerry Wexler produced, LaVern Baker, had a #14 R&B hit with "Tweedlee Dee," but the cover version by white singer Georgia Gibbs went to #2 on the pop charts. Another record produced by Wexler and Ahmet Ertegun did the same thing; "Sh-Boom" by the Chords was a big hit on the R&B charts, but it was copied by a Canadian group, the Crew-Cuts, on Mercury Records, and their version buried the Chords' original. The experience with these two records and several others led Ahmet and Jerry to reach the conclusion that it would be possible to expand their market from just the black population, appealing to the young white population who were increasingly buying rhythm and blues based records. This new style was eventually called Rock and Roll.

In May of 1954, Atlantic released the landmark "Shake, Rattle and Roll" by Big Joe Turner. The song was written by Charles Calhoun (a.k.a. Jesse Stone). "Shake, Rattle and Roll" was a big R&B hit and was covered by the then-country group Bill Haley and the Comets. The suggestive lyrics of the song were changed by Haley for the white market, although the most risqué line in the song, "I'm like a one-eyed cat peeping in a sea food store" wasn't changed because Haley didn't know what the line meant. "Shake, Rattle and Roll" by Haley was the big pop hit that really kicked off the Rock and Roll era.

Ray Charles was signed to Atlantic Records in 1952, and his first record was titled "Roll With My Baby". He managed several minor R&B hits in the next two years, but his style was basically derivative of Charles Brown and Nat King Cole. The breakthrough for both Ray Charles and Atlantic occurred in November of 1954. Jerry Wexler went to Atlanta to hear a new band Charles had formed, and upon hearing them, Wexler immediately took the band to the Georgia Tech radio station to record "I've Got a Woman." This was the start of the Ray Charles gospel style, and "I've Got a Woman" became the first Ray Charles smash hit. Charles had applied R&B lyrics to sixteen-bar gospel chord progressions, which was a radical departure from the twelve-bar blues-based structure of the black music of the day. "I've Got a Woman" is considered by some to be the birth of Soul Music.

When Sam Phillips at Sun Records decided to sell Elvis Presley's contract in 1955, Atlantic entered into the bidding for him. Atlantic bid \$30,000, but was outbid by RCA Victor who paid \$40,000. Wexler loved Presley's singing and bid aggressively, although he later admitted he didn't know how Atlantic could have raised the \$30,000 if their offer had been accepted. It's interesting to speculate what would have happened to Presley's career if he had gone to Atlantic, with the great R&B musicians at the Atlantic studios and sympathetic production by Wexler. Perhaps Presley's performances would not have sunk to the mediocre level they did in the 1960s.

In 1955, Nesuhi Ertegun, who was still in California, mentioned in a phone call to Ahmet that he was going to work for the Los Angeles based Imperial Records. He was to head up a jazz record line and develop a catalog of LPs. Imperial was Atlantic's biggest competitor, and had an established talent roster. Hiring Nesuhi, who was well known as an expert in the jazz field, would make Imperial even stronger. The two brothers had not been close for many years, but when Nesuhi told him he was going to join Imperial, Ahmet became very upset. Ahmet and Wexler immediately went to California to talk Nesuhi out of joining Imperial, insisting that he join Atlantic. All of the existing partners kicked in stock, and Nesuhi Ertegun was made a partner and came to work for Atlantic.

The Great R&B Pioneers

Nesuhi Ertegun was put in charge of the development of the Atlantic jazz catalog and given responsibility for all long playing albums. By 1955, LP sales were starting to gain momentum. Customers wanted better quality recordings, and the major record companies were supplying the demand. The independent companies were having trouble entering the LP market because it required a large investment. Anyone who looks at an Atlantic album from the late fifties can see the results of Nesuhi's work. An Atlantic album's quality was even better than the majors, and a far cry from the cheap albums issued by the other independents. Atlantic album covers were constructed of heavy white cardboard, were coated with glossy plastic to resist stains and dirt, had well written liner notes with recording information. Most of the records had fourteen songs instead of the standard twelve, and were pressed on thick quality vinyl. The albums just projected "class". Nesuhi also brought to Atlantic many of the West Coast jazz artists he had seen in California, including Shorty Rogers, Jimmy Giuffrè, Herbie Mann and Les McCann. Nesuhi's most important contribution was championing and producing the Modern Jazz Quartet; the MJQ recorded twenty albums for Atlantic and was the backbone of their jazz catalog.

Soon after Nesuhi took over the album catalog, he deleted the 100 and 400 series of 10-inch albums, because the 12-inch format was becoming the standard. He also deleted the early 12-inch albums in Atlantic's catalog. Nesuhi started the new Atlantic long play catalog with album 1212. This 1200 album series carried a \$4.98 list price, and at first the series contained both jazz and R&B albums. In 1956, a new 8000 popular series was started with a list price of \$3.98. The few rhythm and blues albums in the 1200 series were reissued in the 8000 series, and the 1200 series became exclusively a jazz series.

For the two years Herb Abramson was away in the Army, Atlantic had enjoyed unprecedented success. In 1955, when he was discharged from the Army, he found a lot of changes at the Atlantic office. Nesuhi was overseeing the jazz catalog. Jerry Wexler had taken Herb's production seat and his success meant he would be staying. Also straining relations in the office was the fact that Herb's marriage to Miriam was over. In order to maintain peace it was decided that a new subsidiary named Atco (ATlantic COmpany) would be established for Herb Abramson to run.

In November 1955, Atlantic acquired the Spark Record Company of Los Angeles. The owners of the Spark Record Company were Lester Sill, Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller. Leiber and Stoller, two young white songwriter/record producers were also the principle assets of the company along with a black vocal group named the Robins. Nesuhi had become aware of Leiber and Stoller while living in California and brought them to the attention of Jerry and Ahmet. Although both were in their early twenties, Leiber and Stoller had written many R&B songs including "Kansas City" (as K.C.Lovin') for Little Willie Littlefield, "Hound Dog" for Big Mama Thornton and a hit song for the Robins called "Smokey Joe's Cafe".

Two of the members of the Robins, Carl Gardner and Bobby Nunn, left the group with Leiber and Stoller to join Atlantic as the foundation of a new group called the Coasters (for West Coasters). The Coasters, with Leiber and Stoller writing and producing, had unprecedented success for Atco in the period from 1956 to 1961 with "Young Blood", "Searchin'", and with the move to New York "Yakety Yak", "Charlie Brown", "Along Came Jones", "Poison Ivy," "Little Egypt," and others. Each of the Coasters hits were humorous mini-soap-operas.

By 1957, recording technology had reached the point that stereo tape had been available for years, and it was only a matter of months before stereo on vinyl was a reality. Atlantic was one of the first independents to record in stereo, using a portable stereo machine to record multitrack tapes at the same time the mono recordings were being made. Some of the early stereo hits were "Lover's Question" by Clyde McPhatter, "What Am I Living For" by Chuck Willis, "I Cried a Tear" by LaVern Baker, "Splish Splash" by Bobby Darin, "Yakety Yak" by the Coasters, "What'd I Say" by Ray Charles, along with many others. The stereo versions of these hits, for the most part, remained unreleased until 1968, when a fabulous stereo album called *History of Rhythm and Blues, Volume 4* [Atlantic SD-8164] unveiled them for the first time.

Leiber and Stoller operated as independent producers for Atlantic, so they were free to make made records for other labels in addition to Atlantic. But they probably had their greatest success on Atlantic. In addition to the Coasters, they wrote and produced songs for LaVern Baker, Ruth Brown, Clyde McPhatter, Ben E. King, and the Drifters. In 1959, Leiber and Stoller were the first to apply strings to an R&B record when they produced "There Goes My Baby" with the Drifters. Ahmet Ertegun didn't like it, and Jerry Wexler called it "dogmeat." There was little to like upon hearing it cold. The tempo was odd, the backup singers sounded off key, and it was recorded in mono in a less-than-wonderful studio. Somehow, the song grew on you, and when they finally relented to Leiber and Stoller's pressure and released it in April, 1959, it shot to #1 and was one of the biggest hits in Atlantic history.

Herb Abramson signed Bobby Darin to the Atco label and produced several songs that had little success. He was on the verge of dropping him when Darin approached Ahmet Ertegun and asked to record a song he had written that Herb refused to use. Ahmet agreed, and Darin had an immediate smash hit with "Splish Splash." Bobby Darin was the first pop act for Atlantic Records. When Darin recorded the Sinatra-styled "Mack the Knife" and "Beyond the Sea" and both became big hits, Darin moved from his teen idol status to a mainstream pop singing star.

Atco proved to be a profitable venture with the Coasters and Bobby Darin as artists, but even the establishment of the Atco label failed to solve the problems between Herb Abramson and Ahmet. The last straw came when the partners decided to replace Abramson as President of Atlantic with Ahmet Ertegun. This precipitated a walkout by Herb, and after protracted negotiations, his ownership share in Atlantic was bought out in December, 1958, for \$300,000. Shortly thereafter, the stock owned by Miriam Bienstock (formerly Abramson) and the silent partner Dr. Sabit was purchased, leaving Atlantic with just three owners, Ahmet Ertegun, Jerry Wexler and Nesuhi Ertegun.

After leaving Atlantic, Herb Abramson started a short lived label called Triumph with a subsidiary label Blaze that issued a few singles in 1958 and 1959. Abramson released the first Gene Pitney record in 1958 (using the name Billy Bryan) "Going Back to My Love/Cradle of My Arms" (Blaze 351). In 1960, he started the Festival label, which issued one album by comedians Butterbeans

and Susie, distributed by King Records. During the 1960s and '70s Herb owned the A-1 Recording Studio, where he produced Titus Turner, Tommy Tucker, Otis Blackwell and Louisiana Red, releasing the recordings through other record labels. His biggest success came in 1963 with his production of "Hi-Heel Sneakers" by Tommy Tucker, which Abramson leased to Checker Records. It reached # 11 on the R&B list. By the 1980s, Abramson had relocated to California and was living in poverty, but he was still dabbling in the recording business, hoping for one more hit record. Herb Abramson died in Henderson, Nevada on November 9, 1999, at the age of 82.

During the late 1950s, with the success of the Drifters, Clyde McPhatter, Joe Turner, LaVern Baker, Ruth Brown, Ray Charles, and the Coasters, Atlantic became a success in the crossover record market. The young white record buyers were no longer content to purchase the cover records of R&B hits, they wanted the real thing. And Atlantic provided it.

The future "Wall of Sound" producer Phil Spector worked for Atlantic in 1960 and 1961. Spector was producing records in California for Lester Sill and Lee Hazlewood on their Atlantic-distributed Trey label. When Spector became restless with the limitations of the West Coast recording scene, he asked Lester Sill for an introduction to his former associates at Spark Records, Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller. In May, 1960, Spector moved to New York to work for Leiber and Stoller. Initially, they used Spector as a session guitarist on Atlantic singles by the Coasters, Ben E. King and the Drifters. Later, Spector's guitar solo was heard on the Drifters' "On Broadway". Leiber and Stoller then assigned Spector to produce Ray Peterson's "Corrine, Corrina" and Curtis Lee's "Pretty Little Angle Eyes" on the Dunes label, and both were big hits. Atlantic took note of Spector's work and signed him as a staff producer. He produced a group called the Top Notes with the original version of "Twist and Shout," although "Twist and Shout" was one of Spector's glaring failures. The record stiffed, and Bert Berns, the song's writer, was incensed when he heard it. Berns felt Spector had ruined his song, and went out to show Spector how the song should be done. Berns recorded the Isley Brothers doing it the way he thought it should sound, and it was a huge hit. Spector also produced Jean DuShon, Billy Storm, LaVern Baker and Ruth Brown during his short stay at Atlantic, to moderate success at best. Spector left Atlantic in 1961 to form Philles Records with ex-boss Lester Sill.

In 1960, a Memphis pressing plant operator named Buster Williams contacted Wexler and told him he was pressing enormous quantities of the record "Cause I Love You", a duet between Carla Thomas and her father Rufus Thomas, on a small local label called Satellite. Wexler contacted the owner of Satellite, Jim Stewart, and with a handshake deal leased the record and obtained an option for future Satellite product for \$5000. "Cause I Love You" was not a big hit on Atlantic, but a year later Carla Thomas recorded a song she had written called "Gee Whiz". The record came out on Satellite, but Wexler immediately exercised his option and claimed it for Atlantic. "Gee Whiz" was released nationally on Atlantic and went to Billboard #5. Satellite soon changed it's name to Stax, and Atlantic had an eight year association with the label. Atlantic began manufacturing and distributing Stax product and Wexler sent the brilliant Atlantic studio engineer Tom Dowd to Stax to improve their recording equipment and facilities. Wexler was impressed with the easy un-pressured atmosphere in the Stax studios where singers worked with the house band (Booker T. Jones, Steve Cropper, Al Jackson, Duck Dunn, Wayne Jackson and Andrew Love) to write, arrange and produce the records. Wexler started taking Atlantic artists to Memphis to record in the Stax studios.

In the early '60s, Atlantic was hit with the loss of Ray Charles to ABC-Paramount and Bobby Darin to Capitol. Darin and Charles together accounted for a third of Atlantic's revenue. Luckily for Atlantic, in the fall of 1961, Solomon Burke showed up at Jerry Wexler's office unannounced. Wexler was a fan of Solomon Burke and had wanted to sign him earlier, but found he was under contract to Apollo Records. When Solomon showed up and told Wexler his Apollo contract was up, Jerry told him "You're home. I'm signing you today". The first song Wexler produced with Burke was the country and western song "Just Out of Reach" which became a big hit in September, 1961. Burke's foray into C&W predated Ray Charles by more than 6 months, who recorded "I Can't Stop Loving You" in 1962. Solomon was a consistent big seller and had many hits on Atlantic into 1962.

In 1964, Ahmet, Jerry and Nesuhi decided to sell Progressive Music, the Atlantic publishing company, to Hill and Range in order to reap some of the fruits of the long years of work building up the company. When they sold Progressive, they established a new publishing company called Cotillion. Cotillion was later used as the name of a subsidiary record label which issued southern rock, soul and gospel.

The alliance with Stax was really starting to show results about the same time. The Stax-produced material by Booker T. and the MG's, Carla Thomas, the Mar-Keys, Eddie Floyd, William Bell, and most of all Otis Redding, was selling well. Jerry Wexler signed Sam and Dave to an Atlantic contract but took them to Memphis to record at Stax. In an unusual arrangement, the Sam and Dave material was even released on the Stax label.

In 1964, Wexler signed Wilson Pickett. At first he had Bert Berns from Bang Records produce him, but the results were poor, so Wexler took Pickett to the Stax studios. According to Wexler, he put Wilson Pickett and Stax guitarist/producer Steve Cropper in a hotel room with a bottle of Jack Daniels whiskey and told them to "write". The result was "In the Midnight Hour" which was recorded at the Stax studio and was a smash hit for Pickett. Wilson Pickett continued to make hits for Atlantic through 1972.

In 1965, Wexler informed Jim Stewart that there was a possibility that Atlantic would be sold and in order to protect Stax, their handshake deal for Atlantic distribution should be formalized with a written contract. Atlantic lawyers drew up the new contract, at the insistence of Stewart, it included a "Key Man" provision, that should Atlantic be sold or Jerry Wexler leave Atlantic, the contract would be re-negotiated. Stewart signed the contract without having had it reviewed by his lawyer because he trusted Jerry Wexler implicitly.

In time, Jim Stewart became tired of having his studio tied up making hits for Atlantic and the relationship between Stewart and Wexler cooled. Wexler still wanted to be able to make records the innovative way it was done at Stax, so he went to Muscle Shoals, Alabama and hooked up with Rick Hall and his Fame studios. One of the first artists Wexler took to Fame was Aretha Franklin. In

The Great R&B Pioneers

1967, Aretha Franklin's contract at Columbia was up. She had had a lackluster career at Columbia, doing pop records and a little jazz, but Columbia never quite knew what to do with her. Jerry Wexler knew she was a tremendous talent and signed her to Atlantic. The first song Aretha recorded was "I Never Loved a Man (The Way I Love You)." In what must have been a magical moment in recording history, everything came together, the song was a smash and Aretha followed that up with "Respect", "A Natural Woman", "Chain of Fools" and many others on her way to becoming the "Queen of Soul" and arguably the greatest female singer of the 20th Century.

While Wexler was making history with R&B music, Ahmet Ertegun was moving Atlantic into white rock. In 1965 he signed an unknown husband and wife singing duo who had once been called Caesar and Cleo. Under their new (and in fact, real) names, Sonny and Cher, they had a #1 hit that year with "I Got You Babe" which was followed by many more hits.

Ertegun also saw the significance of the British invasion and signed Cream, King Crimson, Yes and the Bee Gees. (Later, Ahmet signed the British band Led Zeppelin and had great success in the album market with them. He also developed an arrangement with the Rolling Stones, giving them their own label which was distributed by Atlantic.) In 1966, Nesuhi and Wexler went out to Long Island to see a performance by a new band called the Young Rascals. Both of them were impressed with the band, but by this time many labels were trying to sign them. Ahmet invited them out to his summer place in Southampton and told them "war stories" of the early days of R&B, charming them into signing a contract with Atlantic. The Young Rascals (later, just the Rascals) recorded the classic "Groovin'", "Good Lovin'", and many more hits for the label.

Atlantic also signed Buffalo Springfield in 1966, and they had several albums on Atco and a big hit with "For What It's Worth". The group, made up of Stephen Stills, Dewey Martin, Richie Furay, Neil Young and Bruce Palmer, self-destructed in 1968, but Atlantic kept Stephen Stills as a solo artist.

In 1967, the three owners of Atlantic; Ahmet, Jerry and Nesuhi were approached by Warner Seven Arts Corporation about selling Atlantic. Warner Seven Arts offered \$17,000,000 in Warner stock plus high paying jobs at the new company for each of the senior Atlantic executives. They agreed to the sale. Atlantic/Atco Records, along with Warner Brothers/Reprise Records, were to be operated as separate record companies under the ownership umbrella of the Warner-Seven Arts Corporation.

One of the most controversial situations in Atlantic history occurred in 1968 with the breakup of the relationship between Stax and Atlantic. Because of the sale of Atlantic, the provisions of the 1965 contract called for the re-negotiation of the agreement to manufacture and distribute Stax records. The owner of Stax, Jim Stewart, wanted to improve the contract. His leverage with Atlantic was that if a new agreement was reached, Atlantic could continue to distribute the very lucrative Stax back catalog. To his horror, Stewart was informed by Atlantic lawyers that the agreement he had signed in 1965 contained a clause giving Atlantic ownership of all of the Stax material that had been released while the distribution agreement was in place. In essence, Stewart learned that in the 1965 contract he had signed away the entire Stax catalog for one dollar. Jim Stewart was left with almost nothing with which to negotiate a new deal, and he eventually sold Stax to Gulf+Western. In his autobiography, Jerry Wexler says that he was unaware of this devastating clause in the Stax distribution contract as it had been inserted unbeknownst to him by Atlantic lawyer Paul Marshall. Wexler says that he felt lousy about what was happening and felt that Jim Stewart should have ownership of the records he had produced in his own studio. Wexler argued with the new Atlantic owners on Stewart's behalf but Wexler, now an employee and not an owner of the company, could not convince the corporate bosses to return valuable property to Stewart that was a key part of the overall Atlantic assets. As Wexler says in his autobiography, "There was no righting this wrong, Jim was screwed, and I feel bad about it to this day."

In 1969, Stephen Stills' manager David Geffen came to Jerry Wexler and asked for Stills' release from his Atlantic contract. Geffen wanted to take a new group Stills had joined to Columbia Records. Wexler lost his temper and threw Geffen out of his office. The next day Geffen called Ahmet Ertegun, and Ahmet suggested that instead of taking Stills to Columbia, let Atlantic sign the group. Ahmet's smooth charm had brought the megastar group Crosby, Stills and Nash to Atlantic. David Geffen became a protégé of Ahmet Ertegun, and eventually started the very successful Asylum Record Label under the Warner-Elektra-Atlantic umbrella, and even later Geffen Records.

Under Warner-Seven Arts, Atlantic and Warner-Reprise operated independently until Warner-Seven Arts itself was purchased by the Kinney Corporation in 1969. Kinney was a conglomerate made up of parking lots, office cleaning companies, rental cars, magazine distribution and funeral parlors that was seeking to branch out into the entertainment business. Under Kinney's ownership, Warner Brothers and Atlantic were brought together, Ahmet Ertegun was given considerable power in the new operation and he, along with both the President and Chairman of Warner Brothers Records, served on a committee to oversee the record business. In 1970, one of their first recommendations was that Kinney purchase the Elektra Record Company and that the resulting record division establish its own distribution branches in each major region of the United States. By taking control of its own distribution from the independents that had previously distributed their product, Warner-Elektra-Atlantic (WEA) had established itself on a level with the majors like Columbia and RCA. One of the reasons that Kinney (which eventually became Warner Communications) was successful in running record companies where other conglomerates failed miserably (for example, Gulf+Western with Stax and Dot, Transamerica with Liberty and United Artists), was that they continued to rely on the seasoned record men in the company like Ahmet Ertegun at Atlantic, Jac Holtzman at Elektra, and Mo Ostin and Joe Smith at Warner Brothers to continue to run the companies. The three record divisions continued to compete with each other for artists and record sales, but Warner Communications provided distribution and capital.

Atlantic continues to operate today as part of Time-Warner, one of the few independent record companies from the 1940s and '50s to survive. The Warner labels today have a large share of the world recorded music market, even more than the two former market leaders, Columbia (owned by Sony) and RCA (owned by BMG). Ahmet Ertegun is still there, although his duties were reduced in 1996 when he became Co-President of the company. Ahmet Ertegun was instrumental in founding the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. A biography of him

was written in 1990 by Dorothy Wade and Justine Picardie, titled "Music Man: Ahmet Ertegun, Atlantic Records, and the Triumph of Rock 'n' Roll". Jerry Wexler is retired and living in Florida. He published his autobiography in 1993, appropriately titled "Rhythm and the Blues". Nesuhi Ertegun was head of the Warner Records International Division until he retired in 1987; he died in 1989 at the age of 71.

The rise of Atlantic Records demonstrates that it was possible for people with ethics, good taste and a love and understanding of music to build a very successful record company.

The above Atlantic history is based on information from "Rhythm and the Blues" by Jerry Wexler and David Ritz, "Making Tracks: Atlantic Records and the Growth of a Multi-Billion-Dollar Industry" by Charlie Gillett, "Music Man: Ahmet Ertegun, Atlantic Records, and the Triumph of Rock 'n' Roll" by Dorothy Wade and Justine Picardie, "Follow the Music" by Jac Holtzman and Gavan Daws, "Soulsville U.S.A.: The Story of Stax Records" by Rob Bowman and "The American Record Label Directory and Dating Guide, 1940-1959" by Galen Gart. Editor's note: Ahmet died December 14, 2006, and Jerry Wexler August 15, 2008.



CORRECTIONS to The Coasters Discography - The Atlantic Recording Studios

Due to the new Bear Family "The Coasters Rock", I have restudied the recording locations of the [Atlantic Recording Studios](#) (which do defer in my discography and the Bear Family's. I've taken a good look at wikipedia's presentation of Atlantic Records, and found the following:

Atlantic started their office at the Ritz Hotel in Manhattan (their first recordings were issued in late January 1948 – several of the early N.Y. recordings were done at the Apex, and Capitol studios up to 1956. The office soon moved to the cheaper Hotel Jefferson. In 1950 they moved their office to 301 West 54th Street., and soon to 356 West 56th Street - and in August 1951 the office was located to 234 West 56th Street (their original studio).

- 1) **Atlantic Studios November 1947 - May 18, 1956**
(before the Coasters moved to New York)
234 West 56th Street in Midtown Manhattan, New York City
- 2) **Atlantic Studios May 18, 1956 (or poss August) – early/mid 1959**
(in the Coasters' case: from "Yakety Yak" to "Charlie Brown")
157 West 57th Street in Midtown Manhattan, New York City
(this was also Atlantic's new office)
- 3) **Atlantic Studios from early/mid 1959**
(appr. from "Along Came Jones")
11 West 60th Street in Brooklyn, New York City
("corner" building to Atlantic's new office on 1841 Broadway, NYC)

When Atlantic Records' office moved to 75 Rockefeller Center in the mid 1970s, Atlantic Studios expanded to occupy the entire 2nd floor of both buildings West 60th / 1841 Broadway. In the early 1980s the studios expanded to the 3rd floor. ([wikipedia](#))

Note: Bear Family gives this studio the address 11 West 7th Street (prob a mixup of some kind – just as my mistakes).

Special note: the "One By One" LP was recorded at A&R Recording Studios (as noted in the discography) and the Los Angeles/Hollywood recordings done as noted (with the poss exception of "Ridin' Hood", which may have been recorded at Radio Recorders (not Gold Star – as the 1961 L.A. recordings).



THE ROBINS (featuring Carl Gardner & Bobby Nunn)
Their great Billboard R&B Top 10 Hit of 1956 (rec. July 7, 1955)

January 7, 1956 - Smokey Joe's Cafe

Peaked the Billboard R&B Best Sellers #13 on December 3, 1955 on Atco 6059 – and jumped to #10 on the R&B Juke Boxes on January 7, 1956, and went Pop #79. Carl and Bobby formed the Coasters on October 12, 1955, and most of the Robins' Spark recordings of 1954-55 for Leiber-Stoller were later issued as by the Coasters on several albums and EPs.



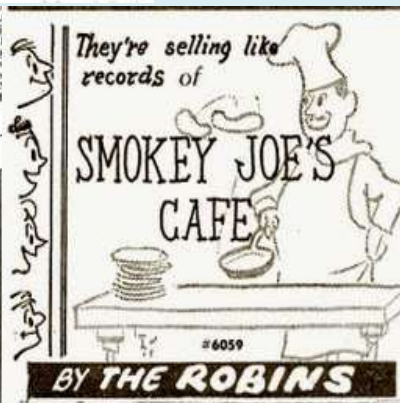
The Billboard Music Popularity Charts RHYTHM & BLUES RECORDS



• Most Played in Juke Boxes
 For survey week ending December 28

RECORDS are ranked in order of the greatest number of plays in juke boxes through the country, as determined by The Billboard's weekly survey of operators using a high proportion of rhythm and blues records. When significant success is reported on both sides of a record, positions are combined to determine position on the chart. In such a case, both sides are listed in bold type, the leading side on top.

| This Week | Last Week | Weeks on Chart |
|--|-----------|----------------|
| 1. AT MY FRONT DOOR (BMI)—El Dorados | 7 | 14 |
| What's Buggin' You, Baby (BMI)—Vee Jap 147 | | |
| 2. HANDS OFF (BMI)—J. McShann-P. Bowman | 6 | 7 |
| Answer Right (BMI)—Vee Jap 155 | | |
| 3. THIRTY DAYS (BMI)—C. Berry | — | 10 |
| Together (BMI)—Chess 1610 | | |
| 4. PRETTY THING (BMI)—B. Diddley | — | 1 |
| Bring It to Jerome (BMI)—Checker 827 | | |
| 4. ADORABLE (BMI)—Drifters | 1 | 5 |
| Secondhand (BMI)—Atlantic 1078 | | |
| 6. DON'T START ME TALKIN' (BMI)—Smokey Roy Williamson | 9 | 5 |
| All My Love in Vain (BMI)—Checker 828 | | |
| 7. POOR ME (BMI)—F. Domino | 5 | 5 |
| I Can't Get On (BMI)—Imperial 5569 | | |
| 8. FEEL SO GOOD (BMI)—Shirley & Lee | 9 | 11 |
| You'd Be Thinking of Me (BMI)—Atlantic 5189 | | |
| 9. TUTTI FRUTTI (BMI)—Little Richard | 7 | 3 |
| I'm Just a Lonely Guy (BMI)—Specialty 561 | | |
| 10. SMOKEY JOE'S CAFE (BMI)—Robins | — | 1 |
| Just Like a Fool (BMI)—Atco 6059 | | |



THE COASTERS – Their Seven Billboard TOP 10 Hits – pt 1

1. April 7, 1956 - Down In Mexico

#8 R&B Juke Boxes (with "Turtle Dovin'" listed in capital letters as flip), withouth flip #9 R&B Best Sellers, and #9 R&B Disc Jockey (6w total on R&B Charts).

APRIL 7, 1956

The Billboard's Music Popularity Charts . . . RHYTHM & BLUES RECORDS



• Most Played in Juke Boxes
For survey week ending March 28

RECORDS are ranked in order of the greatest number of plays in juke boxes throughout the country, as determined by The Billboard's weekly survey of operators using a high proportion of rhythm and blues records. When significant action is reported on both sides of a record, points are combined to determine position on the chart. In such a case, both sides are listed in bold type, the leading side on top.

| This Week | Last Week | Weeks on Chart |
|---|-----------|----------------|
| 1. DROWN IN MY OWN TEARS (BMI)—R. Charles... | 1 | 6 |
| Mary Ann (BMI)—Atlantic 1045 | | |
| 2. WHY DO FOOLS FALL IN LOVE? (BMI)—Teen-Agers | 4 | 5 |
| Please Be Mine (BMI)—Clef 1892 | | |
| 3. BLUE SUEDE SHOES (BMI)—C. Perkins | 5 | 4 |
| Honey, Don't (BMI)—Sun 234 | | |
| 4. GREAT PRETENDER (BMI)—Platters | 2 | 12 |
| I'm Just a Dancing Partner (ASCAP)—Mercury 10793 | | |
| 5. DEVIL OR ANGEL (BMI)—Clovers | 3 | 7 |
| Hey, Doll Baby (BMI)—Atlantic 1091 | | |
| 6. EDDIE, MY LOVE (BMI)—Teen Quents | 6 | 4 |
| Just Gooden (BMI)—RPM 473 | | |
| 7. WHOOP (BMI)—Little Walter | 10 | 2 |
| In A-1-2 (BMI)—Clef 815 | | |
| 8. AIN'T THAT LOVIN' YOU, BABY? (BMI)—J. Reed | 8 | 8 |
| Baby, Don't Say That No More (BMI)—Van Jay 168 | | |
| 8. DOWN IN MEXICO (BMI)—Coasters | | 1 |
| TURTLE DOVIN' (BMI)—Atco 6064 | | |
| 10. BO WEEVIL (BMI)—F. Domino | | 1 |
| Don't Blame It on Me (BMI)—Imperial 5335 | | |



2. June 3, 1957 - Young Blood

1w at #1 R&B Best Sellers (17w total on R&B Charts)
#2 on both the R&B Disco Jockey and Juke Boxes charts

3. June 10, 1957 - Searchin'

12w at #1 R&B Best Sellers (21w total on R&B Charts)
#1 on both the R&B Disco Jockey and Juke Boxes charts.

& BLUES RECORDS

JUNE 3, 1957

• R&B Best Sellers in Stores
For survey week ending May 29

RECORDS are ranked in order of their current national selling importance at the retail level, as determined by The Billboard's weekly survey of dealers throughout the nation with a high volume of sales in rhythm and blues records. When significant action is reported on both sides of a record, points are combined to determine position on the chart. In such a case, both sides are listed in bold type, the leading side on top.

| This Week | Last Week | Weeks on Chart |
|---|-----------|----------------|
| 1. YOUNG BLOOD (BMI)—Coasters | 2 | 4 |
| SEARCHIN' (BMI)—Atco 6087 | | |
| 2. SCHOOL DAY (BMI)—C. Berry | 1 | 9 |
| Deep Feeling (BMI)—Clef 165 | | |
| 3. ALL SHOOK UP (BMI)—E. Presley | 3 | 9 |
| That's What Your Heartaches Bring (ASCAP)—Vic 20-6570 | | |
| 4. C. C. RIDER (BMI)—C. Willis | 4 | 8 |
| Base the Pale (BMI)—Atlantic 1130 | | |
| 5. COME GO WITH ME (BMI)—Del Vikings | 5 | 13 |
| How Can I Find Love? (BMI)—Dot 12534 | | |
| 6. OVER THE MOUNTAIN (BMI)—Johnnie & Joe | 8 | 3 |
| My Baby's Gone, On On (BMI)—Clef 1654 | | |
| 7. LITTLE DARLIN' (BMI)—Diamonds | 6 | 12 |
| Faithful and True (BMI)—Mercury 71060 | | |
| 8. VALLEY OF TEARS (BMI)—F. Domino | 12 | 2 |
| IT'S YOU I LOVE (BMI)—Imperial 5442 | | |
| 9. JUST HOLD MY HAND (BMI)—C. McPhatter | 9 | 6 |
| No Matter What (ASCAP)—Atlantic 1135 | | |
| 10. LUCILLE (BMI)—Little Richard | 7 | 13 |
| SEND ME SOME LOVIN' (BMI)—Specialty 598 | | |
| 11. SO RARE (ASCAP)—J. Dorsey | 14 | 2 |
| Sophisticated Swing (ASCAP)—Framo 755 | | |
| 12. NEXT TIME YOU SEE ME (BMI)—Little Jr. Parker | 11 | 13 |
| My Deity Bee—Duke 164 | | |
| 13. I'M WALKIN' (BMI)—F. Domino | 9 | 13 |
| I'm in the Mood for Love (ASCAP)—Imperial 5428 | | |
| 14. WHAT CAN I DO? (BMI)—D. Elbert | | 1 |
| Hear My Plea (BMI)—DeLuxe 6125 | | |
| 15. EMPTY ARMS (BMI)—I. J. Hunter | | 5 |
| LOVE'S A HURTING GAME (BMI)—Atlantic 1128 | | |



BLUES RECORDS

JUNE 10, 1957

• R&B Best Sellers in Stores
For survey week ending Jun 5

RECORDS are ranked in order of their current national selling importance at the retail level, as determined by The Billboard's weekly survey of dealers throughout the nation with a high volume of sales in rhythm and blues records. When significant action is reported on both sides of a record, points are combined to determine position on the chart. In such a case, both sides are listed in bold type, the leading side on top.

| This Week | Last Week | Weeks on Chart |
|---|-----------|----------------|
| 1. SEARCHIN' (BMI)—Coasters | 11 | 5 |
| YOUNG BLOOD (BMI)—Atco 6087 | | |
| 2. SCHOOL DAY (BMI)—Chuck Berry | 2 | 10 |
| Deep Feeling (BMI)—Clef 165 | | |
| 3. ALL SHOOK UP (BMI)—Elvis Presley | 3 | 10 |
| That's What Your Heartaches Bring (ASCAP)—Vic 20-6570 | | |
| 4. C. C. RIDER (BMI)—Chuck Willis | 4 | 9 |
| Base the Pale (BMI)—Atlantic 1130 | | |
| 5. COME GO WITH ME (BMI)—Del Vikings | 5 | 14 |
| How Can I Find Love? (BMI)—Dot 12534 | | |
| 6. VALLEY OF TEARS (BMI)—Fats Domino | 8 | 3 |
| IT'S YOU I LOVE (BMI)—Imperial 5442 | | |
| 7. LITTLE DARLIN' (BMI)—Diamonds | 7 | 13 |
| Faithful and True (BMI)—Mercury 71060 | | |
| 7. OVER THE MOUNTAIN (BMI)—Johnnie & Joe | 6 | 4 |
| My Baby's Gone, On On (BMI)—Clef 1654 | | |
| 9. JUST TO HOLD MY HAND (BMI)—Clyde McPhatter | 9 | 7 |
| No Matter What (ASCAP)—Atlantic 1135 | | |
| 10. NEXT TIME YOU SEE ME (BMI)—Little Jr. Parker | 12 | 14 |
| My Deity Bee—Duke 164 | | |
| 11. MY DREAM (ASCAP)—Platters | | 1 |
| I Wasna (BMI)—Mercury 71093 | | |
| 12. SO RARE (ASCAP)—Jimmy Dorsey | 11 | 3 |
| Sophisticated Swing (ASCAP)—Framo 755 | | |
| 13. JOHNNY'S HOUSE PARTY —Johnny Heartsman | | 1 |
| Part No. 2—Music City 807 | | |
| 13. BYE BYE LOVE (BMI)—Everly Brothers | | 1 |
| I Wonder If I Care as Much (BMI)—Cadence 1513 | | |
| 15. WHAT CAN I DO (BMI)—Donnie Elbert | 14 | 2 |
| Hear My Plea (BMI)—DeLuxe 6125 | | |

Note: Seems like some kind of misprint conc last weeks pos on Searchin'

Note: The songs were listed combined in capital letters on the R&B Best Sellers chart. On the Juke Box and Disc Jockey Charts the songs above were listed separately. The final Juke Box chart was published June 17, 1957 - and the final Jockeys Chart was published October 13, 1958. "Young Blood" went Pop #8, and "Searchin'" Pop #3. From October 20, 1958 the R&B charts were "combined" to one Hot R&B Chart.

The Cash Box R&B Charts

THE COASTERS - Their Seven Billboard TOP 10 Hits – pt 2

4. June 23, 1958 - Yakety Yak

7w at #1 R&B Best Sellers (14w total on R&B Charts)
- #1 on both the R&B Disc Jockey and Juke Boxes charts.

5. March 30, 1959 - Charlie Brown

2w at #2 Hot R&B Sides (12w total)
(Note: Hot R&B Sides is a "combined" chart).

BLUES RECORDS **JUNE 23, 1958**

R&B Best Sellers in Stores

FOR SURVEY WEEK ENDING JUNE 14

RECORDS are ranked in order of their "retail" national selling importance at the retail level, as determined by The Billboard's weekly survey of dealers through the nation with a high volume of sales in rhythm and blues records. When significant activity is reported on both sides of a record, points are credited to determine position on the chart. In such a case, both sides are listed in bold type, the leading side on top.

| This Week | Last Week | Chart |
|-----------|-----------|-------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 2 | 1 | 9 |
| 3 | 3 | 6 |
| 4 | 4 | 8 |
| 5 | 7 | 5 |
| 6 | 5 | 10 |
| 7 | 6 | 10 |
| 8 | 8 | 5 |
| 9 | 11 | 4 |
| 10 | 10 | 5 |
| 11 | 16 | 3 |
| 12 | 12 | 9 |
| 13 | 9 | 11 |
| 14 | 15 | 6 |
| 15 | 14 | 11 |
| 16 | | 1 |
| 17 | 13 | 10 |
| 18 | 10 | 9 |
| 19 | 18 | 5 |
| 20 | | 1 |
| 20 | | 6 |



TOP NEW TEEN HITS ON ATCO

The Coasters

YAKETY YAK

ZINGI WENT THE STRINGS OF MY HEART
ATCO 6116

CHARLIE BROWN

THE COASTERS

THANKS

ATLANTIC & A&O RECORDS

MARCH 30, 1959

Billboard

HOT R&B SIDES

FOR WEEK ENDING MARCH 29

| WEEK | LAST WEEK | TITLE | ARTIST | WEEKS ON CHART |
|------|-----------|------------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| 1 | 1 | IT'S JUST A MATTER OF TIME | Black Brothers | 8 |
| 4 | 3 | CHARLIE BROWN | The Coasters | 7 |
| 2 | 2 | I CRIED A YEAR | Clayton Kershaw | 15 |
| 10 | 7 | TEARDROPS ON YOUR LETTER | Wesley Willis | 4 |
| 9 | 8 | THE RIGHT TIME | Wesley Willis | 13 |
| 5 | 5 | LOVELY TEARDROPS | Wesley Willis | 20 |
| 19 | 19 | WHERE WERE YOU ON OUR WEDDING DAY? | Wesley Willis | 2 |
| 8 | 6 | TRY ME | James Brown | 21 |
| 3 | 4 | STAGGER LEE | Wesley Willis | 16 |
| 14 | 10 | EVERYBODY LIKES TO CHA CHA | Wesley Willis | 4 |
| 15 | 16 | VENUS | Wesley Willis | 5 |
| 13 | 18 | PETER GUNN THEME | Wesley Willis | 6 |
| 6 | 9 | PRETTY GIRLS EVERYWHERE | Wesley Willis | 15 |
| 12 | 11 | COME SOFTLY TO ME | Wesley Willis | 2 |
| 20 | 15 | COME TO ME | Wesley Willis | 4 |
| 28 | 10 | SO FINE | Wesley Willis | 2 |
| 26 | 14 | NO REGRETS | Wesley Willis | 7 |
| 29 | 21 | PLEASE, MR. SUN | Wesley Willis | 4 |
| 22 | 16 | WHAT MAKES YOU SO TOUGH | Wesley Willis | 3 |
| 21 | 19 | TRAGEDY | Wesley Willis | 4 |
| 25 | 20 | SINCE I DON'T HAVE YOU | Wesley Willis | 3 |

6. June 22, 1959 - Along Came Jones

2w at #9 Hot 100 pop chart (R&B #14, 6w total on Hot R&B Sides)

7. October 5, 1959 - Poison Ivy

4w at #1 Hot R&B Sides (16w total)

Billboard

HOT 100

| WEEK | LAST WEEK | TITLE | ARTIST | WEEKS ON CHART |
|------|-----------|--------------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| 1 | 1 | THE BATTLE OF NEW ORLEANS | Wesley Willis | 9 |
| 3 | 2 | NO PERSONALITY | Clayton Kershaw | 9 |
| 8 | 3 | DREAM LOVER | Clayton Kershaw | 10 |
| 8 | 10 | LOVELY BOY | Wesley Willis | 4 |
| 2 | 4 | KANSAS CITY | Wesley Willis | 11 |
| 4 | 4 | OH OH OH YEAH | Wesley Willis | 11 |
| 15 | 7 | TALKING WITH A LADY | Wesley Willis | 7 |
| 6 | 6 | A RENAISSANCE IN LOVE | Wesley Willis | 10 |
| 20 | 13 | ALONG CAME JONES | The Coasters | 6 |
| 23 | 15 | NO LIPSTICK ON YOUR CHIN | Wesley Willis | 6 |
| 22 | 16 | NO FRAGILE | Wesley Willis | 6 |
| 9 | 9 | ONLY YOU | Wesley Willis | 12 |
| 33 | 20 | NO BOBBY SIX TO SPOILING | Wesley Willis | 5 |
| 7 | 7 | NO BODICE KNOWS HOW TO HOLD YOUR OWN | Wesley Willis | 10 |
| 12 | 11 | SO FINE | Wesley Willis | 17 |
| 30 | 21 | NO BODICE KNOWS HOW TO HOLD YOUR OWN | Wesley Willis | 6 |
| 66 | 24 | WATKINS | Wesley Willis | 5 |
| 17 | 19 | FM READY | Wesley Willis | 7 |
| 60 | 29 | WHEN I ONLY HAVE EYES FOR YOU | Wesley Willis | 4 |
| 8 | 8 | SORRY, I RAN ALL THE WAY HOME | Wesley Willis | 15 |
| 33 | 28 | NO A HOT WITHOUT A BUN | Wesley Willis | 5 |
| 32 | 22 | NO JUST KEEP IT UP | Wesley Willis | 5 |
| 13 | 17 | NO EMBROIDERY | Wesley Willis | 10 |

THE COASTERS

'ALONG CAME JONES'

THE COASTERS HITS ARE PILING UP

"I'm A Hog For You"

"POISON IVY"

Thanks Music Operators from... 64

THE COASTERS

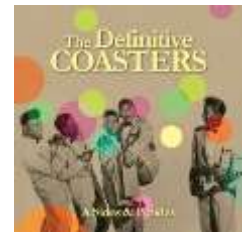
Billboard

HOT R&B SIDES

FOR WEEK ENDING OCTOBER 5

| WEEK | LAST WEEK | TITLE | ARTIST | WEEKS ON CHART |
|------|-----------|--------------------------------------|---------------|----------------|
| 1 | 1 | POISON IVY | The Coasters | 4 |
| 2 | 2 | NO BODICE KNOWS HOW TO HOLD YOUR OWN | Wesley Willis | 10 |
| 3 | 3 | NO BODICE KNOWS HOW TO HOLD YOUR OWN | Wesley Willis | 10 |
| 4 | 4 | NO BODICE KNOWS HOW TO HOLD YOUR OWN | Wesley Willis | 10 |
| 5 | 5 | NO BODICE KNOWS HOW TO HOLD YOUR OWN | Wesley Willis | 10 |
| 6 | 6 | NO BODICE KNOWS HOW TO HOLD YOUR OWN | Wesley Willis | 10 |
| 7 | 7 | NO BODICE KNOWS HOW TO HOLD YOUR OWN | Wesley Willis | 10 |
| 8 | 8 | NO BODICE KNOWS HOW TO HOLD YOUR OWN | Wesley Willis | 10 |
| 9 | 9 | NO BODICE KNOWS HOW TO HOLD YOUR OWN | Wesley Willis | 10 |
| 10 | 10 | NO BODICE KNOWS HOW TO HOLD YOUR OWN | Wesley Willis | 10 |
| 11 | 11 | NO BODICE KNOWS HOW TO HOLD YOUR OWN | Wesley Willis | 10 |
| 12 | 12 | NO BODICE KNOWS HOW TO HOLD YOUR OWN | Wesley Willis | 10 |
| 13 | 13 | NO BODICE KNOWS HOW TO HOLD YOUR OWN | Wesley Willis | 10 |
| 14 | 14 | NO BODICE KNOWS HOW TO HOLD YOUR OWN | Wesley Willis | 10 |
| 15 | 15 | NO BODICE KNOWS HOW TO HOLD YOUR OWN | Wesley Willis | 10 |
| 16 | 16 | NO BODICE KNOWS HOW TO HOLD YOUR OWN | Wesley Willis | 10 |
| 17 | 17 | NO BODICE KNOWS HOW TO HOLD YOUR OWN | Wesley Willis | 10 |
| 18 | 18 | NO BODICE KNOWS HOW TO HOLD YOUR OWN | Wesley Willis | 10 |
| 19 | 19 | NO BODICE KNOWS HOW TO HOLD YOUR OWN | Wesley Willis | 10 |
| 20 | 20 | NO BODICE KNOWS HOW TO HOLD YOUR OWN | Wesley Willis | 10 |
| 21 | 21 | NO BODICE KNOWS HOW TO HOLD YOUR OWN | Wesley Willis | 10 |
| 22 | 22 | NO BODICE KNOWS HOW TO HOLD YOUR OWN | Wesley Willis | 10 |
| 23 | 23 | NO BODICE KNOWS HOW TO HOLD YOUR OWN | Wesley Willis | 10 |
| 24 | 24 | NO BODICE KNOWS HOW TO HOLD YOUR OWN | Wesley Willis | 10 |
| 25 | 25 | NO BODICE KNOWS HOW TO HOLD YOUR OWN | Wesley Willis | 10 |
| 26 | 26 | NO BODICE KNOWS HOW TO HOLD YOUR OWN | Wesley Willis | 10 |
| 27 | 27 | NO BODICE KNOWS HOW TO HOLD YOUR OWN | Wesley Willis | 10 |
| 28 | 28 | NO BODICE KNOWS HOW TO HOLD YOUR OWN | Wesley Willis | 10 |
| 29 | 29 | NO BODICE KNOWS HOW TO HOLD YOUR OWN | Wesley Willis | 10 |
| 30 | 30 | NO BODICE KNOWS HOW TO HOLD YOUR OWN | Wesley Willis | 10 |

Pop chartings - "Down In Mexico" (not charted) - Young Blood BB #8, CB #15 - Searchin' BB #3, CB #7 - Yakety Yak BB #1 for 1w, CB #1 for 1w - Charlie Brown BB #2 for 3w, CB #2 for 3w - Along Came Jones BB #9, CB #11 - Poison Ivy BB #7, CB #9
Note: "What About Us" hit the Cash Box R&B chart #10 in January, 1960 (BB=#17). (BB=the Billboard; CB=the Cash Box).



THE COASTERS SESSION DISCOGRAPHY on Atco (UPDATED June 20, 2020)



This discography is an update, based on the discography in "The Clown Princes of Rock and Roll" (from the Great R&B Files), with all new researched information added to it. The Coasters' recording line-ups are listed as **headings**. Carl Gardner, lead vocal unless otherwise indicated. The Coasters' stage guitarists Adolph Jacobs, Albert "Sonny" Forriest, and Thomas "Curley" Palmer also worked in the studios with the vocal group (as shown on personnel listings). Recording location is valid until new location is listed. All tracks are issued on Rhino Handmade RHM2-7740 "There's A Riot Goin' On: The Coasters On Atco" (issued December 12, 2007) unless indicated (*not RHM*). Several of the original mono masters of 1958 appear in stereo masters on that 4CD-set, but are the same takes as the mono masters, marked **. On those tracks representative CD issues with the mono editions are listed. All unmarked labels are Atco. Only US original issues are listed - singles, EPs and LPs, and when originally not issued on any US single or LP, the first album issue (LP/CD). The seven original US LPs have all their tracks listed, later albums (LP/CD) only tracks not issued on US LPs. Full catalogue number for LP AD2: Atlantic DeLuxe AD2-4003 (mono). CBCD is a bootleg CD titled "Charlie Brown" (2000) with most titles in stereo (all tracks listed), Edsel LP is a British issue titled "Thumbin' A Ride" (1984), GY is a limited edition issued at the Coasters' 50th Anniversary, and the Mr R&B LP 102 "What Is The Secret Of Your Success?" (1980, reissued on CD in 1990) included never-before-on-LP-

issued tracks. Singles issued significantly later than recording dates are marked with year of issue. Edited, dubbed, outtakes and alternates listed separately for each session (with takes clearly and significantly different to original issues marked #). The four British Sequel CDs of 1997 comprise a total of 98 tracks (incl two dupl).

THE ROBINS or **THE COASTERS** (LP 101, EP 4503, LP 371, LP AD2, UK Sequel RSA CD 868)

Carl Gardner, lead/tenor; **Bobby Nunn**, bass/lead-1; Grady Chapman (first session - and probably also the last), tenor/lead-2; "Ty" Terrell Leonard, tenor; Billy Richard and Roy Richard, baritones

with Gil Bernal, ts; Willard McDaniel, pno/celeste-4; Charlie "Chuck" Norris, gtr; Ralph "Waldo" Hamilton, bs; John "Jessie" Sailes, dms. Poss. Val Valentine, eng; Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller, prod. Poss. Mike Stoller, pno on LS 29, 31, 32.

Prob. Radio Recorders, 7000 Santa Monica, Boulevard, Los Angeles (Hollywood)
c:a February-March, 1954

| | | |
|-------|------------------------------------|--|
| LS 13 | The Hatchet Man -1 | Spark 116, 71090, Collectables CD 9974 |
| LS 29 | I Love Paris -2 | Spark 113 |
| LS 31 | Whadaya Want? -2 | Spark 110, 71090, CD 9974 |
| LS 32 | If Teardrops Were Kisses -4 | Spark 110, GY, Collectables CD 9974 |

Note: All four issued on (British) Sequel RSA CD 868 (1997). All tracks of Rhino R2 71090 mono 2CD, titled "50 Coastin' Classics" (1992), listed for overview (marked 71090). Collectables CD 9974, titled "Smokey Joe's Cafe" (2006) by The Robins, features ten of the group's twelve Spark recordings.

with Richard Berry, prob. lead bass vcl-3; Mike Stoller, arr/pno; Gil Bernal, ts; Barney Kessel, gtr; Ralph "Waldo" Hamilton, bs; John "Jessie" Sailes, dms. Abe "Bunny" Robyn, eng; Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller, prod. Unkn handclapping -5. Atco LP 33-101 presents Bobby Nunn as lead bass vcl on "Riot In Cell Block #9".

Master Recorders, 533 North Fairfax Avenue, Los Angeles

| | | | |
|-------|--------------------|------------------------|---|
| LS 15 | 57C-245 (59C-4073) | Wrap It Up -1 | Spark 103, LP 101, 71090, (not CD 9974) |
| | | (Gardner, second lead) | |

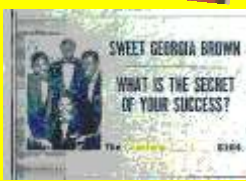
| | | | |
|-------|--------------------|---------------------------------|---|
| LS 16 | 57C-246 (59C-4074) | Riot In Cell Block #9 -3 | Spark 103, EP 4503, LP 101, LP 371, LP AD2, 71090, 2CD 132092 |
|-------|--------------------|---------------------------------|---|

| | | | |
|-------|--------------------|---------------------------|---|
| LS 22 | 57C-281 (59C-4093) | Loop De Loop Mambo | Spark 107, EP 4503, LP 101 |
| LS 14 | 57C-282 (59C-4094) | One Kiss | Spark 113, LP 101, 71090 |
| LS 23 | 57C-283 (59C-4095) | I Must Be Dreamin | Spark 116, LP 101, LP AD2, 71090 |
| LS 24 | 57C-284 (59C-4096) | Framed -1 | Spark 107, EP 4503, LP 101, LP AD2, 71090, 2CD 132092 |

| | | | |
|-------|---------------|-----------------------------|---|
| LS 30 | 55C-32 S-1669 | Smokey Joe's Cafe -5 | July 7, 1955 Spark 122, 6059, LP 101, LP 371, LP AD2, 71090, 2CD 132092 |
| LS 21 | 55C-33 S-1670 | Just Like A Fool | Spark 122, 6059, 71090 |



The Great R&B Pioneers



Note: S-master numbers used on Atco 6059. Mike Stoller states in the liner notes of Rhino R2 71090 that "The Hatchet Man" was the first Robins date on Spark. Last session wrongly listed as recorded in 1954 on RHM2-7740. That session probably features Grady Chapman. Michel Ruppli and the Atlantic files give September 28, 1955 as recording date, but that was the day the Spark masters were purchased by Atco (55C-32/33), sometimes listed as recorded in January. Several discographies list above recordings in three sessions in order of LS master numbers. Spark single 103 was released in June 1954, single 110 in February 1955, and single 122 in September. Master series 57C- allocated for LP 101 in 1957. Collectables CD 9974 as by The Robins, has "One Kiss" titled "One Kiss Led To Another". LS 23 titled "I Must Be Dreamin'" on LP. LS 16 titled "Riot In Cell Block Number Nine" (33-101 sleeve, not label). The Coasters were formed on October 12, 1955 (due to unconfirmed source). In 1957 and 1958 several of the Robins' Spark recordings were reissued on LP and EP as by the Coasters, leading to the common misconception that the Robins had transformed into the Coasters. In fact Gardner and Nunn were recruited by manager Lester Sill and producers Jerry Leiber - Mike Stoller. Due to touring engagements there was not enough recorded material available when Atco needed recordings for the Coasters' first LP (so the LS Robins' recordings came in handy). Atco LP 33-101 titled "*The Coasters*" (November 1957), and in electronic simulated stereo SD 33-101 in 1968 (or possibly even in 1962), reissued as one half of Collectables CD 76566 "*The Coasters - One By One*" (2004). LP 371, full catalogue number SD 33-371 (mono/stereo edition), titled "*Their Greatest Recordings - The Early Years*" (November 1971).

THE COASTERS

Carl Gardner, lead/tenor; **Billy Guy**, baritone/lead-1; **Bobby Nunn**, bass; **Leon Hughes**, tenor

with Mike Stoller, arr/pno; Gil Bernal, ts; Barney Kessel, gtr; Ralph Hamilton, bs; Jessie Sailes, dms/perc; Chico Guerrero, congas. Lester Sill, manager; Abe Robyn, eng; Leiber-Stoller, prod. Omit ts on 56C-67. According to late information on Adolph Jacobs he did not join the Coasters until mid/late 1956.

Master "Hollywood" Recorders, 533 North Fairfax Avenue, Los Angeles

| | | | |
|--------|--------|---|---|
| 56C-67 | S-1857 | Brazil (Gardner, Nunn, Guy joint leads) | January 11, 1956 6073, LP 101, 71090 |
| 56C-68 | S-1858 | Down In Mexico | 6064, LP 101, LP 111, Clarion LP 605, LP 371, LP AD2, 71090 |
| 56C-69 | S-1859 | One Kiss Led To Another | 6073, LP 101, Clarion LP 605, 71090 |
| 56C-70 | S-1860 | Turtle Dovin' | 6064, LP 101, LP 371, LP AD2 (not WCD), 71090 |

Note: S-master numbers used on singles. Atco LP 33-111 and stereo version SD 33-111 titled "*The Coasters' Greatest Hits*" (October 1959, simulated stereo version probably issued in 1960 and reissued in 1968, plus on CD in 1989). Clarion LP 605 and stereo version SD-605 titled "*That Is Rock & Roll*" (January 1965). Atlantic Deluxe mono LP AD2-4003 titled "*Young Blood*" (July 1982). 20 tracks on that 2-set LP (which spells "Girls Girls Girls" and "Run Red Run" with commas and a "The" before "Idol With The Golden Head"), reissued with some alternate stereo editions (marked WCD) on Warner CD 27604 "*The Ultimate Coasters*" (1986). S-1860 titled "Turtle Dovin'" on some 45-singles and on Rhino 2CD 71090.

with Obe (Obie) "Young" Jessie, harm-vcl (omit Hughes); Mike Stoller, arr/pno; Gil Bernal, ts; Barney Kessel, gtr/mandolin-5; **Adolph Jacobs**, gtr; Ralph Hamilton, bs; Jessie Sailes and Alvin Stoller, dms; Joe Oliveira, perc; poss. Chico Guerrero, congas. Abe Robyn, eng; Leiber-Stoller, prod. Omit ts on 57C-185 and -188.

February 12 & 15, 1957

| | | | |
|---------|--------------------|--|--|
| 57C-105 | 57C-185 (59C-3689) | Lola -5 | LP 101 |
| 57C-106 | 57C-186 (59C-3690) | Sweet Georgia Brown (Gardner, Guy, Nunn joint leads) | 6104, LP 111, 71090 |
| 57C-107 | 57C-187 (59C-3691) | Young Blood | 6087, EP 4501, LP 101, LP 111, LP 371, LP AD2, 71090 |
| 57C-108 | 57C-188 (59C-3692) | Searchin' -1 | 6087, EP 4501, LP 101, LP 111, LP 371, LP AD2, 71090 |

Note: Master numbers 106 - 108 later changed to 186 - 188 (due to early mishap). "Young" Jessie was hired for this session with the Coasters (contrary to the belief that he was a Coasters member - and possibly the one singing the phrase "Bull Dog Drummond" on "Searchin'"). Master numbers 57C-186 through 57C-461 used on singles in 1957-1958. According to Plas Johnson, who often is listed, it is Gil Bernal who plays the sax. This is the order they share the *Looka there/What's your name/You're the one* phrases in "Young Blood": Gardner, Guy, Jessie, Nunn.

with Jesse Stone, dir/poss. prod; Lowell "Count" Hastings, ts; prob. Mike Stoller, arr; Kenny Burrell, gtr; Lloyd Trotman, bs; Joe Marshall, dms.

Capitol Studios, New York City June 12-13, 1957

| | | | |
|---------|------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 57C-229 | (59C-4083) | Wait A Minute -1 | rejected (see note), (not RHM) |
|---------|------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------|

Note: Probably edited on December 4, 1957 (see 57C-326) and may be same master track (59C-4083 poss. the rechanneled number, see below).

with Mike Stoller, arr/pno; Floyd McDaniel, gtr; Willie Dixon and/or Louis Meyers, bs; Fred Below, dms. Jack Wiener, eng; Leiber-Stoller, prod. (Is there a slight audio of background saxophone on -5 ?)

Sheldon Recording Studio, 2120 Michigan Avenue (Chess Building), Chicago

July 24, 1957

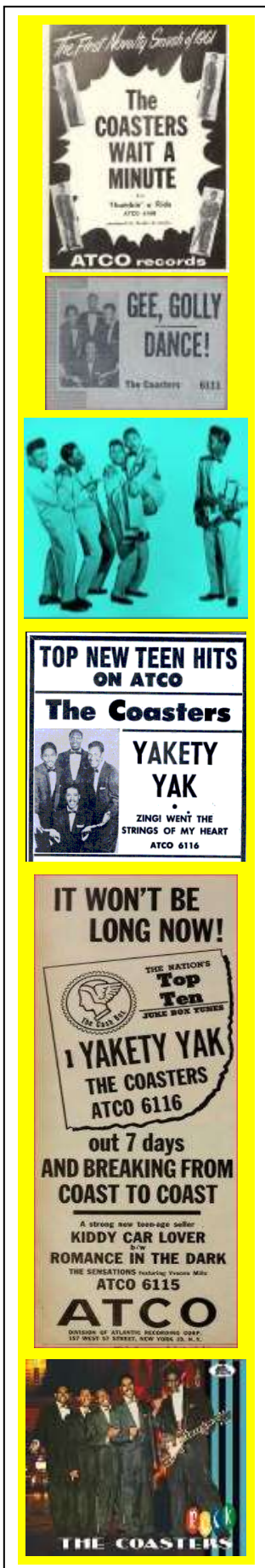
| | | | |
|---------|------------|--|--|
| 57C-251 | (59C-3648) | (When She Wants Good Lovin') My Baby Comes To Me -1 | 6098, EP 4501, MrR&B LP 102, 71090 |
| 57C-252 | (59C-3649) | Idol With The Golden Head -5 | 6098, EP 4501, Clarion LP 605, LP 371, LP AD2, 71090 |
| 57C-253 | (59C-3650) | What Is The Secret Of Your Success? -1 | 6104, MrR&B LP 102, Edsel LP 156, 71090 |

Alt. take (outtake)

My Baby Comes To Me -1 CBCD

Note: 57C-251 listed as recorded June 13, 1957 in Fernando L. Gonzalez' Disco File. The alternate take has a different chorus backing, faster tempo and different piano sound. MrR&B mono LP 102 titled "*What Is The Secret Of Your Success?*" (1980, reissued on CD RBD 102 in 1990). CBCD (MR. R&B CD-102, completely different to the earlier Mr R&B issue) is a bootleg CD titled "*Charlie Brown*" (2000 - full catalogue number 5267-65175-1B+). AD2 and 71090 have a total of four King issues added (and 71090 also one unissued Columbia).

The Great R&B Pioneers



with prob. Tommy Evans, bass vcl (omit Nunn and Hughes); Mike Stoller, arr/pno; Seldon "Jesse" Powell, ts; Adolph Jacobs and Al Caiola, gtrs; Lloyd Trotman, bs; Joe Marshall (and poss Alvin Stoller), dms; Harry Breuer, tamb. Leiber-Stoller, prod. Omit ts on 57C-329. Both Nunn and Hughes audibly present on 57C-326/57C-3700 (see 57C-229 above), but omit pno and one gtr.

Capitol Studios, 151 West 46th Street, New York City

December 4, 1957

| | | | |
|---------|---------------------|---|-------------------------------------|
| 57C-326 | 57C-3700 (59C-3700) | Wait A Minute -1 (edited from above) | 6186 (1961), LP 135, SDLP135, 71090 |
| 57C-327 | (59C-3701) | I'm Fallin' | unissued, (not RHM) |
| 57C-328 | (59C-3702) | Dance! | 6111, EP 4507, Sequel CD 868 |
| 57C-329 | (59C-3703) | Gee, Golly -1 | 6111, EP 4507, MrR&B LP 102 |

Extended re-mix

Dance

Clarion LP 605, GY

Note: Master number 57C-3700 used on single. 57C-327 often filed as "I've Fallen". 57C-329 titled "Gee Golly" on LP sleeve (only). When The Coasters were awarded for "Searchin'" and "Young Blood" on the Steve Allen TV-show, doing "Searchin'" with no lip-sink and full orchestra on August 25, 1957 (from which the photo on the Coasters' first Atco LP was taken) Nunn and Hughes participated. Atco LP 33-135 (July 1962; and the stereo version SD 33-135, with alternate editions, also issued in 1962, titled "Coast Along With The Coasters"). The stereo album reissued on Collectables CD 6523 (2005). The two versions of "Wait A Minute" on Sequel are identical (the track was rechanneled for the stereo LP SD 33-135). On May 18, 1956 (or possibly August) Atlantic/Atco had moved their office from 234 West 56th Street to 157 West 57th Street and combined their new office with a "private" recording studio.

THE COASTERS

Carl Gardner, lead/tenor; **Billy Guy**, baritone/lead-1; **Will "Dub" Jones**, bass/lead-2; Cornelius (Cornel) **"Cornell" Gunter**, tenor/second lead-3. (Sung in unison -4)

with Mike Stoller, arr/pno; "King" Curtis (Montgomery-Ousley), ts; Clifton "Skeeter" Best, bjo; Adolph Jacobs and Allen (Alan) Hanlon, gtrs; Lloyd Trotman or Wendell Marshall, bs; Joe Marshall, dms; Francisco "Chino" Pozo, congas; Reggie Obrecht, prob. dir. Tom Dowd, eng; Leiber-Stoller, prod. Omit ts and pno on all versions of "Stewball". Hanlon played the acoustic gtr on all his sessions.

Atlantic Studios, 157 West 57th Street, New York City

March 17, 1958

| | | | |
|---------|------------------------------|--|--|
| 58C-363 | (59C-4121) take 7 master | Zing! Went The Strings Of My Heart -2,3 | 6116, LP 111, CBCD, **CD 33111-2, **Rhino 2CD 71090 |
| 58C-364 | (59C-4122) mono/stereo* | Three Cool Cats | 6132 (1959), SD-45-6132*, EP 4506, Clarion LP 605, Clarion LP SD-605*, LP AD2, 71090 |
| 58C-365 | (59C-4123) master (58C-4123) | Yakety Yak (Gardner & Guy, dual lead) | 6116, EP 4503, LP 111, Clarion LP 605, LP AD2, CBCD, **Rhino 2CD 71090, 2CD 132092 |
| 58C-366 | 58C-4124 mono (59C-4123) | Stewball -1 | 6168 (1960), LP 135, (not RHM) |

Takes 1,2 (and 7 above w chat)

Take 1, alt. stereo arr #

Outtakes, take 1 above +7,8

Stereo master (take 12)

Take 3, alternate hi-fi #

Outtakes, takes 1,2,5

Take 5 (outtake)

Alt. edition stereo (take 6)

Complete alt master (take 9) #

Outtakes, takes 8,9,10

Stereo, take 11 (58C-4124)

False start take 8

False start take 11

False start take 10

Zing! Went The Strings Of My Heart -2,3

Three Cool Cats

Three Cool Cats

Three Cool Cats

Yakety Yak

Yakety Yak

Yakety Yak

Yakety Yak

Yakety Yak

Yakety Yak (Gardner & Guy, dual lead on the five above)

Stewball -1

Stewball -1

(stereo master of above)

R002, (not RHM)

CBCD

R002, (not RHM)

CBCD

RHM

R002, (not RHM)

CBCD

Clarion LP SD-605, LP 371, WCD, CD 33111-2

R002, (not RHM)

R002, (not RHM)

Atco LP SD 33-135, Edsel LP 156,

Sequel CD 871, CBCD

The tracks below are the masters from above - with studio chat and false starts (also featured on the Outtakes above)

False start take 8

False start take 11

False start take 10

Zing! Went The Strings Of My Heart-2,3

Three Cool Cats

Stewball -1

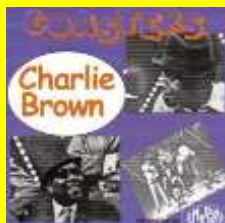
CBCD, (not RHM)

CBCD, (not RHM)

CBCD, (not RHM)

Note: Starting with this session Atlantic recorded their titles on 8-track tapes. UK's Sequel 4CD-series in 1997 were the first to feature the stereo versions of the 1958 8-track recordings. The mono edition of "Three Cool Cats" runs for 2:08 or 2:10 (around the same time as on stereo SD 6132 single, and has wrong time, 2:43, noted on EP - which is the time of the stereo master #12, with prolonged sax solo). On Clarion stereo track time is reported 2:43 (unconfirmed). On Sequel and the British Warner Platinum CD the stereo master runs for 2:26 with shorter sax solo. "The Coasters Rock" (2020) on Bear Family BCD 17526 is a nice and comprehensive CD, featuring 32 recordings of 1956-1961, and includes a stereo version of "Three Cool Cats" (2:26) - the one featured on Sequel and Warner Platinum. Take 1 is a complete different version both vocally and instrumentally. Take 3 of "Yakety Yak" has a completely different sax solo and slightly different vocal approach. Take 5 has slightly different vocals and lesser sax. "Yakety Yak" take 6, stereo, has a short sax sequence omitted after the line "Don't you give me no dirty looks". The complete unissued alt master (time 2:26) has different sax solo and prolonged alternate ending. Master number 58C-4124 used on "Stewball" single. It is spelt "Stew Ball" on album cover front (but not on sleeve). Edsel LP 156 has the stereo edition. The two versions on Sequel and on R001/R002 are identical (same master - mono 58C-366 and stereo take 11). Rhino 2-set CD 132092, titled "The Definitive Soul Collection" (2007), was to include all Coasters hits, and some more classic ones (a total of 30 tracks incl. three by the Robins), on Atco in mono. The release was cancelled, when "The Complete Coasters on Atco" was planned, which became RHM2 7740. CD 33111-2 (1989) is the CD version of stereo LP SD 33-111. "Yakety Yak" and "Poison Ivy" (from later session) listed on that CD may be the takes issued on that LP. The planned Atlantic/Atco CD 82313-2 "Poison Ivy - The Best Of The Coasters" in their 20-track ReMasters series in 1991 was cancelled, when the project of "50 Coastin' Classics" was initiated.

The Great R&B Pioneers



with Mike Stoller, arr/pno; King Curtis, ts; Adolph Jacobs, gtr; Allen Hanlon and/or George Barnes, gtrs; Wendell Marshall or Abie Baker, bs; Joe Marshall (or poss. Gary Chester), dms; prob. Francisco "Chino" Pozo, congas. Tom Dowd, eng; Leiber-Stoller, prod. Omit pno and ts on 58C-419. Omit pno on 58C-421 and 59C-3610.

58C-419 (59C-3632) master **Sorry But I 'm Gonna Have To Pass** -2
58C-420 (59C-3633) master **The Shadow Knows** -1

58C-421 (59C-3634) (1:59) **I 'm A Hog For You** -4 stereo master
58C-422 (59C-3635) take 14 **Crocodile** -4

Outtakes, takes 2,3,11

Take 2 (outtake)
Outtakes, takes 11,12,13

Outtakes, takes 1,2,3,4
Take 5 (outtake) #

Takes 6,7 false starts, take 8

Alt.take - slow version (stereo) # **I 'm A Hog For You** -4
Take 1, alternate hi-fi **Crocodile** -4
Takes 3,5 and complete take 12 **Crocodile** -4

Note: 58C-419 listed in files as "Sorry But I Must Pass". The CBCD edition of that track has studio chat intro and runs for 2:27 (2:11 on the others). 58C-420 issued with added credits "**Sax Solo: King Curtis**" on Atco single label. The undubbed original master of "I'm A Hog For You" (which is in stereo) and most of the 1958 8-track stereo editions were not issued until British Sequel tried to find all Coasters recordings for Atco in 1997. The original issued version (59C-3610, see below) was edited on July 17, 1959 with extra dubs and is listed in Atlantic files as "I'm A Hog For You Baby", and titled so on Sequel and other British issues. That edition is often misplaced at the next session below. Take 2 of "The Shadow Knows" has different lyrics and different instrumental sound. The alternates of "I'm A Hog For You" (no pno) are completely different to the original master (take 5 only issued on the "Charlie Brown" CD). The alternate (take 1) of "Crocodile" has a different vocal approach and a complete different sax solo (and is only issued on Rhino CD 7740). Take 12 slightly different to take 14 with different ending. "Crocodile" and "Hey Sexy" (from next session) were not issued during the classic Coasters years, due to "unpolished" lyrics. Rhino CD R2 32656 (1994) is the European issue of R2 71597 with "Sorry But I'm Gonna Have To Pass" added as a bonus track.

with Mike Stoller, arr/pno; James "Taft" Jordan and Red Solomon, tpts; Eddie Bert, tbn; King Curtis, ts-5; Adolph Jacobs and Don Arnone, gtrs; Milt Hinton, bs; Belton Evans, dms. Tom Dowd, eng; Leiber-Stoller, prod. Omit tpts and tbn on all versions of "Charlie Brown". George Barnes, banjo listed in the discography on "Rock" (Bear Family BCD17526).

58C-461 (59C-4168) master **Charlie Brown** -4, -5

58C-462 (59C-4169) master **Hey Sexy** -4

Alternate stereo (outtake) # **Charlie Brown** -4, -5
Outtakes, (tracks)/takes
14,22,23,27
Alt.take (take 4, stereo) **Charlie Brown** -4, -5
Hey Sexy / Sexy
(Gardner lead) #

Outtakes, (tracks)/takes 8,10,12 **Hey Sexy** -4, -5

Note: Master numbers in parentheses are the reallocated numbers given when Atlantic coordinated all Atco master numbers with Atlantic's in July, 1959 (36/37-series) and in January, 1960 (40/41-series). The Gardner-led "Hey Sexy" is a complete different version with the other Coasters only doo-wa-ing, listed as "**Sexy**" in Atlantic files (which would be the correct title for this version since Gardner does not sing "hey"), and sometimes wrongly filed as 58C-460. The Clarion version of "Charlie Brown", which has Gunter separated from Gardner in stereo, no speeded-up "yes you" and different sax solo, runs for 2:12 or 2:17, but for 2:44 with chat intro and longer fadeout on CBCD and RHM. 16 of the tracks from the 2CD-set Rhino 71090 reissued on Rhino R2 71597 "The Very Best of The Coasters" (1994, reissued 2008). Unless otherwise noted all issued recordings (including alternates) of 1954-1962 ("The Hatchet Man" to "Bull Tick Waltz"), with the stereo editions of the 8-track-single masters of 1958 (including "Hey Sexy", were released on History of RnB Records on February 5, 2013; R001 2CD "The Definitive Coasters - A Sides & B Sides" and R002 2CD "Those Hoodlum Friends - The Coasters In Stereo" - the latter with several previously unissued alternate outtakes. Parts of the studio chats of the 1958 outtakes previously issued on CBCD (and some on RHM). Not confirmed which stereo versions of "Charlie Brown" / "Three Cool Cats" are on SD-45-6132. The group overdubbed the line "Who's always throwing spitballs" for the British version of "Charlie Brown" with "Who's always headed for a fall". That overdub can be found on R002. The Atco releases (except where noticed) used master numbers 57C-186 through 58C-461.

with Mike Stoller, arr/pno/temple blocks; King Curtis, ts; George Barnes, bjo; Allen Hanlon and Tony Mottola, gtrs; Abie Baker, bs; Sammy "Sticks" Evans, dms; Jerry Leiber, vcl(on bridges)-5. Tom Dowd, eng; Leiber-Stoller, prod. Lester Sill, manager (most prob present). "Rocks" lists Gary Chester, dms.

Most prob. Atlantic new Studios, 11 West 60th Street, New York City

59C-3418 mono master **Along Came Jones**
(joint leads)
59C-3419 mono master **That Is Rock & Roll** -5

August 8, 1958

6126, EP 4506, MrR&B LP 102, Edsel LP 156, CBCD, Rhino CD 32656, **71090 6126, EP 4506, LP 111, LP AD2, CBCD, **71090, 2CD 132092
Sequel CD 871, CBCD
CBCD

R002, (not RHM)
CBCD

R002, (not RHM)
R002, (not RHM)

Only on CBCD, (not RHM)

CBCD, (not issued on R002)
CBCD

Only on RHM, (not issued on R002)
R002, (not RHM)

December 11, 1958

6132, EP 4506, LP 111, Clarion LP 605, LP 371, LP AD2, CBCD, **Rhino 2CD 71090, 2CD 132092
Rhino 2CD 71090 (**mono),
CBCD (stereo)

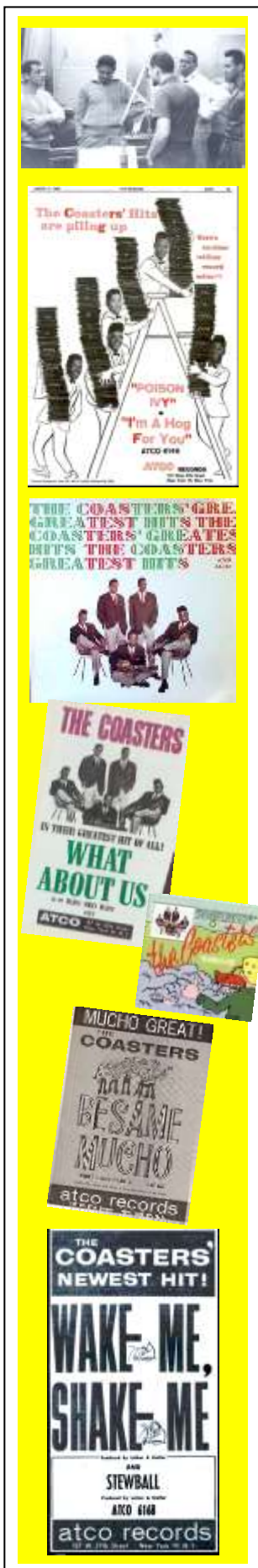
SD-45-6132, Clarion LP SD-605, CBCD

R002, (not RHM)

CBCD

R002, (not RHM)

The Great R&B Pioneers



Alternate Stereo version **Along Came Jones** Clarion LP SD-605
 Alternate (dubbed/edited stereo) **That Is Rock & Roll -2 #** Clarion LP SD-605, LP 371

Note: From this session Atlantic used different masters for mono and for stereo. The alternate stereo version of "Along Came Jones" has a slightly different vocal approach and a different sax solo. The alternate version of "That Is Rock & Roll" has the same instrumental track with unison chorus instead of Gardner plus Jones' dubbed lead (on bridges) and titled "That Is Rock And Roll" on Atco LP 371. Starting with above session Atco's master numbers correspond with Atlantic's. Adolph Jacobs (leaving for California in early or mid 1959) often played with the vocal group on stage until at least 1960. Both Clarion editions (LP/SD) issued in ca January 1965. Around the time of this session the Coasters were signed for a seven year renewed pact with Atco Records. The session above may possibly have been done at *A&R Recording Studios, 112 West 48th Street, New York City*, although several photos from Leiber-Stoller at this session also features Atlantic Records' engineer Tom Dowd, a fact pointing towards the new Atlantic studio.

with Mike Stoller, arr (no pno); King Curtis, ts; George Barnes, sixstr. bsg (dan-electro); McHouston "Mickey" Baker and poss. Allen Hanlon, gtrs; **Albert (Elbert) "Sonny" Forriest**, gtr; Wendell Marshall, bs; Alfred Dreares, dms; Willie Rodriguez, bgo. Tom Dowd, eng; Leiber-Stoller, prod. Omit ts on all versions of "Poison Ivy". Add dubbed güiro perc (poss. Stoller) on the mono edited version of "Poison Ivy".

Atlantic new Studios, 11 West 60th Street, New York City

56C-3606 mono **What About Us** -4 July 16, 1959
 59C-3607 mono, edited **Poison Ivy** (Gardner & Guy, joint leads) 6153, LP 135, 71090
 6146, LP 111, LP AD2, 71090

Stereo version **What About Us** -4 LP SD 135
 Stereo master **Poison Ivy** (prob LP SD 111), Atlantic LP K-30057,
 (Gardner & Guy, joint leads) CD 33111-2
Poison Ivy (Gardner & Guy, duet #) LP 371

Alternate stereo edition (echo)

Note: The stereo version of "What About Us" has a different sax solo and slightly different vocals. The alternate stereo edition of "Poison Ivy" has only the vocals by Gardner and Guy (stereo and no "aaahas" from the other Coasters plus echo guitar), and is missing on Sequel (although mentioned in booklet). British Atlantic LP K-30057 titled "*The Coasters - 20 Great Originals*" (1978).

with Mickey Baker or Al Caiola, "extra one-note guitar"; King Curtis, dubbed extra sax; and the Coasters, rephrasing the text "do the boogie all night long" (recorded at August 8, 1958 session, edited with dubs as indicated here; also see 58C-421).

59C-3610 dubbed/ed. mono **I'm A Hog For You** July 17, 1959
 -4 (1:56) # 6146, LP 111, 71090

with Mike Stoller, arr/pno; King Curtis, ts; Sonny Forriest and Al Caiola, gtrs; Wendell Marshall, bs; David "Panama" Francis, dms. Tom Dowd, eng; Leiber-Stoller, prod.

59C-3713 **Run Red Run** -1 July 23, 1959
 59C-3714 **Guitaritious** (instrumental) 6153, LP 135, LP AD2, 71090
 Unissued, (*not RHM*)

Stereo version **Run Red Run** -1 LP SD 135, WCD

Note: The stereo version has a different, extra, sax solo, and titled "Run, Red, Run" on Warner CD (WCD).

with Mike Stoller, arr/pno-5/elpno-6; King Curtis, ts/lead ts-8; George Barnes, bjo; Sonny Forriest, gtr; Wendell Marshall or Milt Hinton, bs; Panama Francis, dms; prob. Willie Rodriguez, bgo/cowbells-7; Jerry Leiber, prob. handcl-6. Tom Dowd, eng; Leiber-Stoller, prod. Omit ts on -6. Earl Carroll -9 wrongly listed on 71090.

60C-4861 61C-4861 **Keep On Rolling** -3,7,9 February 26, 1960
 60C-4275 60C-4293 **Besame Mucho (Part I)** -2 6192 (1961), LP 135, 71090
 6163, MrR&B LP 102, Edsel LP 156,
 71090
 60C-4294 (edited) **Besame Mucho (Part II)** -4,8 6163, MrR&B LP 102
 60C-4276 **The Snake And The Book Worm** -6
 (Gardner & Gunter, unison lead) 6178, LP 135, GY,
 Acrobat 2CD ADDCD3180
 60C-4277 **Wake Me, Shake Me** -1 6168, LP 135, 71090
 60C-4278 **Lady Like** -4,5 6341 (1965), MrR&B LP 102, Edsel LP 156

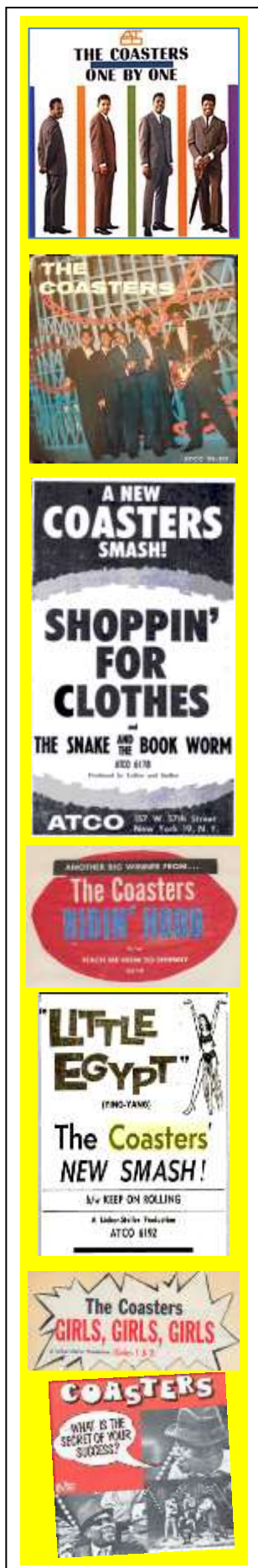
Stereo version **Keep On Rollin'** -3,7 LP SD 135
 Dubbed stereo edition **The Snake & The Bookworm** LP SD 135
 -4,8 #

Stereo master (60C-4277) **Wake Me, Shake Me** -1 LP SD 135

Note: 4861 edited in August, 1960 (original master number not listed in Atlantic files). 61C-4861 used on single. It is titled "Keep On Rollin'" on LP 33-135. 60C-4294 issued with added credits "**Tenor Sax Solo By King Curtis** (no lead by Jones, only vocal chorus). 60C-4293/94 edited in March, 1960 and used on single. "Besame Mucho Part 2" on Edsel LP 156 is in fact Part I. The two parts are connected into one track on Mr R&B RBLP 102 (total time 4:06). The stereo version of "Keep On Rollin'" has dubbed vocal chorus instead of Curtis' sax breaks. The stereo edition of "The Snake..." is completely different to the mono and has Curtis on sax and lesser vocals (the title is not sung). Stoller's electric piano is omitted in favour of a Curtis sax breaks. The mono version, although mentioned in Sequel booklet, not present. The song is titled "The Snake & The Bookworm" on LPs and corresponding CDs and "The Snake And The Bookworm (or "... Book Worm") on later CD compilations. The fine Acrobat 2CD "*The Complete Singles As and Bs 1954-62*" (2016) features all 27 mono singles by the Robins and the Coasters 1954 - 1962 (with at least five of the 1958 CBCD stereo masters), plus the two extra album tracks of 1957 and 1962. Stereo master of "Wake Me, Shake Me" same master as 60C-4277. The five tracks in this discography marked # after track title indicate alternates completely different to original issues.

Check the R&B Pioneers Series' (**The Great R&B Files**) volume "Those Hoodlum Friends - The Coasters" for later records and an off-shoot Coasters discography - and page 42 in this volume for the Coasters' King Records discography.

The Great R&B Pioneers



with Stan Applebaum, arr/dir; unknown strings; Ellis Larkins, pno; Artie Ryerson, bjo; Sonny Forriest and Allen Hanlon, gtrs; George Duvivier, bs; Don Lamond, dms; Phil Kraus, perc/vbs. Phil Ramone, eng; Leiber-Stoller, prod. Coaster not singing lead acts vocal chorus. Some evidence point to the fact that the instrumental parts were recorded separately before the vocals.

A&R Recording Studios, 112 West 48th Street, New York City

June 13, 1960

| | | | |
|----------|---------|---|--------|
| 60C-4625 | Gunter | Easy Living | LP 123 |
| 60C-4626 | Guy | Don't Get Around Much Anymore | LP 123 |
| 60C-4627 | Gardner | Moonlight In Vermont | LP 123 |
| 60C-4628 | Gardner | Moonglow | LP 123 |
| 60C-4629 | Jones | You'd Be So Nice To Come Home To | LP 123 |
| 60C-4630 | Gunter | Autumn Leaves | LP 123 |



June 15, 1960

| | | | |
|----------|---------|--|--------|
| 60C-4631 | Guy | Gee Baby Ain't I Good To You | LP 123 |
| 60C-4632 | Gardner | Satin Doll | LP 123 |
| 60C-4633 | Jones | The Way You Look Tonight | LP 123 |
| 60C-4634 | Gardner | Willow Weep For Me | LP 123 |
| 60C-4635 | Jones | But Beautiful | LP 123 |
| 60C-4636 | Gunter | On The Sunny Side Of The Street | LP 123 |



Note: The mono and stereo masters are identical. ** All 12 tracks in stereo on RHM 4CD-7740 (and not issued in mono on CD). Originally issued on Atco LP 33-123 (July 1960; stereo version SD 33-123, originally also in 1960 and later reissued with diff "logos"), titled "One By One". The stereo album reissued as one half of Collectables CD 76566 "The Coasters - One By One" (2004), and the UK reissue Hoodoo CD 263387 "The Coasters plus One By One" (2011). The latter also features three bonus tracks of 1958-59 plus a nice 16-page booklet.

with Mike Stoller, arr/pno; King Curtis, ts; Sonny Forriest and Phil Spector, gtrs; Wendell Marshall, bs; Gary Chester, dms. Tom Dowd, eng; Leiber-Stoller, prod. Omit pno and one guitar on -5 (Spector probably not featured on that track).

Atlantic Studios, 11 West 60th Street, New York City

July 29, 1960

| | | | |
|----------|--|----------------------------------|---|
| 60C-4752 | | Thumbin' A Ride | 6186, MrR&B LP 102, Edsel LP 156, 71090 |
| 60C-4753 | | Dog Face | unissued, (not RHM) |
| 60C-4754 | | Shoppin' For Clothes -1,5 | 6178, LP 371, LP AD2, **Rhino 2CD 71090, 2CD 132092 |

Note: Original composer credits to Elmo Glick (pseudonym for Jerry Leiber - and possibly Mike Stoller too) on 6178. Later pressings of that single (most probably a bootleg - which does not even feature The Coasters, poss. Kent Harris in a compl diff song) issued as "Clothes Line (Wrap It Up)" with master number 60C-4654-MO (flip also had an -MO ending). This was the original title, written by Kent Harris (who was credited composer on that "reissue", later Leiber-Stoller-Harris were credited as composers to "Shoppin' For Clothes").

with Plas Johnson, ts; Jewell Grant, bars; Ernie Freeman, pno; Sonny Forriest and Rene Hall, gtrs; Eddie Williams, bs; Melvin Pollan, dms. Lester Sill and Lee Hazlewood (sic Hazelwood), prod.

Prob. Radio Recorders, 7000 Santa Monica Boulevard, Los Angeles, California

(or poss. Gold Star Studios, 6252 Santa Monica Boulevard)

December 7, 1960

| | | | |
|----------|--------|-----------------------|--|
| 60C-5234 | master | Ridin' Hood -4 | 6219 (1962), MrR&B LP 102, Edsel LP 156, CBCD, **MrR&B RBD 102 |
|----------|--------|-----------------------|--|

| | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------|
| <i>Alt. take (stereo master)</i> | Riding Hood -4 | Sequel CD 870, CBCD, (not RHM) |
| <i>Take 4, false start take 5</i> | Riding Hood -4 | CBCD , (not RHM) |
| <i>Take 28 fast version (stereo)</i> | Riding Hood -4 | CBCD |

Note: MrR&B RBD 102 (1990) is the CD version of LP 102. The alt.take and takes 4, 5 are only issued as noticed.

with Mike Stoller, arr/pno/speeded-up vcl on fade-5331; King Curtis, ts; George Barnes, bjo; Sonny Forriest and Allen Hanlon, gtrs; Abie Baker, bs; Bobby Rosengarden and Gary Chester, dms. Tom Dowd, eng; Leiber-Stoller, prod. Earl Carroll is listed as fifth singer on CD 71090 and Bear Family CD "Rock".

Atlantic Studios, 11 West 60th Street, New York City

February 9, 1961

| | | | |
|----------------------|--|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 61C-5330 | | Girls Girls Girls (Part I) -1 | 6204, LP 135, LP AD2 |
| 61C-5607 (61C-5330B) | | Girls Girls Girls (Part II) -1 | 6204, MrR&B LP 102, 71090, 2CD 132092 |
| 61C-5331 | | Little Egypt (Ying-Yang) -1 | 6192, LP 135, LP AD2, 71090 |
| 61C-5332 | | Weddin' Days | unissued, (not RHM) |

| | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------|
| <i>Stereo alternate #</i> | Girls, Girls, Girls (Pt. 1) -1 | LP SD 135, WCD |
| <i>Stereo edition</i> | Little Egypt -1 | LP SD 135, LP 371, WCD |

Note: 61C-5607 edited in July, 1961 and is a complete different take in faster tempo. The stereo alternates are only slightly different, although "Girls, Girls, Girls" in stereo has unison chorus instead of Guy's solo bridge. That version appears twice on Sequel. Note the commas only on WCD stereo version (and on some European issues and ads). "Ying-Yang" subtitle omitted on most reissues. LP SD33-135 was reissued in 2005 on Collectables Col-CD-6523.

with Steve Douglas, ts; James H. Davids, tackpno; Michael Adams, gtr; Llevellyn Klassy,bs; Sandy Nelson, dms. Lester Sill and Lee Hazlewood (sic Hazelwood), prod. "Hongry" wrongly credited to be produced by Leiber-Stoller on Atco 6341. Earl Carroll is listed as fifth singer on Bear Family CD "Rock". Peter Stoller, who corrected me on some of my earlier mishaps, states this session was a Leiber-Stoller session with Mike at the tackpno (recorded ca February 1961). Well. I am not agreeing on that, but "fixed" the earlier mishaps.

Gold Star Studios, 6252 Santa Monica Boulevard, Los Angeles, California

April 10, 1961

| | | | |
|----------|--|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 61C-5513 | | Giving Up | unissued, (not RHM) |
| 61C-5514 | | Hongry -1 | 6341 (1965), MrR&B LP 102, 71090 |
| 61C-5515 | | Teach Me How To Shimmy -1 | 6219 (1962), MrR&B LP 102, 71090 |
| 61C-5516 | | I'm A Hum Dinger | unissued, (not RHM) |

The Great R&B Pioneers

THE COASTERS

Carl Gardner, lead/tenor; **Billy Guy**, baritone/lead-1; **Will "Dub" Jones**, bass/lead-2; **Earl "Speedo" Carroll**, tenor/lead-3. (Sung in unison -4)

with Mike Stoller, arr; Grady Gaines and Clifford "Gene" Burks, tss; Gary Bell, pno (or poss. ts); Milt Hopkins and Joe Richardson, gtrs; "Olsie" Richard Robinson, bs; Emile Russell, dms (the Upsetters). Phil Iehle, eng; Leiber-Stoller, prod.

Atlantic Studios, 11 West 60th Street, New York City

September 25, 1961

| | | |
|----------|-------------------------------------|---|
| 61C-5699 | My Babe -1 | LP 135, LP SD 135, ** |
| 61C-5700 | Bad Blood | 6210, LP 135, LP AD2, 71090 |
| 61C-5701 | (Ain't That) Just Like Me -1 | 6210, LP 135, LP SD 135, **Rhino 2CD 71090, 2CD 132092 |

Stereo version **Bad Blood** LP SD 135, WCD

Note: 61C-5699 unissued in mono on CD. The stereo version of "Bad Blood" has a different bridge. The Atlantic Studio sometimes reported to have moved to 11 West 60th Street in 1961 (not in 1959, but 1959 is the right year). The office now was at 1841 Broadway, which was the same "cornered" building as the new studio.

with Mike Stoller, arr/elpno; Alan Lorber, dir; unknown strings; Wilbur "Dud" Bascomb and Lamar Wright, tpts; Harry DiVito, tbn; prob Alonzo "Buddy" Lucas or poss King Curtis, ts/lead ts-5; **Thomas "Curley" Palmer**, Billy Butler and John "Bucky" Pizzarelli, gtrs; Al Lucas, bs; Gary Chester, dms. Leiber-Stoller, prod.

July 31, 1962

| | | |
|----------------------|---------------------------------|--|
| 62C-6376 mono master | The Climb (vocal) -2 | 6234, Clarion LP 605, GY, (not RHM, not R001/2) |
| 62C-6414 (edited) | The Climb (instrumental) | 6234, GY, (not RHM, not R001/2) |
| 62C-6377 | Bull Tick Waltz -1,5 | 6251, MrR&B LP 102, R001 |

Alternate master **The Slime** -2 Clarion LP SD-605, R002, **Rhino 2CD 71090

Stereo master (62C-6376) **The Climb** -2 Sequel CD 870, CBCD, R001

Note: 62C-6414 with brass overdub (no vocals - the trombone doing Jones) edited on August 14, 1962, with same rhythm track as the vocals. The instrumental is featured on GY (although not listed). "The Slime" uses "...the Slime" instead of "...the Climb" and is probably the original master, since this was the original intended title (although it is titled "The Climb" on Clarion). Master titled "The Climb (Pt 1)" on Sequel with one sequence rephrased to "...at the club - let 'em roll" (with a short intro on CBCD and poss same master as on Atco single 6234).

with George "Teacho" Wiltshire (*sic* Wilshire), arr/dir; Alonzo "Buddy" Lucas, ts; Artie Butler, pno; Billy Butler, Mimi Roman and Everett Barksdale, gtrs; Russ Saunders, bs; Panama Francis, dms. Unkn handclapping; the Coasters whistling. Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller, prod.

January 10-11, 1963

| | | |
|----------|----------------------|--------------------|
| 62C-6707 | The P.T.A. -1 | 6251, MrR&B LP 102 |
|----------|----------------------|--------------------|

Note: Observe the 62C-master number although the recording was made in 1963. Song written by Fred Tobias - Paul Evans. This was Leiber-Stoller's last Coasters production for Atco.

with King Curtis, dir/ts (and his orchestra); collective personnel: Lamar Wright and Elmon Wright, tpts; George Matthews, tbn; Jimmy Powell, as; Alva "Beau" McCain and Noble "Thin Man" Watts, tss; Paul "Hucklebuck" Williams, bars; George Stubbs, pno; Cornell Dupree, James Albert Bethea and Thomas "Curley" Palmer, gtrs; Jimmy Lewis and Alonzo Collins, bs; Ray Lucas, dms. King Coleman, MC; Tom Dowd and Phil Iehle, engs; Pat "Lover" Patterson, manager; Nesuhi Ertegun and Jerry Wexler, prod.

Apollo Theater, 253 West 125th Street, New York City

November 16, 1963

| | | |
|-------------------|--|--|
| 63C-7401 63C-7573 | T' Ain't Nothin' To Me -1 (Jones, second lead) | LP 159, 6287, **Sequel CD 870, Rhino 2CD 132092 |
| 63C-7402 | Speedo's Back In Town -3 | LP 159, 6287, **Sequel CD 870 |
| 63C-7403 | What's The Secret Of Your Success -1 | unissued, (not RHM) |
| 63C-7404 | Girls, Girls, Girls -1 | unissued, (not RHM) |

Note: 63C-7573 shortened into 45-single, time 3:35, on January 28, 1964. The original track 4:38 appears on Atco LP 33-159, which is a live album of several performers, titled "Saturday Night At The Apollo" (1964).

with Charles Calello, arr/dir/prod; James Cleveland, tbn; Joe d'Addario, tpt; Raymond Desio and Wille "Bridges" Outerbridge, saxes; Leroy Glover, org; Horace Ott, pno; Thomas Palmer, Vincent Bell and Al Gorgoni, gtrs; Russ Saunders, bs; Buddy Saltzman, dms; George Devens, perc; Barbara Webb, Maretha Stewart and Eileen Gilbert, background vcls. Omit brass/reeds and girl vcls on -7477.

Atlantic Studios, 11 West 60th Street, New York City

December 17, 1963

| | | |
|----------|-------------------------|--|
| 63C-7477 | Bad Detective -1 | 6300, MrR&B LP 102, 71090 |
| 63C-7478 | Lovey Dovey | 6300, MrR&B LP 102, Sequel CD 869, Warner Platinum CD 73225 |
| 63C-7479 | Cotton Fields | unissued, (not RHM) |
| 63C-7480 | Skylark | unissued, (not RHM) |

Note: British Warner Platinum CD "Yakety Yak - The Coasters Collection" (2005) features 20 classics (with "Three Cool Cats" 2:26, "Zing! Went The Strings Of My Heart" and "The Shadow Knows" in stereo). Most of the raw session tapes with unissued recordings were lost in Atlantic's ware-house fire in New Jersey in 1978, although the master tapes of issued recordings were stored in New York (and some raw tapes were found stored elsewhere).



The Great R&B Pioneers



with Teacho Wiltshire, arr/dir/prod/prob.pno; Bill Bivens, ts; Ernie Hayes, org and/or pno; Eric Gale, Carl Lynch and Troy Seals, gtrs; Jimmy Lewis, bs; Bernard "Pretty" Purdie, dms. Gregory Carroll, co-prod (no relation to Earl). Omit ts and org on -8155.

64C-8153
64C-8154
64C-8155

Wild One -1
Speedball
I Must Be Dreaming
(Gardner & Guy, joint leads)

August 28, 1964
6321, MrR&B LP 102, Sequel CD 870
unissued, (not RHM)

6321, Sequel CD 870

Note: 64C-8155 titled "I Must Be Dreamin' (1964 version)" on Sequel.

with Bert Keyes, arr/dir/pno/prod; Joe Newman and Bill Berry, tpts; Buddy Lucas, hca-5/ts; Seldon Powell, ts; Heywood Henry, bars; Thomas Palmer, Carl Lynch and Everett Barksdale, gtrs; Bill Winston, bs; Bobby Donaldson, dms; prob. George Devens, vbs-6. Unknown female vclgrp-7. Billy Guy, prod-8
Unknown studios, New York City

65C-8832
65C-8833

Money Honey -4,5
Let's Go Get Stoned -1,7

April 21, 1965
6356, Sequel CD 870
6356, Atco LP SD-850, Sequel CD 870

65C-9290
65C-9291

Crazy Baby -1,6,7,8
Bell Bottom Slacks And A Chinese Kimono
(She's My Little Spodee-O) -5

September 8, 1965 (see note)
6379, Sequel CD 871

Note: Audibly -8832/9291 belong to one Atco-recorded session, with -8833/9290 as a special session, produced by Billy Guy and purchased by Atco (both sessions probably recorded in April, since Atco 6356 was released in May, when "Let's Go Get Stoned" possibly was given "Bell Bottom Slacks..." original master number). September 8, 1965 possibly in fact editing date of Atco 6379 (with partly different personnel). 65C-9291 has a studio intro on Sequel. LP SD-850 is a v.a. album titled "Smash Sounds" (1967).

with King Curtis, arr/dir/prod/ts (and his orchestra); Paul Griffin, pno; Cornell Dupree and Hugh McCracken, gtrs; Charles "Chuck" Rainey, bs; Ray Lucas, dms. Add on -9877: prob. Melvin Lastie or Ernie Royal, tpt; poss. Willie "Bridges" Outerbridge, bars; and poss. Robert (Bob) Ascher, tbn.

Atlantic Studios, 11 West 60th Street, New York City

66C-9877
66C-9878

She's A Yum Yum -4
Saturday Night Fish Fry -1

January 26, 1966
6407, Sequel CD 869
6407, Sequel CD 869

Note: "Quicksand" from this session is by King Curtis. The British Sequel CDs (RSA 868, 869, 870 and 871), with same titles and covers as the first four Atco LPs, are reissues (with lots of extra bonus tracks) from 1997, featuring several stereo masters for the first time, later also on RHM. Some track mishaps occurred, later corrected on the Rhino Handmade CD. All tracks from MrR&B LP 102 later on Sequel CDs. In 1959 (after the success of "Charlie Brown") the Coasters had renewed their contract with Atco for a further seven years. Leiber-Stoller had parted with Atlantic/Atco in 1963. In 1966 Jerry & Mike took the Coasters to Columbia, where Lester Sill gave Leiber-Stoller control of the group for the subsidiary label Date and in 1971 The Coasters again teamed up with Leiber-Stoller for a third time (recording for King Records). A total of five Date/Columbia/King recordings are featured on AD LP2-4003 and Rhino CD 71090.



The Coasters Discography on Atco - Compiled by Claus Rönnisch - updated August 30, 2020.

Acknowledgments to: Bill Miller and the late Kurt Mohr (you two did so much groundwork for this), to Therese Garthson at the Atlantic Records office of the 1960s, my dear friends - the late Carl Gardner, and his wife Veta Gardner (The Coasters' manager); and to the elaborate Michel Ruppli (Atlantic session discography). Thanks also to Randy Poe, the late Jerry Leiber and his friend Mike Stoller, the late Big Al Pavlov, to Stefan Wriedit of Bear Family (who read my very first draft of this 30+ years ago), and his colleague Nico Feuerbach, to Victor Pearlman, the late Brian Watson, Jonas Bernholm in Sweden, Bernd Kratochwil of Rockin' Fifties magazine in Germany, the great Bill Dahl, my new-found friends Todd Baptista (USA), and Nick Duckett (at Rhythm & Blues Records and History of RnB Records), and to Marv Goldberg, the late Robert Palmer, Fernando L. Gonzalez (Disco-File), Gary Kramer, the late Robert D. Ferlingere, Norbert Hess, Barry Hansen, Dave "Daddy Cool" Booth, Little Walter De Venne, Billy Vera, the late George Lavatelli (UGHA and Relic Records), and to Tony Rounce (formerly of Sequel Records in London - nowadays at Ace Records), Bob Fisher at Jasmine Records, Seamus McGarvey, Robert Christgau (thanks for your great analysis), Frank Scott (a true pioneer), Chris Woodford, editors Tony Burke, and Trevor Caijao, veteran Opal Louis Nations, Peter Stoller (Mike's son), Gary Blalock at Hoodoo Records, Dave Penny (Blues and Rhythm Classics, and Fantastic Voyage), the staff at Rhino and Collectables, re-issue producer Mason Williams, to Cary Mansfield at Varèse Sarabande (Vintage), Bob McGrath, Paul Watts at Acrobat Music, and especially to James Ritz (working for a.o. Rhino Handmade). I am proud of having been fortunate to find information from you - and especially proud of having learned to know some of you personally due to our mutual interests.

Check the R&B Pioneers Series (**The Great R&B Files**) volume "The Clown Princes of Rock and Roll" for the Coasters' King Records discography - revised on page 42 in this volume. Also check "Those Hoodlum Friends - The Coasters" for later records and an off-shoot Coasters discography (plus the planned tracks for "The Definitive Soul Collection").

The Great R&B Pioneers

Photos and album covers on the Coasters' previous pages

THE COASTERS ON ATCO

- page 8:**
- The Coasters May 11, 1956 debut at the Apollo (Al Hibbler top billing). Image top left Bobby Nunn, center circle image Carl Gardner, Leon Hughes, and Billy Guy (shifted in bottom images).
 - The Coasters prob early 1957, Carl Gardner, Bobby Nunn, Billy Guy, and front Leon Hughes.
- page 9:**
- The Robins 1955, top "Ty" Terrell Leonard, center fr.l. Billy and Roy Richard, Bobby Nunn, Grady Chapman, and front Carl Gardner.
 - 1956, top Nunn and Gardner, bottom Hughes and Guy.
 - The Cash Box September 14, 1957 (with a photo from August 25, 1957) fr.l. Carl Gardner, Billy Guy, Bobby Nunn, TV-host Steve Allen (with the golden records of "Young Blood" and "Searchin'"), Leon Hughes, and front Adolph Jacobs.
- page 10:**
- The Dick Clark TV-show August 16, 1958, top Will "Dub" Jones, Carl Gardner, Cornell Gunter, front Adolph Jacobs and Billy Guy (with the golden record of "Yakety Yak").
 - Bottom, The Coasters in mid 1959.
- page 11:**
- Top left image, early publicity photo ca 1956, fr.l. Leon Hughes, Billy Guy, Carl Gardner, and center front Bobby Nunn.
 - Center image, ca 1960, Billy Guy, Will "Dub" Jones, Carl Gardner, and Cornell Gunter.
 - "The Definitive Coasters" (History of RnB Records 2CD-set R001), the Coasters in 1959, Cornell Gunter, Will "Dub" Jones, Billy Guy, Carl Gardner, and Adolph Jacobs.
 - "Those Hoodlum Friends" (History of RnB Records 2CD-set R002), photo August 16, 1958, Guy, Jones, Gardner, Gunter, and Jacobs.
 - "There's A Riot Goin' On - The Coasters on Atco", August 16, 1958, Guy, Gunter, Gardner, and front Jones.
 - The Robins "Smoky Joe's Cafe" (budget CD on Collectables), 1955 (see page 8).
- page 12:**
- "Their Greatest Recordings - The Early Years" - Atco montage of the Coasters ca early 1957.
- page 13:**
- 1956, top Nunn and Gardner, bottom Hughes and Guy.
 - 1959, fr.l. Gunter, Jones, Guy, Gardner and Jacobs.
 - "The Coasters Rock" (Bear Family CD), August 25, 1957 at the Steve Allen TV-show, fr.l. Gardner, Guy, Nunn, Hughes, and Jacobs.
- page 14:**
- "The Very Best Of The Coasters" (Rhino CD), photo 1959, Jones, Gardner, Gunter, Guy, and Jacobs.
 - "Charlie Brown" (U.S. bootleg Mr. R&B CD), Shindig TV-show Los Angeles, February 10, 1965 with Guy and Jones plus the whole group fr.l. Earl "Speedo" Carroll, Gardner, Guy, and seated Jones.
 - At the Atlantic office in late 1958, fr.l. manager Lester Sill, Atlantic vice president Jerry Wexler, Gardner, Jones, Guy, Gunter, and president Ahmet Ertegun; seated Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller.
- page 15:**
- The Coasters in the studios on March 26, 1959, fr.l. Jerry Leiber, Carl Gardner, Mike Stoller (back turned), King Curtis, and Billy Guy (hidden Jones and Gunter).
 - "The Coasters' Greatest Hits" (Atco LP), mid 1959, Guy, Gardner,

(next page - the covers (& folders) of the British Sequel CDs of March, 1997).

- page 16:**
- Jones, Gunter and front Jacobs.
 - "Thumbin' A Ride" (UK Edsel LP of 1984 - the last Coasters LP).
 - "One By One" (Atco LP), 1960, Guy, Gardner, Jones, Gunter.
 - "The Coasters" (Atco LP, simulated stereo) photo 1957, and "The Coasters plus One By One" (Hoodoo CD), photo 1959 (see p.14).
 - "What Is The Secret Of Your Success?" (Swedish Mr R&B LP/CD), see details at "Charlie Brown" above.
- page 17:**
- The Coasters in ca 1966, fr.l. Earl "Speedo" Carroll, Will "Dub" Jones, Carl Gardner, and Billy Guy.
 - French v.a. EP "The Climb", photo from ca 1960, Guy, Jones, Gardner, and Gunter.
 - "Apollo Saturday Night" (Atco LP), the Coasters November 16, 1963, Carroll, Jones, Gardner, Guy.
 - "Coast Along With The Coasters" (Atco LP 1962) - no photo.
 - "Yakety Yak - The Coasters Collection" (UK Warner Platinum CD), photo 1965 with Gardner, Will Jones, Earl Carroll, and Guy.
 - At the Shindig TV-show February 10, 1965, Jones, Guy, Gardner, Earl "Speedo" Carroll, and Thomas "Curley" Palmer.
- page 18:**
- "That Is Rock & Roll" (budget LP Clarion - Atlantic sub), photo ca 1960, Jones, Gardner, Gunter, Guy.
 - "20 Great Originals" (UK Atlantic LP), drawing/photo montage based on the 1957 Coasters, fr.l. Hughes, Guy, Nunn, and Gardner.
 - "Young Blood" (Atlantic De-Luxe 2-set LP), drawing of Earl "Speedo" Carroll with inspiration from an Apollo appearance with the Coasters in 1969.
 - "The Ultimate Coasters" (Warner Special Products CD) - no photo.
 - "50 Coastin' Classics" (2-set Rhino CD), photo prob early 1957 with Carl Gardner, Bobby Nunn, Billy Guy, and kneeling Leon Hughes.
 - The Coasters in the Atlantic Studios March 26, 1959 (doing "Along Came Jones"), Carl Gardner, Will "Dub" Jones, Cornell Gunter, and at the piano Billy Guy and Mike Stoller.
 - Inserted: "The Definitive Soul Collection" (2-set withdrawn CD, planned 2007), photo ca late 1955, Gardner, Nunn, Hughes, and Guy (with guitar).
 - "The Complete Singles A's and Bs 1954-62" (Acrobat 2-set CD), photo 1959, Jones, Gardner, Gunter, Guy, and Jacobs.
- page 19:**
- "Brazil" promo 1956 fr.l. Leon Hughes, Billy Guy, Carl Gardner, and Bobby Nunn.
 - ca late 1958 (in Arizona with DJ Jack Curtis: Gunter, Jones, Jacobs, Guy, and Gardner).
 - bottom left: late 1971 promoting "Love Potion Number Nine" on King Records, fr.l. Ronnie Bright, Carl Gardner, Billy Guy, and seated front Earl "Speedo" Carroll.
 - "What About Us" promo ,photo mid 1959 (see page 15).
 - Swedish EP, "Top Hits" photo August 16, 1958 with Jones, Gardner, Gunter, and front Jacobs and Guy.
 - bottom right: 1986 (or poss 1987), Ronnie Bright, Jimmy Norman, guitarist Thomas "Curley" Palmer, and center front Carl Gardner,

THE COASTERS 1955 - 1997

| | | |
|--|---|--|
|  Carl Gardner born 1925-2005, death in 2021 |  Bobby Nunn born 1923-2019 |  Billy Guy born 1925-2019 |
|  Leon Hughes born 1923-1997 |  Will Jones born 1926-2007 |  Cornell Gunter born 1925-1981 |
|  Earl "Speedo" Carroll born 1923-1975 |  Ronnie Bright born 1926-2005 |  Jimmy Norman born 1926-1999 and 1921-1999 |
|  Adolph "Al" Jacobs 1920-1999, 1991-11 |  Stewart "Sonny" Payroll 1929-1981 |  Thomas "Curley" Palmer 1942-2011 |









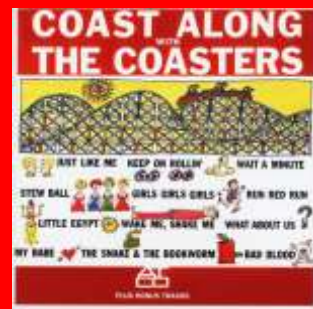
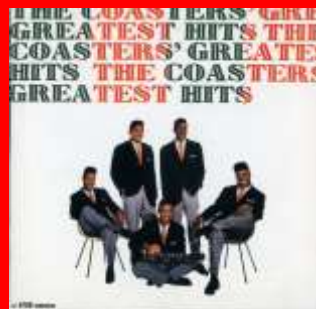






The Great R&B Pioneers

The Four British Coasters Sequel CDs (of March, 1997) - RSA CD 868, 869, 870, and 871 (with a total of 98 great tracks).



JOHN LEE HOOKER

- The World's Greatest Blues Singer

THE FORMATIVE YEARS 1948-1967

4 Further Super Tracks presented by Claus Röhnisch
(Extras to page 80 in Amendments to the Great R&B Files -
to make it an even 20)

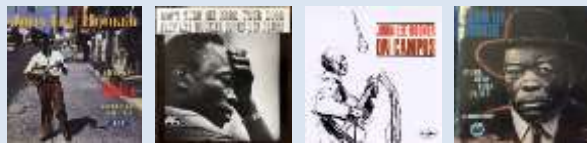


Too Much Boogie - Detroit, ca August 1953

Modern 916 - Issued in October. From late 1952 - and probably up into early 1955 - Joe Bihari regularly drove to United Sound in Detroit to cut Hooker records - still engineered by Joe Siracuse, who also co-produced. This is a true "catching hook" with Eddie Kirkland supporting, who in his car, toured the South with Hooker during several occasions these years. By the way - the song was even issued in Britain on the London label. Apart from bootlegs it had to wait until 1993 for a first album issue (on CD). In 1953 John also made some "down-south" blues for Henry Stone (probably in Cincinnati - or possibly Miami for Rockin', DeLuxe and Chart), with several singles issued 1953-1956. Recommended CD: *The Legendary Modern Recordings* (Ace).

You Lost A Good Man - Miami, ca July 7, 1961

From *Atco LP 33-151 Don't Turn Me From Your Door / John Lee Hooker Sings His Blues* - Issued in 1963. A gospel-styled superb song - the Henry Stone Miami-recorded gems really get you turned on! Stone sold tracks from this session to whoever wanted them! They appeared on Guest Star, Storyville, Atco and Stax during the 1960s. Hard to say if there is a second guitar or an electric bass backing - or both. Hooker refers to "Earl" in one of the great Florida songs - maybe cousin Earl Hooker plays both guitar and bass on his "double-neck"? Great stuff! The Atco LP also featured 1953 DeLuxe songs, CD: *Don't Turn Me From Your Door* (Atco/Atlantic with bonus tracks).



Birmingham Blues - Chicago, mid 1963

Vee-Jay 493 - Issued 1963 and picked from *the On Campus LP* (titled *I Want To Shout The Blues* in England). Loosely based on the early classic Tommy Johnson Delta blues "Big Road Blues", Hooker gets "political" and gives his view on the Alabama "race situation". A strong and tuff Funk Brothers-backed rendition most probably featuring original "funk brother" Joe Edward Hunter at the piano. This is truly qualified as one of Hooker's greatest. The recording date in Chicago is easy to identify - the race riots in Alabama of May, 1963 and Kennedy still alive. CD: *Testament* (Charly 3CD-set).

House Rent Blues - Chicago May, 1966

From *Chess/Universal CD CHD 9329 More Real Folk Blues - The Missing Album* - Issued in 1991, featuring previously unissued tracks from the Real Folk Blues sessions, produced by Ralph Bass (of Black & White, Savoy, King, and Chess). It is most probably a "legal" session with Hooker temporarily "freed" from ABC. Johnnie is backed by long-time Chess session musician Lafayette Leake at the piano, Hooker's old Detroit friend Eddie Burns on second guitar (not harmonica this time), unknown bass and tambourine players, and S.P. Leary or poss Fred Below at the drums. The most famous of the songs on the original *Real Folk Blues LP* was "One Bourbon, One Scotch, One Beer", Hooker's first version of the retitled Amos Milburn hit of 1953. The song here Hooker recorded thruout his years, twice as a boogie in the very early days, in 1959 as "I Lost My Job", and several times like this - as a slow "talking blues". This is the most interesting rendition. Johnnie talks and whispers, and plays no guitar, with Burns et.co backing up real steady. There is another interesting version featured on the *Endless Boogie ABC LP* recorded 1971. Recommended CD: *The Complete Chess Folk Blues Sessions* (European MCA).

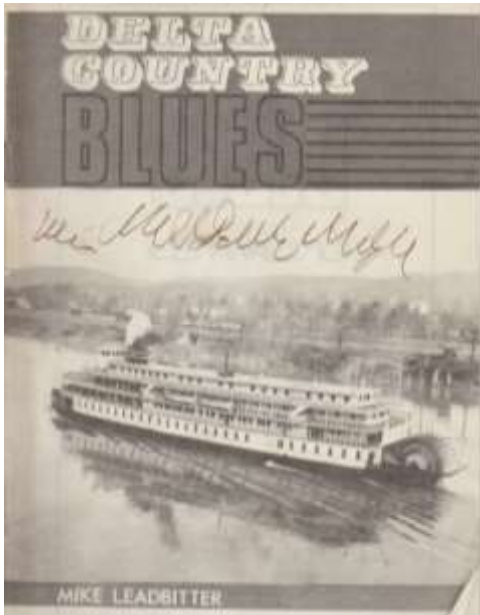


MISSISSIPPI JUKE JOINT BLUES

Rhythm and Blues Records RANDB036 (4CD box plus bonus CD)

- a perfect companion to Nick Duckett's "The History of Rhythm and Blues" CD-series covering 1925-1962 (with a total of four 4CD-sets) and his Rhythm & Blues Chronology 4CD-sets covering 1938 - 1949 (with a total of six 4cd-sets). The Mississippi box is based on resercher Lewis Wade Jones' inventory of Clarksdales Juke Box contents a given day (September 9, 1941) in five taverns (published by Tony Rusell in 1971). A simply terrific, and historic chance to find out what Mississippi's inhabitants had a chance to listen to at a true "war-time" moment, just before the Rhythm & Bues explosion. Decca, Okeh, Bluebird, Columbia, Victor are the labels with most of the famous jazz/blues artists of the day. Louis Jordan, Billie Holiday, Jay McShann, Buddy Johnson, Walter Davis, Count Basie, Sister Rosetta Tharpe, Roosevelt Sykes, Andy Kirk, Big Bill Broonzy, and all the others are here. Among my favorites: "Boogie Woogie's Mother-In-Law" with Buddy Johnson and his Band, "Bottle It Up And Go" by Tommy McClennan, and "The Blues" with Artie Shaw, but there is several more great stuff here. Get it! The songs are all recorded around 1938-1941.

Here is what we knew about **Sonny Boy** in 1968 (at least what Mike Leadbitter, editor of Blues Unlimited, knew in his ground-breaking little booklet "Delta Country Blues", published by his magazine).



Mike continues his chapter on Sonny Boy with some interesting facts about his stay in Greenville in about 1936 for some years – hanging around with Robert Jr, and meeting Elmore James, doing radiosets from 1938 from both Belzoni and Greenville. He moved to Helena, Arkansas in 1941 to broadcast daily spots on KFFA radio (with Pinetop Perkins, Houston Stackhouse and "Peck" Curtis, a.o.). The chapter also has presentations of Robert Jr. Lockwood (who went north to cut records in 1939, but returned to Helena to work with Sonny until after the war), In 1943 Sonny moved to Little Rock and met Elmon Mickle. In 1944 he was back in Belzoni (and travelled to New Orleans with Elmore James), Willie Love, Robert Johnson (who died in 1938), Boyd Gilmore, and several others are also mentioned.

It is fascinating reading - even more than fifty years after its publication. Well, **Mike was a true blues writing pioneer!**

The booklet also has chapters on the Howlin' Wolf, Charley Booker, Doctor Ross, Ike Turner (with Robert Nighthawk and Joe Bihari's "field trips"), B. B. King, Joe Hill Louis, Willie Nix, Walter Horton and Junior Parker (with James Cotton), Woodrow Adams, and Elmon Mickle (that's Driftin' Slim of Little Rock in Arkansas).

THE STORY OF 'SONNY BOY' & FRIENDS

"I was born in the small town of Glendora, Mississippi - That's in Tallahatchie County."

Sang Sonny Boy Williamson, the man who taught Howlin' Wolf to blow a harmonica and who always said that he was the "original Sonny Boy Williamson." His real name and date of birth were never really established and never will be. Sonny Boy provided his interviewers with several dates between 1896 and 1901 and was evasive about his life and name at all times. I am inclined to believe that he was born in 1901 and that his name was Willie Miller. Willie later being replaced by "Rice". However his early records were credited to "W. Williamson" and he was also know to people as Willie "Sonny Boy" Williams! Though he may have adopted the name of "Sonny Boy Williamson", as a means of furthering his own career, Miller owed nothing to John Lee Williamson at all. He neither imitated his songs nor his style, and was in actual fact a far better vocalist and harmonica player and in a class of his own. In spite of this, Miller only rose to real fame after John Lee Williamson died in 1949.

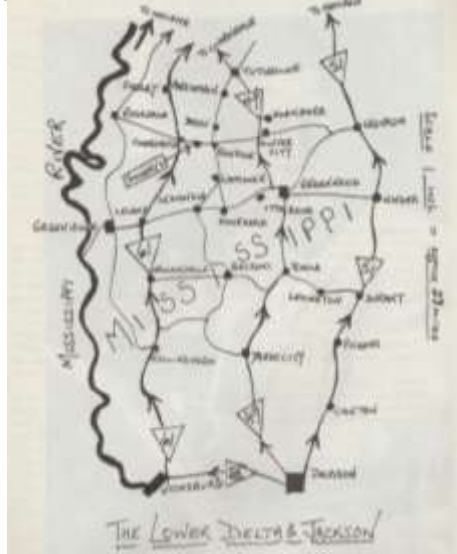
Glendora is just south of Clarkdale and near Nuleville. Here Willie Miller was obviously born on a plantation and raised in a farming community. Though nothing is known of his childhood, it is understood that his family moved to a farm outside Yazoo City while Willie was still young.

Willie's mother apparently lived on here for some time after he moved away. Living in this area would place Willie's initial musical activities in the Yazoo City - Belzoni area, as they were. How he learned harmonica and when is not known, but he himself said that he turned to the life of a wandering musician in 1928. From his home, he wandered right up the Delta to Memphis and then into Arkansas during the early '30's. He is remembered variously as being "tough" and even "evil" at this time. When he came to Parkin in Arkansas to court and marry Howlin' Wolf's sister, Wolf described him as "a loafer and a drinker", but a man who could "blow hard". Thus he was a proficient musician at the time and well known. He obviously did know several musicians active in the Delta area and several of his "tall stories" may be based on the truth.

In the area around Memphis and down through Helena to Greenville he travelled with Wolf and Robert Johnson in the middle '30's. When Wolf returned to Parkin and Johnson went his own way, Willie, turned to Robert Lockwood as a companion and they seem to have teamed up for quite a long period.

"Come, take a little walk with me
Down to the same old place, where we long to be."

(x 2)





The Modern Records Story

By David Edwards and Mike Callahan

Last update: July 3, 2015 (slightly edited)

[Both Sides Now Publications](#)

Modern / RPM / Flair / Crown / Kent

Singles Discos: [Modern](#) - [RPM](#) - [Flair](#) - [Kent](#) - [Blues & Rhythm](#)
The **Modern** label was formed in 1945 in Los Angeles, California, by Saul and Jules Bihari. Modern recorded rhythm & blues, country & western, jazz, popular, blues, and gospel. The subsidiary RPM was formed in 1950 and released blues, jazz, rhythm & blues and rock & roll. *The subsidiary Flair was formed in 1953 (with great Elmore James recordings)*. Crown was formed in 1954 and after three years (starting in 1957), was used only for budget priced albums. The Riviera label subsidiary was a budget label that operated in 1959. The Kent label subsidiary was formed in 1958 and issued only singles, but the name was used again from 1965 to 1971 for album issues. All of these labels were very much a family affair, as the President of all the labels was Saul Bihari, his brothers Jules and Joe served as Vice Presidents, and brother Lester was head of Sales and Promotion. [Note: This information comes from industry sources and was cited in Galen Gart's book *American Record Label Directory and Dating Guide, 1940-1959*. Joe Bihari's daughter recently sent an e-mail stating Jules was actually President, not Saul, and that Joe Bihari "discovered" their A&R man, Ike Turner.] At the Modern, RPM, *Flair*, and Crown labels, A&R was handled by Joe and Jules Bihari, Maxwell Davis, Austin McCoy, Jake Porter, Lester Sill and Ike Turner.

In the late '40s and early '50s, Modern/RPM was able to attract many fine blues performers to the labels, including B.B. King, Roscoe Gordon, Elmore James, Smokey Hogg, Lightnin' Hopkins, Little Willie Littlefield, Jimmy McCracklin, Jimmy Witherspoon, Pee Wee Crayton and John Lee Hooker. Modern also leased masters from Sam Phillips in Memphis, and was the first label to release material by the legendary Howlin' Wolf. A split between the Bihari brothers and Sam Phillips occurred when Phillips started leasing the Wolf masters to Chess in Chicago. (*Ed. note; Wolf was contracted to Chess and Roscoe Gordon stayed with the Bihari's RPM label*).

Modern/RPM was even successful in the rock & roll field, with vocal groups including the Cadets, Marvin and Johnny, the Jacks, and the Teen Queens, and single artists Jesse Belvin, Etta James, Jimmy Beasley, Richard Berry, and Shirley Gunter. The biggest hits for the Biharis were an uptempo instrumental by tenor sax player Joe Houston, titled "Blow, Joe, Blow", the slow group recording by the Jacks titled "Why Don't You Write Me" in 1955, a novelty number titled "Stranded in the Jungle" in 1956 by the Cadets (a group with the same personnel as the Jacks), a hit by Jesse Belvin with the fine ballad "Goodnight, My Love" in 1956, and a hit with the amateurishly sung "Eddie My Love" by a girl group called the Teen Queens, also in 1956.

Modern got into the 33 1/3 album market very early, issuing a series of 10 inch LPs starting in 1950. Most of the issues in this series are unknown because the company did not list their releases in the Schwann Long Playing Record Catalogs of the period, a practice that continued throughout the history of the company.

The releases in the 12 inch Modern 1200 series and RPM 3000 series were quite high quality releases. Thick vinyl was used, and liner notes and printed spines were used on the covers. The number of albums actually released in these two series is a subject of some debate. Crown reissues of 5002 through 5015 actually have Modern issue numbers 1202 to 1215 in the vinyl trail out area, indicating that these Modern numbers were mastered, but may not have been released except on Crown. Crown reissues 5001 and 5017 through 5024 actually have RPM issue numbers 3001 through 3009 in the vinyl trail out areas indicating that these RPM numbers were mastered if not pressed. The following albums are known to exist for sure: Modern 1201-1211 and RPM 3001 and 3006. RPM album jackets have been issued with Crown label records inside. Any early Modern or RPM album is very collectable.

Unfortunately for record collectors, these quality releases soon deteriorated when the Biharis started putting all of their energy into the Crown budget album line in 1957. After the initial 25 or so Crown album releases (which were reissues of their earlier Modern and RPM albums), the goal of the Crown line seemed to be "How cheap can you make the record?" The covers were two pieces of thin cardboard held together with the paper cover, with no liner notes, and no record inner paper or plastic sleeves were used. Many had only 10 songs

rather than the standard 12. The vinyl on these reissues was thin, and many have manufacturing defects. We have heard that the Biharis even tried to make the vinyl go farther by mixing sand with the vinyl for filler during the pressing process. Whether this is true is debatable, but many Crown albums are so poorly manufactured that they may as well have sand on their surface.

One thing that is known for sure is that they used generic album jackets, and even recycled them. For this reason, most do not even list the song titles on the back cover. Since the backs of the jackets were all the same, they printed up a pile of jackets with no front cover, then just pasted a single sheet (slick) on the front for whatever album they were issuing. If they didn't sell enough of one record and they had some jackets left over, they just pasted another slick on the front and used the jacket for a different album.

With the exception of the Crown releases of the earlier Modern and RPM recorded material, the Biharis hired anonymous studio musicians to record Broadway orchestral music, big band imitations, classical, children's records, sing-along records, and other drivel. Whenever a new music craze came along, the Biharis repackaged the earlier albums to capitalize on it. The twist craze generated many albums where they reissued old material sometimes adding the word "twist" to the song title. If the song was an instrumental, they just made up a new title that included the word "twist". There were also surf records, limbo records, and car song records.

The biggest loser in this sorry business — other than the record buying public — was probably B.B. King, an artist of prodigious talent whose new album releases were subject to the same shoddy treatment that the rest of the Crown catalog received. Early works by B.B. King generally have much less value to collectors than they should have because of the poor quality of the album packaging and record pressings. It's tragic that so much great recorded music by artists like B.B. King, John Lee Hooker, Pee Wee Crayton, Elmore James, Etta James, Jesse Belvin, Richard Berry, and many others was so poorly treated.

Another budget label named Riviera was created in 1959, the only albums of note on the label are some early recordings by Paul Anka [Riviera R0047] and a good compilation of rhythm and blues artists [Riviera R0052]. Even while using the Crown budget album series, the Biharis revived the Modern label several times. In the early '60s, it was used for a line of budget stereo albums, and in 1965/6 for releases by Little Richard, and the Ikettes.

A budget label catering to Latin releases was formed in the early 1960s, a sister label to Crown Records called "Discos Corona," which is "Crown Records" in Spanish.

In the mid-'60s, the company went bankrupt, but a new approach was to use Kent, a label the Biharis formed in 1958, to issue albums with essentially the same management and the same catalog. Kent re-released the most successful of the Crown albums, including the B.B. King catalog. The Kent albums had somewhat better packaging than the Crown albums and did include liner notes and song titles on the back covers. This trend did not last long, however, because in order to capitalize on the '50s nostalgia in the early '70s, another budget label, United (*Ed. note: originally United/Superior*), was started which released some of the better Crown and Kent album titles, again with no liner notes.

The discographies at *both sides now* cover the Modern, RPM, Crown, Discos Corona, Riviera, Kent, Custom, and United/Superior (United) labels. About the only source for information on these labels is our record collections and the discographies on the back of the generic Crown and United record jackets. The titles never appear in either the Schwann catalogs or the Phonolog catalog. Any help on these discographies would be greatly appreciated.

This story and discography are copyright 2000, 2002, 2015 by Mike Callahan. - singles discs: [Global Dog Productions](#)

Thanks to Nicole Bihari Young.



The Chess Story

by Mike Callahan and David Edwards

Last update: November 4, 2005 [Both Sides Now Publications](#) (sl.ed)

Brothers Leonard and Philip Chess were two Jewish immigrants from Poland who came to Chicago in 1928. They were involved in the liquor business and by the 1940's, they owned several bars on the south side of Chicago. Their largest establishment was a nightclub called the Macomba. The Macomba had live entertainment, many of those being blues performers that had migrated to Chicago from the Mississippi delta in the '30s and '40s. They realized that these performers were not being properly recorded, so they decided to start recording them themselves. In 1947 they entered into a partnership with Charles and Evelyn Aron at Aristocrat Records. The Arons had just formed the label to record blues, jazz and rhythm & blues. The most important artist to record on Aristocrat was McKinley Morganfield, who recorded as Muddy Waters and had several successful singles on the label in 1947 and 1948. He had migrated from Mississippi to Chicago a few years before and was working semi-professionally until he met the Chess brothers. Initially his records contained only himself, a piano and bass and his raw singing style reflected the spirit of the bars he played in. Through their connections with radio stations and local clubs, the Chess brothers were able to build Muddy Waters into Chicago's leading blues singer.

In late 1949, Leonard and Phil Chess purchased the interests of the Arons and became the sole owners of Aristocrat Records. On June 3, 1950, they reorganized the company and changed its name to Chess Records. Chess Records flourished in those early days of both rhythm and blues and independent record companies. Chess along with Atlantic, Aladdin, Specialty, Imperial, Modern and King were giving the public music that they could not get from the larger, established "major" record companies. With the success of Muddy Waters, other young Mississippi bluesmen were drawn to Chicago, many joined Muddy's band. One of the most brilliant musicians to play with Muddy was Little Walter Jacobs, whose outstanding harmonica made the band even better. In 1952, Chess formed a subsidiary label called Checker, and Little Walter recorded in his own right for the label. His first release was an instrumental called "Juke" which topped the Rhythm and Blues charts. He was able to top the charts again in 1955 with the vocal "My Babe".

A young record producer in Memphis Tennessee named Sam Phillips was recording a 300 pound farm worker named Chester Burnett, who became known as "the Howlin' Wolf". At the time he recorded Howlin' Wolf, Phillips, who later established Sun Records, did not have a record company so he leased the Howlin' Wolf masters to the Chess brothers. "How Many More Years" backed with "Moanin in the Moonlight" was a hit in 1951. Soon, Howlin' Wolf migrated to Chicago and signed with Chess Records. In 1956, Chess was able to recapture the intensity of his earlier Memphis recordings with the hit "Smoke Stack Lightnin'". Howlin' Wolf recorded for many years on Chess and was one of the most influential bluesmen in history, his influence can be heard in the music of many of the young British and American blues players that became so successful in the '60s and '70s.

In addition to Muddy Waters, Howlin' Wolf and Little Walter, Chess recorded many other giants of post-war American blues such as Sonny Boy Williamson, Lowell Fulson, Memphis Slim, Jimmy Rogers, John Lee Hooker and Willie Mabon. Later, they recorded the next generation of Chicago blues artists with Buddy Guy, Little Milton and Koko Taylor. In 1954, Chess recorded two black vocal groups, the Flamingos and the Moonglows, singing sentimental songs in styles that had appeal to the white record buying public, also. The songs were "Sincerely" by the Moonglows and "I'll Be Home" by the Flamingos. Before the records could become big hits, though, they were covered by white singers, the McGuire Sisters with "Sincerely" and Pat Boone with "I'll Be Home" who took most of the record sales. Even though they did not get the sales, the Chess Record company became known to record distributors as a company that could produce hit music.

In 1955, on a vacation trip to Chicago a young singer and guitar player from St. Louis named Chuck Berry met Muddy Waters, who encouraged him to see the Chess brothers. Chuck Berry auditioned for them with a song he had written called "Ida Red", Leonard and Phil liked the song but suggested a name change, the song was renamed "Maybellene" and became the first of his many Top 40 hits. With Chuck Berry, Chess Records had a singer whose sound could not be duplicated with cover records by white recording artists. Chuck Berry recorded for the Chess brothers for many years producing hit after hit. The songs he wrote and recorded for Chess include many of the signature songs of rock and roll; "Roll Over Beethoven," "Johnny B. Goode," "Sweet Little Sixteen," "Rock and Roll Music," "Memphis," "Brown Eyed Handsome Man" and "School Day" among them. He is one of the giants of Rock and Roll and was one of the initial 10 inductees into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.

Another singer/songwriter who could not be duplicated was discovered by Chess in 1955. His name was Elias McDaniel, *born Bates*, who had moved from Mississippi to Chicago with his family as a boy. He auditioned for the Chess brothers with a song he had written called "Uncle John". Again, they liked the song but not the title, so McDaniels changed it to his own nickname, one that he had used as an amateur boxer, Bo Diddley. The Chess brothers signed Bo Diddley to a long term contract. His distinctive "Shave and a Haircut" rhythm was a staple on Checker Records for many years. His biggest hit was the self titled "Bo Diddley" backed with "I'm a Man" in 1955.

In 1956, Chess established a jazz subsidiary called Argo, and built an impressive stable of influential jazz artists like Sonny Stitt, James Moody, Yusef Lateef, Gene Ammons, Lou Donaldson, Loretta Alexandria, Ahmad Jamal and Ramsey Lewis. The catalog of albums on Argo was extensive. Even though Argo was primarily a jazz label, it also contains the work of Etta James, one of the finest female rhythm and blues artists ever, who made excellent albums also into the new millennium. In 1965 the name of the label was changed to Cadet, because of the existence of another record company called Argo in England. Also in 1956, Chess began taking a bigger interest in music from New Orleans by signing veteran Paul Gayten to represent them there. Gayten brought them Clarence "Frogman" Henry who had a

hit "Ain't Got No Home" in 1956 and "(I Don't Know Why) But I Do" and "You Always Hurt the One You Love" in 1961. Gayten also recorded Bobby Charles and Eddie Bo for Chess. The Chess religious and gospel recordings are also extensive. Chess devoted an entire series to the sermons of the Rev. C.L. Franklin, pastor of the 4500 member New Bethel Baptist Church in Detroit Michigan. They were also the first company to record his daughter Aretha Franklin, when as a teenager she recorded gospel music for the label. Their gospel catalog is almost exclusively contained on the Checker 10000 series and includes albums by the Five Blind Boys, Soul Stirrers, Alex Bradford and the Violinaires.

During the early years of the label, Leonard and Phil Chess did everything. They were the quintessential '50s record men: they owned the label, they produced the music they loved themselves and managed the financial end of the business. As the label grew, they gradually delegated more and more of the creative side of the business to employees. In 1959, they were able to hire the veteran producer Ralph Bass away from King Records in Cincinnati to serve as A&R Director. Bass continued to record blues, gospel, and rhythm and blues. He brought in a young black producer named Billy Davis who expanded the company into soul music, Davis revived the career of Etta James and turned her into Chess Records' first soul star. A group called the Dells, which had formed in Harvey Illinois in 1953 went back and forth between Chess and another Chicago label, Vee-Jay, several times, but when they came back to Chess in 1967, they recorded the fantastic album "There Is" which contained six hits, "Oooo, I Love You", "Stay in My Corner", "Run For Cover", "There Is", "Show Me" and "Wear It on Your Face". The Dells recorded many more albums for Cadet but never again reached the pinnacle of the album "There Is". Billy Stewart, a native of Washington D.C. first came to Chess in 1956 through Bo Diddley. Stewart played piano and sang with Diddley's band. In 1962, Stewart returned to Chess with his unique vocal style, which involved a stuttering, rapid-fire explosion of words. He recorded a string of soul hits for Chess, including "I Do Love You", "Sitting in the Park" and "Summertime". Other soul hitmakers for Chess were Fontella Bass who had the great hit "Rescue Me", Sugar Pie Desanto, Mitty Collier, Jackie Ross, Little Milton, the Radiants, Laura Lee and Jo Ann Garrett.

Chess Records was the great American blues record company. There is a story we've heard, perhaps even true, that when Brian Jones first saw Keith Richards, he started talking to him because he noticed he was carrying a copy of Chess LP-1427, "The Best of Muddy Waters." Jones wanted to find out where he got it. When they formed a band, they named it after one of Muddy Waters' songs, "Rollin' Stone." The Rolling Stones later came to Chicago to pay homage to the company by recording much of their album "The Rolling Stones Now!" at the Chess Ter Mar studios.

The late '60s were banner years for Chess, which makes the decline and fall of Chess Records hard to understand. In 1968, Billy Davis, the producer responsible for much of the soul music output, left to join an advertising agency as music director, and Leonard Chess, the creative force behind the company became more and more involved in a radio station he owned, WVON. When Billy Davis left, much of the cohesion in the creative staff was lost and many other producers and songwriters left. Ralph Bass stayed, but most of the talent was gone. In 1969, Leonard and Phil Chess sold Chess to General Recorded Tape (GRT) for 6½ million dollars plus 20 thousand shares in GRT stock. In October 1969, the company suffered a devastating blow when Leonard Chess died. Quality output declined, and by the summer of 1972, the Chess Chicago offices were almost empty, the distribution company and pressing plants had been closed, and only the Chess Ter Mar studio was operating with a few employees.

By the summer of 1975, GRT was dismantling what was left of Chess. In August 1975, with all of the GRT record operations closed down, what remained of Chess Records, was sold to New Jersey-based All Platinum Records. Although originally intended to be run as an active label, shortage of capital reduced the great Chess Records to a reissue label. When the Chess building in Chicago was sold, the new owners brought in dumpsters and chain saws and destroyed 250,000 records that had been abandoned there. It's sad to think of all that great music; Chuck Berry, Howlin' Wolf, Little Walter, Bo Diddley, Etta James and Muddy Waters being hauled away to a landfill. Even though the records were destroyed, the master tapes survived and are now the property of MCA, which has rereleased much of the Chess material during the 1980s and 1990s.

Chess Records got into the long play record business relatively late, never having made any 10 inch albums as their contemporaries Atlantic, Aladdin, King, Imperial and Modern did. Their first album releases were in 1956 with several Argo jazz releases, all of them in the 12 inch format. The first album on Chess itself was the soundtrack of the movie "Rock, Rock, Rock", which came out in December 1956 and may be the first commercially released rock and roll motion picture soundtrack. Most of the black label Chess and Checker albums by their major blues and rock and roll stars are now very collectable and in demand. Even more collectable are a few of the early white label promotional albums which were pressed on multi-colored vinyl, those known to be available in this form are Chess LP-1439 and LP-1441, Checker LP-2971 and LP-2973 and Argo LP-649. All of these were produced in 1958 or possibly early 1959, Also included with this Chess discography are three labels that were distributed by Chess. Tuff, a label that was formed in 1963 by Zelma Sanders in New York City that had one album, Neptune, a label owned by Kenny Gamble and Leon Huff of Philadelphia, and Heads Records.

This discography was compiled using Schwann catalogs from 1956 to 1975, Phonolog from 1963 and 1967, MCA order sheets, research in used record stores, and our personal record collections. The Michael Ruppli *Discography of Chess Records* was the source of information about unissued records and a few track lineups.

[Both Sides Now Publications](#) – web site (bsnpubs.com)

A further 23 "Super Chart" R&B Hits! (See page 2-4 for the TOP 10)

1940



Floyd's Guitar Blues (Decca) – Andy Kirk And His Clouds Of Joy
featuring Guitar Solo by Floyd Smith

Written by Floyd Smith, Chris Columbo, and John Weigand. Bandleader Andy Kirk born in Kentucky, grew up in Colorado and became one of the great Kansas City Swing era musicians (he played saxophone). Pianist and arranger was Mary Lou Williams, and Kirk's band featured jazz greats like Buddy Tate, Jimmy Forrest, and Hank Jones.

Rec March 16, 1939 in New York City. Issued in May.
Smith (born in St. Louis), re-recorded his song for Hy-Tone in 1947.

1941




T-Bone Blues (Varsity) – Les Hite and his Orchestra
Vocal by T-Bone Walker (Frank Pasley at the Guitar)

Written by Walker with Hite from Quin, Illinois; bandleader/sax, mostly working in L.A. Arranger: Dudley Brooks w Pasley, gtr (not Walker) and a.o. Allen Durham, tbn; Que Martyn, tenorsax; Nat Walker, pno (no relation); and Oscar Bradley, dms. T-Bone born in Linden, Texas, became a true guitar wizard, using his electric guitar for the first time on "Mean Old World" for Capitol in 1942 (with Freddie Slack at the piano).

Rec ca June, 1940 in New York City (on tour across the states). Issued 1940 (or poss March 6, 1941), Track was reissued on BlueNote 1947 with T-Bone head credit.

1941



After Hours (Bluebird) – Erskine Hawkins and his Orchestra
featuring Avery Parrish, Piano

Written by Avery Parrish from Alabama, (also originally credited to Hawkins), who actually left Hawkins' band in 1941, Trumpeter Hawkins from Birmingham, Alabama (who started out on drums and trombone) was subcredited as "Twentieth Century Gabriel" and a hitmaking bandleader in New York City ("Tuxedo Junction" and others).

Rec June 10, 1940 in New York City. Prob issued in 1941.
The record was reissued in 1946 on RCA-Victor, entered Nov 16, 1946, peaking at #3 on Most Played Juke Box Race Records chart (4w total).

1944




Red Blues (Hit) – Cootie Williams and his Orchestra
Vocal refrain by Eddie Vincon (sic)

The record was reissued on Majestic in 1945 as **Cherry Red** (and Vinson re-recorded it for Mercury as **Cherry Red Blues** on December 11, 1945).
Written by Joe Turner and Pete Johnson, who made the original recording (**Cherry Red**) on June 30, 1939 as Pete Johnson and the Boogie Woogie Boys on Vocalion (Bob Haggart credited as composer on Hit). Trumpeter Cootie Williams born in Mobile, Alabama. Vinson, born in Houston, Texas, vcl/altosax; with Bud Powell at the piano.

Rec January 6, 1944 in New York City. Issued in April. Entered Harlem Hit Parade chart on May 20 – peaked at #2 for 2w (39w total - longest of all), Pop #18.

1949



Ain't Nobody's Business (Supreme) – Jimmy Witherspoon
(Part 1 & Part 2) (Jay McShann at the Piano)

Written by Porter Grainger and Everett Robbins, but credited to Henry Grisham on this record. The song was originally recorded by Anna Myers in 1922 as **Tain't Nobody's Biz-ness if I Do**, and by Bessie Smith in 1933. Witherspoon (left) born in Gordon, Arkansas. His former bandleader McShann (right) born in Muskogee, Oklahoma plays piano, and Louis Spleigner, gtr. Frank Sleet does an altosax solo on Part 2.

Rec November 15, 1947 in Los Angeles (Part 1) and Nov 20 (Part 2).
Entered March 5, 1949 – spent 1w at #1 August 20 on Best Selling Retail Rhythm & Blues chart, with a total of 34 weeks on the charts.

1951



Rocket "88" (Chess) – Jackie Brenston and his Delta Cats
(featuring Ike Turner's "Kings of Rhythm")

Written by Jackie Brenston, born in Clarksdale, Mississippi. Brenston is in reality accomp by Ike and his band. Ike, also born in Clarksdale, plays the guitar on this session. Brenston, vcl/bars; Raymond Hill, tens; Willie Kizart, gtr; and Willie Sims, dms.
Producer: Sam Phillips, Memphis Recording Services.

Rec March 5, 1951 in Memphis, TN.
Entered May 12, 1951 – spent 5w at #1 from June 9 on Best Selling Retail Rhythm & Blues chart with a total of 18 weeks on the charts.

1952



One Mint Julep (Atlantic) – The Clovers *with Rhythm Accompaniment*

Written by Rudolph Toombs. Group formed in Washington, D.C. in 1950. On this recording it was the group's original line-up featured w. fr.l. Harold "Jerome" Winley, bass; Harold Lucas (the group's founder); John "Buddy" Bailey (born in Washington), lead; Matthew McQuater; and guitarist Bill Harris. Willis Jackson, saxophone and Harry Van Walls at the great piano. Jesse Stone "coached" and arranged. Herb Abramson and Ahmet Ertegun produced. Group had several hits, starting with "Don't You Know I Love You" and "Fool, Fool, Fool" (both #1 in 1951), plus later a.o. "Good Lovin'" (featuring former Dominoes and Checkers member Charlie White, lead in 1953).

Rec October 26, 1951 in New York City.
Entered April 19, 1952 – spent 2w at #2 on Best Selling Retail Rhythm & Blues chart with a total of 18 weeks on the charts.

1954



The Things That I Used To Do (Specialty) – Guitar Slim And His Band

Written by Eddie Jones, that's Guitar Slim, born in Greenwood, MS and raised in New Orleans, LA. The band behind Slim, who sings and plays the guitar on this session, consisted of Frank Mitchell, tpt; Gus Fontenette, altosax; Charles Burbank and Joe Tillman, tenorsaxes; Ray Charles, "questing" arranger and pianist; bandleader Lloyd Lambert, bs; and Oscar Moore, dms.
At the end of the song you really can recognize Ray Charles' significant "yeah" voice.

Rec October 27, 1953 in New Orleans, Louisiana.
Entered Jan 16, 1954 – spent 14w at #1 from January 30 on Most Played in Juke Boxes R&B chart with a total of 21 weeks on the charts.

The Great R&B Pioneers

A further 23 "Super Chart" R&B Hits! (Continued)

1954



Shake, Rattle And Roll (Atlantic) – Joe Turner and his Blues Kings

Written by Charles Calhoun (an alias for Jesse Stone). Turner, born in Kansas City, Missouri, turns "rock-n-roll" after many years as blues shouter for Decca and later for Herb Abramson at National. Produced by Ahmet Ertegun and Jerry Wexler with Jesse Stone, arranger and "coach". The Blues Kings here are unkn tpt; Wilbur DeParis, tbn; Haywood Henry, barsax; Harry "Van" Walls, pno; Mickey Baker, gtr; Lloyd Trotman, bs; and Connie Kay, dms. Joe's "Honey Hush", rec in New Orleans, with Fats Domino (under a "Kathy Thomas" pseudonym) at the pno, was also a big "sleeper" in 1953/1954.

Rec February 15, 1954 in New York City.
Entered May 8, 1954 – spent 3w at #1 from June 12, on Most Played in Juke Boxes R&B chart with a total of 32 weeks on the charts.

1955



Earth Angel (Will You Be Mine) (Dootone) – The Penguins

Written by Curtis Williams (as credited), but both Jesse Belvin and Gaynel Hodge got the rights of authorship later. Group formed in Los Angeles in late 1953 with (pictured above from top): Bruce Tate, Dexter Tisby (doing the bridge), and the founders and old schoolmates Cleveland Duncan, lead singer; and Curtis Williams, bass (prob also playing the piano intro, although several California "doo-woppers" have claimed to that). Producer: Dootsie Williams (no relative). Group re-recorded it for Mercury.

Rec in early/mid 1954 in Los Angeles (issued in September).
Entered Dec 18, 1954 – spent 3w at #1 from January 15, 1955 on Best Sellers in Stores R&B chart with a total of 19 weeks on the charts. Pop #8.
This true "Doo-wop" song was reissued several times during the 1950s.

1955



Only You (And You Alone) (Mercury) – The Platters

Written by manager Buck Ram, sometimes using pseudonym Ande Rand. Group formed in Los Angeles in late 1952. Tony Williams (from Elisabeth, New Jersey) joined in June, 1953. This song was originally recorded for Federal on May 20, 1954 (with Alex Hodge preceding Robi – and not yet Taylor in). It was not released until after the Mercury recording. Re-recorded for Mercury with imaged fr.l. Herb Reed, bass; David Lynch, tenor; Tony Williams, lead; soprano Zola Taylor; and Paul Robi, baritone. The follow-up, "The Great Pretender" (rec in Chicago), was an even bigger hit in 1956.

Rec April 26, 1955 in Los Angeles.
Entered July 30, 1955 – spent 7w at #1 from Oct 22 on Best Sellers in Stores R&B chart with a total of 30 weeks on the charts up into 1956. Pop #5.

1955



Tutti-Frutti (Specialty) – Little Richard And His Band

Written by Dorothy LaBostrie and "Little" Richard Penniman (later also credited to "Joe Rubin"). Richard born in Macon, Georgia, sings and plays the piano backed by Lee Allen, tens; Alvin "Red" Tyler, bars; Justin Adams, gtr; Frank Fields, bs; and Earl Palmer, dms. Producer "Bumps" Blackwell. Mastered at Master Recorders in Hollywood, but recorded in Matassa's studio in N.O. Pictured: Little Richard and his road band, the Upsetters in 1957 (who made several great "demos" of the N.O. hits). Richard followed this one up with an even bigger "Long Tall Sally" in 1956.

Rec September 14, 1955 in New Orleans, Louisiana.
Entered Nov 26, 1955 and peaked at #2 on Best Sellers in Stores R&B chart for 6w, with a total of 21 weeks on the charts up into April, 1956. Pop #17 in 1956.

1956

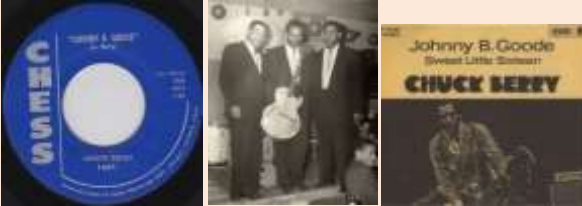


Blueberry Hill (Imperial) – Fats Domio

Written by Lewis, Stock & Rose. Domino born in New Orleans. This revival of an old standard featured Domino singing and playing the piano w. Wendell Duconge, altosax; Buddy Hagans and Eddie Silvers, tenorsaxes; Walter Nelson, gtr; Lawrence Gayton, bs; and Cornelius Coleman, dms. Producer: Lew Chudd and prob Dave Bartholomew. The song was cut in the Los Angeles' Hollywood studio Master with Bunny Robyn, engineer. Pictured: Domino and his band in 1957. "The Fat Man" was Fats' first hit – in 1950 (also on Imperial, cut in New Orleans).

Rec June 21, 1956 in Los Angeles.
Entered Oct 6, 1956 – spent 11w at #1 from Nov 3 on Most Played in Juke Boxes R&B chart up into early 1957, with a total of 23 weeks on the charts. Pop #2.

1958




Johnny B. Goode (Chess) – Chuck Berry

Written by Chuck Berry (and poss also pianist Johnnie Johnson). Chuck born in St. Louis, Missouri. On this historic recording he sang and played both the lead and the extra rhythm guitar. Famed studio man Lafayette Leake played the piano, although some files state Johnnie was the "88" man. He had played on most of the previous ones, including "Sweet Little Sixteen" (originally a bigger hit) just a day before – or on the same day. Willie Dixon, bs; Fred Below, dms. Producer: Leonard Chess. Imaged: Chuck's Combo w. drummer Ebby Hardy, Berry, and pianist Johnnie Johnson.

Rec January 6, 1958 or poss December 30, 1957 in Chicago.
Entered May 5, 1958 and hit #2 for 2w on Most Played R&B by Jockeys chart, with a total of 12 weeks on the charts. Pop #8.

1959




Kansas City (Fury) – Wilbert Harrison

Written by Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller and originally recorded by pianist Little Willie Littlefield on August 18, 1952 (who actually claimed authorship) as "K.C. Loving" (with Maxwell Davis on sax on Federal – five days after Mama Thornton's "Hound Dog" for Peacock, of which Johnny Otis claimed authorship). Harrison was born in Charlotte, North Carolina. On this revival Harrison sang and played the piano with among other musicians Jimmy Spruill on a great guitar solo.

Rec in February, 1959 in New York City.
Entered May 29, 1959 – spent 7w at #1 from May 11 on Hot R&B Sides chart with a total of 15 weeks on the charts. Pop #1 for 2 weeks in 1959.

1959



What'd I Say (Part I & Part II) (Atlantic) – Ray Charles and his Orchestra

Written by Ray Charles, born in Albany, Georgia, raised in Florida, went to Seattle and California and from there to settle in Texas. Image is from ca 1959. This record was split into two parts (and really can't be listened to without trying both sides). Ray sings and plays el.pno w. Marcus Belgrave and poss John Hunt, tpts; David Newman, alt/tensax; Hank Crawford, barsax; Edgar Willis, bs; Milton Turner, dms (and tamb?). The Raylettes are prob Margie Hendrix, Gwen Berry, Pat Lyles, and Darlene McCrea. Ahmet Ertegun and Jerry Wexler, prods; Tom Dowd eng.

Rec February 18, 1959 in New York City.
Entered July 13, 1959 – spent 1w at #1 August 3 on Hot R&B Sides chart (both sides combined) with a total of 17 weeks on the charts. Pop #6.

The Great R&B Pioneers

A further 23 "Super Chart" R&B Hits! (Continued)

1959



The Twist (King) – Hank Ballard And The Midnighters

Written by Hank Ballard, born in Detroit, raised in Alabama (with poss assistance from guitarist Cal Green). Group formed in Detroit in 1952, and had hit big with "Work With Me Annie" in 1954 (on Federal). "The Twist" was originally recorded for Henry Stone in Miami (prob on July 8, 1958) but held back for contractual reasons. This King rec was the first with Ballard getting top billing and featured an exciting dubbed sax solo by James E. "Hank" Moore (who had done so on the original). Ray Felder prob also played sax. Bandleader Green on guitar w. Sonny Thompson, pno; Navarro Hastings, bsg; Edwyn Conley bs; and George DeHart, dms. Singers: Ballard, Lawson Smith, Henry Booth, and bass Norman Thrasher (who had succeeded Sonny Woods). This song was soon followed up by "Finger Poppin' Time" in 1960.

Rec November 11, 1958 in Cincinnati, Ohio (prob prod by Henry Glover). Entered the Hot R&B Sides chart on April 6, 1959 (as flip of "Teardrops On Your Letter") and peaked at #16. Re-entered after Chubby Checker's success, on July 25, 1960, peaking at #6. Combined it spent 23 weeks on the charts. Pop #28 in 1960.

1960



Sweet Sixteen (Pt. 1 & Pt. 2) (Kent) – B.B. King and His Orchestra

Written by Ahmet Ertegun for Joe Turner in 1952 (although this Kent single – with a true "rework" on the tune says the usual King-Josea – the latter a pseudonym for Joe Bihari). King born near Itta Bena, MS. This great rendition has King singing and playing gtr w. either Maxwell Davis and his studio orchestra or King's road band, which included Kenneth Sands and Henry Boozier, tpts; Pluma Davis, tbn; Lawrence Burdine, alts; Johnny Board, tens; Barney Hubert, bars; Millard Lee, pno; Marshall York, bs; and Sonny Freeman, dms. Producer: Joe Bihari and/or poss Maxwell Davis.

Rec October 26, 1959 in Los Angeles. Entered the Hot R&B Sides January 18, 1960 and hit #2 for 1w, with a total of 14 weeks on the charts (Pt. 1 was the hit, but the song really deserves both sides credited – with Pt. 2 a superb continuation).

1961



Mother-In-Law (Minit) – Ernie K-Doe

Written and co-produced by Allen Toussaint. K-Doe born in New Orleans. This record (distributed by Imperial Records in early 1961) had K-Doe (real name Kador) doing a superb "harmony group" styled modern N.O. stomper, with a male "studio" vocal group featuring Benny Spellman, bass vcl; plus Larry Williams and Art Neville.

Toussaint plays the great piano; Emile Hall, tp; Alvin "Red" Tyler, tens; and John Moore, gtr; unknown tbn, bs and dms. Head producer: Joe Banashak.

Rec April 25, 1960 in New Orleans, Louisiana. Entered April 3, 1961 (a year after rec) – spent 5w at #1 from April 24 on Hot R&B Sides chart, with a total of 16 weeks on the charts. Pop #1 for 1 week.

1962



Duke Of Earl (Vee-Jay) – Gene Chandler (*the Duke of Earl*)

Written by Bernice Williams (song-writer and coach for **the Dukays**, formed in Chicago around 1957), and two members of the group: Earl Edwards (founder) and Eugene Dixon (that's Gene Chandler, born in Chicago – top of image). The song was actually recorded by the Dukays, who also had members Benjamin Broyles, James Lowe, and Shirley Johnson (imaged above). Producers Carl Davis (yes the later famous one) and Bill Sheppard (they had the Nat label, which made the recording).

Rec in Chicago, prob early 1961 (since recordings from this session were released on Nat in April). "Duke of Earl" issued on Vee-Jay in November. Entered Jan 20, 1962 – spent 5w at #1 from February 17 on Hot R&B Sides chart, with a total of 19 weeks on the charts. Pop #1 for 3 weeks.

1965



My Girl (Gordy) – The Temptations

Written by Smokey Robinson (producer of the song and leader of the Miracles) and Ronnie White (co-founder of the Miracles). Group formed in Detroit in 1961. This was their second hit (follow-up to the Eddie Kendricks-led "The Way You Do The Things You Do" of 1964). Line-up fr.l. founder Otis Williams (from Texas), Melvin Franklin (Otis' old friend, bass), Paul Williams (no relation, from Alabama, baritone), David Ruffin (from Mississippi, lead singer on "My Girl"), and Eddie Kendricks (Paul's friend from Alabama). Cornelius Coleman soon became the group's stage guitarist. Arr: David Riser. With violins, and "funk brother" Robert White playing the wonderful guitar. It even sounds like an extra girl chorus at the end.

Rec in Detroit, Michigan prob November 17, 1964. Entered Jan 9, 1965 – spent 6w at #1 from Jan 30 on Hot Rhythm & Blues Singles chart (the week Billboard re-launched its R&B Chart), with a total of 16 weeks on the charts. Pop #1 for 1 week.

1965



Shotgun (Soul) – Jr. Walker & The All Stars

Written by Aury DeWalt (that's Jr. Walker, born in Blythville, Arkansas). This basically instrumental superthing with vocals by Walker and the studio musicians behind him (on a Tamla-Motown sub-label) featured Walker on tenorsax with Victor Thomas, organ; Willie Woods, gtr; James Jamerson, bsg; Benny Benjamin, dms; and James Graves, tamb. Producers: Barry Gordy and Lawrence Horn.

On stage Jr. was accomp by Thomas, Woods, and Graves on drums (the latter replaced by the returned original member Billy Nicks in 1966).

Rec in Detroit, Michigan December 15, 1964. Entered Febr 13, 1965 – spent 4w at #1 from March 13 on Hot Rhythm & Blues Singles chart, with a total of 17 weeks on the charts. Pop #4. (*On June 5 the "name" of the R&B Chart was changed to Top Selling Rhythm & Blues Singles*).

1965

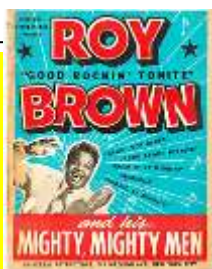


Papa's Got A Brand New Bag (Part I & Part II) (King) – James Brown And The Famous Flames

Written and produced by James Brown, born in Barnwell, South Carolina - raised in Augusta, Georgia. This is Brown's "return" to King Records with his "new bag" found at Smash Records. His Famous Flames vocal group had actually stopped singing on his recordings by now, although Brown used the name up into 1968. There is no sound of piano, so Brown concentrates on his singing, fronting his band, now led by altoxaxist Nat Jones w. Ron Tootley, Joe Dupars and Levi Rasbury, tpts; unidentified tbn; St.Clair Pinkney, Eldee Williams and Al "Brisco" Clark, tensaxes; Maceo Parker, ten- & barsax; Jimmy Nolen, gtr; Sam Thomas, b; and Melvin Parker, dms.

Rec in February, 1965 in Charlotte, North Carolina. Entered July 17, 1965 – spent 8w at #1 from August 14 on Top Selling Rhythm & Blues Singles chart with a total of 17 weeks on the charts. Pop #8. Part I was the hit, but don't miss Maceo Parker on Part II (*included in the link above*).

The Great R&B Pioneers



The History of Rhythm & Blues

"From Roy Brown to James Brown"



Summary of all 36 Super Chart R&B Hits

(check pages 2-4 for Top 10 -marked # at hit year)

Host: Roy Brown - **Good Rocking Tonight** (DeLuxe) with Bob Ogden & Orch. **1947**

Written by Roy Brown, born in Kinder, near New Orleans, moved to Texas. Brown's first rec for DeLuxe at J&M Studios. He sings with an orchestra led by Bob Ogden, dms w. Tony Moret, tp; Clement Tervalone, tb; O'Neal Jerome, alts; Earl Barnes, tns; prob Walter Daniels, pno; William Diamond, bs (thats certainly Fats' buddy). This was covered by Wynonie Harris, who recorded it for King in Cincinnati on December 28, 1947 and had a superhit with it for 25 weeks from May 1, 1948 on the Race Records charts (1w #1).

Rec in July 1947 in New Orleans, Louisiana.

Brown's original entered the Best Selling Retail Race Records chart June 12, 1948 for one week (#13), but re-entered April 16, 1949 for 2w (peaking at #11) when King Records had bought DeLuxe from the New Jersey owners - brothers David and Jules Braun (new catnumber, 3093, now without Ogden credited). Roy had a bigger "hit of is own" in March, 1949 - the even tuffer "Rockin' At Midnight", peaking the Race Records charts at #2, and recorded his classic "Hard Luck Blues" in Cincinnati, Ohio in 1950.

| hit year | title - artist (label) | R&B charts peak (p-weeks) | total weeks | POP peak |
|----------|---|---------------------------|-------------|----------|
| 1929 | Pine Top's Boogie Woogie - "Pine Top" Smith (Vocalion) | | | |
| 1940 | Floyd's Guitar Blues - Andy Kirk w. Floyd Smith (Decca) | | | |
| 1941 | T-Bone Blues - Les Hite w. T-Bone Walker (Varsity) | | | |
| | After Hours - Erskine Hawkins w. Avery Parrish (Bluebird) | # 3 | 1 w | 4 |
| 1943 # | Don't Cry, Baby - Erskine Hawkins w. Jimmy Mitchell (Bluebird) | # 1 | 14 w | 29 |
| 1944 | Red Blues - Cootie Williams w. Eddie Vincon (sic) (Hit) | # 2 | 2 w | 39 |
| | Hamp's Boogie Woogie - Lionel Hampton (Decca) | # 1 | 6 w | 13 |
| 1946 # | Choo Choo Ch' Boogie - Louis Jordan (Decca) | # 1 | 18 w | 26 |
| 1947 | Good Rocking Tonight - Roy Brown (DeLuxe) | # 11 | 2 w | 3 |
| 1949 # | Trouble Blues - Charles Brown Trio (Aladdin) | # 1 | 15 w | 27 |
| | Ain't Nobody's Business - Jimmy Witherspoon (Supreme) | # 1 | 1 w | 34 |
| 1950 # | Double Crossing Blues - Johnny Otis Quintette with The Robins and Little Esther (Savoy) | # 1 | 9 w | 22 |
| 1951 # | Sixty-Minute Man - The Dominoes (Federal) | # 1 | 14 w | 30 |
| | Rocket "88" - Jackie Brenston and his Delta Cats (Chess) | # 1 | 5 w | 18 |
| 1952 | One Mint Julep - The Clovers (Atlantic) | # 2 | 2 w | 18 |
| 1953 # | Money Honey - Clyde McPhatter & The Drifters (Atlantic) | # 1 | 11 w | 21 |
| 1954 | The Things That I Used To Do - Guitar Slim (Specialty) | # 1 | 14 w | 21 |
| | Shake, Rattle And Roll - Joe Turner (Atlantic) | # 1 | 3 w | 32 |
| 1955 | Earth Angel - The Penguins (Dootone) | # 1 | 3 w | 19 |
| | Only You - The Platters (Mercury) | # 1 | 7 w | 30 |
| | Tutti-Frutti - Little Richard (Specialty) | # 2 | 6 w | 21 |
| 1956 # | Honky Tonk - Bill Doggett (King) | # 1 | 13 w | 28 |
| | Blueberry Hill - Fats Domino (Imperial) | # 1 | 11 w | 23 |
| 1957 # | Searchin' - The Coasters (Atco) | # 1 | 13 w | 21 |
| 1958 | Johnny B. Goode - Chuck Berry (Chess) | # 2 | 2 w | 12 |
| 1959 # | Lonely Teardrops - Jackie Wilson (Brunswick) | # 1 | 7 w | 22 |
| | Kansas City - Wilbert Harrison (Fury) | # 1 | 7 w | 15 |
| | What'd I Say - Ray Charles (Atlantic) | # 1 | 1 w | 17 |
| | The Twist - Hank Ballard and the Midnighters (King) | # 6 | | 23 |
| 1960 | Sweet Sixteen - B.B. King (Kent) | # 2 | 2 w | 14 |
| 1961 # | Tossin' And Turnin' - Bobby Lewis (Beltone) | # 1 | 10 w | 19 |
| | Mother-In-Law - Ernie K-Doe (Minit) | # 1 | 5 w | 16 |
| 1962 | Duke Of Earl - Gene Chandler (Vee-Jay) | # 1 | 5 w | 19 |
| 1965 | My Girl - The Temptations (Gordy) | # 1 | 6 w | 16 |
| | Shotgun - Jr. Walker & The All Stars (Soul) | # 1 | 4 w | 17 |
| | Papa's Got A Brand New Bag - James Brown (King) | # 1 | 8 w | 17 |

SPECIAL "ENTER" & "EXIT" BONUSES - don't miss 'em!

1929

Pine Top's Boogie Woogie (Vocalion) - "Pine Top" Smith

Written by Clarence ("Pine Top") Smith (also credited Smith - Gimbel/or Gabriel). Smith, born in Troy, Alabama on June 11, 1904, befriended Cow Cow Davenport, Albert Ammons, Meade Lux Lewis, and Ma Rainey in Chicago, but died there (from a gunshot in a dancehall fight) on March 15, 1929. This is the very first boogie woogie "hit" (really describing the descendent of barrelhouse). Pine Top (or Pinetop) sings/talks and plays the piano without any accomp. No photo seems to exist of Pinetop (as he also was spelt).

Rec in Chicago, Illinois December 29, 1928 - issued 1929.
This is the most influential of all boogie woogie recordings.

1944

Hamp's Boogie Woogie (Decca) - Lionel Hampton And His Orchestra

Written by Lionel Hampton and pianist Milton Buckner, and arranged by Frank Davenport. Loosely based on "Pinetop's Boogie Woogie" (one sure can trace those roots on Louis Jordan's "Choo Choo Ch' Boogie" too). Hampton born in Louisville, Kentucky, raised in Chicago. Both Hampton and Buckner play piano on this one. Among the tp players you'll find Lamar Wright and Joe Morris, among the sax players Earl Bostic, Al Sears and Arnett Cobb. Eric Miller plays gtr and Fred Raddiff dms.

On "Hamp's Boogie Woogie No. 2" (even wilder) of 1949 Hampton shares piano playing with Albert Ammons and also plays his vibes, with Wes Montgomery on gtr.

Rec in New York City March 2, 1944.
Entered August 12, 1944 - spent 6w at #1 from September 2 on Harlem Hit Parade chart, with a total of 13 weeks on the charts. Pop #18.

The Great R&B Pioneers

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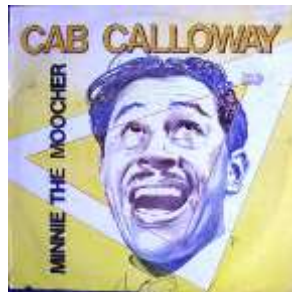
CAB CALLOWAY (from wikipedia,sl.ed)

Cabell "Cab" Calloway III (Rochester, New York, December 25, 1907 – Hockessin, Delaware, November 18, 1994) was an American jazz singer, dancer, bandleader and actor. He was associated with the Cotton Club in Harlem, New York City, where he was a regular performer and became a popular vocalist of the swing era. His niche of mixing jazz and vaudeville won him acclaim during a career that spanned over 65 years.



Calloway was a master of energetic scat singing and led one of the United States' most popular **big bands** from the early 1930s to the late 1940s. His 11-15(+) piece band included trumpeters Dizzy Gillespie, Jonah Jones, and Adolphus "Doc" Cheatham, saxophonists Ben Webster and Leon "Chu" Berry, guitarist Danny Barker, bassist Milt Hinton, and drummer Cozy Cole. Calloway had several hit records in the 1930s and 1940s, becoming known as the "Hi-de-ho" man of jazz for his most famous song, "[Minnie the Moocher](#)" (pictured above: is one of several reissues), originally recorded in New York, NY, March 3, 1931. He reached the *Billboard* charts in five consecutive decades (1930s–1970s). Calloway also made several stage, film, and television appearances until his death in 1994 at the age of 86. He had roles in *Stormy Weather* (1943), *Porgy and Bess* (1953), *The Cincinnati Kid* (1965), and *Hello Dolly!* (1967). His career saw renewed interest in 1980 when he appeared in *The Blues Brothers*.

Calloway was the first African-American musician to sell a million records from a single song and to have a nationally syndicated radio show. In 1993, Calloway received the National Medal of Arts from the United States Congress. He posthumously received the Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award in 2008. His song "Minnie the Moocher" was inducted into the Grammy Hall of Fame in 1999 and added to the Library of Congress' National Recording Registry in 2019. He is also inducted into the Big Band and Jazz Hall of Fame and the International Jazz Hall of Fame. ["Minne The Moocher"](#) (youtube)



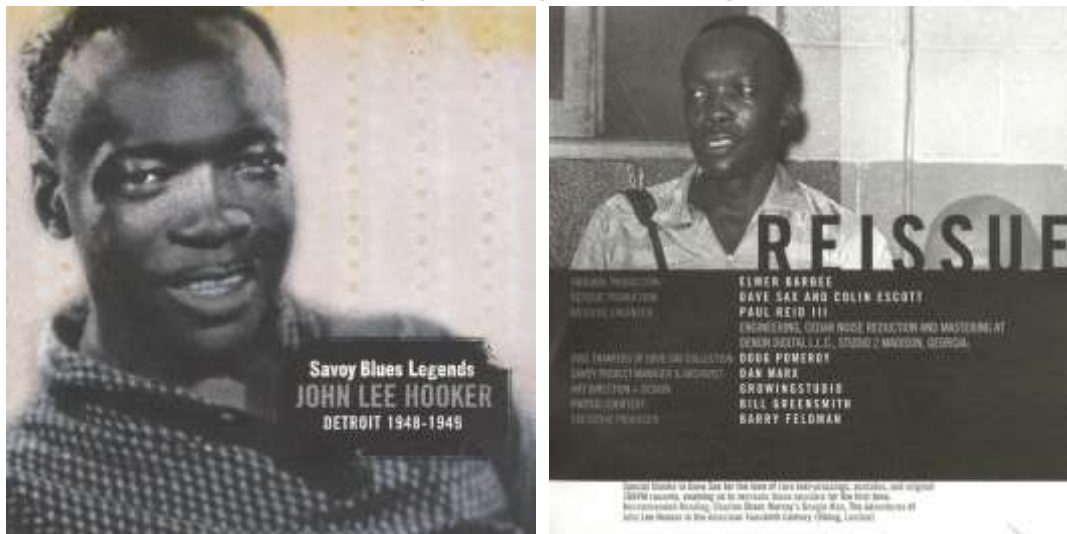
Tropical Glen FREE OLDIES MUSIC SELECTIONS

A "Great Juke Box" to select from and listen to your favorites!

The 1958 hit "Topsy II" really should have been included in the Blues / R&B Time - Line of "Amendments" – a true classic (it was a 1938 instrumental release for bandleader Benny Goodman written by Edgar Battle and Eddie Durham. The tune had previously been recorded by Count Basie and His Orchestra on August 9th, 1937, but was really Cozy's special).

Cozy Cole: [TOPSY II](#)

John Lee Hooker's early Savoy recordings for Elmer Barbee



"Savoy Blues Legends – John Lee Hooker - Detroit 1948-1949", issued on Savoy Jazz CD SVY 17078 and Atlantic-Savoy 92910-2 in 2000 and 2002, featuring manager Elmer Barbee-produced early pirate recordings (later handled by Joe Von Battle). Truly interesting stuff! Reissued on Metro-Doubles METRDCD532 "Early Years – The Classic Savoy Sessions" in 2004 (also featuring his late 1961 recordings for Fred Mendelsohn, licensed by Savoy, and often wrongly noted – just like below – as recorded ca 1959).

Detroit, c. early November, 1948.

1. D 1106 LOW DOWN MONTE DOOGIE (Savoy 5500)
2. D 1106 GREENY BLUES
3. D 1106 TWIGER BLUES
4. D 1111 LIKE A WOMAN
5. D 1107 LANDING BLUES (Savoy 5500)
6. D 1110 GOBY HOME BLUES
7. D 1109 SHADY GROVE BLUES
8. D 1101 DOOGIE WOODIE
9. D 1103 GOOD BUSINESS
10. D 1108 MERCY BLUES
11. D 1102 HELPLESS BLUES (Regent 1001)
12. D 1104 GOBY MAD BLUES (Regent 1001)

Vocal/acoustic guitar: Elmer Barbee, speech on J11402
Detroit, c. February, 1949.

13. J1 1403 MORNING BLUES (unedited version)
14. J1 1407 DOOGIE WHOLE
15. J1 1461 TUESDAY EVENING BLUES
16. J1 1483 MISS PEARL DOOGIE

Vocal/Electric guitar: James Rankin, piano: Curtis Foster, drums:
Elmer Barbee and band, speech on "109 Boogie", vocal on J11404.
Detroit, c. February, 1949.

17. unknown ROAD TROUBLE (unedited) previously unissued
18. unknown GOY DOOGIE (unedited version)
19. J1 1494 CHRISTMAS TIME BLUES
20. J1 1494 DO THE DOOGIE (Ocarr 308)

DISCOGRAPHY

Some recordings for this compact disc version, whenever possible, utilize original master tapes, original labelings and transfers prepared for the real-1970s LP releases. All the sources have been transferred to digital tape with audio restoration – including judicious use of the CEDAR noise reduction system and equalization – provided by Paul Reed III (at Dorian Digital Industries, Studio 2, Madison, Georgia).

Only those titles, where noted, were actually released on the Savoy label. The flip-side of Avaro 308 was an edited version of J1 1403. A speed-up version of this title was reissued as J1 1408, entitled "Dixie And Chicks". A speed-up version of "Boogie Woogie" was reissued as J1 1409, titled "Boogie Woogie". Tracks 17 and 18 are probably the missing masters J1 1401 and J1 1405 (the latter has been identified in discographies as "After Hours Blues").

Note that in 1959 Savoy licensed an LP from Fred Mendelsohn, Living With the Blues, which included one Hooker track, "When My Wife Quit Me." This is unavailable to us, as are the remaining 11 titles from Mendelsohn's session, although they have been reissued on Muse/32 Jazz Records.

Note also that the original titles on Joe Battle's worksheets were as follows:

1. "Talking Blues"
2. "Just Like A Woman Blues"
3. "Mad Boogie"
4. "Hard Luck Blues"
5. "After Hours Blues"

Joe Battle remarked in the packing slip that there were two masters of the correct-speed version of "Morning Blues", but he was probably referring to the fact that one version had a truncated intro.

CORRECTIONS & UPDATES

to *The John Lee Hooker Session Discography* page 37: ca 1969 recordings with Chicago All Stars most prob France 1969.
page 42:

Chuck Berry's Johnny B. Goode – 1958; Etta James' At Last – 1961.

J.B. Lenoir is his name (not Lenior)

page 83: It simply must be Adolph Jacobs sitting (and sleeping) next to Carl Gardner, proving he certainly toured with the Coasters even after his "official departure" from the group, moving back to L.A. (the photo is from ca Sep/Oct, 1959).

page 90: "You're So Fine" 3w at #2.

Two underrated, but terrific R&B/Soul singers have recently died. Young Jessie (Obediah Donell Jessie), living in Atlanta, Georgia, died on April 17, 2020 in Los Angeles (having been taking care of by his children). A prominent singer with the Flairs in the early 1950s, he revived his career several times, and travelled the world with a jazz group named Superlites in the 1980s.. In recent years he "returned" to his Coasters connection, singing with Leon Hughes' (who he studio-subbed for in 1957) off-shoot "Coasters".. - **and** Bobby Lewis, (of Tossin' And Turnin' fame), living in New Jersey, died on April 28, 2020.

The Great R&B Pioneers



The Robins Session Discography

by Claus Röhnisch

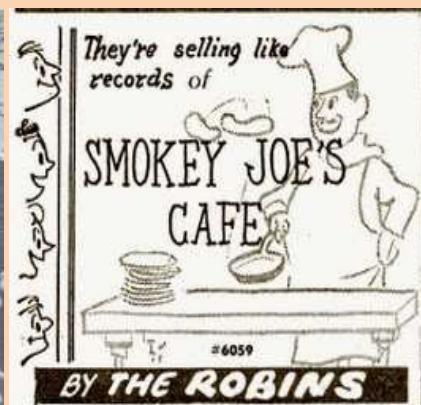
Special R&B Pioneers Series "Extra" for Veta Gardner,
with thanks to Marv Goldberg and Todd Baptista



This is a special R&B Pioneers Series "Extra Feature" with a complete Robins discography (updated from "THE Top Ten Vocal Groups of the 1950s"). The Robins were the forerunners of the Coasters (and Carl Gardner made his recording debut with the Robins in 1954). Left: In the late 1954 Universal Pictures Short, "The Robins Sing" with Bobby Nunn, Roy Richard, Carl Gardner, "Ty" Terrell Leonard, and Billy Richard. Photo above: Bobby Nunn, Carl Gardner, Grady Chapman, "Ty" Terrell Leonard, and Billy Richard (Roy Richard not present) at the Hollywood "Trocadero" in 1955 or poss late 1954 (both photos ctsy of Billy Vera). Below: Bobby Nunn's "Coasters Mark II" (the first spin-off Coasters group, debuting in late 1962), touring up to Nunn's death in 1986.



The Robins - Story & Discography



Compiled by Claus Röhnisch

with thanks to Michel Ruppli, Fernando L. Gonzales, Kurt Mohr, Galen Gart, Robert Ferlingere, Jim Pewter, Bob Porter, Ray Topping, Anthony Rotante, Jim Dawson, Leslie Fancourt, Per Anderö, Bill Millar, Eric LeBlanc, Steve Propes, Charles Sheen, Marv Goldberg, Todd Baptista, Tony Rounce of Ace Records, Billy Vera, Dave Penny, and "Blues Records".

Photo above (1955) - top: Leonard; center: Billy and Roy Richard, Nunn, and Chapman; bottom: Carl Gardner.

The Great R&B Pioneers



The "A-Sharp Trio" (Billy, "Ty", and Roy) early 1948 with MC Bardu Ali (co-owner of "the Barrelhouse" club with Johnny Otis).



Bobby Nunn in 1949 and in 1953.



The Robins at Johnny Otis's new club, the "Oasis", prob in late 1953 with Billy Eckstine (Grady, Roy, Bobby, "Ty", and Billy).

THE STORY of THE ROBINS

California's first "bird" group was formed when "Ty" Terrell Leonard and the Richard brothers Billy and Roy met at Alameda High School near Oakland (San Francisco) in 1945, and formed the "A-Sharp Trio" (no recordings). The trio came to Watts (Los Angeles) probably in late 1947, and soon were joined by Bobby Nunn, who worked at Johnny Otis' and Bardu Ali's club "The Barrelhouse" in Watts (which opened around early 1948). The group became the third of the trend setting bird groups after the Ravens and the Orioles. Grady Chapman joined the group as lead singer and fifth member in 1953. From March, 1954 Carl Gardner substituted for Grady (who was sent to jail for a while) and Carl was later featured as sixth singer in the group (and foremost lead on Spark Records). Chapman made some solo records in 1954 or 1955, and in 1957 and 1958, and also for Imperial after 1960 and was used as a studio back-up. He often joined Nunn's "Coasters Mark II" during several years from 1964. Nunn handed his doubtful rights of the Coasters' name to Billy Richards Jr (no direct relation) and Chapman shortly before his death. Billy soon called his new group "Billy Richards Coasters", and Chapman originally called his group "Bobby Nunn Tribute Coasters", later "The Fabulous Coasters". Grady also substituted for Carl Gardner in the true Coasters a couple of times in the late '90s after Richards and Gardner had settled their differences. Ty Terrell, as he preferred to call himself, did some solo recordings after 1960. Several of the Robins' members also recorded with Marvin Phillips in different versions of "Marvin & Johnny".

Note: the Richard brothers (who were not twins) were born with the name **Richard** (although the early Savoy song credits are to Richards). Todd Baptista, who seldom is wrong, refers to them as Richard; and the Rhythm & Blues Foundation sent one of the invitations of their award ceremony to "William Richard" ([1989 interview of Billy](#)) – and Eric LeBlanc has confirmed the birth dates and surnames Richard, although Census seems to have Richards registered.

Original recording line-up

- * Ulysses B. **Bobby Nunn** - lead and bass 1949 - 1955
Born Sept 20, 1925 in Birmingham, Alabama, raised in Detroit - died in Los Angeles, Nov 5, 1986. Left the group to form the Coasters with Carl Gardner.
- * **"Ty" Terrell Leonard** – tenor 1949 – 1960
Born 1928 or poss Dec 5, 1929 in Read and Run, near Jackson, Miss and moving to California in 1939 (or 1944). Spokesman and some kind of road manager (Terrell was his first name). Later telling everyone he was an original Coaster. Veta Gardner reports (not confirmed) that "Ty" died in the summer of 2019.
- * William Gene **"Billy" Richard** (aka William Richard Jr.) – tenor/baritone 1949-1960
Born Jan 31, 1928 in Crockett, Houston County, Texas – died in California, Dec 10, 2007.
- * **Roy Richard** (aka Curtis Benton Richard) – baritone 1949 – 1960 (bass from 1958)
Born Oct 10, 1929 in Crockett, Houston County, Texas (not 1933 or 1930) - died in Los Angeles, May 1, 1983.

Later members

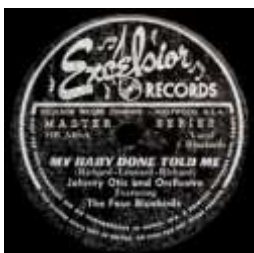
- * **Grady Chapman** - lead tenor & fifth singer from 1953 until early 1954 and late 1954 - ca mid 1958
Born Oct 1, 1929 in Greenville, South Carolina. Actually sang lead with the Dominoes (subbing for Joe Von Loan) on a Los Angeles gig in early 1953. Joined Bobby Nunn's Coasters Mark II in 1964, and active with a new Robins group in later years up to his death in Los Angeles, Jan 4, 2011.
- * **Carl Edward Gardner** - lead & sixth singer 1954-1955
Born April 29, 1928 in Tyler, Texas – formed the Coasters on Oct 12, 1955 and led them up to his death in Port St. Lucie, Florida June 12, 2011.
- * Hildre Brown **H. B. Barnum** - fifth singer, pianist & utility voice 1956-1957
Born July 15, 1936 in Houston, Texas. Sang from four years of age (soon known as "Pee Wee"). Was with the Dootones in 1955. Produced the Robins' recordings 1958-1960. Turned famous arranger, musical director, producer and manager in later years, still semi-active.
- * Robert Joseph **"Bobby" Sheen** - high tenor and lead late 1958-1961
Born May 17, 1941 in St. Louis, Missouri. Also turned solo, and joined Nunn from late 1962. Died in Los Angeles, Nov 12, 2000.
- * **"Little" Billy Richards Jr** (aka Billy Richard) – tenor from circa late 1959
Born circa 1940 (or a bit earlier). Actually not directly related to Richard above (originally the group's driver). Joined Nunn with Sheen in late 1962. Highly active with his own "Coasters" in later years, but not in the best of shape nowadays.

Recording debut: Los Angeles, around 1948 as **The Four Bluebirds** (see below).

Most notable records for: Savoy 1949-1950, RCA 1953, Spark 1954-1955, Whippet 1956-1957. See detailed session discography below.

THE DISCOGRAPHY

Below are listed all of the Robins' **studio recordings**. The group is also featured on live records and screen recordings. Only original issues and the most well-known LP compilations are noted. The CDs are referred to in notes. There are several different labels who have issued records as by "The Robins" which are not this group. Note: Each entry starts with master number (when known).



Johnny Otis And Orchestra featuring The Four Bluebirds

Bobby Nunn, lead vcl; "Ty" Terrell Leonard, Billy Richard, and Roy Richard, vcls.
with John Anderson, tpt; George Washington, tbn; Cecil "Big Jay" McNeely, alt/tens; Lem Tally, bars; Darby Hicks (pseudonym for Devonia Williams) or poss. Lee Wesley Jones, pno; Mario Delagarde, bs; Johnny Otis, dms. Produced by Otis René. Label owned by Otis and Margaret René.
Radio Recorders, Los Angeles, prob 1948

OR 540 A **My Baby Done Told Me** *Excelsior 540*, Essex 707, Californian 301

Note: Flip "Court Room Blues" by Johnny Otis & His Orchestra (with Lem Tally and Darby Hicks, vcls).

Record issued ca April, 1949, but listed as recorded in 1947 in "Blues Records". Pete "Guitar" Lewis featured on a great guitar instrumental, "Midnight In The Barrel House", prob cut at this session.



The Robins

(as above) **with** pno, gtr, bs, dms. Prob. prod. by Sammy Lane, purchased by Aladdin. Possibly the Otis band.
Prob. Radio Recorders, Los Angeles, May 27, 1949

RR-700 **Don't Like The Way You're Doing** Aladdin 3031

RR-701 4010-A **Around About Midnight**

(aka "Long About Midnite") *Score 4010*, Imperial LP 94005

RR-702 **Come Back Baby** Aladdin 3031

RR-703 4010-B **You Sure Look Good To Me** *Score 4010*

Note: Not confirmed, but it may be the Otis band on this session with Otis himself still on drums. The singles were issued in 1949 (Aladdin) and 1951 (Score).

The Great R&B Pioneers



The Robins (726) or The Robins with the Johnny Otis Quintette (738, 752)

or **Johnny Otis Quintette - Vocals by The Robins and Little Esther (731-78rpm)**, also as **Johnny Otis Quintette - The Robins and Little Esther (731-78/45rpm)** and on sec. pressing **The Robins and Little Esther - Johnny Otis Quintette (sic, 78rpm)**

(as above) **with** Esther Mae Jones, lead guest vcl on -1; Devonia "Lady Dee" Williams, pno; Johnny Otis, vbs; Pete "Guitar" Lewis, gtr; Mario Delagarde, bs; Leard "Kansas City" Bell, dms. Produced by Ralph Bass.

Radio Recorders, 7000 Santa Monica Boulevard, Los Angeles, December 1, 1949

- SLA 4452 **If It's So Baby** Savoy 726, LP 2230, LP 12422
- SLA 4453 **Our Romance Is Gone** Savoy 738, LP 2221, LP 12422
- SLA 4454 **If I Didn't Love You So** Savoy 726, LP 2221, LP 12422
- SLA 4455 **There's Rain In My Eyes** Savoy 752, Savoy LP 2230*, LP 12422
(aka **Rain In My Eyes** *)
- SLA 4456 **Double Crossing Blues -1** Savoy 731, LP 2221, LP 2258

Note: Savoy 731 reissued several times with differing credits. It had two different flips, neither by the Robins. 4453-54 on LP credited "Johnny Otis, vocal by The Robins". Poster of "Little Esther with The Robins & Johnny Otis and his Orchestra" on Savoy LP 2221 (with a five-headed Robins-group incl. H.B. Barnum) is from an ad of 1956. All other LP titles credited "Johnny Otis, vocal by The Robins", except 4456 credited "Johnny Otis, vocal by Little Esther & The Robins". Savoy 726 and 738 advertised as by **"The 4 Robins with Johnny Otis' Orchestra"**. SLA 4451 "I'm Not Falling In Love With You", vocals by Devonia Williams (issued on Regal 1016 and Savoy 749 as flip of Mel Walker's "Cry Baby" - flip not the Robins as backup). All Robins' Savoy tracks are included on the Atlantic/Savoy Jazz 3CD Johnny Otis compilation "Rhythm & Blues Caravan" 92859-2. Little Esther was born in Galveston, Texas September 23, 1935. "If It's So Baby" hit the R&B charts on January 28, 1950 (peaking at #10). "Double Crossing Blues" hit the R&B charts on February 4, 1950 and peaked at #1 for nine weeks (with a total of 22). SLA 4455 also listed as SLA 4445 November 10, 1949 (not confirmed which of the two versions is the rejected one (see Johnny Otis).



SHOW AND DANCE
SATURDAY NITE JAN. 20TH

DOUBLE CROSSIN' BLUES REVUE *In Person!*

LITTLE ESTHER

with **MEL WALKER** and **REDD LYTE**

with **JOHNNY OTIS** and **BARREL HOUSE ORCH.**

plus **THE 4 BLUE NOTES**

Saturday January 20, 1951, no Robins.

Johnny Otis Orchestra - Vocal by The Robins

(as above) **with** Johnny Otis, dir; Little Esther Mae Jones, lead guest vcl-1; John Anderson, tpt; Floyd Turnham, alts; Big Jay McNeely, guest tens; Lorenzo Holden and James Von Streeter, tens; Walter Henry, bars or alts; poss. Bobby McNeely, bars; Devonia Williams, pno; Pete Lewis, gtr; Mario Delagarde, bs; Leard Bell, dms.

January 11, 1950

- SLA 5101 **The Turkey Hop Pt. I** Savoy 732, LP 2230
- SLA 5102 **The Turkey Hop Pt. II** Savoy 732, LP 2230, LP 12422
- SLA 5105 **Lover's Lane Boogie -1** Savoy LP 2221, Savoy LP 2258
- SLA 5106 **I Found Out My Troubles (aka I Found Out)** Savoy LP 2230, LP 12422

Note: SLA 5101 is an instrumental with 5102 the vocal. SLA 5103 "Blues Nocturne" by Johnny Otis & his Orchestra, SLA 5104 "Cry Baby" by Mel Walker and the Quintones (with vocal assistance from the band - not the Robins). SLA 5107 "Misery" by Little Esther. "Lover's Lane Boogie" issued on a bootleg single as by "The Robins"; and on LP as by "Johnny Otis with Little Esther & The Blue Notes" (Bobby Nunn featured as on "Double Crossing." plus the other Robins). SLA 5105, 5106 credited "Johnny Otis Septet" on Atlantic/Savoy 3 CD. Only rhythm, trumpet & ten sax on 5105; rhythm and ten sax on 5106. Savoy 732 advertised as by Johnny Otis Orchestra and the "4" Robins. [Savoy LP MG 12422](#) titled "There's Rain In My Eyes" (no details).

The Robins (762) or The Robins with the Johnny Otis Quintette

(as above) **with** Devonia Williams, pno; Johnny Otis, vbs; Pete Lewis, gtr; Mario Delagarde, bs; Leard Bell, dms. Billy Richard, lead vcl on -1.

February 13, 1950

- SLA 5108 **I'm Through** Savoy 762, LP 2252, LP 12422
- SLA 5109 **I'm Living OK** Savoy 752, LP 2230, LP 12422
- SLA 5110 **There Ain't No Use Beggin'** Savoy 738, LP 2230, LP 12422
(aka **There's No Use Begging**) -1
- SLA 5111 **You're Fine But Not My Kind** Savoy 762, LP 2230, LP 12422

Note: No record featured on any of the above (although Lorenzo Holden was present on the session). SLA 5114 "Mistrustin' Blues" and other Savoy recordings by Little Esther w. Johnny Otis often incorrectly listed as recordings by the Robins featuring Esther. Little Esther assumed the name Esther Phillips in 1962. All Robins' Savoy recordings made at **Hollywood's Radio Recorders, 7000 Santa Monica Boulevard, L.A.** with Ralph Bass (assisted by Johnny Otis) as producer, and Val Valentine as engineer. After this session the Johnny Otis Blues & Rhythm Caravan went on the road with Ralph Bass as road manager, but without the Robins, although the Atlantic/Savoy 3CD suggests they were included. The Robins' manager/agent Ed Fishman pulled the group away from the revue (leaving the door open for Mel Walker). LP 2230 also issued on Japanese Savoy CD SV 0266. All Robins' tracks for Savoy issued on Savoy LP SJL-1188 **"The Complete Savoy Recordings with Johnny Otis"**, and on Atlantic 3CD 92859-2 (reissued on Savoy Jazz CD 17050) **"The Johnny Otis Rhythm & Blues Caravan"**, and in April 2004 the Robins Savoy tracks were reissued on Savoy Jazz CD 17357 as **"Johnny Otis Presents The Robins"** (12 tracks - not "Lover's Lane" - and not to be confused with the Ace CD featuring Modern tracks).



THE ROBINS DO IT AGAIN!
2 DOUBLE-BARRELED RELEASES

"I'M LIVING O.K."
"THERE'S RAIN IN MY EYES"

"THERE AIN'T NO USE BEGGIN'"
"OUR ROMANCE IS GONE"

Savoy RECORD CO., INC.
59 Market St., Newark 1, N. J.

The Robins and 2 Sharps & A Natural (112A)

or **Maggie Hathaway with The Robins and 2 Sharps & A Natural (121 and 112B)**

Bobby Nunn and prob. as above; Billy Richard, second lead on -3 **with** Maggie Hathaway, lead vcl (on -1); Ted Mossner, pno; Louis Speiginer, gtr; Red Callender, bs. Produced by "Big" John Dolphin. The bass on "Race Of Man" is most certainly Bobby Nunn.

Dolphin's Rec. Studio, Los Angeles, c:a June 1950

- 112A **Race Of Man** RIH 112
- 112B **Bayou Baby Blues -1** RIH 112
- 121A **A Falling Star -1, -3** RIH 121
- 121B **When Gabriel Blows His Horn -1** RIH 121



Little Esther & the 4 Blue Notes:
Pete Lewis, Lorenzo Holden,
Mel Walker, and Mario Delagarde.

The Robins

Bobby Nunn and prob. as above **with** Mickey Champion, lead vcl (on -2) **with** unkn. accomp. Prob. Eddie Beal, pno; Chuck Norris, gtr; Red Callender, bs; Lee Young, dms. Produced by "Big" John Dolphin.

Dolphin's Rec. Studio, Los Angeles, prob late 1950

- 4050B **Early Morning Blues** RIH 150, Earth Angel LP JD-906
 - 4051A **School Girl Blues -2** issues as above
- Note: RIH is Dolphin's Recorded in Hollywood label. RIH 112 and 121 are gospel-like recordings. The lead on 4050B sounds like a baritone. RIH 150 issued ca March, 1951.

The Great R&B Pioneers



This photo is a montage with Mickey Champion.

The Nic Nacs

(as above) *with* Mickey Champion, lead guest vocal (except on -1); and tens, pno, gtr, bs, dms. Prob. the Johnny Otis band.

- Los Angeles, November 2, 1950**
- 1440-2 **Gonna Have A Merry Xmas ***
or **Gonna Have A Merry Christmas **** RPM 313*, 342**, AceLP 88
- 1441-3 **Found Me A Sugar Daddy** RPM 313, 316, 342, Ace(E) LP CH 88, Ace CD CHD 698
- 1442 **I'm Telling You Baby** Ace LP 88, Ace CD 1174
- 1443-3 **You Didn't Want My Love -1** RPM 316, Ace LP 88

Note: Several alternate takes of all four songs issued on Ace CD MOD50. Original single 313 issued for Christmas 1950; 316 in early 1951 and 342 issued for Christmas 1951. Mickey Champion was a familiar thrush on the San Francisco black music scene, often substituting for the under-aged Little Esther on stage.



Bobby Nunn with the "Robbins"

(poss. as above) *with* vbs, pno; bs, dms.

- Los Angeles, prob, March 2, 1951**
- 1517 **Rockin'** Modern 20-807, Ace(E) LP CH 88, Spark LP 1000 (reissue bootleg)
- (tk 1) **That's What The Good Book Says** Ace CDCHD 1010
- 1518 **That's What The Good Book Says** issues as 1517, plus Ace CHD 698
- (tk 3) **That's What The Good Book Says** (slow version) Ace CDCHD 1022
- Well, Hello Pretty Baby** unissued
- All Day I've Been Cryin'** unissued



1953 with Dinah Washington.

Note: "Rockin'" is an "answer" to the Mel Walker/Johnny Otis "Rockin' Blues" hit and "That's What The Good Book Says" was the first studio-recorded Jerry Leiber-Mike Stoller composition. The alternate is issued on the 2004 Ace CD "The Leiber & Stoller Story Vol 1 - Hard Times" and the slow version is issued on v.a. CD titled "Mellow Cats 'N' Kittens". Johnny Otis probably not involved in these recordings. LP credits "Bobby Nunn & The Robins". The unissued tracks are unconfirmed, but filed as recorded March 2, 1951. Not confirmed if "Robbins" actually are the group.

Notes – and 1952:

26 of the above recordings (excluding "Lover's Lane Boogie" and the tracks of RIH 112) are featured on the German CD "Rockin' with the Robins" on Titanic TRC 6007. During 1951-52 Nunn was recording as a solo artist - as all the other Robins went to military services (not confirmed - could as well have been "trouble with the law"), reported being discharged in late 1952. Nunn recorded a.o. for Sammy Lane, and a nice "Christmas Bells" b/w "Two Sisters" (instr.) on RIH 244 for Dootsie Williams, plus also with Little Esther for Federal ("Saturday Night Daddy"). By the end of 1952 the Robins returned to civilian life and resumed their career. They now recruited Grady Chapman as lead tenor and got a new manager, Jack Lewis. Grady Chapman's first known "gig" was reportedly (source *Marv Goldberg*) in Los Angeles in September or October 1952 at a concert with the Dominoes, where member James Van Loan was in jail, and Joe Lamont out sick (his place was at this performance taken by a relatively unknown Jesse Belvin). Chapman (who had not yet joined the Robins) sang lead on stage. He was given Billy Ward's white uniform and Clyde McPhatter moved down to second tenor. Bass singer was Dave McNeil, who said that no one knew the difference between Grady and Clyde (which infuriated Clyde, esp. when Grady started signing autographs).

The Robins

Bobby Nunn, Grady Chapman, Ty Terrell Leonard, Billy and Roy Richard, vcls
with Shorty Rogers, dir; tens, bars, pno, gtr, bs, dms. Jack Lewis, prod; Jerry Leiber & Mike Stoller, co-prods on -1. Second session arranged by Maxwell Davis; and third session produced by Danny Kessler.



1953, not 1954, top Leonard and Billy; bottom Bobby, Roy and Grady.

- Hollywood, January 21, 1953**
- E3VB-0018 **All Night Baby** RCA 5271, LP 6279, CLP 1000
- E3VB-0019 **My Heart's The Biggest Fool** RCA 5175, Crown LP 1000
- E3VB-0020 (Now And Then There's) **A Fool Such As I** RCA 5175, CLP 1000
- E3VB-0021 **Oh Why** RCA 5271, CLP 1000



- July 30, 1953**
- E3VB-0161 **My Baby Done Told Me** RCA 5486 (issued and withdrawn)
- E3VB-0162 **I'll Do It** RCA 5486 (issued and withdrawn)
- E3VB-0163 **Let's Go To The Dance** RCA 5434, CLP 1000E3VB-0164
- How Would You Know** RCA 5434, CLP 1000

THE ROBINS - 1953 (Courtesy of Billy Ward)



- September 15, 1953**
- E3VB-0198 **Don't Stop Now** RCA 5564, CLP 1000
- E3VB-0199 **Get It Off Your Mind** RCA 5564, CLP 1000
- E3VB-0200 **Empty Bottles** RCA 5489, CLP 1000
- E3VB-0201 **Ten Days In Jail -1** RCA 5489, CLP 1000

Note: Mario Delagarde (aka de la Garde) - Otis's old string bass player - was co-writer on at least one RCA recording, suggesting he was still a "Robins man". He had co-written several of the Robins' Savoy recordings. "Ten Days In Jail" written by Leiber-Stoller. Crown LP (CLP) is a bootleg titled "The Best of .. Vol 2". Vol. 3 covers the Spark tracks and the first volume features Savoy tracks. All tracks on El Toro (Spain) CD R&B 111 "I Must Be Dreamin'" (2007), also including the four Crown tracks below plus the 12 Spark recordings. The CD is compiled and has great liner notes by Dave Penny, who insists the Spark recordings were done in order of the LS master numbers.

The Drifters

(prob. as above) *with* unkn acc.

- Los Angeles, late 1953**
- JB 327 **Sacroiliac Swing** Crown 108
- JB 328 **The World Is Changing** Crown 108

Note: According to Steve Propes this Crown issue of 1954 was actually a recording by the Robins (see matrix numbers on the following session - where Grady Chapman has a true McPhatter styled singing - cashing in on "Money Honey"). There were more "Drifters" issues on other labels by different groups, which were recorded by vocal groups before the Clyde McPhatter 1953 Drifters group.

Above: Chapman. Below him the group in 1953, with top Nunn and Billy Richard; bottom Grady Chapman, Ty Terrell Leonard and Roy Richard.

The Great R&B Pioneers



With Tony Bennet at Hollywood Bowl in 1954 flanked by Bobby, Roy, "Ty" Terrell, Billy, and Carl.



In the late 1954 Universal Pictures Short "The Robins Sing" with Bobby Nunn, Roy Richard, Carl Gardner, "Ty" Terrell Leonard, and Billy Richard.



Prob late 1954 (or early 1955) with fr.l. Billy, Carl, Bobby, Roy, and "Ty" Terrell.



At the Hollywood Trocadero in early 1955 – or late 1954 (Bobby upfront, with Carl, Grady center, "Ty", and Billy. Roy not present.



Sharing top billing with Ms. Helen Trebel (flanked by Chapman and Leonard) at the Royal Nevada Hotel and Casino, opening on April 15, 1955 (later to become part of Stardust Resort and Casino). Back row fr.l. Nun and Gardner, plus Billy and Roy Richard.



Prob 1955 with the returned Chapman top left, "Ty" and Carl; bottom Bobby, Roy, and Billy.,

The Robins or The Robbins (120)
(as above) *with* reeds and rhythm.

329 **Double Crossin' Baby**
329 **Double Crossing Baby** (alt. take)
330 **I Made A Vow**
331 **All I Do Is Rock**
332 **Key To My Heart**

Note: Singles issued in 1954. All RPM/Modern/Crown recordings prob. produced by Joe Bihari. Joe, Jules and Saul Bihari involved with their usual pseudonyms as composers on labels. Singles tracks reissued on LPs Ace 88 and CLP 1000.

Los Angeles, c:a December, 1953

Crown 106
Ace CD CHD 698
Crown 106, Ace CD CHD 698
Crown 120
Crown 120

The Robins or The Coasters (Atco LP 101, Atco EP 4503)

Carl Gardner, lead/tenor; Bobby Nunn, bass/lead-1; Grady Chapman (first session – and probably also the last), tenor/lead-2; "Ty" Terrell Leonard, tenor; Billy Richard and Roy Richard, baritones **with** Gil Bernal, ts; Willard McDaniel, pno/celeste-4; Charlie "Chuck" Norris, gtr; Ralph "Waldo" Hamilton, bs; John "Jessie" Sailes, dms. Poss. Val Valentine, eng; Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller, prod. Poss. Mike Stoller, pno on LS 29, 31, 32.

Prob. Radio Recorders, 7000 Santa Monica, Boulevard,

Los Angeles, c:a February-March, 1954

LS 13 **The Hatchet Man** -1 Spark 116, Collectables CD 9974
LS 29 **I Love Paris** -2 Spark 113
LS 31 **Whadaya Want?** -2 Spark 110, CD 9974
LS 32 **If Teardrops Were Kisses** -4 Spark 110, CD 9974

Note: Collectables CD 9974, titled "Smokey Joe's Cafe" (2006) by The Robins, features ten of the group's twelve Spark recordings. Chuck Landers (business partner of Gene Norman, now became the group's manager.

with Richard Berry, prob. lead bass vcl-3; Mike Stoller, arr/pno; Gil Bernal, ts; Barney Kessel, gtr; Ralph "Waldo" Hamilton, bs; John "Jessie" Sailes, dms. Abe "Bunny" Robyn, eng; Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller, prod. Atco LP 33-101 presents Bobby Nunn as lead bass vcl on "Riot In Cell Block #9".

Master Recorders, 533 North Fairfax Avenue,

Los Angeles, c:a April, 1954

LS 15 57C-245 **Wrap It Up** -1 (Gardner, second lead) Spark 103, Atco LP 101, (not CD 9974)
LS 16 57C-246 **Riot In Cell Block #9** -3 **Spark 103**, Atco EP 4503, LP 101

c:a August, 1954

LS 22 57C-281 **Loop De Loop Mambo** Spark 107, EP 4503, LP 101
LS 14 57C-282 **One Kiss** Spark 113, LP 101
LS 23 57C-283 **I Must Be Dreamin** Spark 116, LP 101
LS 24 57C-284 **Framed** -1 Spark 107, EP 4503, LP 101

July 7, 1955

LS 30 55C-32 **Smokey Joe's Cafe** S-1669 **Spark 122**, Atco 6059, LP 101
LS 21 55C-33 **Just Like A Fool** S-1670 Spark 122, Atco 6059

Note: Mike Stoller states in the liner notes of Rhino R2 71090 that "The Hatchet Man" was the first Robins date on Spark. Last session wrongly listed as recorded in 1954 on the Coasters' Rhino Handmade box. That session probably features Grady Chapman. Michel Ruppli and the Atlantic files give September 28, 1955 as recording date, but that was the day the Spark masters were purchased by Atco (55C-32/33), sometimes listed as recorded in January. Several discographies list above recordings in three sessions in order of LS master numbers. Spark single 103 was released in June 1954, single 110 in February 1955, and single 122 in September. Master series 57C- allocated for LP 101 in 1957. LS 23 titled "I Must Be Dreamin" on LP 101. LS 16 titled "Riot In Cell Block Number Nine" (33-101 sleeve, not label). The Coasters were formed on October 12, 1955 (due to unconfirmed source). In 1957 and 1958 several of the Robins' Spark recordings were reissued on LP and EP as by the Coasters, leading to the common misconception that the Robins had transformed into the Coasters. In fact Gardner and Nunn were recruited by manager Lester Sill (who soon owned the name of "The Coasters") and producers Jerry Leiber - Mike Stoller. "The Robins" was owned by Terrell. Due to touring engagements there was not enough recorded material available when Atco needed recordings for the Coasters' first LP (so the Robins' Leiber-Stoller recordings came in handy). "Smokey Joe's Cafe" (Atco) hit the R&B charts December 3, 1955, peaking at #10 in January 1956 (and Pop #79).



Grady Chapman (who was out of the Robins from March, 1954 until the end of that year) possibly featured on more than the first and last sessions. Billy Guy and Leiber/Stoller have stated that Berry was guest lead on LS 16, although Gardner and Atco proclaimed it was actually Nunn. Both Berry and Guy have recorded "answers" to "Riot...". Atco purchased and reallocated Spark masters on September 28, 1955 and reissued one Robins single (Atco 6059 with S-master numbers used). Most of the Spark recordings issued as by the Coasters on several later LP and CD issues. Spark was owned by A.L. Stoller, Mike Stoller, Jerry Leiber and Lester Sill. Quintet Music was owned by Leiber, the Stollers, Sill, and Jack Levy. Some Ernie Freeman-fans wrongly state Freeman and René Hall were involved as arrangers and musicians on "Just Like A Fool" (well Freeman certainly backed the Robins - and the Coasters on tours several times in the mid '50s). All twelve recordings released on a bootleg Robins LP (Spark 1000 "The Best Of The Robins Volume 3", 1974, reissued in 1991 with two extra tracks, "Rockin'" and "That's What The Good Book Says" from Modern). LS 23 titled "I Must Be Dreaming" on Warner/Pioneer LP 13013 (and wrongly credited as the 1964 recording on that LP). LS 31 titled "Whadaya

Want" on British Sequel RSACD 868. Several of the above titles are on Dutch Harmony LP LS-13 (bootleg with very bad sound), which also features Robins recordings for Crown and RCA (1953). "Wobble Loo" on that album is neither by the Robins or the Coasters (actually by Ray Agee - Spark 119 - matrix LS 50) and the album is issued as by the Robins on label and the Coasters on sleeve. LS 30 sometimes spelt "Smokey Joe's Cafe". Collectables CD 9974, titled "Smokey Joe's Cafe" has ten of the 12 Spark recordings with "One Kiss" titled "One Kiss Led To Another".

During his absence in 1954 (or poss. 1955) Chapman recorded with the Suedes for Dolphin's label Money (a.o. "Don't Bopper"). In early 1954 Carl Gardner had joined the group. Gardner made his first appearance with the Robins on March 13, 1954 for Gene Norman's Embassy Ballroom. The short film "The Robins Sing" was released around November 1954 and contained "Loop De Loop Mambo" and the not yet issued "I Must Be Dreamin" with Grady Chapman not in the group. Six of the Robins' 12 Spark-titles are on Ace CDCHD 801 "Leiber & Stoller present the Spark Records story": Riot In Cell Block #9 - Loop De Loop Mambo - Smokey Joe's Cafe - Whadaya Want - I Must Be Dreamin - The Hatchet Man. During the summer of 1955 the Robins were fully engaged in Las Vegas for nightly stage shows.

The Great R&B Pioneers



The "new" Robins with fr. l. "Ty" Terrell, Grady Chapman, H.B. Barnum, Billy Richard, and Roy Richard around early 1957.

Around June, 1955 Jake Porter of Combo records issued a single, Combo 91 as "Jake Porter and The Buzzards", titled "**Wine Women and Gold**". Porter says this was the 1955 Robins (the flip "The Bop" is an instrumental). It sure does not sound like the Robins. In January 1956 the Robins entered "the second coming stage" (without Nunn and Gardner).

The Robins or The Robins with Eddie Beal and his Orchestra (Whippet 206)

Grady Chapman, Ty Terrell Leonard, Billy and Roy Richard, and Hidle Brown "H.B." Barnum, vcls/lead -1; plus Johnnie "Twovoice" Morissette and/or Ted Rambo, vcls poss. guesting on some tracks. Carl Gardner wrongly listed on these recordings in some discographies.

with Jewell Grant, bars; Plas Johnson, tens; Ernie Freeman, pno; Rene Hall, gtr; Curtis Counce, bs; Ed Hall, dms. Freeman and Rene Hall, arrs. Produced by Gene Norman. The orchestra credit on 206 suggests that other musicians than above are featured on several recordings.

MGM Studio, Fairfax Avenue and Gene Norman Studio, Hollywood Boulevard, Los Angeles, ca: January 1956



GNP-175
GNP-176

Cherry Lips Out Of The Picture

Spring, mid, ca Sept 1956 and into 1957 (during five sessions)

- | | | |
|--------|--------------------------------|-----------------------|
| B-5000 | Merry-Go-Rock | Whippet 201, WLP 703 |
| B-5001 | Hurt Me | W 201, WLP 703 |
| | How Long -1 | Whippet LP 703 |
| B-5004 | That Old Black Magic | W 203, WLP 703 |
| B-5011 | Since I First Met You | W 203, WLP 703 |
| | Blues In The Night | GNP Crescendo LP 9034 |
| B-5029 | All Of A Sudden My Heart Sings | W 206, WLP 703 |
| B-5030 | A Fool In Love | W 206, WLP 703 |
| B-5033 | Where's The Fire | W 208, WLP 703 |
| B-5046 | Keep Your Mind On Me | W 211 |
| B-5047 | In My Dreams | W 211 |
| B-5048 | Ev'ry Night (Every Night) | W 208, WLP 703 |
| B-5049 | You Wanted Fun | W 212 |
| B-5050 | Snowball | W 212, WLP 703 |



Note: Whippet 206 issued early 1957. Carl Gardner has stated that Leiber-Stoller called him off the "Cherry Lips" recording session to do the first Coasters session. "Cherry Lips" was supposed to be led by Gardner, but by then he and Nunn had left to form the Coasters. H.B. Barnum, born in Texas July 15, 1936 (who was a childhood Hollywood stage piano concerts favorite and had made his first solo record on Imperial as Pee Wee Barnum in 1950 and sang with the Dootones in L.A. in 1955), acted as pianist and utility voice with the Robins during 1956-57. He sang and played piano for RCA in the early 1960s and later became a famous manager /arranger /producer for several acts. Whippet singles subsequently issued between March, 1956 and January, 1958 - Whippet was owned by GNP (Gene Norman). "Rock & Roll" Whippet LP 703 reissued on GNP-Crescendo 9034 (excluding "How Long") and re-titled "The Best of The Robins", and on CD GNPD 9034 (with all 16 tracks). The GNP issue has a cover featuring a photo from 1957 of Leonard, Chapman, Barnum and the Richard brothers and presents the brothers as Richard (no s). All Whippet titles issued on "Cherry Lips" CD. On May 11, 1956 the Robins appeared at the Shrine in Los Angeles along with Little Richard, the Turks, and Marvin & Johnny. The following day they appeared, via tape, on Alan Freed's "Rock'N'Roll Dance Party" show, on CBS radio, with Kitty White and Count Basie's orchestra. The "live" recordings of the Robins doing both sides of the initial Whippet disc and "I Love Paris" issued on LP WINS 1010. Johnnie Morissette said he sang with the Robins during this period. From Steve Propes in Blues & Rhythm: "I (Morissette) was in the Robins too, we came behind Grady Chapman. Gene Norman split up the lead singers... I sang lead on "You Wanted Fun". We played the Crescendo with Herb Jeffries". Morissette was born in Brazil on July 1, 1935 (or Montu Island in the South Pacific). He succeeded Vernon Green as lead with the Medallions before his stint with the Robins - later worked with Sam Cooke. Rick? Lamont seems to have been The Robins' manager around this time.



The Robins

Grady Chapman lead -1, and poss "Ty" Terrell Leonard, Billy and Roy Richard, vcls with unknown accomp and girl chorus. Probably Chapman solo without the group. Chapman and Sheen did not sing together in the Robins' group. Produced by Imperial Records and H.B. Barnum.

- | | | |
|---------|------------------------|--|
| IM-1708 | A Quarter To Twelve -1 | Radio Recorders, Los Angeles, August 7, 1958 |
| IM-1709 | Pretty Little Dolly | Knight 2001 Knight 2001 |

Same but Chapman out and Bobby Sheen in, lead-2



- | | | |
|---------|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| IM-1831 | A Little Bird Told Me -2 | November 11, 1958 |
| IM-1832 | It's Never Too Late | Knight 2008 Knight 2008 |

Note: There are two unreleased tracks filed for Knight, "Talk, Talk, Talk" and "Sufferin'". Grady Chapman was replaced by Bobby Sheen from late 1957. Sheen was born in 1941. Charles Sheen (Sheen's son) has given the following information. Sheen joined the Robins in late '57/early '58 when Chapman was in and out of the group. From 1959 the Robins' driver, Billy Richards Jr, also joined the group as Ty Terrell not always worked with them. By March 1961 Sheen had done most of the leads and he went with Lester Sill to Phil Spector of Philles Records as a back-up-singer and toured with Bobby Soxx & the Blue Jeans. In 1962 Sheen started moonlighting and joined Nunn's new Coasters, Mark II (originally including Nunn, Richards Jr, and Sheen - Chapman joined Nunn's group in 1964). This group was the same until 1966. Chapman and Richards Jr each had their own group of "Coasters" after Nunn's death.

The Robins

Bobby Sheen, Billy and Roy Richard, plus "Little" Billy Richards Jr, vcls with girl vcls, tbn, bars, pno, gtr, bs, dms, cga. Produced by H.B. Barnum, Jack Nitzsche, and Sonny Bono. Leads: Sheen -1, Richards Jr -2.

- | | | |
|--|----------------------------|-------------------|
| | Just Like That -1 | Los Angeles, 1960 |
| | Whole Lotta Imagination -2 | Arvee 5001 |
| | Live Wire Suzie -1 | Arvee 5001 |
| | Oh No -2 | Arvee 5013 |

Note: In the spring of 1960 Terrell, H.B. Barnum snf Jimmy Scott Norman (yes the later Coasters member) recorded as the Dyna-Sores, who made a cover of "Alley Oop" for Rendezvous with the Rene Hall orch.



The Great R&B Pioneers

The Ding Dongs

Bobby Sheen, lead vcl-1; Billy and Roy Richard, Billy Richards Jr, lead-2; vcls
with girl vcls and orchestra. Produced by Johnny Otis.



THE COASTERS

Bobby Nunn's Coasters Mark II in 1964 with fr.J. Billy Richards Jr, Bobby Sheen, and Grady Chapman, with Nunn center front (the very first off-shoot Coasters).

Los Angeles, c:a 1960

Ding Dong (aka Saw Wood Mountain) -1
Sweet Thing -2
Lassie Come Home
Late Last Night

Eldo 109, Ace CD CHD 759
 Eldo 109
 Todd 1043
 Todd 1043

Note: Thanks, Charles Sheen, for the information on above. See page 39 for bio presentations of Grady Chapman and Bobby Sheen.

The Robins

Bobby Sheen, lead; Billy Richards Jr, lead vcl-1; Billy and Roy Richard, vcls
with orchestra directed by Jimmy Lee.

Prob Los Angeles, c:a March, 1961

6001 **How Many More Times**
 6002 **White Cliffs Of Dover**
 6003 **Mary Lou Does The Hoochie Koo - 1**
 (aka Mary Lou Loves To Hootchy Kootchy Coo)
 6004 **Magic Of A Dream**

Lavender 001
 Lavender 001
 Lavender 002
 Lavender 002

Note: In 1962 Roy, Billy Jr. and Bobby Sheen joined Marvin Phillips.

Final notes:

All titles from 1956 - 1961 (except those as The Ding Dongs) on "**Cherry Lips**" Famous Grooves CD 31672 971026 of 1997. Hugh Gregory wrote the following on the Robins in his 1998 book "The Real Rhythm and blues": "Although the Robins were not the most influential of all the vocal groups... they facilitated the possibility that R&B could comment on and reflect, in a humorous way, the concerns of the working man (also referring to the Coasters, ed.mark). It does have to be said... the Robins... being at the cutting edge of social change was of less consideration than turning a fast buck. And it was the lure of the fast buck that scuppered their chances of long-term success". The tracks featuring Bobby Sheen as lead with the Robins and The Ding Dongs are issued on Ace CDCHD 1257 "Bobby Sheen Anthology 1958-1975" (2010).

During the 1970s Chapman, Billy Richards Jr, Leonard and Barnum sporadically acted in a revival Robins group and in January, 2002 Grady Chapman (who had substituted for Carl Gardner in the Coasters a couple of times in the late '90s and in 2001) re-activated a new group - **Grady Chapman & The Robins** with Bobby Baker, Billy Foster, and Bobby Johnson. Randy Jones and J.D. Hall sang bass different times at the end in that group.



Grady Chapman with his "new" Robins in 2003.



The Great R&B Pioneers

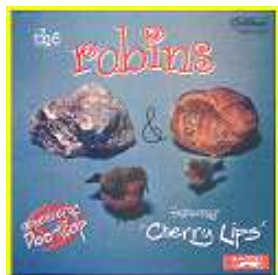
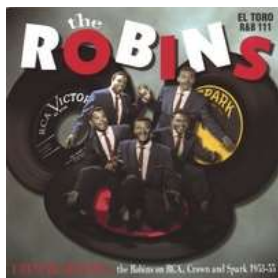
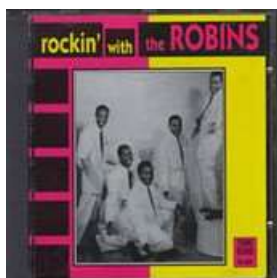
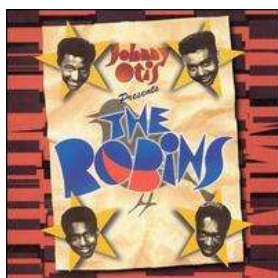


Grady Chapman subbing for Carl Gardner in the "true" Coasters in May 2001, with Ronnie Bright, Bob Walker (of New Orleans' Radio Shrine), and Alvin Morse. Grady also fronted a fake Coasters for several years. Center image: Bobby Nunn's Coasters. Bobby Sheen, Billy Richards Jr, and Nunn (far right) around mid 1970s.



One of the many "fake", or if you like off-shoot Coasters - "Billy Richards' Coasters" (Billy center front), who have toured ever since Nunn's death.

The Robins' (selected) CDs



Johnny Otis Presents The Robins

- Savoy Jazz CD 17357 (all 12 Savoy tracks)

Rockin' with The Robins

- Titanic (Germany) TRC CD 6007
(26 pre-RCA recordings 1947-1952 incl Savoy)

I Must Be Dreamin' - El Toro (Spain) R&B CD 111

(all 12 RCA, all 12 Spark and the 4 Crown)

Smokey Joe's Cafe - Collectables CD 9974

(10 of the 12 Spark recordings)

Rock & Roll - GNPD CD 9034

(featuring all 16 Whippet recordings)

Cherry Lips - Famous Grooves (Germany) CD 31672

971026 (all 28 post-Spark tracks including the Whippet recordings)

West Coast Doo Wop 1949 - 1961 (issued Febr 12, 2015)

Jasmine JASCD 795 (2CD - tracks list right)

Read more on the Robins at:

<http://www.uncamarvy.com/Robins/robins.html>



West Coast Doo Wop - Jasmine 2CD

Disc 1

1. MY BABY DONE TOLD ME - THE FOUR BLUEBIRDS
2. AROUND ABOUT MIDNIGHT
3. YOU SURE LOOK GOOD TO ME
4. DON'T LIKE THE WAY YOU'RE DOING
5. COME BACK BABY
6. FOUND ME A SUGAR DADDY - MICKEY CHAMPION & THE NIC NACS
7. GONNA HAVE A MERRY CHRISTMAS - MICKEY CHAMPION & THE NIC NACS
8. YOU DIDN'T WANT MY LOVE - THE NIC NACS
9. IF I DIDN'T LOVE YOU SO
10. IF IT'S SO BABY
11. DOUBLE CROSSING BLUES
12. THE TURKEY HOP (Part 2)
13. OUR ROMANCE IS GONE
14. THERE AIN'T NO USE BEGGIN'
15. I'M LIVING OK
16. THERE'S RAIN IN MY EYES
17. I'M THROUGH
18. YOU'RE FINE BUT NOT MY KIND
19. ROCKIN'
20. THAT'S WHAT THE GOOD BOOK SAYS
21. A FALLING STAR - MAGGIE HATHAWAY & THE ROBINS
22. WHEN GABRIEL BLOWS HIS HORN
23. SCHOOLGIRL BLUES
24. EARLY MORNING BLUES
25. (Now And Then There's) A FOOL SUCH AS I
26. MY HEARTS THE BIGGEST FOOL
27. ALL NIGHT BABY
28. OH WHY

Disc 2

1. LET'S GO TO THE DANCE
2. HOW WOULD YOU KNOW
3. MY BABY DONE TOLD ME
4. I'LL DO IT
5. TEN DAYS IN JAIL
6. EMPTY BOTTLES
7. DON'T STOP NOW
8. GET IT OFF YOUR MIND
9. I MADE A VOW
10. DOUBLE CROSSIN' BABY
11. ALL I DO IS ROCK
12. KEY TO MY HEART
13. FRAMED
14. THE HATCHET MAN
15. CHERRY LIPS
16. OUT OF THE PICTURE
17. HURT ME
18. SINCE I FIRST MET YOU
19. A FOOL IN LOVE
20. ALL OF A SUDDEN MY HEART SINGS
21. EVERY NIGHT
22. WHERE'S THE FIRE
23. A LITTLE BIRD TOLD ME
24. JUST LIKE THAT
25. WHOLE LOT OF IMAGINATION
26. LIVE WIRE SUZIE
27. OH NO
28. HOW MANY MORE TIMES
29. WHITE CLIFFS OF DOVER
30. MAGIC OF A DREAM



THE ROBINS Discography

(ctsy uncamarvy.com) – slightly edited
(Imaged: the Robins in 1953 and 1955)



EXCELSIOR (as The Four Bluebirds)

540 My Baby Done Told Me (BN) / [Courtroom Blues - Johnny Otis] - ca. 4/49 Re-released as Essex 707 around 6/50

ALADDIN (as The Robins)

3031 Don't Like The Way You're Doing (BN) / Come Back Baby (BN) - 6/49

SAVOY (as The Robins)

726 If I Didn't Love You So (BN) / If It's So Baby (BN) - 12/49
731 Double Crossing Blues (LE/BN) / [Back Alley Blues - Beale Street Gang] - 1/50; alt flip [Ain't Nothin' Shakin' - Leo Sims with Johnny Otis Orchestra]
732 Turkey Hop, Part 1 / Part 2 (BN) - 2/50
738 Our Romance Is Gone (BN) / There Ain't No Use Beggin' (BR) - 3/50
752 I'm Living O.K. (BN) / There's Rain In My Eyes (BN) - 6/50
762 I'm Through (BN) / You're Fine But You're Not My Kind (BN) - 9/50

(Originally) UNRELEASED SAVOY:

I Found Out My Troubles (BN) - Savoy LP 2230
Have A Merry Christmas (BN) editor's note: poss not recorded ??
Lovers' Lane Boogie (LE/BN) - Savoy LP 2221

RECORDED IN HOLLYWOOD (as The Robins)

112 Race Of Man (BR/BN) / Bayou Baby Blues (MH/BN) - ca. 6/50
121 A Falling Star (MH) / When Gabriel Blows His Horn (MH/BR) - ca. 9/50

RPM (as The Nic Nacs)

313 Found Me A Sugar Daddy (MC/BN) / Gonna Have A Merry Xmas (MC/BN) - 12/50
316 Found Me A Sugar Daddy (MC/BN reissue) / You Didn't Want My Love (BN) - 1/51

UNRELEASED RPM:

I'm Telling You Baby (MC/BN) - Ace LP 88

MODERN (as Bobby Nunn with the "Robbins")

807 Rockin' (BN) / That's What The Good Book Says (BN) - 3/51

UNRELEASED MODERN:

Well, Hello Pretty Baby / All Day I've Been Cryin' (both recorded 3/2/51)

RECORDED IN HOLLYWOOD (as The Robins)

150 School Girl Blues (MH/BN) / Early Morning Blues (BN) - ca. 3/51

SCORE (Aladdin subsidiary - as The Robins) - recorded 1949

4010 Around About Midnight (BN) / You Sure Look Good To Me (BN) - 10/51

RPM (as The Nic Nacs)

342 Found Me A Sugar Daddy (MC/BN) / Gonna Have A Merry Christmas (MC/BN) - 12/51
313 Found Me A Sugar Daddy (MC/BN) / Gonna Have A Merry Christmas (MC/BN) - 11/52 (reissue)

RCA (as The Robins)

5175 A Fool Such As I (BN/GC) / My Heart's The Biggest Fool (GC) - 2/53
5271 Oh Why (GC) / All Night Baby (ALL) - 4/53
5434 How Would You Know (GC) / Let's Go To The Dance (BN) - 8/53
5486 My Baby Done Told Me (BN) / I'll Do It (GC) - 10/53
5489 Ten Days In Jail (GC) / Empty Bottles (BN) - 10/53
5564 Get It Off Your Mind (BN) / Don't Stop Now (GC) - 12/53

CROWN (as The Robins)

106 I Made A Vow (GC) / Double Crossin' Baby (GC) - 2/54

CROWN (as The Drifters)

108 Sacroiliac Swing (GC?) / The World Is Changing (GC?) - 2/54

SPARK (as The Robins)

103 Riot In The Cell Block #9 (RB) / Wrap It Up (CG) - 5/54

CROWN (as The Robbins)

120 Key To My Heart (GC) / All I Do Is Rock (BN) - 7/54

SPARK (as The Robins)

107 Framed (BN) / Loop De Loop Mambo (CG) - 9/54
110 If Teardrops Were Kisses (CG) / Whadaya Want (GC) - 1/55
113 One Kiss (CG) / I Love Paris (GC) - 3/55
116 I Must Be Dreaming (CG) / The Hatchet Man (BN) - 5/55

COMBO (as "Jake Porter & The Buzzards") - prob not the Robins!

91 Wine, Women And Gold / [The Bop - Jake Porter's Combo] - ca. 6/55

SPARK (as The Robins)

122 Smokey Joe's Cafe (CG) / Just Like A Fool (CG) - 9/55
Re-released as Atco 6059 in 10/55

WHIPPET (as The Robins)

200 Cherry Lips (GC) / Out Of The Picture (ALL) - 3/56
201 Hurt Me (GC) / Merry-Go-Rock (ALL) - 6/56
203 Since I First Met You (GC) / That Old Black Magic (GC) - 10/56
206 A Fool In Love (GC?) / All Of A Sudden My Heart Sings (GC?) - 3/57
208 Ev'ry Night (HB?) / Where's The Fire? (ALL) - 57
211 In My Dreams (ALL) / Keep Your Mind On Me (ALL) - 57
212 Snowball (HB?) / You Wanted Fun (HB) - 12/57

WLP-703 *Rock 'N Roll With The Robins* - 11/57 (reissued on GNP Crescendo)

Cherry Lips
Out Of The Picture
A Fool In Love
Hurt Me
Merry-Go-Rock
Every Night
Since I First Met You
How Long (HB)
Where's The Fire?
All Of A Sudden My Heart Sings



(Originally) UNRELEASED WHIPPET

Blues In The Night (issued on GNP Crescendo LP 9034 together with nine of the tracks above - not How Long - but also Snowball and That Old Black Magic)

KNIGHT (Sub of Imperial - as The Robins)

2001 A Quarter To Twelve (GC) / Pretty Little Dolly - 9/58
2008 A Little Bird Told Me (BS) / It's Never Too Late (ALL) - 11/58
Note: Chapman and Sheen were not with the Robins together.

UNRELEASED KNIGHT

Talk, Talk, Talk (??) / Sufferin' (??)

ARVEE (as The Robins)

5001 Just Like That (BS) / Whole Lot Imagination (BR) - 5/60

ELDO (a Johnny Otis label; as The Ding Dongs)

109 Ding Dong (Saw Wood Mountain) (BS) / Sweet Thing (??) - 10/60

ARVEE (as The Robins)

5013 Live Wire Suzie (BS) / Oh No (LBR) - 12/60

LAVENDER (as The Robins)

001 White Cliffs Of Dover (BS) / How Many More Times (BS) - 3/61
002 Magic Of A Dream (BS) / Mary Lou Loves To Hootchy Kootchy Coo (LBR) - 3/61

LEADS:

BN = Bobby Nunn; LE = Little Esther; BR = Billy Richard;
MH = Maggie Hathaway; MC = Mickey Champion;
GC = Grady Chapman; RB = Richard Berry;
CG = Carl Gardner; HB = H.B. Barnum;
BS = Bobby Sheen; LBR = "Little" Billy Richard(s)



The Great R&B Pioneers

THE ROBINS and Grady Chapman

Remembering An R&B Pioneer: Robins' Magical Tenor Lead, Grady Chapman, Dies At 81
(c) 2011 by Todd Baptista

Grady Chapman, whose expressive high tenor lead graced a host of rhythm and blues vocal group harmony records by the Robins during the mid-1950s died January 4, 2011 at a Los Angeles, California hospital, according to the singer's daughter, Tania. The 81-year old's death was attributed to congestive heart failure. Born in Greenville, South Carolina on October 1, 1929, Chapman came to the West Coast as a youngster and joined the already established Robins in 1952. Discovered by Johnny Otis, the Robins had begun recording in 1949 and appeared on a handful of labels including Excelsior, Aladdin, Score, Savoy, Regent, Modern, RPM, and Recorded in Hollywood, under their own name, pseudonyms including the Four Bluebirds and the Nic-Nacs, and backing other artists including Little Esther and Mickey Champion. Chapman first recorded with the Robins - Ulysses "Bobby" Nunn, Terrell "Ty" Leonard, and Billy and Roy Richard - in Hollywood for RCA-Victor on January 21, 1953. Over the course of three sessions held between January and September, Chapman fronted the Robins on the haunting ("My Heart's The Biggest Fool" and "How Would You Know?"), the humorous, ("Ten Days in Jail"), and the soulful ("Oh Why"). The group even masqueraded under the Drifters name, waxing an obscure single for Crown entitled "The World Is Changing". Chapman also shined on "Double Crossin' Baby", issued on Crown in 1954 as by the Robins (sic).



Grady was in and out of the Robins for much of 1954, going afoul of the law - by his own admission - and also recording with another group, Grady Chapman and the Suedes ("Don't Bloop") for Money Records. Consequently, the Robins added Texas-born tenor Carl Gardner who initially shared lead vocal chores with Chapman when the act signed with Leiber and Stoller's Spark enterprise early that year. In what was likely their only session together, Gardner led "If Teardrops Were Kisses" and Chapman fronted "I Love Paris" and "Whadaya Want?" In Chapman's absence, the Robins recorded "Riot In Cell Block #9", "Framed", and "Smokey Joe's Café", and by the end of 1955, Leiber and Stoller had sold Spark, joined Atco, and recruited Gardner and Nunn away from the Robins to form the Coasters. Chapman rejoined Leonard, the Richard brothers, and a new member, 19 year-old H. B. Barnum, in the Robins. Signing on with disc jockey Gene Norman's Whippet label, the group recorded a number of impressive R&B and pop-flavored sides in 1956-57 including "Cherry Lips", "Since I First Met You", and "That Old Black Magic", all featuring Grady's emotive lead tenor. *Editor's note: Chapman returned to the Robins on December 27, 1954 and worked in and out with the group up to Nunn's and Gardner's departures and was with the group when H.B. Barnum joined. Carl Gardner did not sing with the Robins on record after 1955 (contrary to the discography statements on the Hydra CD).*

Around March of 1957, Chapman's initial solo effort ("My Love Will Never Die"/"The Smiling Gondolier", backed by an uncredited female group) was issued on Zephyr and distributed by Norman. With Grady still in the fold, the Robins moved to Imperial's Knight subsidiary label in 1958, waxing "A Quarter To Twelve", but by year's end, Chapman had gone solo full-time, leaving 17 year-old Bobby Sheen to take over the lead vocal chores. A 1958 solo disc on Knight, "Say You Will Be Mine"/"Starlight, Starbright", was followed by two 1959 Imperial 45s, including the splendid "Tell Me That You Care", again with a female group backing. Three additional singles were recorded and issued on Mercury in 1960-61 but, despite some stellar material, Chapman was never able to build a strong solo career. From 1963or '64 to 1966, he toured in the Coasters Mark II with Bobby Nunn, Bobby Sheen, and Billy Richards, Jr. After the members went their separate ways, Chapman and Nunn joined forces to form their own touring unit. At various times he performed as the leader or a member of Grady Chapman's Coasters, the Bobby Nunn Tribute Coasters Group, the World Famous Coasters and the Fabulous Coasters. Often, Chapman was joined by ex-Coasters alumni including Leon Hughes, Billy Guy, and Will "Dub" Jones. In 1977, Guy, Chapman, and Evans recorded background vocals for Michelle Phillips of the Mamas and the Papas. Old friends Billy Richards, Jr, Jerome Evans, formerly of the Cyclones and the Furies, Randy Jones of the Penguins, and Bobby Sheen (who was working with Chapman just before his death in 2000), all shared the stage with Grady at various times from the '70s into the 2000s. In 2000, Chapman, Evans, Jones, and Robert Baker toured Germany as the Fabulous Coasters. When demand arose, he was also willing to resurrect the Robins, and did so on numerous occasions - sometimes with 1950s members Leonard, the Richard brothers, and H. B. Barnum, frequently with Randy Jones, Bobby Johnson and Billy Foster, and, most recently, with Bobby Baker and J. D. Hall.

In the fall of 1993, while he was recovering from throat cancer treatment, Coasters founder and lead singer Carl Gardner asked his old friend to take his place in the group until he was well enough to return to the stage, which Chapman did with pleasure. "We were very saddened to learn of the passing of Grady Chapman", 82 year-old Carl Gardner and his wife, Veta, said in a joint statement from their Florida residence. "We worked together in both the Robins and the Coasters and remained friends over these many years. We send our deepest sympathies to his family. Grady, we will miss you". *CD image above: Hydra BCK 27145 (27 tracks - issued April 2012).*

BOBBY SHEEN (partly from Wikipedia)

Born Robert Joseph Sheen in St. Louis, Missouri May 17, 1941
- Died of pneumonia in Los Angeles November 23, 2000.

Sheen is best known for singing with Bob B. Soxx & the Blue Jeans who had their biggest hit "Zip-a-Dee-Doo-Dah" in 1962 (which was produced by Phil Spector). Bobby toured with Fanita James and Darlene Wright (that's Darlene Love) - and with other girls, but it is not confirmed that he actually was on the hit recording. Sheen has recorded with other groups including the Robins, the Lovables, the Ding Dongs, and the Alley Cats. He would later join Bobby Nunn's group of Coasters and recorded an album with the group called *Coasting* in 1979, which was released on Sheen's own record label, Salsa Picante Records. When Bobby Nunn died in 1986, Nunn's group of Coasters still toured with Sheen and Billy Richards, Jr as members. In later years Bobby sang with Grady Chapman's Fabulous Coasters.

CD image right: Ace CDCHD 1257 (issued in 2010)



Thanks, Charles Sheen, for all you have told me about your father. If you are a true Robins' and Coasters' fan, get the two CDs imaged at this page to find out lots of interesting facts concerning Sheen, Chapman, the Robins, the Coasters, and much more.



The Sheen singles:

"How Many Nights" / "How Can We Ever Be Together" (Liberty #55459) (1962)
"My Shoes Keep Walking Back To You" / "I Want You For My Sweetheart" (Dimension #1043) (1965)
"Come On And Love Me" / "Love Stealing" (Chelsea #3034)
"Dr. Love" / "Sweet Sweet Love" (Capitol #5672) (1966)
"I Shook The World" / "Cloud Nine" (Capitol #5827) (1967)
"The Way Of Love" / "The Shelter Of Your Arms" (Capitol #5984) (1967)
"I Don't Have To Dream" / "She Taught Me What Love Really Is" (Capitol #2507) (1969)
"Something New To Do" / "I May Not Be What You Want" (Warner Brothers #7662) (1972)
"If I Ever Dreamed I Hurt You" / "It Ain't Easy Being Your Fool" (Warner Brothers #7701) (1973)
"Payback" / "Don't Make Me Do Wrong" (Warner Brothers #7732) (1973)

Excerpts from THE ROBINS touring schedule ... and some more

(thanks to Marv Goldberg, Todd Baptista, Steve Propes and [Spontaneous Lunacy](#))

Circa early 1948 - The A-Sharp Trio enters

On a Thursday night talent show at Balu Ardi's and Johnny Otis' newly established "Barrelhouse" Club in Watts (also co-owned by Nat Cole's bass player Johnny Miller), the A-Sharp Trio land at second place with their rendition of "Satchelmouth Baby". First place goes to a guitarist named Pete Lewis, whom Otis hires immediately for his orchestra. He also puts the trio to work, paying them \$5 a night to sing there on weekends.

1948 - Bobby Nunn enters

Unknown exactly when the group (also now featuring bass singer Bobby Nunn, also "working" at the Barrelhouse) did their first recordings with the Johnny Otis Orchestra for Excelsior - probably though, in the recording ban year of 1948 - as the Four Bluebirds.

1949 - The Robins are born

May 27: Recording for Aladdin (issued as the Robins). Frequent "gigs" at the Barrelhouse for the singing quartet and recording for Savoy 1949-1950. No tour with the Otis aggregation.

1950 - Bobby Nunn "moonlighting"

for Jimmy Lane and for Dootsie Williams as a solo singer.

Bobby Nunn singles: (wikipedia, edited)

- "Why Did You Leave Me Baby?" / "Alone About Midnight" (for Sammy Lane) (Hamptone International #605) (1/1950) - also see *Robins' Aladdin recordings*
- "Bring Your Lovin' Back To Me" / "I Got A Country Gal" (Blue #105) (1950) (as Billy Nunn for Dootsie Williams)
- "Anticipating Blues" / "Hard Luck Women & Strife" (B-side by Big Duke with Pete Johnson All-Stars) (Dootone #302) (1950)
- "Clappin' And Shoutin'" / "I'm Tellin' You Baby" (Blue #115) (1951) (as Billy Nunn)
- "Christmas Bells" / "Two Sisters" (B-side instrumental by Que Martin) (Recorded in Hollywood #244) (1951) (for John Dolphin)
- "Saturday Night Daddy" / "Mainliner" (B-side by Little Esther) (Federal #12100) (1952) (Bobby Nunn & Little Esther (prod by Ralph Bass)
- "You Took My Love Too Fast" / "Streetsights" (B-side by Little Esther) (Federal #12122) (1952) (Bobby Nunn & Little Esther)
- "Please Don't Hurt Me" / "Delicious Are Your Kisses" (Sage & Sand #203) (1952) (with Bobby Byrd & Ty Terrell)
- "Candle Of Love" / "Peanut Brittle" (Sage & Sand #204) (1952) (with Bobby Byrd & Ty Terrell)
- (Note: the Sage & Sand records prob not Bobby, but a white country & western group)
- "Like" / "Henrietta" (Titan #1703) (1960) ("Henrietta" with Ginny Tyler)
- "Sixty Minute Man Is Back" / "Been Thinking It Over" (Tishman 714) (unknown date)

Nunn was a welterweight boxing champion in the U.S. Air Force. After discharge in 1947 he moved to Watts, California. Went from the Robins to the Coasters. After leaving the Coasters in late 1957, he teamed with another former Coaster, Leon Hughes, to record as the Dukes in 1959. Two singles were released, "Looking For You" b/w "Groceries, Sir" (Flip #343), and "I Love You" b/w "Leap Year Cha Cha" (Flip #344). Nunn recorded backup vocals for Dorsey Burnette on Imperial Records. Two songs, "Try" and "You Came As A Miracle", were recorded on August 28, 1958, and were released as a single (Imperial #5561) in March 1959.

In 1965 Nunn arranged the song "Whip It On Me Baby" by the O'Jays on Imperial Records. This song had already been recorded by fellow Coaster Billy Guy on Double-L Records in 1963. From late 1962 through the whole of the 1970s, Nunn had his own group of Coasters called "The Coasters Mark II" with Sheen and Billy Richards Jr., soon joined by Grady Chapman. Nunn also appeared on a record by "The Coasters Two Plus Two" in 1975 called "Searchin' '75" b/w "Young Blood" (released on Chelan Records and produced by Bumps Blackwell). The other members of this group included Leon Hughes, Grady Chapman, and Jerome Evans. In 1985, Nunn's group of Coasters appeared on the NBC variety show "Our Time" hosted by Karen Valentine. "Fabian's Good Time Rock 'N' Roll" oldies special, and a Churches Chicken commercial (which included Nunn, Sheen, Richards, and Sonny Chaney). Nunn is interred at the Evergreen Cemetery, Los Angeles.



The Robins in 1950 and in 1953 with Grady Chapman far left; Carl Gardner (late 1954 or early 1955); and at club Trocadero in August 1954 with Gardner far right. Hard to identify the singers, but "Ty" Terrell (or poss one of the Richard brothers seems to be the one missing. Bobby Nunn is the one second to Gardner.

Johnny Otis Orchestra 1947-1948

Here are the nine songs the band recorded at "The Four Bluebirds" session (all the songs may or may not have been recorded at the same date). Also see Johnny Otis feature, pages 46-47.

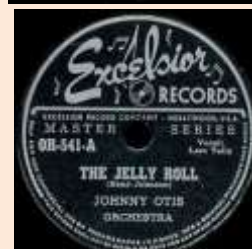
Headcredit - mostly: **Johnny Otis Orchestra** (or **and Orchestra**)



"Happy New Year Baby" (released December 1948 - Excelsior 536) Vocal Lem Tally (barsax) plus uncredited vocal Cathy Cooper
b/w "Barrel House Stomp" Big Jay McNeely sic (altosax) headcredit
New-A side: "Midnight In The Barrel House" (released January 1949) Featuring Pete Lewis with his Guitar

Imaged above right: the proud owners of "the Barrelhouse" Club in Watts, Los Angeles, baptized after the Omaha (Nebraska) "Barrel House", which inspired the instrumentals - Bardu Ali, and Johnny Otis at the drums. (photo prob from 1948).

"Alimony Boogie" (released February 1949 - Excelsior 537) Vocal Cathy Cooper, plus Lem Tally (exit vcl & barsax)
b/w "Hog Jaws" (instrumental) - no images available



"My Baby Done Told Me" (released April 1949 - Excelsior 540) Featuring The Four Bluebirds
b/w "Court Room Blues" credited Vocal: Lem Tally. Darby Hicks (Hicks is prob Johnny Otis, not Devonia Williams) "montage image"
 "The Jelly Roll" (released June 1949 - Excelsior 541) Vocal Lem Tally
b/w "Pay Day Blues" Vocal Cathy Cooper - and uncredited vocal by Bardu Ali.

The musicians on the nine recordings above were John Anderson, tp; George Washington, tb; Big Jay McNeely, alt/tens; Lemuel Tally, bars; most prob Devonia Williams, pno; Mario Delagarde, bs; Johnny Otis, dms (who turned to vibes after an accident in 1949), and "guest" Pete Lewis on "Midnight In The Barrel House" (later reissued on Savoy).

1951 - 1952 - Intermission

No detailed information available. The Robins did not tour with Johnny Otis - see the discography. The group (apart from Bobby Nunn) was inactive from early 1951 until at least late 1952.

The Great R&B Pioneers

1953 - Grady Chapman enters

August 15: the Robins are part of Gene Norman's "Fourth Annual Rhythm and Blues Jubilee", held at the Shrine Auditorium in Los Angeles. Others on the bill are Johnny Ace, Willie Mae Thornton, the Flairs, Linda Hopkins, Camille Howard, Roy Milton, Helen Humes, Jimmy Witherspoon, Marvin Phillips, saxists Gil Bernal and Maxwell Davis, comedian Slappy White, and MC Dick "Huggy Boy" Hugg. **December:** appearing nightly at Johnny Otis' new Los Angeles "Club Oasis" on Western Avenue, along with the Sugar Hill Revue.

1954 - Carl Gardner enters

Chapman out: **March 13:** Carl Gardner debuts on stage with the Robins at the Gene Norman show at the Embassy Ballroom in L.A. with Earl Bostic, the Flairs, and Christine Kittrell (aka Ketrell). The package also tours Bakersfield, Salinas, Ventura, Pasadena, and Oakland. **Circa April:** *Riot In Cell Block #9* is recorded in L.A. **May 7:** one week at Johnny Otis' Club Oasis in L.A. **July 4:** weekend at the Savoy Ballroom in L.A. (billed as the Robbins) with Richard Lewis and his Band. **July 17:** "Fifth Annual Blues Jubilee" hosted by Gene Norman at the Hollywood Shrine with the Chords, the Clovers, the Four Tunes, the Crows, and the Hollywood Flames. **Late July:** radio and TV-shows followed by "The Gene Norman Show" tour to Bakersfield, San Jose, Pismo Beach, Fresno, Salinas, and "The Rancho" in Hollywood. **July 22:** two weeks at the "Trocadero" jazz club in Hollywood. **July 30:** "Rhythm & Blues" show on KTTV hosted by Jerry Lawrence with Harry Belafonte, and the Oscar McLollie orchestra. **Ca August:** *Loop De Loop Mambo* (Gardner, lead) and *Framed* (Nunn, lead) are recorded. **August 17:** "The Starlite" in Burbank, CA with Big Jay McNeely, Jimmy Witherspoon, the Flairs, and the Richard Lewis Band. **August 19:** (billed as the Robbins) with ten days at club "Trocadero" with Louis Jordan and his Tympany Five. **September:** San Joaquin Valley and northern California with Jo Ann Lynn, and Chuck Higgins and his Orchestra. **September 25:** the Gene Norman show at the Shrine Auditorium with Guitar Slim, Muddy Waters, the Flairs, the Jewels, Marvin & Johnny, Chuck Higgins, Johnny "Guitar" Watson, and the Platters. **Circa November:** "The Robins Sing" for Universal-International Pictures. The group (backed by Leighton Noble's orchestra) lip synch to two songs, "I Must Be Dreaming" (which had already been recorded for Spark, but not yet released) and "Loop De Loop Mambo". Film is released on January 17, 1955. **December 27:** L.A. Shrine (with Chapman back, the Robins a sextet) with the Clovers, Big Jay McNeely, the Jewels, the Platters, and the Cheers.

1955 - Transitions

January 14: three days at the 5-4 Ballroom, L.A. with Floyd Dixon, and T-Bone Walker. **February 25:** three days at the 5-4 Ballroom with Johnny "Guitar" Watson. "Trocadero" may be visited again. **Prob July 7:** group with Gardner, wax *Smokey Joe's Cafe* and *Just Like A Fool* in L.A. **July-August:** nightly shows in Las Vegas, Nevada, where they present their stage show nightly. A hit with the sophisticated audiences of the gambling city, they would appear there on several occasions over the next few years. At some point, to make their Las Vegas act more polished, they retain Lon Fontaine as a choreographer. The Robins continue to tour after the leave of Gardner and Nunn in **October** - supplemented by H.B. Barnum, Grady Chapman still lead. **December 31:** billed "The Newly Formed Robins" at the L.A. Shrine, along with Joe Turner, Oscar McLollie, Gene and Eunice, and the Calvanes.

1956 - H.B. Barnum enters

January: Booking agent Harry Levine, through the Gale Agency, arranges for the Robins to join the stage shows at the Los Angeles and

San Francisco Paramount Theaters. The L.A. show, which begins on the 11th, is MC'd by Gene Norman and Huggie Boy while Jumping George Oxford takes over in the North. Al Hibbler, Gloria Mann, LaVern Baker, the El Dorados, Shirley and Lee, and Oscar McLollie are also on the bill. **May 1:** the Shrine in Los Angeles along with Little Richard, the Turks, and Marvin & Johnny. The following day they appear, via tape, on Alan Freed's "Rock 'N' Roll Dance Party" show on CBS radio, with Kitty White and Count Basie's orchestra. **July:** Hermosa Beach with Joe Houston and his band before heading off to Lake Tahoe for a five-day stint. **October:** The 5-4 Ballroom along with Chuck Higgins and Larry Birdsong. **Mid October:** signed by Herald Attractions and immediately booked in the "Top Ten Revue". The tour, which also includes Little Richard, Joe Turner, Bill Doggett, the Moonglows, the Five Keys, Faye Adams, Etta James, and Big Jay McNeely and his band, plays dates in San Antonio, Houston, and Austin, Texas.



Grady Chapman; H.B. Barnum; The Robins in 1957 with H.B. Barnum, top and Grady Chapman, bottom; Bobby Sheen, and "Little" Billy Richards(s) Jr.

1957 - The Beginning of the End

Around March: Grady Chapman's first solo effort issued on Geordie Hormel's Zephyr label (Grady still a member of the Robins though).

1958 - Bobby Sheen enters

Spring or summer: H.B. Barnum is yet another of the Robins who does some extracurricular recording. **October:** Appearance on Art Laboe's TV show, singing "Pretty Little Dolly". **November:** Grady Chapman leaves the group, but continues doing solos with girl group backing. Bobby Sheen enters.

1959 - "Little" Billy Richards enters

Late this year: H.B. Barnum concentrates on arranging and producing the Robins' songs (and "Ty" Terrell" quits around this time). "Little" Billy Richard (later known as Billy Richards Jr) enters. Group disbands 1961.

Late 1954 or poss early 1955: fr.l. Carl Gardner, Bobby Nunn, Roy Richard (or is it the returned Grady Chapman?), "Ty" Terrell Leonard, and Billy Richard.

The Great R&B Pioneers



The Coasters' Date/King recordings – Revised Sessionography

with "Down Home" - Varèse Sarabande CD 302 066 844-2 (issued August 27, 2007) stereo.
 The Coasters' recording line-ups are listed as headings. Carl Gardner, lead vocal unless otherwise indicated.
 The Coasters' stage guitarist Thomas "Curley" Palmer also worked in the studios with the vocal group (as
 shown on personnel listings). Recording location is valid until new location is listed. Only the original issues are
 listed - singles and LP, and when not issued on any single or LP, the original CD issue. Also listed are tracks
 featured on Atlantic/Rhino issues. All tracks are featured on the CD "Down Home" (2007) unless marked (DH*).
 The King singles are marked with year of issue. (Photo ca 1965 – fr.I Gardner, Jones, Carroll, Guy)

THE COASTERS

Carl Gardner, lead/tenor; Billy Guy, baritone/lead-1; Will "Dub" Jones, bass/lead-2; Earl "Speedo" Carroll,
 tenor/lead-3. (Sung in unison -4).

with Mike Stoller, arr/dir/poss. pno; James Booker, pno/elpno/org; Ernie Royal and Melvin Lastie, tpts; Bennie Powell, tbn; Thomas Palmer, gtr,
 George Devens, vbs/perc; Jesse "Preacher" Fairman, bs; Charles Joseph "Honeyman" Otis, dms. Phil Ramone, eng; Leiber-Stoller, prod.

A&R Recording Studios, 112 West 48th Street, New York City

CO-96542 ZSP 117950 (K-14182) **Soul Pad** -1 (Carroll 2nd lead, Gardner 3rd)

November 18, 1966

Date 1552, King LP 1146, King 6404 (1973),

Rhino 2CD 71090

Date 1552, King LP 1146, ALP 2-4003,

Rhino 2CD 71090

CO-96543 ZSP 117951 (K-14181) **Down Home Girl** -1

Note: CO- are Columbia file numbers. King single 6404 issued as by COASTERS (no The). King LP 1146 (full catalogue number KS1146-498, which is in
 stereo) titled "The Coasters On Broadway" (1972), issued in UK on London SHZ 8460. The Date single was issued in March, 1967 with ZSP master
 numbers (exactly one year after the last Atco single). (Photo ca 1966 – fr.I Carroll, Jones, Gardner, Guy)

with unknown accomp; Leiber-Stoller, prod.

Probably one of the Columbia Recording Studios, New York City

CO-93388

Everybody's Woman

June 28, 1967

unissued prob. demo, (DH*)

CO-93389

Teeny Bopper

unissued prob. demo, (DH*)

Note: Fernando L. Gonzalez' Disco File lists these with editing date given as July 19, 1967.



with Artie Butler, arr/dir/pno/prob.org; Mike Stoller, prob. tackpno; Ernie Royal, tpt; Mark Markowitz, tpt; Mickey Gravine, tbn; Artie Kaplan, bars;
 Artie Ryerson, bjo; Eric Gale, gtr; Chuck Rainey, bs; Bernard Purdie, dms; George Devens, perc/bells. Unknown, eng; Leiber-Stoller, prod.

Columbia Recording Studios, (unknown location), New York City

CO-98087 ZSP 137279 (K-13960) **She Can / Talkin' Bout A Woman** (joint leads)

October 30, 1967 (poss. edited November 6)

Date 1607, King LP 1146, King 6389 (1972)

CO-98088 (K-14180)

Mohair Sam -4

King LP 1146

CO-98089 ZSP 137280 (K-14183)

Everybody's Woman -3

Date 1607, Date 1617, King LP 1146

CO-98086 ZSP 138113 (K-13954) **D. W. Washburn** -1 (Gardner, second lead)

October 31, 1967 (edited January 4, 1968)

Date 1617, King 6385 (1971), King LP 1146,

King 6404 (1973), ALP 2-4003, Rhino 2CD 71090

Note: Date Records was a subsidiary of CBS, where Lester Sill was one of the presidents. Date 1617 was held back for issue in favor of the Monkees' pop
 version for Colgems. "She Can", which has the subtitle (Based on "I Am A Woman"), titled "Talkin' Bout A Woman" on King 6389 and LPs/CDs. The
 Date singles were issued with ZSP master numbers in May and July, 1968. CO-98088 poss. edited on January 4, 1968 (or prob in late 1971). Columbia
 (CBS) had several, famous, recording studios in New York.

with Will Jones not present. Jerry Leiber, lead vcl-7; Mike Stoller, pno/tackpno-7; Charlie Macey, bjo; poss. Thomas Palmer, gtr; Jesse
 "Preacher" Fairman, bs; Gary Chester, dms. Add brass on all tracks except on -7 (prob added when these recordings were re-dubbed at the
 autumn, 1971 session). Charlie Cameliere, arr prob. on -6. Taco Meza, flute-5 (dubbed in 1971, when Larry Harlow directed, see below); Back-up
 girlvcls-6 (dubbed). Leiber-Stoller, prod.

Bell Sound Recording Studios, 237 West 54th Street, New York City

CO-96663

Shake 'Em Up And Let 'Em Roll -7

February 13/14, 1968 (edited in late 1971)

Rhino 2CD 71090, (DH*)

CO-96664 K-13953

Love Potion Number Nine -5

King 6385 (1971), King LP 1146, ALP 2-4003

CO-96665 (K-14184)

Down At Papa Joe's -4,6

King LP 1146

CO-96666

Personality

unissued demo, (DH*)

Note: K-13953 advertised as "Love Potion #9", but single 6385 issued on King credited COASTERS (no The) as "Love Potion
 Number Nine" in late 1971. Tracks above recorded for Columbia by Leiber-Stoller. All titles on the King LP (together with Billy Guy's
 tracks for Gusto/Power Pak) reissued on Highland/DeLuxe LP DLX-7786, and CD DCD-7786, titled "20 Greatest Hits" (1987) and
 issued again on Gusto Tee Vee CD 0750-2 (September, 2006). CO-96665 titled "Down at Poppa Joe's" on album sleeve and on
 reissue Highland/DeLuxe LP/CD 7786, and "(Down At) Papa Joe's" on the British London LP (as on the Gusto TeeVee reissue of
 the Highland CD; also on Varèse). K-master numbers used on King singles. The three King titles on Atlantic mono LP 2-4003
 "Young Blood" (1982) are not on corresponding Warner stereo CD 27604-2 "The Ultimate Coasters" (1986). CO 96663 issued on
 Rhino 2CD 71090 "50 Coastin' Classics" (1992) with added credits "with Jerry Leiber". This title was also recorded by Earl Richard
 (United Artists) in 1968. (Photo 1971 fr.I. Bright, Gardner, Guy, and seated Carroll. Below-back cover: Carroll, Gardner, Bright, and Guy).

THE COASTERS

Carl Gardner, lead/tenor; Billy Guy, baritone/lead-1; Ronald "Ronnie" Bright, bass;
 Earl "Speedo" Carroll, tenor.

Prior to the session below the Coasters recorded one single for Lloyd Price's Turntable
 label in ca February 1969 (at Jimmy Norman's "Jamaica Studios" in New York City).

with Marty Sheller, arr; Larry Harlow, dir; Mike Stoller, poss.pno; Taco Meza, flute; prob. Thomas Palmer, gtr;
 unknown sec.gtr; and unknown orchestration (poss. similar to Date/Columbia recordings above). Carl Gardner, solo
 vocal -8. Dave Palmer, eng; Leiber-Stoller, prod. Mixed/edited at **Electric Lady Studios**, 52 West 8th Street, New
 York City, late 1971 with Taco Meza dubbed on K-13953 "Love Potion Number Nine" from above session.

Starday unknown studio (Electric Lady?), New York City

K-13959

Cool Jerk

Autumn, 1971

King LP 1146, King 6389 (1972)

K-14176

Good Lovin'

only instrumental track exists, unissued, (DH*)

K-14177

Mustang Sally -1

King LP 1146

K-14178

On Broadway

King LP 1146

K-14179

The In Crowd -8

King LP 1146


Note: In the autumn of 1971 Leiber and Stoller purchased and remastered all Date/Columbia tracks ("She Can" changing
 title). They overdubbed and edited two tracks from the 1968 session, produced the new recordings above, and reissued
 all Date tracks (with K-master numbers used) on King/Starday, newly bought up by Leiber, Stoller, Freddy Bienstock, and
 company-president Hal Neely. Last track titled "The In Crowd" on the British London LP and on several CD re-issues.
 King LP stereo - tracks on ALP 2-4003 and Rhino in mono. Leiber-Stoller soon "sold" their shares in King Records to
 Neely. In early 2015 "Love Potion Number Nine" and "Cool Jerk" were issued on a U.K. BGP (Ace) single (BGPS 044).

This discography is checked for accuracy and validated on August 30, 2020. Right: the King LP (issued in December, 1972).

Discography compiled by Claus Röhnisch.



The Great R&B Pioneers




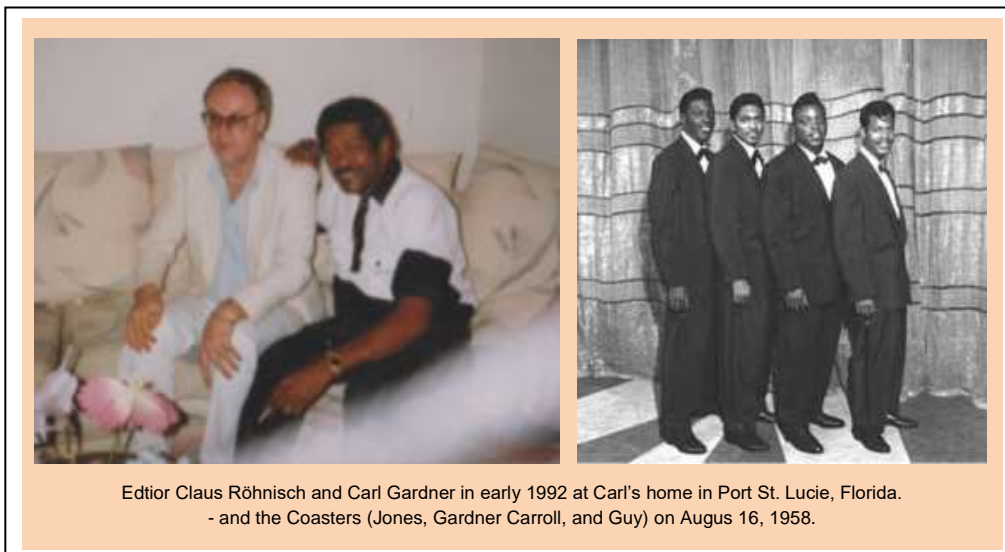
Here is a date you may add to the Coasters at the Apollo (the list in the first Update volume). I found the date in Veta and Carl Gardner's book "Yakety Yak I Fought Back"..

June 16, 1961
Ray Charles and his Band, the Raelets, the Coasters, Betty Carter, and the Jazztet (with Art Farmer and Benny Golsen).

Right: Ad for "Apollo" (and documented on the Atlantic LP "Apollo Saturday Night"). Show starting Friday Nov 15, 1963. Note Redding's misspelling.

Below: Carl Gardner (of the Coasters) and his siblings (poss 1988) and an ad for the March 5, 1965 Apollo week (so you may add the names of the acts).





The Great R&B Pioneers

This is the 1958 recording session by **Bobby Hendricks**, reported to feature THE COASTERS backup singing (one rocker and one ballad on each record).



Bobby Hendricks, lead vcl; with guitarist and pianist Jimmy Oliver's Orchestra. (the Clyde McPhatter/Drifters Oliver)

Recorded in New York City, ca May (or poss June), 1958 (two months after the Hendricks-led Drifters' "Drip Drop", also rumoured to have featured the Coasters back-up).

- | | | |
|--------|--------------------------------------|---------|
| SR-929 | A Thousand Dreams | Sue 706 |
| SR-930 | Itchy Twichy Feeling | Sue 706 |
| SR-933 | Molly Be Good | Sue 708 |
| SR-934 | Dreamy Eyes | Sun 708 |

Get this fine compilation, featuring all 19 tracks of T-Bone Walker's "revival" sessions

from ABC-Bluesway's two wonderful Los Angeles albums, recorded May 24-25, 1967 and February 20-21, 1968 (of which 11 tracks were reissued on Bluesway in 1973).



"Stormy Monday Blues – the essential collection" - Spectrum/Universal HMNCD 038 (1998) – also issued on several other labels.

T-Bone Walker stormy monday blues the essential collection

Of all the bluesmen to explore the potential of the electric guitar, Aaron "T-Bone" Walker was one of the most influential to be helped to change the vocabulary of the genre. Indeed, through Walker's influence the electric guitar became one of the most creative and expressive vehicles for musical expression, with his single-note, rocking technique and sophisticated chordings. Blending his skill to jazz while remaining firmly grounded in the blues. This set gathers together the highlights of the three albums - Stormy Monday Blues (1967), Family Town (1968) and Dirty Mulewater (1972) - that he recorded for ABC's subsidiary Bluesway.

Born on May 26, 1910 in Linder, Texas, Walker moved to Dallas when he was two. After learning the guitar and falling under the spell of family friends Blind Lemon Jefferson and Big Bill Broonzy he found the south-west in a medicine show as a lap dancer, recorded a single, "Windy Fall Blues" and "Dixie River Blues" for Columbia in 1929 as Oak CBOT-Deese. After touring with Cal Collins, Ma Rainey and Ida Cox and playing with Lawson Brink in Fort Worth, he moved to Los Angeles in 1935. In 1937 Walker joined Los Hill's Orchestra and for the next two years they toured widely, playing from coast to coast and collaborating with other recordings that included "T-Bone Blues" for the New York-based Varsity label. Gradually at jobs with Hill's growing big band style it had the jump-style beat that would become synonymous with the electrified sound of R&B.

Walker left Hill in Chicago and headed back to the west coast, where he took up the electric guitar and put together his own outfit. From 1942 until the late 1950's, Walker toured continuously, maintaining a schedule that was severely debilitating, which resulted in long term poor health. Even so, he recorded prolifically as well, cutting sides for Capitol, the Chicago-based Chess/RCA label, Black & White, Imperial and Atlantic. Many of these sides such as "I Got a Shock Baby", "The 500 in Love With Me", "Don't Leave Me Baby", "T-Bone Shuffle" and "Call It Stormy Monday, But Tuesday's Just as Bad" would be re-recorded over the years with the arrangements reflecting the way he kept ahead of changing fashions in musical taste.

By the late 1950's, Walker - in common with most bluesmen - slipped out of fashion as rock and roll ruled the roost. Still Walker toured, spending time in Europe and recording only periodically. In 1967 he was signed to ABC's subsidiary Bluesway. The result was a trilogy of albums that featured some of Walker's best-known material, "Stormy Monday Blues" (originally known as "Call It Stormy Monday, But Tuesday's Just as Bad"), "Cowboy Blues", "Call Me 'Round Blues", "Goin' In Family Beer" and "You're An Actor Man", among others, but in speaking raw versions. Although he was far from well, he still worked hard, pushing back boundaries all the time; in 1970, he was in Germany for his collaboration, "Good Lovin'", with the multi-instrumentalist Mose Ebranko of the Cannonballers.

In 1971, with producers Jerry Leiber and Mike Dinkor and jazzmen trumpeter Gerry Gilmore, saxophonists Al Cohn, Zoot Sims and Gerry Mulligan and Basford Horns Men, Walker recorded Very Rare for Reprise. The following year he suffered a stroke and died of bronchial pneumonia on March 18, 1975.

Bob Thiele, producer.
Lloyd Glenn, pno.
See **Updates** volume for personnel listings.
Below. T-Bone in 1968.



LITTLE WALTER

(as presented at wikipedia, sl-edited)



LITTLE WALTER CHECKER RECORDING ARTIST

Marion Walter Jacobs (May 1, 1930 – February 15, 1968), known as **Little Walter**, was an American blues musician, singer, and songwriter, whose revolutionary approach to the harmonica and impact on succeeding generations has earned him comparisons to such seminal artists as Django Reinhardt, Charlie Parker and Jimi Hendrix. His virtuosity and musical innovations fundamentally altered many listeners' expectations of what was possible on blues harmonica. He was inducted into The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 2008, the first and, to date, only artist to be inducted specifically as a harmonica player.

Early years

Jacobs' date of birth is usually given as May 1, 1930, in Marksville, Louisiana. He was born without a birth certificate and when he applied for a Social Security card in 1940, his birthdate was listed as May 1, 1923 (over the years he often gave different years, but May 1 was constant. In some other documents he filled out before reaching the age of majority he indicated birth years of 1925 and 1928, probably to appear to be of legal age to sign contracts for recordings and club work. After reaching the age of majority based on a birth year of 1930, he consistently gave his birth year as 1930). He was raised in Rapides Parish, Louisiana, where he learned to play the harmonica. He quit school and by the age of 12 had left rural Louisiana and travelled, working odd jobs and busking on the streets of New Orleans, Memphis, Helena and West Helena, Arkansas, and St. Louis. He honed his musical skills on harmonica and guitar, performing with older bluesmen including Sonny Boy Williamson II, Sunnyland Slim, Honeyboy Edwards, and others.

Arriving in Chicago in 1946, he occasionally found work as a guitarist but garnered more attention for his already highly developed harmonica playing. According to Chicago bluesman Floyd Jones, Little Walter's first recording was an unreleased demo recorded soon after he arrived in Chicago, on which Walter played guitar backing Jones.^[9] Jacobs, reportedly frustrated with having his harmonica drowned out by electric guitars, adopted a simple but previously little-used method: He cupped a small microphone in his hands along with his harmonica and plugged the microphone into a public address system or guitar amplifier. He could thus compete with any guitarist's volume. However, unlike other contemporary blues harp players, such as Sonny Boy Williamson I and Snooky Pryor, who like many other harmonica players had also begun using the newly available amplifier technology around the same time solely for added volume, Little Walter purposely pushed his amplifiers beyond their intended technical limitations, using the amplification to explore and develop radical new timbres and sonic effects previously unheard from a harmonica or any other instrument. In a short biographical note on Little Walter, Madison Deniro wrote that he was "the first musician of any kind to purposely use electronic distortion".

Success

Jacobs made his first released recordings in 1947 for Bernard Abrams's tiny Oranella label, which operated out of the back room of Abrams's Maxwell Radio and Records store in the heart of the Maxwell Street district in Chicago. These and several other of his early recordings, like many blues harp recordings of the era, owed a strong stylistic debt to the pioneering blues harmonica player Sonny Boy Williamson I (John Lee Williamson). Little Walter joined Muddy Waters' band in 1948, and by 1950 he was playing acoustic (unamplified) harmonica on Waters' recordings for Chess Records. The first appearance on record of Little Walter's amplified harmonica was on Waters's "Country Boy" (Chess 1952), recorded on July 11, 1951. For years after his departure from Waters' band in 1952, Chess continued to hire him to play on Waters' recording sessions, and as a result his harmonica is featured on most of Waters' classic recordings from the 1950s.

As a guitarist, Little Walter recorded three songs for the small Parkway label with Waters and Baby Face Leroy Foster (reissued on CD by Delmark Records as "The Blues World of Little Walter" in 1993) and on a session for Chess backing pianist Eddie Ware. His guitar playing was also featured occasionally on early Chess sessions with Waters and Jimmy Rogers. In January 1952, talent scout Ike Turner tried to get Jacobs to record for Modern Records while in Helena, but Jacobs was on his way to Mississippi. They played together in Clarksdale



Jacobs had put his career as a bandleader on hold when he joined Waters' band, but he stepped out front again when he recorded as a bandleader for Chess' subsidiary label Checker Records on May 12, 1952. The first completed take of the first song attempted at his debut session became his first number one hit, spending eight weeks at the top of the *Billboard* R&B chart. The song was "Juke", and it is still the only harmonica instrumental ever to be a number-one hit on the chart. The original title of the track file was "Your Cat Will Play", but was renamed at Leonard Chess's suggestion. Three other harmonica instrumentals by Little Walter also reached the *Billboard* R&B top 10: "Off the Wall" number eight, "Roller Coaster" number six, and "Sad Hours" number two (while "Juke" was still on the charts). "Juke" was the biggest hit to date for any artist on Chess and its affiliated labels and one of the biggest national R&B hits of 1952, securing Walter's position on the Chess artist roster for the next decade. Jacobs had fourteen top-ten hits on the *Billboard* R&B charts between 1952 and 1958, including two number-one hits (the second being "My Babe" in 1955), a level of commercial success never achieved by Waters or by his fellow Chess blues artists Howlin' Wolf and Sonny Boy Williamson II. Following the pattern of "Juke", most of Little Walter's singles released in the 1950s featured a vocal performance on one side and a harmonica instrumental on the other. Many of Walter's vocal numbers were written by him or Chess A&R man Willie Dixon or adapted from earlier blues themes. In general, his sound was more modern and up-tempo than the popular Chicago blues of the day, with a jazzier conception and rhythmically less rigid approach than that of other contemporary blues harmonica players.

Jacobs left Waters' band in 1952 and recruited his own backing band, the Aces, a group that was already working steadily in Chicago backing Junior Wells. The Aces, the brothers David and Louis Myers on guitars and Fred Below on drums, were credited as the Jukes on most of the Little Walter records on which they played. By 1955 the members of the Aces had each separately left Little Walter to pursue other opportunities and were initially replaced by the guitarists Robert Lockwood Jr and Luther Tucker and drummer Odie Payne. Among others who worked in Little Walter's recording and touring bands in the 1950s were the guitarists Jimmie Lee Robinson and Freddie Robinson, and drummer George Hunter. Jacobs suffered from alcoholism and had a notoriously short temper, which in late 1950s led to violent altercations, minor scrapes with the law, and increasingly irresponsible behavior. This led to a decline in his fame and fortunes, beginning in the late 1950s. Nonetheless he toured Europe twice, in 1964 and 1967. The 1967 European tour, as part of the American Folk Blues Festival, resulted in the only known film footage of Little Walter performing. Jacobs recorded and toured infrequently in the 1960s, playing mainly in and around Chicago. In 1967 Chess released a studio album, *Super Blues*, featuring Little Walter, Bo Diddley, and Muddy Waters.

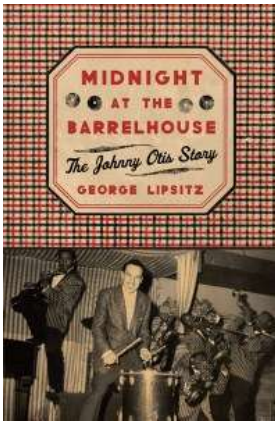
Death

A few months after returning from his second European tour, Little Walter was involved in a fight while taking a break from a performance at a nightclub on the South Side of Chicago. He apparently sustained only minor injuries in this altercation, but they aggravated the damage he had suffered in previous violent encounters, and he died in his sleep at the apartment of a girlfriend, at 209 East 54th Street in Chicago early the following morning. The official cause of death stated on Little Walter's death certificate was coronary thrombosis (a blood clot in the heart); evidence of external injuries was so insignificant that the police reported that his death was due to "unknown or natural causes", and no external injuries were noted on the death certificate. His body was buried at St. Mary's Cemetery, in Evergreen Park, Illinois, on February 22, 1968. Little Walter's grave remained unmarked until 1991, when fans Scott Dirks and Emot Rasun had a marker designed and installed.

Little Walter's daughter, Marion Diaz Reacco, has established the Little Walter Foundation in Chicago, to preserve the legacy and genius of Little Walter. The foundation aims to create programs for the creative arts, including music, animation and video.

The Great R&B Pioneers

The early Johnny Otis Orchestra (read the book and get the four CDs imaged below!)



The Johnny Otis Orchestra in 1950
 Fr.I. Mario Delagarde, Pete "Guitar" Lewis, Don Johnson (tp), Johnny Otis (vbs), Lorenzo Holden (tens), Walter Henry (bars), Lee Graves (tp), and Devonia "Lady Dee" Williams (pno). This was the line-up, which together with George Washington (trn), James Von Streeter (tens), and Leard "Kansas City" Bell (dms), recorded the very first Savoy sessions on November 10 and December 1, 1949.

Top left: Midnight at the Barrelhouse – The Johnny Otis Story - By George Lipsitz (2010).

Top right: Ace CDCHD 1312 (1CD) - The Johnny Otis Story Volume 1 1945-57 / Midnight At The Barrelhouse

Right: Classics CD 5027 (1CD) – The Chronological Johnny Otis 1945 – 1947 (or 1945 – 1948 with all the Excelsior recordings. Atlantic Savoy Jazz 92859-2 (3CD) - The Johnny Otis Rhythm & Blues Caravan / The Complete Savoy Recordings Fantatic Voyage FVTD120 (3CD) - That's Your Last Boogie! / The Best of Johnny Otis 1945 - 1960



The Johnny Otis Orchestra, Oklahoma City 1950
 L.r: George Washington (trambone), Don Johnson (trumpet), Walter Henry (alto sax), Lorenzo Holden (tinner sax), Redd Lyte (vocals), Little Esther (vocals), Leard "Kansas City" Bell (drums), Mel Walker (vocals), Johnny Otis, Pete "Guitar" Lewis (guitar), Mario Delagarde (bass), Devonia "Lady Dee" Williams (piano)



The Great R&B Pioneers



Johnny Otis and his Orch, here most likely in early 1946. Trumpets l.r. - Eddie Preston, Leslie Current, Billy Jones, Loyal Walker. Trombones - John Pettigrew, George Washington, Herb Mullins, Bernie Cobbs (guitar), Cliff Trenier (vocal), Leon Beck (baritone sax), Kent Pope (alto sax), Johnny Otis (vibes), Paul Quinichette (tenor sax), James Van Streeter (tenor sax), Lee Wesley Jones (piano), Curtis Counce (bass), Claude Trenier (vocal).

Johnny Otis' Pre-Savoy Years

Excelsior was Otis Rene's label, Exclusive his brother Leon's. Songs recorded in Los Angeles. (Image top right: 1945-1946 featuring Otis, Leon Beck, Kent (Kenneth) Pope, Bob Harris, Paul Quinichette, Curtis Counce-yes with a saxophone!, and James Van Streeter)

A-sides: Jimmy Rushing, vocalist; accompanied by Johnny Otis his Drums & his Orchestra B-sides: Johnny Otis his Drums & his Orchestra
Sept 13, 1945

Teddy Buckner, Billy Jones, Loyal Walker, (Harry) Par Jones, tpts; (Henry) Lorenzo Cocker, Eli Robinson, John Pettigrew, Jap Jones, tbns; Rene Block, James Van Streeter, Paul Quinichette, Bob Harris, Leon Beck, reeds; Bill Doggett, pno; Bernie Cobbs, gtr; Curtis Counce, bs; Johnny Otis, dms; Jimmy Rushing, vcls-1
Excelsior 141 My Baby's Business -1 b/w Preston's Love Mansion
Excelsior 142 Jimmy's 'Round the Clock Blues -1 b/w Harlem Nocturne



Johnny Otis and His Orchestra October 15, 1945

Leslie Current, Billy Jones, Eddie Preston, Loyal Walker, tpts; Jap Jones, John Pettigrew, George Washington, tbns; Bob Harris, Kent Pope, Paul Quinichette, James Van Streeter, Leon Beck, reeds; Henry Owens, pno; Bernie Cobbs, gtr; Curtis Counce, bs; Johnny Otis, dms; Ivie Anderson, vcls-1; Joe Turner, vcls-2. SwingTime LP 1009 (AFRS broadcast issued 1986) One O'Clock Jump (Theme) / Omaha Flash / He Was Tall, Dark And Handsome -1 / S.K. Blues -2 / Jam Session Blues -1,2 / One O'Clock Jump (Theme encore)

c. February 1946

Lester Current, Loyal Walker, Eddie Preston, Billy Jones, tpts; John Pettigrew, Jap Jones, Sonny Durham-152, George Washington, tbns; Kent Pope, Bob Harris, Paul Quinichette, James Van Streeter, Leon Beck, reeds; Gene Gilbeaux, pno-152, Henry Owens, pno; Bernie Cobbs, gtr; Curtis Counce, bs; Johnny Otis, dms
Excelsior 152 Omaha Flash b/w Jeff-Hi Stomp
Excelsior 156 Miss Mitchell b/w Ultra-Violet (poss alt flip Knight Lullaby)
Excelsior 157 Sgt Barksdale Pt. 1 & Pt. 2

December 1946

Eddie Preston, Walter Williams, Lester Current, Billy Jones, tpts; John Pettigrew, Herb Mullins, George Washington, tbns/vcl-1; Preston Love, Buddy Colette, Paul Quinichette, James Van Streeter, Lemuel Tally, reeds; Lee Wesley Jones, pno; Bernie Cobbs, gtr; Joe Comfort, bs; Johnny Otis, dms; ens. vcls-1
Excelsior 518 Love's Nocturne b/w Good Boogie Googie -1
Excelsior 519 My Old Flame b/w La Bohème And Beans
unissued Somebody Loves Me

Johnny Otis Orchestra or Johnny Otis and Orchestra (540)

or ... and his... (536 A-side) (see Robins feature - page 40 for detailed label credits)
Probably 1948 (or poss. late 1947)

John Anderson, tpt; George Washington, tbn; Big Jay McNeely, ten/altosax; Lemuel Tally, barsax; "Darby Hicks" (prob. Devonia "Lady Dee" Williams) or poss Lee Wesley Jones, pno; Pete Lewis, gtr-5; Mario Delagarde, bs; Johnny Otis, dms; Cathy Cooper, vcl-1; Bardu Ali, vcl-2; Lem Tally, vcl-3; "Darby Hicks" (prob Otis), vcl-4; The Four Bluebirds (Bobby Nunn, Terrell Leonard, Billy and Roy Richard), vcls-6

Excelsior 536 Happy New Year Baby -3.1 b/w Barrel House Stomp
Excelsior 536AA Midnight In The Barrel House -5 b/w Barrel House Stomp
Excelsior 537 Alimony Boogie -1,3 b/w Hog Jaws
Excelsior 540 My Baby Done Told Me -6 b/w Court Room Blues -4,3
Excelsior 541 The Jelly Roll -3 b/w Pay Day Blues -1,2



Joe Swift with Johnny Otis and his Orchestra 1948

Joe Swift, vocals with prob John Anderson, tpt; Lemuel Tally, sax; Maxwell Davis, tens; Devonia Williams, pno; Gene Phillips, gtr-1 (with female voice intro); Curtis Counce, bs; Johnny Otis, dms; Ens.vcls-2.
Only pno, unkn perc; Otis, cga and Emmanuel Varandes, bgs -3.
Exclusive 51 That's Your Last Boogie -3 / What's Your Name
Exclusive 64 I'll Just Laugh (I Laughed When You Cry) / Lovin' Baby Blues
Exclusive 80 Crazy 'Bout Your Cookin' / Right Now Baby
Exclusive 85 Alligator Meat -2 / Nightmare -2
Night Train CD 7003 Crazy 'Bout Your Cooking (alt) / Right Now Baby (alt) / Alligator Meat (instrumental -3) / Train Blues (Hold It) / Be Bop Baby Blues
Night Train CD 7006 Love And Gold / Come To Me / Ice Man (instr)-1

Johnny Otis and His Orchestra June 25, 1948

Lester Current, Billy Jones, Eddie Preston, Loyal Walker, tpts, Jap Jones, John Pettigrew, George Washington, tbns; Bob Harris, Preston Love, Jay McNeely, Paul Quinichette, James Van Streeter, Lemuel Tally, reeds; "Darby Hicks", pno; Pete Lewis, gtr; Curtis Counce, bs; Johnny Otis, dms; Jimmy Witherspoon, vcl-1 AFRS Jubilee 279 (broadcast) One O'Clock Jump (Theme) & California Boogie / Landlord Blues -1 / Flying Home / One O'Clock Jump (Theme encore)

Johnny Otis & His Orchestra (or Orch.) August, 1949

orchestration similar to above or poss next session, featuring Pete Lewis and Devonia Williams plus reeds and brass; no vibes; "Little" Esther Jones, vcls-1
Modern 20-715 I Gotta Guy -1 b/w Thursday Night Blues
Modern 20-748 Mean Old Gal -1 b/w Good Old Blues
Note: Several alternates issued on Ace (UK)

Image right: the alternate A-side of "Double Crossing Blues", 731, credited Little Esther and the Robins - Johnny Otis Quintette (sic).



Johnny Otis' First Savoy Sessions

Leon Sims with Johnny Otis Orchestra (731) or Johnny Otis Orchestra (787) or Little Esther and Junior with Johnny Otis Orch. (824)
November 10, 1949

Lee Graves, Don Johnson, tpts; George Washington, tbn; Lorenzo Holden, James Van Streeter, Walter Henry, reeds; Devonia Williams, pno; Pete Lewis, gtr; Mario Delagarde, bs; Leard Bell, dms, Johnny Otis, vbs; "Little" Esther Jones, vcl-1 (and echo ending); Leon Sims, vcl-2; Gene Phillips, steelgtr-3; two (prob not three) gtrs, barsax, pno, bs, dms only-4.; the Robins, vcls-5
SLA 4443 Boogie Guitar -4 Savoy LP 2230
SLA 4444 Ain't Nothin' Shakin' -2,3 Savoy 731 (this is an alt. B-side)
SLA 4445 Rain In My Eyes -5 rejected see next session
SLA 4446 Hangover Blues -3 Savoy 787, Regent 1036
SLA 4447 Get Together Blues -1,3 Savoy 824

Note: flips from other sessions. Junior prob not Ryder (the 1953 "guest"). Does the credit refer to the steel guitarist? (certainly not Ryder - only female vcl).
Leon Sims (the Barrelhouse MC) later known as Redd Lyte.

Johnny Otis Quintette December 1, 1949

Johnny Otis, vbs; Devonia Williams, pno/vcl-1; Pete "Guitar" Lewis, gtr; Mario Delagarde, bs; Leard Bell, dms. The Robins and Little Esther, vcls-2
SLA 4451 I'm Not Falling In Love With You -1 Savoy 749, Regent 1015
SLA 4452-55 with The Robins (see Robins Discography for credits - also on below)
SLA 4456 Double Crossing Blues -2 Savoy 731

Johnny Otis continued his terrific career with his "Blues & Rhythm Caravan" with Savoy 1950-51 (with several super-gems - and "guests"), recorded for Mercury 1952 (also moonlighting for Federal), Peacock in 1953 - continued "guest" recordings for his own label Dig 1955-56 and joined Capitol with his "Johnny Otis Show" 1957. Went to King in 1961 (still with "Lady Dee" at the piano), and made records for several other labels later.



The Johnny Otis show 1957, here with Jimmy Nolen (gtr, who just had succeeded Pete Lewis), Leard Bell, James Van Streeter, George Washington, Fred Harman (bars), Don Johnson; and front left Johnny Parker (string bass), and Johnny Otis. Devonia Williams was still on piano.

1957 - same musicians with the Show performers: Mel Williams, in light colored suit between bass and guitar players. Jeannie Sterling in the red dress. Moonbeams in checked jackets at left rear (sometimes feat a girl as fourth vcl). Marie Adams (center) and the 3 Tons Of Joy at right rear. Little Arthur Matthews in blue striped jacket in front of Marie Adams. (Devonia not in photo).

Johnny (and band) guested many other artists. He used the name Darby Hicks with Effie Smith in 1945 and also guested Wynonie Harris in July, and Charles Brown (with Johnny Moore's Three Blazers) in September, before his Excelsior debut. Later he recorded with Mickey Cooper and Earl Jackson 1947, Marilyn Scott, Little Esther and Mel Walker 1951-52, Pete Lewis, Preston Love, Big Mama Thornton, and the Royals 1952, Joe August, Linda Hopkins, Little Richard, and Johnny Ace in 1953; plus Etta James, Gene and Eunice, and Johnny "Guitar" Watson in 1954. Otis recorded "The Midnite Creeper", featuring Jimmy Nolen on guitar for Dig (Otis' own label) in 1956, and had a true rock'n'roll hit with "Willie And The Hand Jive" in 1958 for Capitol (also called "Johnny Otis Hand-Jive" - one of his rare, singing himself, vocals).

The Great R&B Pioneers

Johnny Otis musicians and vocalists on Savoy Records 1950-1951

"The Blues & Rhythm Caravan"

(Images right: Johnny Otis, and Mel Walker, Johnny and Little Esther)

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| Trumpet | Don Johnson John Anderson Lee Graves Hosea Sapp |
| Trombone | George Washington |
| Reeds | James Von Streeter Lorenzo Holden Walter Henry Big Jay McNeely, guest Bobby McNeely, guest Floyd Turnham |
| Piano: | Devonia "Lady Dee" Williams |
| Guitar | Pete Lewis |
| String bass: | Mario Delagarde |
| Drums | Leard Bell |
| Percussion | Emmanuel Vaharandes |
| Vibes | Johnny Otis ("Darby Hicks") |
| Vocals | Little Esther Mickey Champion (occ subbing for Esther on stage) Mel Walker Marylin Scott, guest Linda Hopkins, guest |
| MC and vocalist | Redd Lyte (Leon Sims aka Floyd Hollis) |
| Road manager | Ralph Bass |

From late 1951-1952 the following entered replacing some - or adding to - the above on Mercury Records

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| Trumpet | Gerald Wilson (joined by Johnson) |
| Trombone | John Pettigrew (added) |
| Reeds | Ben Webster (repl Turnham) Curtis Lowe, added Freston Love, guest Fred Ford (repl Lowe) |
| <i>the returned</i> | Paul Quinichette (subbing for Von Streeter) |
| Vocalist | Ada Brown, added/subbing for Esther |

Note: Many of the musicians doubled as vocalists, and also sang as "vocal groups" of different names, due to the Robins absence. In 1953 Marie Adams, Arthur Matthews, and Junior Ryder vocals; plus Albert Winston, bass; entered.



(Hard to identify, but bottom kneeling is Ralph Bass with "Lady Dee" and Johnny Otis right behind hm, and Mel Walker far right. Second girl beside "Lady Dee" has to be Little Esther. The Robins? - **Definitely Not!** Is it Pete Lewis top left? - behind the unidentified woman (who prob not is Marie Adams).
- Well - that leaves us with at least a further six or seven to identify.



Some Otis-connected instrumentals

Dee Williams and the California Playboys

Devonia Williams, pno; John Anderson, tp; Gene Montgomery, tens; Richard Brown, bars; Charles Norris, gtr; Morris Edwards, bs; Roy Porter, dms
Savoy 684

Dee's Boogie Feb 18, 1949
Williams recorded a totally different Dee's Boogie with Johnny "Guitar" Watson in 1955/56 (unissued at the time). It's a wonderful ballad.

Some Great Johnny Otis Instrumentals from Savoy

| | |
|-----------------------------|---------------|
| New Orleans Shuffle | Dec 23, 1949 |
| Freight Train Boogie | June 20, 1950 |
| Mambo Boogie | January 1951 |
| Honky Tonk Boogie | March 1951 |

Pete "Guitar" Lewis on gtr and hca

| | |
|-------------------------|---------------------|
| Louisiana Hop | Federal Jan 4, 1952 |
| Harmonica Boogie | as above |



Fred Ford, Don Johnson, James Van Streeter, and Pete "Guitar" Lewis in ca 1952. Right: Marie Adams and the Show in 1957.



Some compilation CDs with an early Johnny "Guitar" Watson



Ace CDCHD 621
RPM/Modern/Keen
Varese-Sarabande
066611-2 Federal/King
Collectables CD 2894
King/Federal
Rhino R2 75702
Combo/Federal/RPM/King



The Great R&B Pioneers

Here is a list of the main 40 performers of the R&B Pioneers Series, who are not presented in the wikipedia "introductions" on pages 52-57 (the 30 Top Favorites of a total of 80 Pioneers).

See pages 60-61 for the Ten "Runner-Ups" ! (based on wikipedia)

(# = imaged) – Note: links of 38 of below to wikipedia in the Top 30 Favorites volume.

The Blues Giants of the 1950s – Twelve Great Legends

Lowell Fulson #



THE Top Ten Vocal Groups of the Golden '50s

– Rhythm & Blues Harmony

The Dominoes #

The Flamingos

The Moonglows #

The Platters #

The Cadillacs



Ten Sepia Super Stars of Rock 'n' Roll

– Idols Making Music History

Ruth Brown #

Clyde McPhatter #

Jesse Belvin #

Bobby Day

Lloyd Price #



Transitions from Rhythm to Soul – Twelve Original Soul Icons

Little Willie John

Brook Benton #

Rufus Thomas #

Junior Parker #

Johnny "Guitar" Watson

King Curtis



The True R&B Pioneers – Twelve Hit-Makers from the Early Years

Lionel Hampton #

Ersine Hawkins

Buddy & Ella Johnson #

Eddie "Cleanhead" Vinson

Wynonie Harris

Charles Brown #

Amos Milburn #

Ike Turner

Chuck Willis

The Five Keys



Predecessors of the Soul Explosion in the 1960s

– Twelve Famous Favorites

Joe Tex #

Solomonn Burke #

Wilson Pickett

Otis Redding

Aretjha Franklin

Marvin Gaye

The Dells #

The Isley Brothers

Four Tops

The Impressions

The Miracles



Updates to the Great R&B Files

[Clarence "Gatemouth" Brown](#)

[Rosco\(e\) Gordon](#)

MUDDY WATERS

(excerpts from wikipedia, with some editing)



McKinley Morganfield (April 4, 1913 - April 30, 1983), known professionally as **Muddy Waters**, was an American blues singer-songwriter and musician who was an important figure in the post-war blues scene, and is often cited as the "father of modern Chicago Blues". He grew up at Stovall Plantation near Clarksdale, Mississippi, and by age 17 was playing the guitar and the harmonica, emulating the local blues artists Son House and Robert Johnson. He was recorded in Mississippi by Alan Lomax for the Library of Congress in 1941 and 1942. In 1943, he moved to Chicago to become a full-time professional musician. In 1946, he recorded his first records for Columbia and then for Aristocrat Records, a newly formed label run by the brothers Leonard and Phil Chess.

In the early 1950s, Muddy Waters and his band, Little Walter Jacobs on harmonica, Jimmy Rogers on guitar, Elga Edmonds (also known as Elgin Evans) on drums and Otis Spann on piano, recorded several blues classics, some with the bassist and songwriter Willie Dixon. These songs included "Hoochie Coochie Man", "I Just Want to Make Love to You" and "I'm Ready". In 1958, he traveled to England, laying the foundations of the resurgence of interest in the blues there. His performance at the Newport Jazz Festival in 1960 was recorded and released as his first live album, *At Newport 1960*. Muddy Waters' music has influenced various American music genres, including rock and roll and rock music.

Early life

Muddy Waters' birthplace and date are not conclusively known. He stated that he was born in Rolling Fork, Mississippi, in 1915, but other evidence suggests that he was born in Jug's Corner, in neighboring Issaquena County, in 1913. In the 1930s and 1940s, before his rise to fame, the year of his birth was reported as 1913 on his marriage license, recording notes, and musicians' union card. A 1955 interview in the *Chicago Defender* is the earliest in which he stated 1915 as the year of his birth, and he continued to say this in interviews from that point onward. The 1920 census lists him as five years old as of March 6, 1920, suggesting that his birth year may have been 1914. The Social Security Death Index, relying on the Social Security card application submitted after his move to Chicago in the mid-1940s, lists him as being born April 4, 1913. His gravestone gives his birth year as 1915.

His grandmother, Della Grant, raised him after his mother died shortly after his birth. Grant gave him the nickname "Muddy" at an early age because he loved to play in the muddy water of nearby Deer Creek. "Water" and "Waters" were added years later, as he began to play harmonica and perform locally in his early teens. The remains of the cabin on Stovall Plantation where he lived in his youth are now at the Delta Blues Museum in Clarksdale, Mississippi.

Career

In August 1941, Alan Lomax went to Stovall, Mississippi, on behalf of the Library of Congress to record various country blues musicians. Lomax came back in July 1942 to record him again. Both sessions were eventually released by Testament Records as *Down on Stovall's Plantation*.

In 1943, Muddy Waters headed to Chicago with the hope of becoming a full-time professional musician. He later recalled arriving in Chicago as the single most momentous event in his life.^[18] He lived with a relative for a short period while driving a truck and working in a factory by day and performing at night. Big Bill Broonzy, then one of the leading bluesmen in Chicago, had Muddy open his shows in the rowdy clubs where Broonzy played. This gave him the opportunity to play in front of a large audience. In 1944, he bought his first electric guitar and then formed his first electric combo. Three years later, in 1946, he recorded some songs for Mayo Williams at Columbia Records, with an old-fashioned combo consisting of clarinet, saxophone and piano; they were released a year later with Ivan Ballen's Philadelphia-based 20th Century label, billed as James "Sweet Lucy" Carter and his Orchestra – Muddy Waters' name was not mentioned on the label. Later that year, he began recording for Aristocrat Records, a newly formed label run by the brothers Leonard and Phil Chess. In 1947, he played guitar with Sunnyland Slim on piano on the cuts "Gypsy Woman" and "Little Anna Mae". These were also shelved, but in 1948, "I Can't Be Satisfied" and "I Feel Like Going Home" became hits, and his popularity in clubs began to take off. Soon after, Aristocrat changed its name to Chess Records. Waters's signature tune "Rollin' Stone" also became a hit that year.



Initially, the Chess brothers would not allow Muddy Waters to use his working band in the recording studio; instead, he was provided with a backing bass by Ernest "Big" Crawford or by musicians assembled specifically for the recording session, including "Baby Face" Leroy Foster and Johnny Jones. Gradually, Chess relented, and by September 1953 he was recording with one of the most acclaimed blues groups in history (see above). Howlin' Wolf moved to Chicago in 1954 with financial support earned through his successful Chess singles, and the "legendary rivalry" with Muddy Waters began. The rivalry was, in part, stoked by Willie Dixon providing songs to both artists, with Wolf suspecting that Muddy was getting Dixon's best songs. 1955 saw the departure of Jimmy Rogers, who quit to work exclusively with his own band, which had been a sideline until that time. In the mid-1950s, Muddy Waters' singles were frequently on *Billboard* magazine's various Rhythm & Blues charts. In 1958 Chess released his first compilation album, *The Best of Muddy Waters*, which collected twelve of his singles up to 1956.

Muddy Waters toured England with Spann in 1958, where they were backed by members of Chris Barber's band. At the time, in the 1960s, Muddy Waters' performances continued to introduce a new generation to Chicago blues. At the Newport Jazz Festival he recorded one of the first live blues albums, *At Newport 1960*, and his performance of "Got My Mojo Working" was nominated for a Grammy award. During the 1970s Muddy toured the world with a superb modified band (featuring musicians, later gaining fame of their own, just like those in his original band). Among the legendary musicians in later years were Joe Willie "Pinetop" Perkins, at the piano, George Smith, harmonica, plus Sammy Lawhorn and James "Pee Wee" Madison, later Luther "Guitar Junior" Johnson on guitars, and Willie "Big Eyes" Smith on drums. From 1977 to 1981, blues musician Johnny Winter, who had idolized Muddy Waters since childhood and who had become a friend, produced four albums of his, all on the Blue Sky Records label. In 1982, declining health dramatically stopped his performance schedule. His last public performance took place when he sat in with Eric Clapton's band at a concert in Florida in the summer of 1982.

Personal life and his death

Muddy Waters and his longtime wife, Geneva Wade (a first cousin of R. L. Burnside) were married in Lexington, Mississippi, in 1940. She died of cancer on March 15, 1973. Gaining custody of two of his children, Rosalind and Renee, he moved them into his home, eventually buying a new house in Westmont, Illinois. Years later, he travelled to Florida and met his future wife, 19-year-old Marva Jean Brooks, whom he nicknamed "Sunshine". Eric Clapton served as best man at their wedding in 1979. His sons, Larry "Mud" Morganfield and Big Bill Morganfield, are also blues singers and musicians. In 2017, his younger son, Joseph "Mojo" Morganfield, began publicly performing the blues, occasionally with his brothers.

Muddy Waters died in his sleep from heart failure at his home in Westmont, Illinois, on April 30, 1983, from cancer-related complications. He was taken from his Westmont home, which he lived in for the last decade of his life, to Good Samaritan Hospital in Downers Grove, Illinois, where he was pronounced dead aged 70. His funeral was held on May 4, 1983. Throngs of blues musicians and fans attended his funeral at Restvale Cemetery in Alsip, Illinois. He is buried next to his wife, Geneva.

the HOWLIN' WOLF

(excerpts from wikipedia, with some editing)



Chester Arthur Burnett (June 10, 1910 – January 10, 1976), known as **Howlin' Wolf**, was a Chicago blues singer, harmonica player and guitarist. Originally from Mississippi, he moved to Chicago in adulthood and became successful, forming a rivalry with fellow bluesman Muddy Waters. With a booming voice and imposing physical presence, he is one of the best-known Chicago blues artists.

The musician and critic Cub Koda noted, "no one could match Howlin' Wolf for the singular ability to rock the house down to the foundation while simultaneously scaring its patrons out of its wits." Producer Sam Phillips recalled, "When I heard Howlin' Wolf, I said, 'This is for me. This is where the soul of man never dies'. Several of his songs, including "Smokestack Lightnin'", "Killing Floor" and "Spoonful", have become blues and blues rock standards. In 2011, *Rolling Stone* magazine ranked him number 54 on its list of the "100 Greatest Artists of All Time".

Early Life

Chester Arthur Burnett was born on June 10, 1910, in White Station, Mississippi to Gertrude Jones and Leon "Dock" Burnett. He would later say that his father was "Ethiopian", while Jones had Choctaw ancestry on her father's side. He was named for Chester A. Arthur, the 21st President of the United States. His physique garnered him the nicknames "Big Foot Chester" and "Bull Cow" as a young man: he was 6 feet 3 inches (191 cm) tall and often weighed close to 300 pounds (136 kg). The name "Howlin' Wolf" originated from Burnett's maternal grandfather, who would admonish him for killing his grandmother's chicks from reckless squeezing by warning him that wolves in the area would come and get him; the family would continue this by calling Burnett "the Wolf". The blues historian Paul Oliver wrote that Burnett once claimed to have been given his nickname by his idol Jimmie Rodgers.

Burnett's parents separated when he was a year old. Dock, who had worked seasonally as a farm laborer in the Mississippi Delta, moved there permanently while Jones and Burnett moved to Monroe County. Jones and Burnett would sing together in the choir of the Life Board Baptist Church near Gibson, Mississippi, and Burnett would later claim that he got his musical talent from her. Jones kicked Burnett out of the house during the winter when he was a child for unknown reasons. He then moved in with his great-uncle Will Young, who had a large household and treated him badly. While in the Young household he worked almost all day and did not receive an education at the school house. When he was thirteen, he killed one of Young's hogs in a rage after the hog had caused him to ruin his dress clothes. This enraged Young who whipped him while chasing him on a mule. He then ran away and claimed to have walked 85 miles barefoot to join his father, where he finally found a happy home with his father's large family. During this era he went by the name "John D." to dissociate himself from his past, a name by which several of his relatives would know him for the rest of his life. At the peak of his success, he returned from Chicago to see his mother in Mississippi and was driven to tears when she rebuffed him. She refused to take money offered by him, saying it was from his playing the "devil's music".

1930s and 1940s

In 1930, Burnett met Charley Patton, the most popular bluesman in the Mississippi Delta at the time. He would listen to Patton play nightly from outside a nearby juke joint. There he remembered Patton playing "Pony Blues" and other songs. The two became acquainted, and soon Patton was teaching him guitar. Burnett recalled that "the first piece I ever played in my life was ... a tune about hook up my pony and saddle up my black mare - Patton's "Pony Blues". He also learned about showmanship from Patton: "When he played his guitar, he would turn it over backwards and forwards, and throw it around over his shoulders, between his legs, throw it up in the sky". Burnett would perform the guitar tricks he learned from Patton for the rest of his life. He played with Patton often in small Delta communities.

Burnett was influenced by other popular blues performers of the time, including the Mississippi Sheiks, Blind Lemon Jefferson, Blind Blake, and Tommy Johnson. Two of the earliest songs he mastered were Jefferson's "Match Box Blues" and Leroy Carr's "How Long, How Long Blues". The country singer Jimmie Rodgers was also an influence. Burnett tried to emulate Rodgers's "blue yodel" but found that his efforts sounded more like a growl or a howl: "I couldn't do no yodelin', so I turned to howlin'. And it's done me just fine". His harmonica playing was modeled after that of Sonny Boy Williamson II, who taught him how to play when Burnett moved to Parkin, Arkansas, in 1933. During the 1930s, Burnett performed in the South as a solo performer and with numerous blues musicians, including Floyd Jones, Johnny Shines, Honeyboy Edwards, Sonny Boy Williamson II, Robert Johnson, Robert Lockwood, Jr., Willie Brown, Son House and Willie Johnson. By the end of the decade, he was a fixture in clubs, with a harmonica and an early electric guitar.

On April 9, 1941, he was inducted into the U.S. Army and was stationed at several bases around the country. Finding it difficult to adjust to military life, he was discharged on November 3, 1943. He returned to his family, who had recently moved near to West Memphis, Arkansas, and helped with the farming while also performing, as he had done in the 1930s, with Floyd Jones and others. In 1948 he formed a band, which included the guitarists Willie Johnson and Matt "Guitar" Murphy, the harmonica player Junior Parker, pianists Albert Williams and Bill "Struction" Johnson, and the drummer Willie Steele. Radio station KWEM in West Memphis began broadcasting his live performances, and he occasionally sat in with Williamson on KFFA in Helena, Arkansas.



1950s

In 1951, Ike Turner, who was a freelance talent scout, heard Howlin' Wolf in West Memphis. Turner brought him to Sam Phillips at Memphis Recording Service (later renamed Sun Studio) and Joe Bihari at Modern Records. Howlin' Wolf quickly became a local celebrity and began working with a band that included the guitarists Willie Johnson and Pat Hare. Sun Records had not yet been formed, so Phillips licensed his recording to Chess Records. Howlin' Wolf's first singles were issued by two different record companies in 1951. "Moanin' at Midnight"/"How Many More Years" was released on Chess, "Riding in the Moonlight"/"Morning at Midnight," and "Passing By Blues"/"Crying at Daybreak" were released on Modern's subsidiary RPM Records. In December 1951, Leonard Chess was able to secure Howlin' Wolf's contract, and at the urging of Chess, he relocated to Chicago around late 1953 or early 1954.

In Chicago, Howlin' Wolf assembled a new band and recruited Jody Williams from Memphis Slim's band as his first guitarist. Within a year he had persuaded the guitarist Hubert Sumlin to leave Memphis and join him in Chicago; Sumlin's understated solos and surprisingly subtle phrasing perfectly complemented Burnett's huge voice. "Smoke Stack Lightnin'" was his most famous hit. The lineup of the Howlin' Wolf band changed over the years, although (with the exception of a couple of brief absences in the late 1950s), Sumlin remained a member of the band for the rest of Howlin' Wolf's career.

Howlin' Wolf had a series of hits with songs written by Willie Dixon, who had been hired by the Chess brothers in 1950 as a songwriter, and during that period the competition between Muddy Waters and Howlin' Wolf was intense. In the 1950s, His first LP, *Moanin' in the Moonlight*, was released in 1959. As was standard practice in that era, it was a collection of previously released singles.

1960s and 1970s

In the early 1960s, Howlin' Wolf recorded several songs that became his most famous, despite receiving no radio play: "Wang Dang Doodle", "Back Door Man", "Spoonful", "The Red Rooster" (later known as "Little Red Rooster"), "I Ain't Superstitious", "Goin' Down Slow", and "Killing Floor", many of which were written by Willie Dixon. During the blues revival the Wolf toured Europe in 1964 as part of the American Folk Blues Festival, produced by the German promoters Horst Lippmann and Fritz Rau.

Wolf's last album was 1973's *The Back Door Wolf*. Entirely composed of new material, it was recorded with musicians who regularly backed him on stage, including Hubert Sumlin, Detroit Junior, and the bandleader Eddie Shaw.

Personal life and his death

Burnett was noted for his disciplined approach to his personal finances. Having already achieved a measure of success in Memphis, he described himself as "the onliest one to drive himself up from the Delta" to Chicago, which he did, in his own car on the Blues Highway and with \$4,000 in his pocket, a rare distinction for a black bluesman of the time. Although functionally illiterate into his forties, Burnett eventually returned to school, first to earn a General Educational Development (GED) diploma and later to study accounting and other business courses to help manage his career. Burnett met his future wife, Lillie, when she attended one of his performances at a Chicago club. She and her family were urban and educated and were not involved in what was considered the unsavory world of blues musicians. Nevertheless, he was attracted to her as soon as he saw her in the audience. He immediately pursued her and won her over. According to those who knew them, the couple remained deeply in love until his death. Together, they raised Betty and Barbara, Lillie's daughters from an earlier relationship.

After her married Lillie, who was able to manage his professional finances, Burnett was so financially successful that he was able to offer band members not only a decent salary but benefits such as health insurance; this enabled him to hire his pick of available musicians and keep his band one of the best around. Burnett's health began declining in the late 1960s. He had several heart attacks and suffered bruised kidneys in a car accident in 1970. Concerned for his health, the bandleader Eddie Shaw limited him to performing 21 songs per concert.

In January 1976, Burnett checked into the Veterans Administration Hospital in Hines, Illinois, for kidney surgery. He died of complications from the procedure on January 10, 1976, at the age of 65. He was buried in Oakridge Cemetery, outside Chicago, in a plot in Section 18, on the east side of the road. His gravestone has an image of a guitar and harmonica etched into it.

Elaborated wikipedia "introductions" of the Top 30 Favorite R&B Pioneers

Part One

John Lee Hooker



1. The Blues Giants of the 1950s - [Every Night](#)

John Lee Hooker (August 22, 1912 or poss 1917 Tutwiler, Tallahatchie County near Clarksdale, Coahoma County, Mississippi - June 21, 2001 Los Altos, California) was a blues singer, songwriter, and guitarist. The son of a sharecropper, raised in Vance and Lambert, Mississippi - moved to Memphis, Tennessee, and rose to prominence performing an electric guitar-style adaption of Delta blues. Started his career in Detroit in 1948 (moving his recording location to Chicago in 1955). Hooker often incorporated other elements, including talking blues and North Mississippi Hill country blues. He developed his own driving-rhythm boogie style, distinct from the 1930s-1940s piano-derived boogie-woogie. Hooker was ranked number 35 in *Rolling Stone's* 2015 list of 100 greatest guitarists. Hooker made several recordings for different labels, using pseudonyms in the early years (e.g. "Stomp Boogie" for King Records as Texas Slim (1948), and "Low Down-Midnite Boogie" for Savoy as Birmingham Sam (1949). Some of his best known "legal" songs include "Boogie Chillen'" (1948 - his debut single), "Crawlin' King Snake" (1949), and "I'm In The Mood" (1951) - all for Modern Records. Then came "Dimples" (1956), "Boom Boom" (1962), and "[It Serves Me Right \(To Suffer\)](#)" (1964) for Vee-Jay. During the late 1960s and early 1970s he recorded several albums for ABC-BluesWay (and the famous 2-setLP with Canned Heat on Liberty, recorded in 1970). His most successful years came at the end of his career from 1989 in California, starting with "The Healer" for Chameleon, and big-sellers with "guesting friends" recordings for Pointblank.

Sonny Boy Williamson



2. The Blues Giants of the 1950s - [Got To Move](#)

Alex Miller né Ford (possibly December 5, 1912 Tutwiler, Mississippi or poss nearby in Money, between Glendora and Greenwood) - May 24, 1965 Helena, Arkansas) known later in his career as Sonny Boy Williamson, was a blues harmonica player, singer and songwriter, who started recording in Jackson, Mississippi from 1951, debuting with "Eyesight To The Blind" and others for Trumpet Records, although stationed in West Memphis, Arkansas. He was an early and influential blues harp stylist, who recorded successfully in the 1950s and 1960s (in Chicago from 1955). Miller used various names, including Rice Miller and Little Boy Blue, before calling himself Sonny Boy Williamson, which was also the name of a popular Chicago blues singer and harmonica player, who was murdered in 1948. To distinguish the two, Miller has been referred to as Sonny Boy Williamson II. Some of his popular songs include "Don't Start Me Talkin'" (1955), "[Your Funeral And My Trial](#)" (1958), "Help Me" (1963) and "Bring It On Home" (1965) - all for Checker. His many European recordings, foremost for Storyville, established him as a "folk blues" favorite in the "old continent". "Don't Send Me No Flowers" (issued 1968 on Marmalade Records in UK), with Brian Auger and Jimmy Page, was one of his last European recordings). (["Keep It To Yourself" live 1963 in Europe](#)).

The Coasters



3. THE Top Ten Vocal Groups of the Golden '50s - [Idol With The Golden Head](#)

The Coasters are an American rhythm and blues & rock and roll vocal harmony group with origins in Los Angeles, California, formed on October 12, 1955. Original lineup featured Carl Gardner and Bobby Nunn (from the Robins), joined by Billy Guy, and Leon Hughes. Gardner and Guy both came from Texas, and Nunn from Alabama. They had a string of hits for Atco Records in the late 1950s. Beginning with "Down In Mexico" in 1956 (their debut), and "Searchin'" and "Young Blood" in 1957, their most memorable songs were written by the songwriting and producing team of Leiber and Stoller, including the #1 hit "Yakety Yak" (1958) - the group now based in New York with west-coasters Cornell Gunter from the Flaris (born in Kansas, later replaced by Earl Carroll from the Cadillacs) and Will "Dub" Jones from the Cadets (born in Louisiana) succeeding Hughes and Nunn. "[Shoppin' For Clothes](#)" (1960) and "Little Egypt" (1961) became two of their fans' most loved ones. The group finished their long-time association with Leiber-Stoller with the "On Broadway" album for King Records in 1973 (which included the original version of the fine "D.W. Washburn" recorded late 1967). Although the Coasters were handchosen professionals outside mainstream doo-wop, they became an important part of the doo-wop legacy with their great recordings, and the first vocal group to be inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. Carl Gardner led the group up into 2005 (and later coached them). He died in 2011. His wife is still their manager since 1987. Image: Nunn and Gardner, top, Hughes and Guy, bottom.

Little Walter



4. The Blues Giants of the 1950s - [Blue Midnight](#)

Marion Walter Jacobs (May 1, 1930 Marksville, Louisiana - February 15, 1968, wounded in fight, Chicago, Illinois) known as Little Walter, was a Chicago-based blues musician, singer, and songwriter, whose revolutionary approach to the harmonica and impact on succeeding generations has earned him comparisons to such seminal artists as Django Reinhardt, Charlie Parker and Jimi Hendrix. He was raised in Alexandria in Louisiana, travelled via Helena, Arkansas, arriving in Chicago 1946. His virtuosity and musical innovations fundamentally altered many listeners' expectations of what was possible on blues harmonica. Walter had started his recording career already in 1947, soon working with Muddy Waters, but it would take some years to establish him as a "star of his own" (1952). He was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 2008, the first and, to date, only artist to be inducted specifically as a harmonica player. His finest instrumentals were "Juke" and "Sad Hours" (1952), and finest songs "Blues With A Feeling" (1953), "[Last Night](#)" (1954), "My Babe" (1955), and the rare "You're Sweet" (1959) - all for Checker. Early on he even outsold his old "buddy" Muddy. He was one of Chess' "Big Four" (Muddy, Wolf, Walter, Sonny Boy).

Muddy Waters



5. The Blues Giants of the 1950s - [Rock Me](#)

McKinley Morganfield (April 4, 1913 Jug's Corner, Issaquena County, near Rolling Fork, Sharkey County, Mississippi - April 30, 1983 Westmont, Illinois) raised at Stovall's Plantation, Coahoma County, was known professionally as Muddy Waters, a blues singer, songwriter and guitarist, who was an important figure in the post-war blues scene, and is often cited as the "father of modern Chicago blues". He made his recording debut in Mississippi in 1941 (the famous "field recordings" at Stovall) and his first successful recordings in Chicago in 1947 (for Aristocrat). In the 1950s, Muddy and his band, Little Walter (later James Cotton - *in photo left* - and several others) on hca, Jimmy Rogers (later Pat Hare and James Madison) on guitar, Elga Edmonds (soon Fred Below, Francis Clay and S.P. Leary a.o.) on drums, and Otis Spann at the piano, became a big influence to the British blues boom. Among his many important recordings for Chess are "Rollin' Stone" (1950), "Long Distance Call" (1951), "I'm Your Hoochie Cooche Man" (1954), "Manish Boy" (1955), "Got My Mojo Working" (1957), "Close To You" and "[She's 19 Years Old](#)" (1958), and "The Same Thing" c/w "You Can't Lose What You Ain't Never Had" (1964). Muddy toured the world with his famous Chicago Blues Band in later years, featuring a.o. special guest James Cotton, George Smith, George "Mojo" Buford, Paul Oscher and later Jerry Portnoy, hca; the legendary Joe Willie "Pinetop" Perkins, pno; Sammy Lawhorn and Luther "Georgia Boy Snake" Johnson. Later came Luther "Guitar Junior" Johnson and Bob Margolin, gtrs; Calvin Jones, bs; and Willie "Big Eyes" Smith, dms. Four LPs we issued on Blue Sky with Johnny Winter in the late 1970s.

The Great R&B Pioneers

Elaborated wikipedia "introductions" of the Top 30 Favorite R&B Pioneers

Part Two

T-Bone Walker



6. The Blues Giants of the 1950s - [That's Better For Me](#)

Aaron Thibaux Walker (May 28, 1910 Linden, Texas – March 16, 1975 Los Angeles, California) was a blues guitarist, singer, songwriter and multi-instrumentalist, who was a pioneer and innovator of the jump blues and electric guitar blues sound. In 2018 *Rolling Stone* magazine ranked him number 37 on its list of "The 100 Greatest Guitarists of All Time". He began his career in Dallas in the 1920s (recorded one single as Oak Cliff T-Bone in 1929) and made Los Angeles his main base later. Among his classic recordings are "T-Bone Blues" (1940 for Varsity, recorded in New York on tour), "Mean Old World" (1942 for Capitol), "They Call It Stormy Monday" (1947 for Black & White), and "[Travelin' Blues](#)" (1950-the true single version) and "Street Walkin' Woman" (1952) - both for Imperial. Health issues forced T-Bone to inactivity several times, but his Atlantic album "T-Bone Blues" with recordings of 1955-1957 stands as one of the true classic blues albums, including remakes of "T-Bone Shuffle" in Chicago, and "T-Bone Blues" (L.A.). In 1967-68 he recorded two fine ABC/BluesWay albums.

B. B. King



7. The Blues Giants of the 1950s - [When My Hert Beats Like A Hammer](#)

Riley B. King (September 16, 1925 Beer Creek-Berclair, near Itta Bena, Mississippi – May 14, 2015 Las Vegas, Nevada) was a singer, songwriter, guitarist, and later record producer. Raised in Indianola, Mississippi, he started his career in Memphis, Tennessee in 1949, and soon introduced a sophisticated style of soloing based on fluid string bending and shimmering vibrato that influenced many later electric blues players. He was the most influential blues musicians of all time, earning the nickname "The King of the Blues". King performed tirelessly throughout his musical career, appearing on average at more than 200 concerts per year into his 70s. In 1956 alone, he appeared at 342 shows. Among his most famous recordings are "3 O'Clock Blues" (1951, Memphis), "Every Day I Have The blues" (1955, one of his first Los Angeles recordings), and "[Sweet Little Angel](#)" (Little Rock, AR - 1956 single) all for RPM, plus "Sweet Sixteen" (1959) for Kent, and "The Thrill Is Gone" (1970) for ABC – all these were super-great revivals of other performers' originals. "[Sweet Little Angel](#)" – earlier studio version

James Brown



8. Transitions from Rhythm to Soul - [Just Won't Do Right](#)

James Joseph Brown (May 3, 1933 Barnwell, South Carolina – December 25, 2006 Atlanta, Georgia) was a singer, songwriter, dancer, musician, record producer and bandleader. "Godfather of Soul", "Mr. Dynamite", and "Soul Brother No. 1" in a career that lasted over 50 years, he influenced the development of several music genres. Brown, raised in Augusta, Georgia, began his career as a gospel singer in Toccoa, Georgia. He joined [the Famous Flames](#), with whom he did "Please, Please, Please" (1956, their debut in Cincinnati) and "Try Me" (1958) – both for Federal. Two of his long-time partners from the Flames were Bobby Byrd and Johnny Terry. His recordings were mostly done in New York City, although several other locations were spread all over the nation. His success peaked in the 1960s with hit singles for King Records such as "Papa's Got a Brand New Bag", "I Got You (I Feel Good)" (both 1965) and "It's a Man's Man's Man's World" (1966). Among later classics (also for King) were "Say It Loud – I'm Black and I'm Proud" (1968) and "Get Up (I Feel Like Being a) Sex Machine" (1970). Brown recorded 17 singles that reached #1 on the *Billboard* R&B charts. *Rolling Stone* magazine ranked him number 7 on its list of the "100 Greatest Artists of All Time". "[Out Of Sight](#)" (1964 Smash) - "[Ain't That A Groove](#)" (1966 King)

Howlin' Wolf



9. The Blues Giants of the 1950s - [Little Baby](#)

Chester Arthur Burnett (June 10, 1910 White Station near West Point, Mississippi – January 10, 1976 Hines, Illinois) known as (the) Howlin' Wolf, was a blues singer, songwriter, harmonica player, and guitarist. Originally from Mississippi, he started his recording career in Memphis, Tennessee in 1951 (with "How Many More Years" b/w "Moanin' At Midnight") for the legendary Sam Phillips (who sold this one to Chess – he had already handed "Ridin' In The Moonlight" to the Bihari brothers in Los Angeles). Wolf also recorded with Ike Turner at the piano for RPM in West Memphis, Arkansas, including the original of "Smokestack" - "Crying At Daybreak" in October, 1951. Wolf's Crown LP has the same quality as the legendary Sam Phillips / Sun recordings' collections. Wolf moved to Chicago in 1954 and formed a rivalry with fellow bluesman Muddy Waters. With a booming voice and imposing physical presence, he is one of the best-known Chicago blues artists. Some of his best songs for Chess, include "Smoke Stack Lightnin'" (1956), "Howlin' For My Darling" (1959), "Spoonful" (1960), "The Red Rooster" (1961), "[I Ain't Superstitious](#)" (1962), and "Killing Floor" (1964).

Ray Charles



10. Transitions from Rhythm to Soul - [I've Got News For You](#) - and video: [Hit The Road Jack](#)

Raymond Charles Robinson (September 23, 1930 Albany, Georgia – June 10, 2004 Beverly Hills, California) was a singer, songwriter, pianist, and composer. After living in Greenville, Florida, where Ray was blinded during childhood due to glaucoma, he left for Seattle, and later San Francisco, and started recording for SwingTime in 1949 (L.A.). Charles pioneered the soul music genre during the 1950s by combining blues, jazz, rhythm and blues, and gospel styles into the music he recorded for Atlantic. He contributed to the integration of country music, rhythm and blues, and pop music during the 1960s with his crossover success on ABC-Paramount. Among friends and fellow musicians he preferred being called "Brother Ray", among his admirers he was often referred to as "The Genius". Some of his many classics are "[Mess Around](#)" (1953), "I've Got A Woman" (1954), "[Hallelujia I Love Her So](#)" (1956), "[\(Night Time Is\) The Right Time](#)" (recorded 1958), "What'd I Say" (1959) - all for Atlantic, plus "Georgia On My Mind" (1960), "[Hit The Road Jack](#)" (1961), and "I Can't Stop Loving You" (1962) for ABC-Paramount. In 2011 *Rolling Stone* magazine ranked him number 10 on its list of the "100 Greatest Artists of All Time".

The Great R&B Pioneers

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Part Three

Chuck Berry



11. Ten Sepia Super Stars of Rock 'n' Roll - [Deep Feeling](#)

Charles Edward Anderson Berry (October 18, 1926 St. Louis, Missouri – March 18, 2017 Wentzville, Missouri) was a singer, guitarist and songwriter, and one of the pioneers of rock and roll music. He started his career around 1953 in pianist Johnnie Johnson's Trio (Johnnie played on most of Chuck's later hits). Nicknamed the "Father of Rock and Roll", Berry refined and developed rhythm and blues into the major elements (including "hillbilly") that made rock and roll distinctive with Chicago songs "Maybellene" (1955), "Roll Over Beethoven" (1956), "School Day" and "Rock and Roll Music" (1957), "Sweet Little Sixteen", "Johnny B. Goode", where Chuck plays both the guitars, and "Memphis, Tennessee" (all 1958), "[Back In The U.S.A.](#)" (1959), and his "come-back" in 1964 with "No Particular Place To Go" – all for Chess - and returned to Chess after a stint with Mercury 1966-69. In 1972 he had his only Pop #1 hit, "My Ding-A-Ling" (back again on Chess, recorded in England), and later made some fine songs for Atco. Writing lyrics that focused on teen life and consumerism, and developing a music style that included guitar solos and innovative showmanship, Berry was a major influence on subsequent rock music. *Rolling Stone* magazine ranked him number 5 on its list of the "[100 Greatest Artists of All Time](#)".

Jackie Wilson



12. Transitions from Rhythm to Soul - [Baby \(I Just Can't Help It\)](#)

Jack Leroy Wilson Jr. (June 9, 1934 Detroit, Michigan – January 21, 1984 Mount Holly, New Jersey) after a collapse on stage September 29, 1975, with several years hospitalized – and in coma for long periods. He was a soul singer and strong entertainer. A tenor, with a four-octave range, Wilson was a prominent figure in the transition of rhythm and blues into soul, and considered a master showman and one of the most dynamic singers and performers, nicknamed "Mr. Excitement". Wilson (after a solo record of "Danny Boy" in 1952) joined the R&B vocal group Billy Ward and His Dominoes in 1953 and went solo again in 1957. His first hits were "Reet Petite, The Finest Girl You Ever Want To Meet" (1957), "[To Be Loved](#)" (1958), and "Lonely Teardrops" (1958-59) - all written by Berry Gordy Jr, who started his Motown empire due to these. Jackie was contracted to Brunswick, who continued to issue hits like "Doggin' Around", "A Woman, A Lover, A Friend" (both 1960), "Baby Workout" (1963), and "(Your Love Keeps Lifting Me) Higher And Higher" (1967). Some of his early recordings were done in Detroit, soon in New York City, and later Wilson made his last recordings in Chicago. He was one of the most important and influential musical artists of his generation.

LaVern Baker



13. Ten Sepia Super Stars of Rock 'n' Roll - [Of Course I Do](#)

Delores LaVern Baker, née Evans, later Williams (November 11, 1929 Chicago, Illinois – March 10, 1997 Queens, New York City) was a rhythm-and-blues singer, who had several hit records on the pop charts in the 1950s and early 1960s. She began singing in Chicago clubs in 1946 and came to Detroit in 1947. She started recording in 1949 using several nicknames, like Little Miss Sharecropper and Bea Baker, but also as Laverne Baker. Her "scat-singing" in "[Pig Latin Blues](#)" with Detroit's Todd Rhodes' Orchestra for King in 1952 is one to really remember. After a tour to Europe she was contracted to Atlantic Records in New York 1953. Her most classic ones for Atlantic were "Soul On Fire" (1953), "Tweedles Dee" (1954), "Jim Dandy" (1956), "I Cried A Tear" (1958), and "[See See Rider](#)" (1962) She finished her original career for Brunswick in 1966. In 1969 she worked overseas for the military, and settled in the Philippines, not returning to the U.S. until the base was closed in 1988, to start a Broadway career (replacing Ruth Brown in the musical *Black and Blue*).

Little Richard



14. Ten Sepia Super Stars of Rock 'n' Roll - [Send Me Some Lovin'](#) (live) - [original single](#)

Richard Wayne Penniman (December 5, 1932 Macon, Georgia – May 9, 2020 Tullahoma, Tennessee), better known as Little Richard, was a singer, pianist, and songwriter. He was an important figure in popular music and culture for seven decades, influencing numerous singers and musicians across musical genres from rock to hip hop. His music helped shape rhythm and blues for generations to come. After some unsuccessful years with RCA and Peacock 1951-1954 (doing a fine "[Directly From My Heart To You](#)" for Peacock in 1954 with the Johnny Otis outfit, issued after his first Specialty hit), he got a contract with Specialty Records in Los Angeles in 1955, although most of his famous hits were recorded in New Orleans, a.o. "Tutti-Frutti" (1955), "Slippin' And Slidin'" and "Long Tall Sally" (1956), "The Girl Can't Help It" (late 1956 with a New Orleans' vcl grp), "Lucille" and "Keep A Knockin'" (both issued 1957) - the latter recorded in Washington, D.C. with his road-band the Upsetters, and "Good Golly, Miss Molly" (issued 1958). He embarked a religious career in California in 1957 (a.o. recording "Travelin' Shoes" for Atlantic in 1962), but returned to rock 'n' roll in the early 1960s for several years to record for Specialty again, "Bama Lama Bama Loo" (1964) with Adolph Jacobs, Dewey Terry and Glenn Willings on guitars: soon for Vee-Jay and Modern, and then for Reprise (1970-72). *Rolling Stone* magazine ranked him number 8 on its list of the "[100 Greatest Artists of All Time](#)".

The Drifters



15. THE Top Ten Vocal Groups of the Golden '50s **b)** Clyde McPhatter – [the Original Soul Star](#)

The Drifters are a doo-wop and R&B/Soul vocal group, originally based in New York. They were formed as a backing group for *Clyde Lensley McPhatter* (November 15, prob 1932 Durham, North Carolina – June 13, 1972 New York City) in 1953, formerly the lead tenor of the Dominoes. Manager George Treadwell owned the Drifters' name after McPhatter leaving in 1955 to go solo. There were three golden eras of the Drifters - the early 50s, the 60s (both decades for Atlantic Records in New York), and the early 70s (the post-Atlantic period, mostly led by Johnny Moore). The new, second Drifters from late 1958, originally featured Ben E. King, also from North Carolina (soon going solo – only singing with the group on records up to 1960) and Charlie Thomas from Virginia (staying on until mid 1967 – and later forming a "rival" Drifters group, still touring today). Rudy Lewis from Pennsylvania (had sung with the Clara Ward Singers) was lead from late 1960 up to his death in May, 1964 (just shortly after his decision to go solo too). Johnny Moore, from Alabama, joined in early 1963. He already had sung lead after Clyde for two years from August 1955. Bill Pinkney (who hailed from South Carolina) and sang bass in Clyde's early group had his "Original Drifters" for many years after the Drifters all were "fired" in 1958. Some notable Atlantic hits were "Money Honey" (1953) and "Honey Love" (1954), both Clyde lead; "Adorable" (1955) and "[Ruby Baby](#)" (1956), both recorded in Los Angeles Master Recordings with Moore lead; "There Goes My Baby" (1959) and "Save The Last Dance For Me" (1960), both King lead; "Sweets For My Sweet" (1961, Thomas lead); "Up On The Roof" (1963, Lewis lead), and "Under The Boardwalk" (1964, Moore lead). b above - is "Lucille", Clyde McPhatter's very first recording with the Drifters in 1953.
Image: Charlie Thomas, center front, Johnny Moore, far right. [When My Little Girl Is Smiling](#) (Charlie Thomas, lead)

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Part Four

Big Joe Turner



16. The Blues Giants of the 1950s - [You Know I Love You](#)

Joseph Vernon "Big Joe" Turner Jr. (May 18, 1911 Kansas City, the Missouri side – November 24, 1985 Inglewood, California) was a blues shouter of the Kansas City tradition. His career as a performer endured from the 1920s into the 1980s. According to songwriter Doc Pomus, "Rock and roll would have never happened without him". He made his debut with boogie pianist Pete Johnson, "Roll 'Em Pete", in New York 1938, recorded the original "Cherry Red" in 1939 (both for Vocalion), and had a hit with "My Gal's A Jockey" for National in 1946 (based on his Decca recording "Rebecca" from 1944), earning his nickname "Boss of the Blues". He was almost forgotten in the late 1940s, but Herb Abramson (who had worked with him at National) was able to recruit him to the early roster of Atlantic, and his greatest fame was due to his recordings for that label, among them "Chains Of Love" (1951), "Honey Hush" (1953, recorded in New Orleans), "Shake, Rattle and Roll" (1954), "[Hide And Seek](#)" och "Flip, Flop And Fly" (1955), and "Corrine, Corrina" (1956).

Jimmy Reed



17. The Blues Giants of the 1950s - [Blue Blue Water](#)

Mathis James Reed (September 6, 1925 Dunleith near Leland, Mississippi – August 29, 1976 Oakland, California) was a blues musician (playing harmonica, guitar and singing simultaneously) and songwriter. His particular style of electric blues ("Louisiana swamp blues-like") was popular with blues as well as non-blues audiences. Reed debuted on Vee-Jay Records (based in Gary, Indiana – near Chicago) in 1953. Many of Reed's songs appeared on both of the Billboard magazine's Rhythm and blues and Hot 100 singles charts. Among his classics are "You Don't Have To Go" (1955), "Honest I Do" (1957), "[Take Out Some Insurance](#)" (1959), "Baby What You Want Me to Do" (1960), "Big Boss Man" and "Bright Lights, Big City" (both 1961) - all recorded in Chicago. After the long Vee-Jay stint Reed "reinvented himself" on ABC's BluesWay label. He influenced other musicians, such as Elvis Presley, Hank Williams Jr., and the Rolling Stones, who recorded his songs. Music critic Cub Koda describes him as "perhaps the most influential bluesman of all", due to his easily accessible style. ["Down In Mississippi"](#) (a late Vee-Jay gem).

The "5" Royales



18. THE Top Ten Vocal Groups of the Golden '50s - [I'm With You](#)

The "5" Royales were an R&B vocal group from Winston-Salem, North Carolina, changing their name from "The Royal Sons Quintet" as they turned secular, after several years of gospel singing. They combined gospel, jump blues and doo-wop, marking an early and influential step in the evolution of rock and roll. Their first hits, written by their guitarist Lowman "Pete" Pauling (who wrote almost all of their songs), were "Baby Don't Do It" (1952) and "Help Me Somebody" (1953) - both for Apollo Records in New York. Cover versions of the group's songs hit the Top 40, including "[Think](#)" (James Brown & The Famous Flames), "Dedicated to the One I Love" (the Shirelles and the Mamas & the Papas), and "Tell the Truth" (Ray Charles and Ike & Tina Turner). These three were recorded by the "5" for King Records 1957 and 1958. They had started recording for King 1954. The group's lead singer through the years was Johnny Tanner, although his younger brother Gene (who joined in 1954) also sang lead, e.g. "Dedicated" and "Tears Of Joy" 1957. Brown modeled his Flames after the "5" Royales, who were inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame as late as 2015. The group ended their career 1965 after some nice recordings for the Memphis-based Home of the Blues label (being relegated to cameos with the James Brown revue). *Image: Johnny Tanner, bottom left.*

Elmore James



19. The Blues Giants of the 1950s - [Mean Mistreatin' Mama](#)

Elmore James, né Brooks (January 27, 1918 Richland near Canton, Mississippi – May 24, 1963 Chicago, Illinois) was a blues guitarist, singer, songwriter. He was noted for his use of loud amplification and his stirring voice. He had worked with Robert Johnson and Sonny Boy Williamson II in the 1930s and made his recording debut as Elmo James in 1951 with Johnson's "Dust My Broom" for Trumpet Records in Jackson, Mississippi (Sonny Boy on harmonica). He made Canton and Jackson his "homes" throughout the years. Through Ike Turner he landed with the Bihari brothers making recs for Lester Bihari's Meteor in Chicago 1952 with his "Broomdusters", featuring J.T. Brown, sax; Little Johnny Jones, pno; and Odie Payne, dms. He also recorded some Chess songs. During 1953-56 Flair/Modern served "[Make My Dreams Come True](#)" (1953) and "Standing At The Crossroads" (1954). They recorded him in Mississippi, Los Angeles, New Orleans and Chicago. In 1957 Chief in Chicago waxed "The Twelve Year Old Boy". He also had yet another Chess session in 1960 (including a fine revival of "Call It Stormy Monday"). "[The Sky Is Crying](#)" (1959, recorded in Chicago), "Shake Your Moneymaker" (recorded in New Orleans 1961), and "Something Inside Me" (issued after his death) were recorded for Bobby Robinson's Fire-associated labels - the last session done in New York shortly before his death (including a revival of "It Hurts Me Too", a hit, issued 1965).

The Clovers



20. THE Top Ten Vocal Groups of the Golden '50s - [I Confess](#) (Charlie White, lead)

The Clovers are an American rhythm and blues/doo-wop vocal group, who became one of the biggest selling acts of the early 1950s. The group originated from a 1946 Washington, D.C. trio supplemented with lead singer John "Buddy" Bailey to become the Four Clovers in 1949. Shortened to the Clovers (as guitarist Bill Harris joined), they made their recording debut for Rainbow Records in 1950. Through their manager Lou Krefetz they became the first successful group on Atlantic in New York, with hits like "Don't You Know I Love You", and "Fool, Fool, Fool" in 1951 and "One Mint Julep" in 1952. Bailey joined the Army a year later, when Charlie White (from the Dominoes and the Checkers), subbed with "Good Lovin'" 1953 and "Love Dovey" (issued 1954). In late 1953 Billy Mitchell replaced White, singing lead on "[Your Cash Ain't Nothin' But Trash](#)" (1954), and when "Buddy" returned they became a sextet. Further hits were "[Blue Velvet](#)" (1955) and "Devil Or Angel" (1956) – both led by Bailey. After their Atlantic-period they had their last hit, a top 30 US pop hit in 1959, "Love Potion No. 9", led by Mitchell on United Artists. Different Clovers groups still are active today (one led by original bass singer Harold Winley). *Image Live 1954 fr. l.: bass singer Harold "Jerome" Winley, group spokesman Harold Lucas, Billy Mitchell center, Matthew McQuater, and Bill Harris.*

The Great R&B Pioneers

Elaborated wikipedia "introductions" of the Top 30 Favorite R&B Pioneers

Part Five

Fats Domino



21. Ten Sepia Super Stars of Rock 'n' Roll - Kansas City

Antoine "Fats" Domino Jr. (February 26, 1928 New Orleans, Louisiana – October 24, 2017 Harvey, Louisiana) was a pianist, singer and songwriter. One of the pioneers of rock and roll music, Domino sold more than 65 million records. Between 1955 and 1960, he had eleven Top 10 hits. His humility and shyness may be one reason his contribution to the genre has been overlooked. During his career, Domino had 35 records in the U.S. *Billboard* Top 40, and five of his pre-1955 records sold more than a million copies, being certified gold. His musical style was based on traditional rhythm and blues, accompanied by saxophones, bass, piano, electric guitar, and drums. His in New Orleans in 1949 recorded (1950 release) "The Fat Man" (on Imperial - his recording debut) is widely regarded as the first million-selling rock and roll record. Some of his most famous songs are "Ain't It A Shame" (1955), "Blueberry Hill" and "Blue Monday" (both 1956), "Im Walking" (1957), "I Want To Walk You Home" (1959), and "Walking To New Orleans" (1960) – all for Imperial (recorded in Los Angeles, and in New Orleans). In 1963 he joined the ABC-Paramount roster, later Reprise.

Roy Brown



22. The Blues Giants of the 1950s - Good Rockin' Man

Roy James Brown (September 10, 1920 Kinder near New Orleans, Louisiana – May 25, 1981 San Fernando, California) was an R&B singer and songwriter. He initially moved to Texas, but had his recording career originally centered in New Orleans, with a significant influence on the early development of rock and roll and the direction of R&B. His original song and hit recording "Good Rocking Tonight" (1947) for DeLuxe has been covered by many artists including Wynonie Harris, Elvis Presley, Bruce Springsteen, Joe Ely, Ricky Nelson, Jerry Lee Lewis, Pat Boone, James Brown, the Doors, and the rock group Montrose. Brown was one of the first popular R&B singers to perform songs with a gospel-steeped delivery, which was then considered taboo by many churches. In addition, his melismatic, pleading vocal style influenced notable artists such as B.B. King, Bobby Bland, Clyde McPhatter, Elvis Presley, Jackie Wilson, James Brown and Little Richard. Among his other classic songs are "Long 'Bout Midnight" (1948), "Rockin' At Midnight" (1949), "Hard Luck Blues" and "Love Don't Love Nobody" (both 1950) – all for DeLuxe (bought up by King Records). Brown later recorded for Imperial (doin' the original "Let The Four Winds Blow" 1957), Home of the Blues, and BluesWay.

Sam Cooke



23. Transitions from Rhythm to Soul - Nothing Can Change This Love

Samuel Cook (January 22, 1931 near Clarksdale, Mississippi – December 11, 1964 Los Angeles, California – shot), known professionally as Sam Cooke, was a singer, songwriter, civil-rights activist and entrepreneur. Influential as a singer, composer, and producer, with distinctive vocals and importance within popular music. He began singing as a kid, and moved to Chicago in 1933 - joined the Soul Stirrers in 1950 as new lead. He started his solo career in 1956 in Los Angeles, debuting with "Lovable", recorded for Specialty on tour in 1956 (issued as Dale Cook), followed by such classics as "You Send Me" (1957 for Keen), "I'll Come Running Back To You" (1958 for Specialty), "Only Sixteen" (1959) and "Wonderful World" (1960 – both for Keen). Then came his L.A. RCA-Victor songs "Chain Gang" (1960), "Cupid" (1961), "Twistin' The Night Away" and "Bring It On Home To Me", feat. Lou Rawls (1962), and his wonderful "A Change Is Gonna Come" (issued after his death in late 1964). His pioneering contributions to soul music contributed to his well earned nick-name, "Mr. Soul". ABKCO and RCA still argue over their rights to his RCA recordings.

Hank Ballard and The Midnighters



24. a) b) THE Top Ten Vocal Groups of the Golden '50s - Is Your Love For Real

The Midnighters were an R&B vocal group from Detroit, Michigan, influential in the 1950s and early 1960s, with many R&B hit records. They were also notable for launching the career of lead singer *Hank Ballard (John Henry Kendricks; November 18, 1927 Detroit, growing up in Bessemer, Alabama – March 2, 2003 Los Angeles, California)*, and the worldwide dance craze *The Twist*. In 1952 Ballard joined the Royals (a group formed by guitarist and songwriter Alonzo Tucker). The group had just recorded Johnny Otis' composition "Every Beat Of My Heart" for Federal. As the Midnighters (changing their name not to be confused with the "5") they were extremely popular in the world of R&B and pop (most songs written by Ballard). The hits included "Work with Me Annie" (1954), the cover of "It's Love Baby (24 Hours A Day)" (1955) and "Tore Up Over You" (1956) – all for Federal. From 1959 Hank was credited with his name on the group's records (just like Clyde had been from the start with his Drifters) and the original "The Twist" was released as B-side to "Teardrops On Your Letter" (on the "mother" label King). "Mr. Rhythm & Blues", as he now was nicked, went on singing lead with the group in "Finger Poppin' Time" and "Let's Go, Let's Go, Let's Go" (both 1960), "The Hoochi Coochi Coo" (1961), and a fine version of "The Continental Walk" (1962). Hank (without his group) was relegated to James Brown's revue in later years, although he had pre-dated Brown, touring with his own orchestra, led by guitarist Cal Green (and doing an interesting non-charting "Let 'Em Roll" with his Midnighters in 1957).

Etta James



25. Transitions from Rhythm to Soul - Do Something Crazy (Crazy Feeling)

Jamesetta Hawkins, best known as Etta James (January 25, 1938 Los Angeles, California – January 20, 2012 Riverside, California) was a singer, who performed in various genres, including blues, R&B, soul, rock and roll, jazz and gospel. Starting her career in L.A. in 1954, she gained fame with her Midnighters' answer "The Wallflower" (her debut, issued 1955, with the girl duo the Peaches – and also featuring Richard Berry), W-O-M-A-N (late 1955), and "The Pick-Up" in New Orleans (with Harold Baptiste, sax, issued in 1957) – all for Modern Records. She moved to Harvey Fuqua of the Moonglows in Cleveland and revived her career in Chicago with "All I Could Do Was Cry" (1960), "At Last" b/w a cover of Muddy Waters' "I Just Want To Make Love To You" (issued 1961), "Don't Cry, Baby" (also 1961) and "Something's Got A Hold on Me" (1962) - all for Chess' sub-label Argo in Chicago, plus "Tell Mama" b/w "I'd Rather Go Blind" (1967) for the Cadet sub in Muscle Shoals, Alabama. She faced a number of personal problems, including heroin addiction, severe physical abuse, and incarceration, before making a successful comeback in 1988 with the LP *Seven Year Itch*, recorded for Island in Nashville.

The Great R&B Pioneers

Elaborated wikipedia "introductions" of the Top 30 Favorite R&B Pioneers

Part Six

Bobby "Blue" Bland



26. Transitions from Rhythm to Soul - Little Boy Blue

Robert Calvin Bland, né Brooks (January 27, 1930 Barretville near Rosemark, Tennessee – June 23, 2013 Germantown, Tennessee), known professionally as Bobby "Blue" Bland, was a blues singer, who developed a sound that mixed gospel with the blues and R&B. He was described as among the great storytellers of blues and soul music, who created tempestuous arias of love, betrayal and resignation, set against roiling, dramatic orchestrations, and left the listener drained but awed. He was described as second in stature only to B.B. King as a product of the Memphis Beale Street blues scene, where he landed in 1951, debuting on Chess, Modern (and Duke in 1952). After military service his new Duke recordings, now in Texas, started his career as maybe the most important Southern Soul exponent, "[Woke Up Screaming](#)" (1955), "Farther Up The Road" (1957), "I Pity The Fool" and "Turn On Your Lovelight" (1961), his superb rendition of T-Bone's "Stormy Monday Blues" (with Wayne Bennett on guitar 1962), "That's The Way Love Is" (1963), and "Ain't Nothing You Can Do" (1964). In the 1970s he landed on ABC, when that label had bought the Duke catalog.

Louis Jordan



27. The True R&B Pioneers - Got My Mojo Working

Louis Thomas Jordan (July 8, 1908, prob not 1907, Brinkley, Arkansas – February 4, 1975 Los Angeles, California) was an alto saxophonist, a productive songwriter and bandleader who was popular from the late 1930s to the early 1950s. His highest profile came towards the end of the swing era. Jordan was a talented singer with great comedic flair, and he fronted his own band (the Tympany Five) for more than twenty years. Jordan was also a film personality, appearing in dozens of promotional film clips and several movies. Jordan began his career in big-band swing jazz in the 1930s, but became known as one of the leading practitioners, innovators and popularizers of jump blues, after the mid-1940s soon augmented by electric guitar. He recorded a series of highly influential 78-rpm discs released by Decca Records – a.o. "G.I. Jive" (1944), "[Caldonia](#)" (1945), "Choo Choo Ch 'Boogie" (1946), "Ain't Nobody Here But Us Chickens" b/w "Let The Good Times Roll" (1947), "Saturday Night Frish Fry" (1949), and "Blue Light Boogie" (1950). He continued his career (now out of the mainstream) for Aladdin, Mercury, Tangerine, and even Motown.

Bo Diddley



28. Ten Sepia Super Stars of Rock 'n' Roll - Cops And Robbers

Ellas McDaniel, born Ellas Otha Bates-Wilson out of wedlock (December 30, 1928 or poss 1927 McComb, Mississippi – June 2, 2008 Archer, Florida), known as Bo Diddley, was a singer, guitarist, songwriter and also producer, who played a key role in the transition from the blues to rock and roll. He influenced many artists, Buddy Holly, the Beatles, the Rolling Stones. His use of African rhythms and a signature beat, a simple five-accent hambone rhythm, is a cornerstone of hip hop, rock, and pop music. Diddley is also recognized for his technical innovations, including his distinctive guitar, with its unique booming, and resonant, shimmering tones. He arrived in Chicago 1934, and started his career with his debut record for Checker in 1955, "Bo Diddley" b/w "I'm A Man". Other famous songs were "Diddley Daddy" (featuring Harvey Fuqua and his Moonglows), "Pretty Thing" (both 1955), "[I'm Looking For Woman](#)" and "Who Do You Love" (1956), "Hey! Bo Diddley" (with members of the Flamingos 1957), "Say! (Boss Man)" with co-vcls by his guitarist Peggy Jones and poss Harvey Fuqua - and Lafayette Leake, pno (1957), "Say Man" (1958), "Say Man, Back Again" (1959) - both featuring his long time friend Jerome Green, maracas & vocals, and the great Lafayette Leake on piano, "Road Runner" (issued 1960), plus "You Can't Judge A Book By The Cover" (written by Willie Dixon) c/w "I Can Tell" (Chicago 1962). In 1960 he made Washington, D.C. his home, where he made several recordings for Chess. He later lived in New Mexico for some years, and landed in Florida.

Johnny Otis Orchestra



29. The True R&B Pioneers - Good Old Blues

Johnny Otis, born Ioannis Alexandres Veliotes to Greek immigrants (December 28, 1921 Vallejo, California – January 17, 2012 Los Angeles, California) was a singer, drummer and later vibraphone player, composer, arranger, bandleader, talent scout, club owner, disc jockey, record producer and -owner, television show host, paint artist, author, journalist, minister, and impresario. He was a seminal influence on American R&B and rock and roll, and discovered numerous artists early in their careers who went on to become highly successful in their own right. Otis has been called the "Godfather of Rhythm and Blues". He grew up in a predominantly black neighborhood in Berkeley, California and started his career around 1939. Founding his own orchestra, featuring an all-black big band personnel in 1945, he debuted with a revival of Earl Hagen's "Harlem Nocturne" for Excelsior. He reduced his band to an R&B-outfit in 1947. After an accident Otis changed from drums to vibraphone in late 1949. Among the groundbreaking recordings are "Midnight In The Barrel House" (for Excelsior in 1948, featuring Pete Lewis on guitar), and for Savoy "I'm Not Falling In Love With You" (with his long-timer, the great Devonia "Lady Dee" Williams, vcl/pno), "Double Crossing Blues" (with the Robins and Little Esther), "Mistrustin' Blues" (Little Esther), "[Cupid Boogie](#)" (Esther & Mel), "Rockin' Blues" (Mel Walker) all late 1949 – late 1950. In 1958 he hit with one of his rare vocals, "Willie And The Hand Jive" for Capitol, after several years of launching great new talents for Excelsior, Modern, Savoy, Mercury, Federal, Peacock, and his own label Dig. Jimmy Nolen, James Brown's funky guitarist, started his career with Otis, replacing Pete Guitar" Lewis in 1956.

The Temptations



30. Predecessors of the Soul Explosion in the 1960s - Try It Baby *)

The Temptations are an American vocal group who released a series of successful records during the 1960s and 1970s. The band members are known for their choreography, distinct harmonies, and dress style. Having sold tens of millions of albums, the Temptations are among the most successful groups in popular music. The group formed in late 1959 in Detroit, Michigan, through a merger of the Distant and the Primes, evolving into the Elgins, and soon the Temptations. Group was founded by Otis Williams, joined by Elbridge "Al" Bryant and Melvin Franklin, supported by Eddie Kendricks and Paul Williams of the Primes. Their recording debut came in 1961 with "Oh Mother Of Mine" for Miracle. In 1962 they started recording for Berry Gordy's Gordy Records. Bryant was replaced by David Ruffin in late 1963. Their first hit came in 1964 with "The Way You Do The Things You Do" (Kendricks, lead) followed by "My Girl" in 1965 with Ruffin's lead, and "Don't Look Back" with Paul Williams, lead. "Ain't To Proud To Beg" (1966), and "I Wish It Would Rain" (1968) both had Ruffin's lead. Going solo like his brother Jimmy (who sang for almost all of Gordy's labels), Ruffin was replaced by Dennis Edwards (from the Contours) in the summer of 1968 and led "Cloud Nine" (a hit of 1969) and "Papa Was A Rollin' Stone" (1972). Richard Street (who already had sung with the Distant) often subbed for and ultimately replaced Paul Williams in late 1971. Damon Harris replaced Ricky Owens around the same time. Owens had for a short spell subbed for solo going Kendricks. During 1977-79 the group recorded for Atlantic Records and in 1982 a short reunion - Otis, David, Melvin, Eddie, Dennis, Richard, and Glenn Leonard (who had replaced Harris in 1975) - issued the "Reunion" LP on Gordy. In 1987, the group now Otis Williams, Edwards (lead), Ron Tyson, Franklin, and Street, had a fine hit, "[I Wonder Who She's Seeing Now](#)", which was issued on Motown (and released the album "Together Again").

Image clockwise frl. (the classic group): David Ruffin from Mississippi, Melvin Franklin, Eddie Kendricks (center), Paul Williams (all three from Alabama), and Otis Williams from Texas (group leader - no relation). Later lead Dennis Edwards also came from Alabama.

**) with Melvin Franklin, Diana Ross, and Paul Williams - and a great arrangement by H.B. Barnum (featuring the Temptations and the Andantes), recorded in Hollywood in 1968 (written by Berry Gordy for Marvin Gaye in 1964 - recorded by him with the Temptations backing vcls).*

Rolling Stone

Rolling Stone's 100 Greatest Artists of All Time ([Rolling Stone - all numbers](#))

The "100 Greatest Artists of All Time" is a special list published by the American magazine *Rolling Stone* in two parts in 2004 and 2005 and updated in 2011. The list presented was compiled based on input from musicians, writers, and industry figures and is focused on the "later" rock & roll era (missing several of "our pioneers"). It predominantly features American and British musicians. Most artists on the list were active in the 1960s and 1970s. Below are the artists with who rank from #10 to #1.



10 Ray Charles



9 Aretha Franklin



8 Little Richard



7 James Brown



6 Jimi Hendrix



5 Chuck Berry



4 Rolling Stones



3 Elvis Presley



2 Bob Dylan



1 The Beatles



JOHNNY JONES and the King Casuals – "[Blues For Brothers](#)" – Brunswick

Johnny Jones, the guitarist – not the pianist with Tampa Red and Elmore James.
The guitarist recorded this one circa 1968 with William Bell (Stax artist) as producer.
The King Casuals were originally formed by Jimi Hendrix and bassist Billy Cox in Nashville.



Correction to Muddy Waters as side-man Amendments volume page 39

The Little Johnny pianist recording of summer 1949 for Aristocrat is credited
LITTLE JOHNNY – MUDDY WATERS
just like Muddy's other "co-works" on that label.



Here is some additional information on an early James Brown

(to add to the feature on pages 78-79 in the Updates volume).
Image: the Flames ca 1954 (Terry not there). Keels, Knox, Pulliam, Brown (drums), Nafloyd Scott, Byrd, and Baroy Scott..

James Brown began singing with the R&B group the Cremona Trio while growing up in Toccoa, Georgia. In 1949, Brown, then sixteen, was sent to a juvenile detention center after committing several offenses of armed robbery. While there he formed a group called the Swanees, which included his "prison-mate" and long-time friend Johnny Terry. The band made their own instruments, including a comb and paper, a washtub bass and a drum kit made from lard tubs, while Brown himself played a sort of mandolin out of a wooden box. This led to Brown's first nickname, "Music Box".

The Great R&B Pioneers

Add this one to Editor's Top Favorite Songs (Runner-Up)

(Volume One in the R&B Pioneers Series – Top Rhythm & Blues Records – pages 44-45)

I'm Your Hoochie Cooche Man

Muddy Waters and his Guitar – Chess 1560 (prob issued late Jan 1954)

(aka I'm Your Hoochie Kooche Man (or Hoochie Coochie on LP), Hoochie Coochie Man or Hootchie Coochie Man)

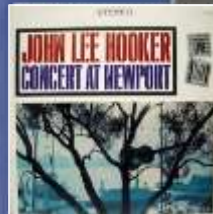
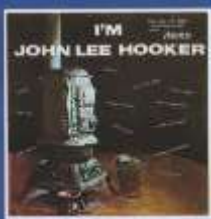


Recorded in Chicago January 7, 1954 – R&B #3 for 1 week in March (13 weeks total on the charts)
 Muddy Waters, vcl/tr; Little Walter, hca; Otis Spann, pno; Jimmy Rogers, gtr; Willie Dixon, poss bs (often not listed, it sure isn't audible); Elga Edmonds (or poss. Fred Below), dms. Leonard Chess and prob Willie Dixon.prods. *Written by Muddy Waters (credited on original label), later credited to Willie Dixon.*
Point: the "drive" and the stop-and-go rhythm.

With this one – plus the 13 extra favorites from volume one – and the 36 "Super Chart Hits" you will really find the Top 50 most classic recordings of the **Original Rhythm & Blues Era!**

(Here is a link to Jackie Wilson's Brunswick recording of 1963, "[Baby Workout](#)", at youtube.)

John Lee Hooker's original Vee-Jay LPs 1959 – 1965 + Dynasty 1973 - in stereo (or "simulated").



VJ LP 1007 Stereo "I'm John Lee Hooker" (late 1959), VJ SR-1023 "Travelin'" (1960), VJ SR-1033 "The Folk Lore Of" (1961), VJ SR-1043 "Burnin'" (early 1962), VJ SR 1049 "The Best of" (late 1962), VJS 1058 / SR 1058 "The Big Soul Of" (early 1963), VJ SR 1066 "On Campus" (late 1963), VJS 1078 / SR 1078 "Concert At Newport" (1964), Dynasty DY-7301 / VJS-7301 "In Person" (1973), VJS / VJSLP 8502 "Is He The World's Greatest Blues Singer?" (1965, produced 1964). Release dates are the years of original mono LP releases. "iinspired" from Charly CD RED Box 6. Hooker's two budget LP's on Discoteque ("Discoteque Dancing Vol I and Vol II – DS 7006 and DS 7007) in "Stereo", were issued in 1965-66 (not 1970) with the latest VJ logo on labels.

The Great R&B Pioneers

Ten Favorite Rhythm & Blues Pioneers – “Runner Ups” to the Favorite Top 30 - Part One

The Dominoes



THE Top Ten Vocal Groups of the Golden '50s - Deep Purple

Billy Ward and his Dominoes – originally just labeled The Dominoes, were an American R&B vocal group, formed in New York City 1950. Heavily “gospel-based”, they were one of the most successful R&B groups of the early 1950s, and helped launch the singing careers of two notable members, Clyde McPhatter and Jackie Wilson. Billy Ward (Robert L. Williams, September 19, 1921 Savannah, Georgia, died 16 February 2002, Inglewood, California) grew up in Philadelphia, and was a child musical prodigy, winning an award for a piano composition at the age of 14, he studied music in Chicago, and New York, where he met talent agent Rose Marks, who became his business and songwriting partner. They started to coach the Ques, with Clyde McPhatter, his buddy Charlie White (both from the Mount Lebanon Singers), Joe Lamont (spokesman), and Bill Brown (bass). Ward acted as their pianist and arranger. After the group made successful appearances on talent shows at the Apollo Theater they landed at producer Ralph Bass of Federal Records, a subsidiary of King, where they were signed to a recording contract and renamed themselves the Dominoes. Their first release was “Do Something For Me” (1951) with McPhatter’s lead vocal. Then followed several hits, a.o. “Sixty-Minute Man” (also 1951 with Brown, lead), and “Have Mercy Baby” (1952). Several changes in the line-up took place early on. One of McPhatter’s last leads with them was “The Bells” (1953). He got fired soon after (Ward had already billed himself with the group from 1952). Jackie Wilson from Detroit joined the group in September 1952 and replaced Clyde around April 1953. He led “Rags To Riches” late 1953 on the “mother” label King. The group now left for Decca (without success), and landed with Liberty in 1957 with the fine “Star Dust”, led by Gene Mumford from the Larks (as Wilson had gone solo). In April 1958 Monroe Powell took over Gene’s role up to 1962. The group had early on settled in Las Vegas for nightly shows, but slowly declined, forcing Ward to use full choruses on his recordings. Image: 1957 with Milton Grayson, Cliff Givens, Billy Ward (center), Milton Merle, and Gene Mumford (far right).

Ruth Brown



Ten Sepia Super Stars of Rock 'n' Roll - Why Me

*Ruth Alston Brown, née Weston (January 12, 1928 Portsmouth, Virginia – November 17, 2006 Henderson, Nevada) was a singer-songwriter and actress. She was noted for bringing a pop music style to R&B music in a series of hit songs for Atlantic Records in the 1950s. She was spotted with Lucky Millinder’s band in Washington, D.C. by Duke Ellington, who presented her to Ahmet Ertegun and Herb Abramson in 1948, but was hospitalized, and had to wait for her formal debut, “So Long” in 1949. Soon came the hits, “Tear Drops From My Eyes” (1950), “5-10-15 Hours” (1952), “(Mama) He Treats Your Daughter Mean” (1953), “Oh What A Dream” (1954), “I Want To Do More” (1956), and “Lucky Lips” (1957). For these contributions, Atlantic became known as “the house that Ruth built”. She left Atlantic in 1961 to record for Philips, Decca and other labels (with minor success). Following a resurgence that began in the mid-1970s and peaked in the 1980s, Brown used her influence to press for musicians’ rights regarding royalties and contracts; these efforts led to the founding of the Rhythm and Blues Foundation. Her performances in the Broadway musical *Black and Blue* earned Brown a Tony Award, and the original cast recording won a Grammy Award.*

Clyde McPhatter



Ten Sepia Super Stars of Rock 'n' Roll - The Bells (Mercury)

Clyde Lensley McPhatter (November 15, prob 1932 Durham, North Carolina – June 13, 1972 New York City) was a rhythm and blues, soul and rock and roll singer. He was one of the most widely imitated R&B singers of the 1950s and early 1960s and was a key figure in the shaping of doo-wop and R&B. McPhatter’s high-pitched tenor voice was steeped in the gospel music he sang in much of his early life. He was the lead tenor of the Mount Lebanon Singers, a gospel group he formed as a teenager (never recorded though). He was later the lead tenor of Billy Ward and his Dominoes and was largely responsible for the initial success of the group for Federal Records. He led a.o. hits “Do Something For Me” (1951), “Have Mercy Baby” (1952) and “The Bells” (1953). After his tenure with the Dominoes, McPhatter formed his own group, the Drifters on Atlantic Records, originally featuring singers from the “Lebanons” (recording “Lucille” in 1953) with one member, Little David Baughan, the first to sub for Clyde when Clyde left his Drifters. Clyde’s first hit (with a new formation of Drifters, again featuring gospel friends of Clyde’s, including Bill Pinkney – soon the bass singer) and brothers Gerhart and Andrew Thrasher was “Money Honey” (1953), followed by “Someday You’ll Want Me To Want You” (1954) and the classic “Cha Gonna Do” (issued 1955). Clyde, going solo, hit with “Seven Days” (1956) and “A Lover’s Question” (1958) on Atlantic. In 1959 he recorded for MGM and was contracted to Mercury in 1960 with a pop hit, “Lover Please” in 1962. McPhatter left a legacy of over 22 years of recording history. He was the first artist to be inducted twice into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, first as a solo artist and later as a member of the Drifters.

Jesse Belvin



Ten Sepia Super Stars of Rock 'n' Roll - What Is Love (and Guess Who)

Jesse Lorenzo Belvin (December 15, 1932 San Antonio, Texas – February 6, 1960 together with his wife in a car accident in Hope, Arkansas), “Father of Doo-Wop”, was a rock and roll singer, pianist and songwriter popular in the 1950s, whose success was cut short by his death. He had moved with his family to Los Angeles, California at the age of five. In 1950, he joined Three Dots and a Dash, saxophonist Big Jay McNeely’s backing vocal quartet, and was featured on some records. His first solo record was “Dream Girl” b/w “Hang Your Tears Out To Dry” (recorded 1951 for Big John Dolphin’s Recorded in Hollywood label). In 1952, he joined Specialty Records (nicknamed the Blues Balladeer) - “Baby Don’t Go” (1952). A re-recording of “Dream Girl” credited to Jesse & Marvin (Phillips) was a minor hit in 1953, plus “Gone” and “One Little Bessing” (1955 – recorded during his military service, backed by Bobby Relf and the Laurels, uncredited). His composition “Earth Angel” was eventually co-credited with the Hollywood Flames singers Curtis Williams and Gaynel Hodge. In 1956 Jesse had signed with Modern Records, but continued to sing for other labels under different names (e.g. “Beware” for Cash, recorded in September 1957 with Eugene Church – originally issued as by Belvin, but later issued as by The Capris. “Girl Of My Dreams” (1956) was issued as the Cliques (with Eugene Church), his biggest hit was “Goodnight My Love” (late 1956), and maybe his finest “Just To Say Hello” (1957) with backing vocals prob. by bass singer Will “Dub” Jones and some of his Cadets (all for Modern). In 1958 he was signed to RCA. The black crooning Elvis, nicknamed “Mr. Easy”, hit with “Guess Who” (1959). Two fine albums were issued on the label and on some recordings he was backed by brothers Gaynel and Alex Hodge, plus Mel Williams (and had the Chargers as his proteges)..

Lloyd Price



Ten Sepia Super Stars of Rock 'n' Roll - Restless Heart

*Lloyd Price (born March 9, 1933 in Kenner, Louisiana – a New Orleans suburb) is an R&B vocalist, bandleader, record owner and business man, known as “Mr. Personality”, after his 1959 hit. His first recording was “Mailman Blues”. It’s flip, “Lawdy Miss Clawdy”, was a hit for Specialty Records in 1952 (featuring Fats Domino at the piano). “I Wish Your Picture Was You” (1953) – all done in N.O., and “Baby, Please Come Home” (issued 1956 – also for Specialty - poss done in L.A.). After military service he formed his first own label with business partner Harold Logan, RKC Records (originally distributed by Atlantic, but soon by ABC-Paramount). His “Just Because” (now with his own orchestra) was recorded in December, 1956 in Washington, DC and a classic hit of 1957. In 1958 he landed in New York and had a string of hits for ABC-Paramount, “Stagger Lee” (1958), “(You’ve Got) Personality” and “I’m Gonna Get Married” (both 1959), plus “Lady Luck” (1960). He started his second own label, Double-L that year (again with Logan) – issued his fine new recordings on that label, like “Misty” in 1963 – and also launched the career of Wilson Pickett. After Logan’s murder he formed Turntable Records – and has continued his business and promotion career in New York City up to this day. Among other things Price manages Icon Food Brands. In about 2009-2011, Price released his autobiography, *The True King of the Fifties: The Lloyd Price Story*, and worked on a Broadway musical, *Lawdy Miss Clawdy*. Price lives with his wife in Westchester County, New York.*

The Great R&B Pioneers

Ten Favorite Rhythm & Blues Pioneers – “Runner Ups” to the Favorite Top 30 - Part Two

Brook Benton



Transitions from Rhythm to Soul - [Hit Record](#) and [Walk On The Wild Side](#)

Brook Benton (born Benjamin Franklin Peay; September 19, 1931 Lugoff, South Carolina – April 9, 1988 New York City) was a baritone singer and songwriter with a pop and R&B audience during the late 1950s and early 1960s. As a youngster he enjoyed gospel music, wrote songs and sang in a Methodist church choir. Leaving Lugoff for New York to pursue his music career, going in and out of gospel groups, such as the Landfordaires (with whom he recorded in 1949 - and in 1953), the Jerusalem Stars and the Golden Gate Quartet. Returning to his home state, he joined an R&B singing group, the Sandmen, and went back to New York trying to get a break with his group, leading on "Somebody To Love" for OKeh (1954), and making his first solo recording in 1955. In August that year he did "It's Just A Matter Of Time" – and in April 1956 "So Many Ways" and "Endlessly" for Mercury. None of these were issued at the time – they had to wait until late 1958/early 1959. Meanwhile he made lots of demo recordings of his own compositions given to other famous balladeers (Nat "King" Cole, Clyde McPhatter et al.). Benton's "If Only I Had Known" and "[A Million Miles From Nowhere](#)" on the RCA-sub Vik were issued in 1957. His very successful career for Mercury started in 1959 with the songs above, followed by "Thank You Pretty Baby" (1959), "Baby (You've Got What It Takes)" and "A Rockin' Good Way" (both with Dinah Washington 1960), "Kiddio" (1960), "The Boll Weevil Song" (1961), "Lie To Me" and "Hotel Happiness" (1962), and "I Got What I Wanted" (1964). After a second period with RCA ("Mother Nature, Father Time" 1965), a contract with Reprise (reviving Bobby Darin's "You're The Reason I'm Living" in 1967), he made a comeback in 1970 with a revival of Tony Joe White's "Rainy Night in Georgia" for Atlantic's sub Cotillion.

Little Junior Parker



Transitions from Rhythm to Soul - [Worried Life Blues](#)

Herman (or Herbert) "Junior" Parker (March 27, 1932 Eastover Plantation near Bobo, Coahoma County, Mississippi – November 18, 1971 Blue Island, Illinois) was a Memphis blues singer and harmonica player. He moved with his mother to West Memphis, Arkansas, during the 1940s, sang in gospel groups as a child and, beginning in his teenage years, played on various blues circuits. His biggest influence was Sonny Boy Williamson II, with whom he worked before moving on to the Howlin' Wolf in 1949. Around 1950, he began performing with a coalition of performers in Memphis known as the Beale Streeters, which included Bobby "Blue" Bland and B.B. King. In 1951, Parker formed his own band, the Blue Flames, with guitarist Pat Hare. In 1952 he was discovered by talent scout Ike Turner for Modern Records. Turner recorded his first release in January, "You're My Angel" b/w "Bad Women, Bad Whiskey" with Turner playing piano and Matt "Guitar" Murphy. This record brought him to the attention of Sam Phillips, and he and his band signed with Sun Records in 1953. There they produced three successful songs: "Feelin' Good" (loosely based on John Lee Hooker's "Boogie Chillen'"), "Love My Baby" and "Mystery Train". Late that same year he landed on Duke Records (staying with the label up to 1966), recording the classics "I Wanna Ramble" (1954), "Next Time You See Me" (1957), "[Sweet Home Chicago](#)" (1958), and "Driving Wheel" (1961). He left his downhome harmonica blues for uptown blues-soul music (with producer Sonny Lester) during later years, his first stop was Mercury (1966-69), followed by a.o. Capitol and Groove Merchant in the 1970s. Originally calling himself Little Junior Parker, he dropped the "Little" in 1964.

Charles Brown



The True R&B Pioneers - [Please Come Home For Christmas](#) (1960)

Tony Russell "Charles" Brown (September 13, 1922 Texas City, Texas – January 21, 1999 Oakland, California) was a blues singer and pianist whose soft-toned, slow-paced blues-club style influenced blues performers in the 1940s and 1950s. In 1943 he settled in Los Angeles, California. The blues-club style of a light rhythm bass and right-hand tinkling of the piano and smooth vocals became popular, epitomized by the jazz piano of Nat King Cole. When Cole left Los Angeles to perform nationally, his place was taken by guitarist Johnny Moore's Three Blazers, featuring Brown's gentle piano and vocals (and originally Eddie Williams, stringbass - later Cole's bassist and Johnny's brother Oscar Moore). The Three Blazers signed with Exclusive Records, and their 1945 recording of "Drifting Blues", with Brown on piano and vocals, guested by Johnny Otis on drums, was a super-seller, and so was "[Merry Christmas Baby](#)" in 1947 (both these classics have later been reissued with Brown getting full credit). Brown left the Three Blazers in 1948 and formed his own trio taking Eddie Williams with him and featuring Charles "Chuck" Norris (later Jesse Ervin) on guitar. He signed with Aladdin Records and had immediate success with "Get Yourself Another Fool" and one of his biggest hits, "Trouble Blues", and "In The Evening When The Sun's Goes Down" (all 1949). More hits followed with "Black Night" (1951) and "Hard Times" (1952), both featuring Maxwell Davis on tenorsax. He re-recorded the classic "Merry Christmas Baby" several times, and did a great duet with Amos Milburn on Ace, "I Want To Go Home" (1959). Brown continued recording up to his death, including for King Records, and for ABC-Bluesway in the late 1960s, and later Bullseye and Verve.

Amos Milburn



The True R&B Pioneers - [Walking Blues](#)

Joseph Amos Milburn (April 1, 1927 Houston, Texas – January 3, 1980 Houston, Texas) was a rhythm-and-blues singer and pianist, popular in the 1940s and 1950s. Milburn excelled at good-natured, upbeat romps about booze and partying, imbued with a vibrant sense of humour and double entendre, as well as vivid, down-home imagery in his lyrics. By the age of five, he was playing tunes on the piano. He enlisted in the United States Navy when he was fifteen and earned thirteen battle stars in the Philippines. He returned to Houston and organized a sixteen-piece band. In 1946 he attracted the attention of Aladdin Records in Los Angeles. Milburn's relationship with Aladdin lasted for eight years, This included "After Midnight" (1946), his cover version of "[Down the Road a Piece](#)", and "[Amos Boogie Woogie](#)" (both issued in 1947). However, none of his recordings were popular until 1949, when his singles got the attention of the R&B audience. "Chicken Shack Boogie" (featuring Maxwell Davis on tenorsax) was his first hit in late 1948 (recorded 1947). Then came among many others "Bewildered", "Hold Me Baby", "Roomin' House Boogie" (all 1949), "Bad, Bad Whiskey" (1950), "Let's Rock A While" (1951), and "One Scotch, One Bourbon, One Beer" (1953). In 1957 he cut a great duet with Charles Brown in New Orleans for Ace, "I Want To Go Home" (which stood model for Sam Cooke's duet with Lou Rawls, "Bring It On Home To Me"). In the mid 1950s Milburn's popularity waned, although he continued recording, for King in 1960-61 and even for Motown 1962-64.

Solomon Burke



Predecessors of the Soul Explosion in the 1960s - [You're Good For Me](#)

Solomon Vincent McDonald Burke (born James Solomon McDonald, March 21, 1936 or poss 1940 Philadelphia, Pennsylvania – October 10, 2010 Amsterdam Schiphol Airport, Haarlemmermeer, Netherlands) was a preacher (nicked "The Boy Wonder Preacher" at an early age), who preached and broadcasted. He was a singer who shaped the sound of rhythm and blues as one of the founding fathers, the one probably deserving the most credit of soul music in the 1960s. He has been named a key transitional figure bridging R&B and soul, and was referred to honorifically as "King Solomon", the "King of Rock 'n' Soul", "Bishop of Soul", and the "Muhammad Ali of Soul". Burke signed with Apollo Records in late 1955, debuting with "Christmas Presents" and "To Thee", soon waxing quasisospel styled pop, a.o. "Walking In A Dream", "You Can Run But You Can't Hide" (both 1956), and "I Need You Tonight" (1957) – all recorded in New York. Burke was still tied to Apollo, but did some recordings for Singular Records in Philadelphia in 1959, soon purchased by Atlantic – and an interesting cover of Little Willie John's "Leave My Kitten Alone" (issued on Galaxy later). He had a string of fine songs for the label (recording in New York again), debuting with "Just Out Of Reach" (a country styled ballad from December 1960) and "How Many Times", followed by "Cry To Me" (recorded in December 1961), "Home In Your Heart", "Down in the Valley", and "Stupidity" (1962), his cover of Wilson Pickett's "If You Need Me" (1963), the classic "Everybody Needs Somebody to Love" (1964), plus "Got to Get You Off My Mind" and the lovely "[Tonight's The Night](#)" in 1965. From 1969 onwards he recorded regularly for labels like Bell, MGM, ABC, Chess and others up to his death (on tour). Due to his minimal chart success in comparison to other soul music greats Burke has been described as the genre's "most unfairly overlooked singer" of its golden age. Jerry Wexler referred to him as "the greatest male soul singer of all time". There was recently issued a super-3CD-set on SoulMusic with all 79 1962-68 recordings for Atlantic.

THREE SUPER ICONS OF SOUL

JOE TEX



Joseph Arrington Jr. (better known as Joe Tex; August 8, 1935 Rogers, Texas and raised in Baytown – August 13, 1982 Navasota, Texas) was a singer and musician who gained success in the 1960s and 1970s with his brand of Southern soul, which mixed the styles of funk, country, gospel, and rhythm and blues. His career started after he was signed to King Records in New York in 1955 following four wins at the Apollo Theater. During 1958-1959 he recorded for Ace in New Orleans, and in 1960 for Anna Records in Detroit (fore-runner of Motown), starting with a cover of Etta James' "All I Could Do Was Cry", and then with his own "Baby, You're Right" (re-worked by James Brown, his long-time antagonist).

In 1961 he met Buddy Killen and started a long career with him for Dial (originally distributed by London Records), recording in Nashville, Muscle Shoals (Alabama) and Memphis. He struggled to find hits, but had to wait until Atlantic started to distribute and promote his Dial recordings, starting with "Hold What You've Got" in 1964. Joe Tex formed his own stage (and recording) band, which soon featured Eldee Williams from James Brown's band, and long-time guitarist Lee Royal Hadley. "That's Your Baby" (1968) was one of his great funky non-charting songs by the end of his Atlantic years. From 1971 it was Mercury who assumed the distribution contract. Tex converted to Muslim faith in 1972, changing his name to Joseph Hazzies. In 1977 he finally went to Epic Records, and had a hit with "Ain't Gonna Bump No More". Tex was nominated for the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame six times, most recently in 2017 (still not inducted).



The Lucky Seven:

- Hold What You've Got - Nov 1964
- One Monkey Don't Stop No Show - 1965
- I Want To (Do Everything For You)** - 1965
- A Sweet Woman Like You - 1965
- Skinny Legs And All - 1967
- Show Me - 1967
- I Gotcha - 1972 (all on Dial)

Book:

Hold What You've Got - The Joe Tex Story by Jason Martinko (2018)

Note: no book found on Solomon Burke.

WILSON PICKETT



Wilson Pickett (March 18, 1941 Prattville, Alabama – January 19, 2006 Reston, Virginia) was a singer and songwriter and a major figure in the development of American soul music. He recorded over 50 songs which made the US R&B charts, many of which crossed over to the *Billboard* Hot 100. In Alabama he sang in Baptist church choirs and eventually left Alabama to live with his father in Detroit in 1955, joining the gospel group the Violinaires for several years. Pickett, lured by the success of gospel singers who had moved to the lucrative secular music market, joined Joe Stubbs' Falcons around late 1959, recording his first lead with them in Detroit on September 18, 1960 for Lupine (distributed by United Artists).

On July 1, 1961 Atlantic organized the first attempt on "I Found A Love" (prob in Cincinnati), and on January 9, 1962 the Lupine Detroit-recording was made (distributed by Atlantic). Pickett's very first solo-record was made that same year for Correc-Tone, "Let Me Be Your Boy". In 1963 he was one of the first artists on Lloyd Price's Double-L label and had two hits, "If You Need Me" and "It's Too Late". He landed on Atlantic the following year. His original recordings for the label in New York were hit-less, but when Jerry Wexler decided to take him to the Stax Studios to work with Steve Cropper in Memphis (and later Alabama), a string of hits secured Pickett as "the black Tom Jones" – the Wicked Pickett. Some not listed below were "Don't Fight It" (1965), "Soul Dance Number Three" (1967), and "Don't Knock My Love" (1971). Some of Wilson's leads with the Falcons were issued on interesting Atlantic albums for the label, a.o. the gospel-like rocker "Take This Love I've Got". After his Atlantic sejour, ending in 1972, Wilson recorded for RCA, his own Wicked label, Big Tree, even Motown, and others.



The Lucky Seven:

- I Found A Love (the Falcons) - 1962 - *Lupine*
- It's Too Late** - 1963 - *Double L*
- In The Midnight Hour - 1965
- 634-5789 (Soulsville, USA) - 1966
- Land of 1,000 Dances - 1966
- Mustang Sally - 1966
- Funky Broadway - 1967 (last five on Atlantic)

Book:

In The Midnight Hour – The Life & Soul of Wilson Pickett by Tony Fletcher (2017)

OTIS REDDING



Otis Ray Redding Jr. (September 9, 1941 Dawson, Georgia, early move to Macon, Georgia – December 10, 1967 Madison, Wisconsin – air plane crash) was a soul singer, and songwriter. He is considered one of the greatest singers in the history of American popular music. Redding quit school at age 15 to support his family, working with Little Richard's backing band, the Upsetters, and by performing in talent shows at the historic Douglass Theatre in Macon. He made his recording debut in Los Angeles as a member of the Shooters in July 1960 (issued much later), and joined Johnny Jenkins' band, the Pinetoppers, with whom he toured the Southern states as a singer and driver (doing "Shout Bamalama" in Athens, Georgia in the fall). An unscheduled appearance with Johnny on a Stax recording session in Memphis led to a contract as an artist on his own, "These Arms of Mine", which was recorded with Steve Cropper's band in October 1962 and issued on the Stax sub Volt Records (distributed by Atco Records). The next single had "That's What My Heart Needs", recorded in June 1963. Redding's debut album was named after his third single "Pain In My Heart" (a disguised cover of New Orleans' "blues Queen" Irma Thomas' "Ruler Of My Heart") – Otis' single was recorded in September, the LP issued in 1964. Initially popular mainly with African-Americans, Redding later reached a wider American pop music audience. He first played small shows in the American South and was soon featured on the fine "Apollo Saturday Night" late 1963 Atco LP.

Shortly before his death in a plane crash, Redding wrote and recorded his iconic "(Sittin' On) The Dock of the Bay" with Steve Cropper. Redding's premature death devastated Stax. Already on the verge of bankruptcy, the label soon discovered that the Atco division of Atlantic Records owned the rights to his entire song catalog. Atco (with Volt and Stax) issued a total of thirteen albums 1964-1970 (including the compilation "The History of Otis Redding", issued just a month before his untimely death), plus a further two with unissued material in the early 1990s. Some more interesting songs beside the ones below are "Send Me Some Lovin'", "I've Been Loving You Too Long" and "Respect" (all 1965), plus "I've Got Dreams To Remember" (1968).



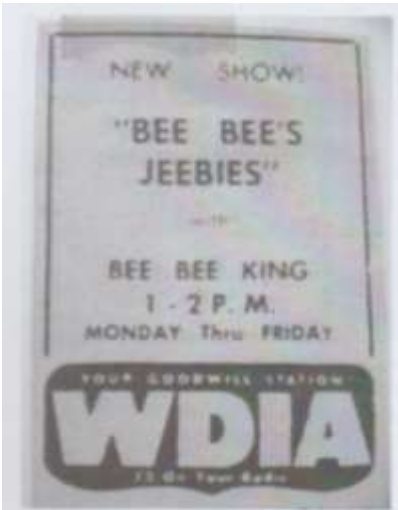
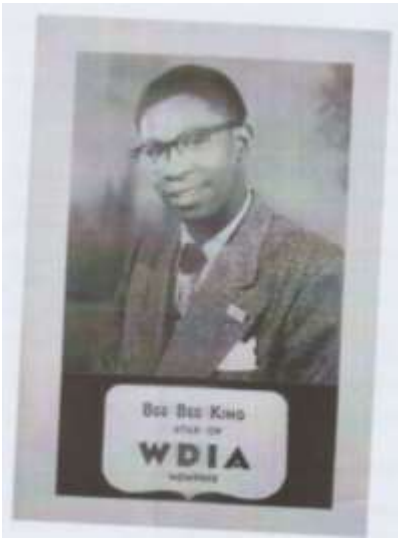
The Lucky Seven:

- These Arms Of Mine - 1963
- Pain In My Heart - 1963
- Your One And Only Man** - 1964
- Mr.Pitiful - 1965 (all seven on Volt)
- Fa-Fa-Fa-Fa-Fa (Sad Song) - 1966
- Try A Little Tenderness - 1967
- (Sittin' On) The Dock Of The Bay - 1968

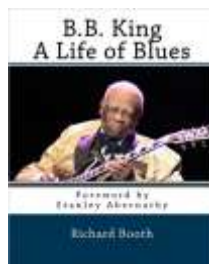
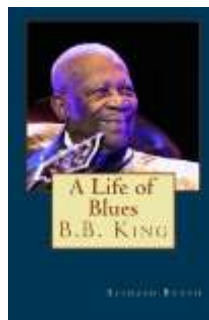
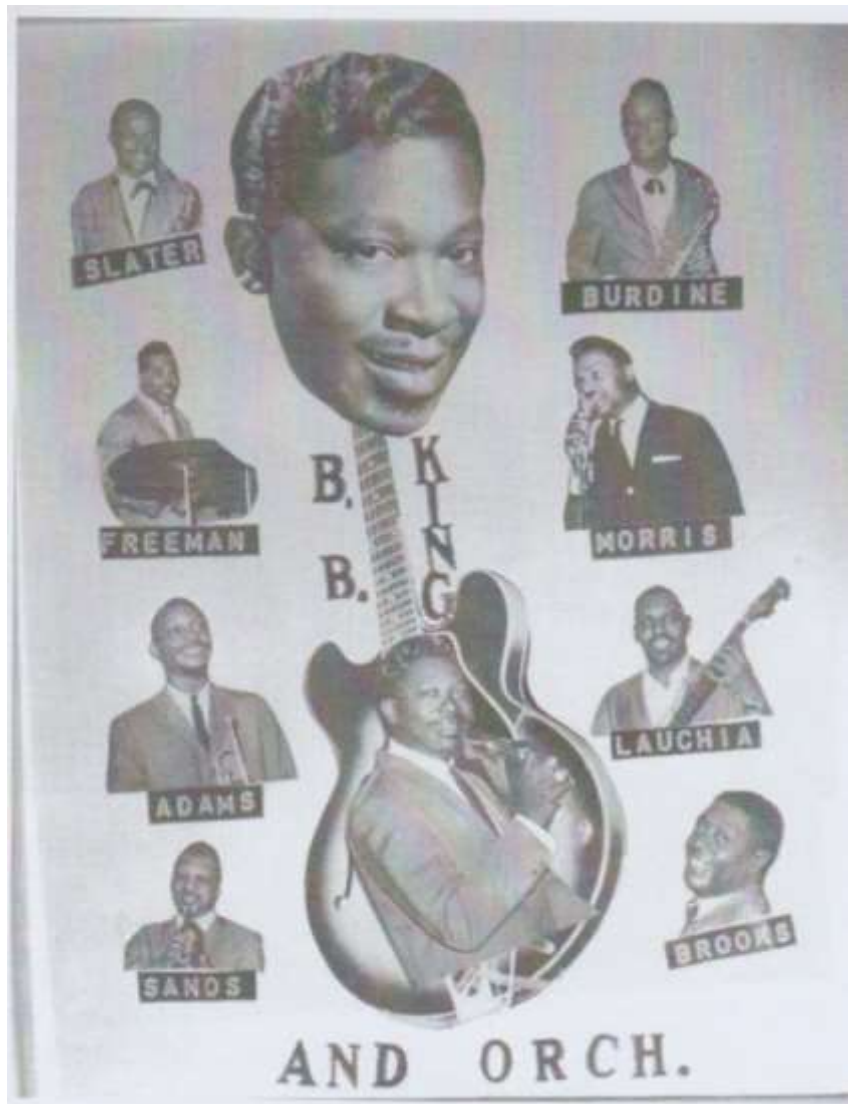
Books:

Otis Redding – An Unfinished Life by Jonathan Gould (2017) and Otis! – The Otis Redding Story by Scott Freeman (2001)

The Great R&B Pioneers



Early advert featuring B.B. King at WDIA radio



Above: **B. B. King And Orch.** - poster from the road band years of 1963 – 1967.

Clockwise from bottom left:

- Kenny Sands, trumpet
- Carl Adams, trumpet
- Sonny Freeman, drums
- Vernon Slater, tenor sax
- Lawrence Burdine, alto sax
- Elmore "The Voice" Morris, vocals (for 11 years)
- Leo Lauchie, bass guitar (el.bass)
- Charles Brooks, piano

The four images are picked from Richard Booth's nice book, "B.B. King – A Life of Blues" (2015). Below mid 1960s tour bus.



TWO MOTOWN 1963 SONGS YOU SHOULDN'T MISS



Little Stevie Wonder – Fingertips Pt 1 and 2

The live version of "Fingertips" (released on May 21, 1963 as a two-part single on Tamla T-54080), arranged and conducted by Clarence Paul; produced by Berry Gordy Jr. Also issued on Tamla LP TM-240 *The Twelve Year Old Genius* (issued in May, like the single).

Written by Wonder's mentors, Clarence Paul (born Pauling, two years younger cousin of the "5" Royales' Lowman Pauling) and Henry "Hank" Cosby (saxophone player, same age as Paul, and one of the early Motown "Funk Brothers"). Entering the Hot R&B Singles chart June 29, 1963, hitting #1 for six weeks from August 3. Pop #1 for 3 weeks.

"Fingertips" was originally a jazz instrumental recorded for Wonder's first album, *The Jazz Soul of Little Stevie* (produced by Clarence Paul and Andre Williams of "Bacon Fat" fame) in Detroit June 19, 1962 (poss with drums by Marvin Gaye, but principally a jazz flute thing – in the style of Taco Meza). Little Stevie was born Stevland Hardaway Morris, née Judkins in 1950.



The live (and hit) version of the song was recorded during a Motortown Revue performance at the Regal Theater in Chicago, Illinois, possibly June 1962 (or later that year). There is a "Fingertips" version noted recorded January 5, 1963 – listed unissued - and an [Apollo New York version live](#) on you tube (possibly from November 1962 – not as good as the Regal version – and with Stevie introducing the song with reference to his earlier live album). Containing only a few stanzas of improvised lyrics, "Fingertips" is essentially an instrumental piece, meant to showcase Wonder's talents on the bongos and the harmonica. Vocals, bongos, and harmonica by Little Stevie Wonder. Bass poss James Jamerson, Larry Moses, or Joe Swift. Recording engineer, Ron Steele Sr.



The Miracles – Mickey's Monkey

The Miracles' single of "[Mickey's Monkey](#)" (released on November 11, 1963 on Tamla T-54083), produced by Lamont Dozier and Brian Holland . Also issued on Tamla LP TM 245 *Doin' Mickey's Monkey*, an album featuring the dance craze songs of the early 1960s.

"Monkey" is written by Brian Holland and Lamont Dozier (and prob also Eddie Holland). Recorded in Detroit July 10, 1963 with several of the Motown artists present to "add sound" to the recording, plus the "Funk Brothers" instrumentation. The album is co-produced by Smokey Robinson. Claudette Rogers was by now Robinson's wife.

The Miracles: William "Smokey" Robinson, lead; Claudette (Rogers) Robinson, female vcl; Bobby Rogers, Ronald "Ronnie" White, and Warren "Pete" Moore, vocals with Marvin "Marv" Tarplin, gtr. Top image fr.l: "Pete", Bobby, "Ronnie"; bottom "Smokey" and Claudette.

Entering the Hot R&B Singles chart August 31, 1963, peaking at #3. Pop #8. This "uptempo" dance song, and the LP was in clear contrast tom most of their other recordings.



Smokey, Claudette, "Ronnie", "Pete", and Bobby. Right: with Marvin Tarplin on guitar.

the important BO DIDDLEY CHESS CD "BOXES"



The Chess Box CHD2-19502 (1990)
Disc 1: 1955-59, Disc 2: 1959-69 - 45 tracks



The Chess Years Charly RED BOX 8
Twelve Discs 1955 – 1974 (1993)



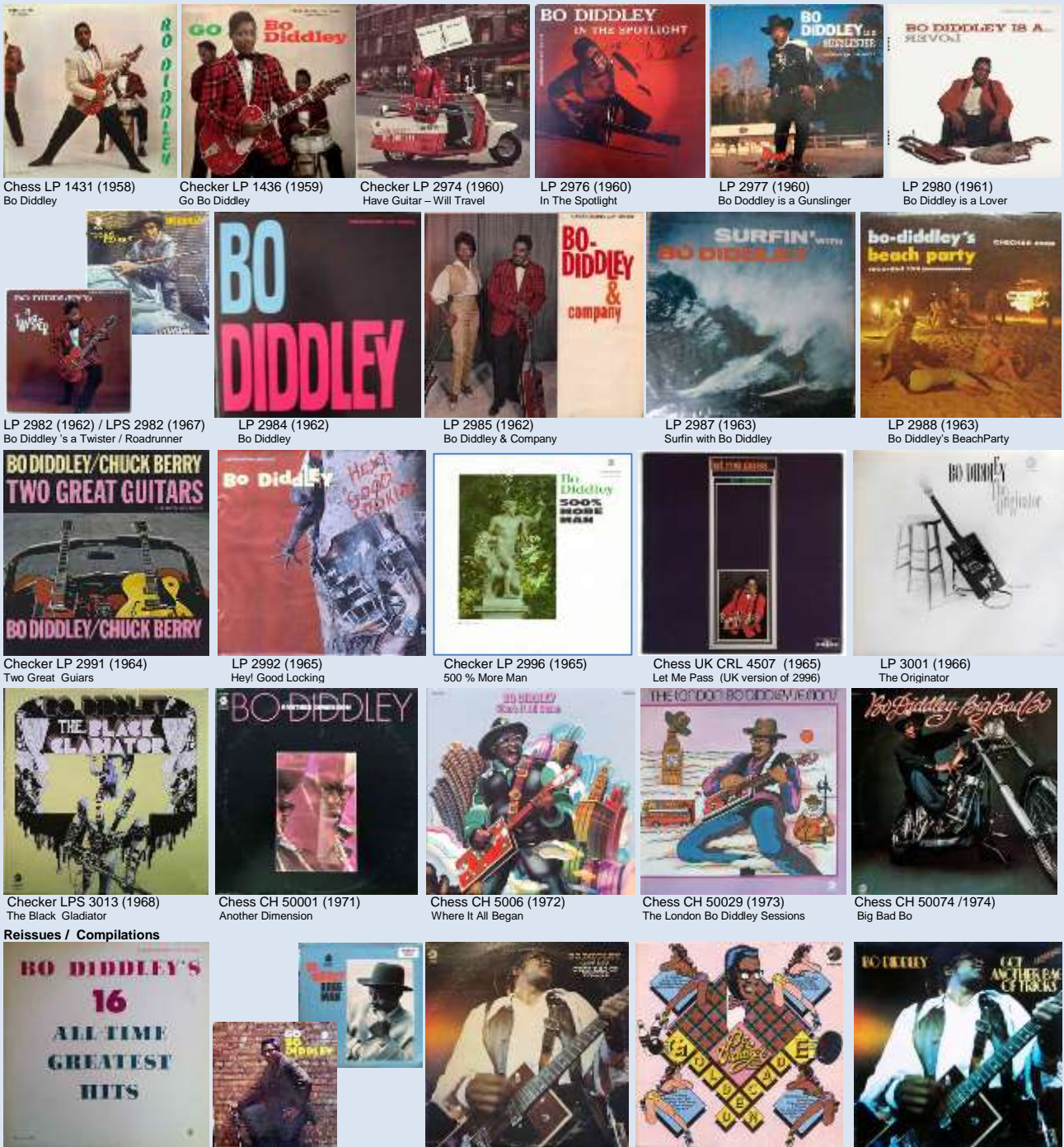
The Chess Masters - 6 discs total
- I'm A Man 1955-58 (two discs),
Hip-O-Select 9231-02 (2007)



Road Runner 1959-1960 (2008),
- Hip-O-Select 110976-02 &
Ride On 1960-61 (2009) 12946-02

The Great R&B Pioneers

THE ORIGINAL CHECKER / CHESS LPs of BO DIDDLEY



Chess LP 1431 (1958) Bo Diddley
 Checker LP 1436 (1959) Go Bo Diddley
 Checker LP 2974 (1960) Have Guitar – Will Travel
 LP 2976 (1960) In The Spotlight
 LP 2977 (1960) Bo Diddley is a Gunslinger
 LP 2980 (1961) Bo Diddley is a Lover
 LP 2982 (1962) / LPS 2982 (1967) Bo Diddley's a Twister / Roadrunner
 LP 2984 (1962) Bo Diddley
 LP 2985 (1962) Bo Diddley & Company
 LP 2987 (1963) Surfin with Bo Diddley
 LP 2988 (1963) Bo Diddley's BeachParty
 Checker LP 2991 (1964) Two Great Guitars
 LP 2992 (1965) Hey! Good Locking
 Checker LP 2996 (1965) 500 % More Man
 Chess UK CRL 4507 (1965) Let Me Pass (UK version of 2996)
 LP 3001 (1966) The Originator
 Checker LPS 3013 (1968) The Black Gladiator
 Chess CH 50001 (1971) Another Dimension
 Chess CH 5006 (1972) Where It All Began
 Chess CH 50029 (1973) The London Bo Diddley Sessions
 Chess CH 50074 /1974) Big Bad Bo
Reissues / Compilations
 Checker LP 2989 (1964) 16 All-Time Greatest Hits
 Checker LPs 3006 and 3007 (1967) Go Bo Diddley / Boss Man (reiss 1326 & 1431)
 Chess 2CH60005 2-set (1972) Got My Own Bag Of Tricks
 Chess UK LP 6310 123 (1972) Bo Diddley's Golden Decade
 Checker UK LP 6467 304 (1972) Got Another Bag of Tricks

Note: In 1967 Bo Diddley appeared on both the "Super Blues" LP with Muddy Waters and Little Walter, and on the "Super Super Blues Band" LP with Muddy and the Howlin'Wolf. LP 1431 was on the Chess label, the next album with 12 new recordings was on the Checker label (with cat#s as the Chess series). Checker LP 2982 reissued in 1967 in simulated stereo with new album title.

These were the musicians who played behind Bo Diddley and his guitar (and violin) on his recordings (in chronological order):

| Chicago 1955 – 1956 | 1957 – Sept 1959 | Sept – Dec 1959 | Washington, DC 1960 - 1961 |
|---|--|---|---|
| Pno: Otis Spann | Lafayette Leake | Otis Spann | Otis Spann |
| Gtr: Jody Williams (Bobby Parler on stage) | Peggy Jones (also vcl) | Peggy Jones (also vcl) | Peggy Jones, William Johnson |
| Bass: Willie Dixon | Willie Dixon | Bobby Baskerville (also vcl) | Bobby Baskerville, Jesse James Johnson |
| Drms: Clifton James | Clifton James / Frank Kirkland (alt) | Clifton James | Billy Downing, Frank Kirkland, Edell Robertson |
| Mrcs/Vcl: Jerome Green | Jerome Green | Jerome Green | Jerome Green |
| Vcls: The Moonglows | The Flamingos, Harvey Fuqua, The Teardrops | Johnny Carter, members of the Moonglows | Billy Stewart, female vcls, members of Moonglows / Flamingos, the Impalas |
| Hca: Billy Boy Arnold, Little Walter, Lester Davenport, Little Willie Smith (55-56) | Gene Barge, tens; Patrina Jones, perc. | - | Note: Claves and other perc occ added. |

Note: the recordings in Bo Diddley's very own studio in Washington were mixed in Chicago, sometimes with Chicago musicians added. In 1962 Diddley returned to Chicago to record. During the early 1960s Lafayette Leake, pno; Norma Jean "The Duchess" Wofford, gtr/vcl (replacing Jones, who returned to Diddley during the 1970s as "Lady Bo"); J-J Johnson or Chester Lindsay, bass; Downing or Robertson, dms and later Clifton James returned; Jerome Green, still on mrcs/vcl until 1964. Soon a girl trio was established, the Bo-Ettes (also called the Cookies) - Gloria Morgan and Bee Bee Jameson, supplied by The Duchess – the last of the girls was actually called "Cookie V". Cornelia Redmond, in the 1970s (an important allied of Diddley's). The line-up of the fine "Bo Diddley" LP 2984 (with tracks from January – July 1962) was Diddley; Green, Billy Stewart (org), Johnson or Lindsay, Downing or Robertson, unkn hca; plus The Duchess and The Vibrations on some tracks. There's a hca (Little Walter?) on "Call Me" titled "Bo's Blues" on LP 2980 (which may be of an earlier date).

The Great R&B Pioneers

(LITTLE) JUNIOR PARKER'S ORIGINAL LPs



Blues Consolidated (shared with Bobby Blue Bland) – Duke DLP 72 (1958). Driving Wheel - Duke DLP-76 (1962)
Like It Is - Mercury MG 21101 (1967) prod by Bobby Robinson. The Best of Junior Parker – Duke DLP 83 (1967)



Blues Man – Minit LP 24024 (1969). Honey-Drippin' Blues – Blue Rock/Mercury SRB-64004 (1969). The Dudes Doin' Business (with Jimmy McGriff) – Capitol ST-569 (1970). Good Things Don't Happen Every Day – Groove Merchant GM-2205 (1970) reissue of Capitol 569



The Outside Man - Capitol ST-564 (1970). Love Ain't Nothin' But A Business Goin' On – Groove Merchant GM 513 (1971) reissue of Capitol 564
You Don't Have To Be Black To Love The Blues – Groove Merchant GM 502 (1971). Blue Shadows Falling - Groove Merchant GM 502 (UK version)



I Tell Stories Sad And True – United Artists UAS-6823 (1972). Chicken Fried Soul (with Jimmy McGriff) – United Artists UAS-5597 (1972).
- one of the two above sometime listed as 100 Proof Black Magic – United Artists LP UAS-6814 (1971) – no record found.
Sometimes Tomorrow My Broken Heart Will Die – BluesWay LPS 6086 (1973) from the Duke/Pracok vaults. The ABC-Collection – ABC LP AC 30010 (1976).



The Legendary Sun Performers (shared with Billy Red Love) – UK Charly LP CR 30125 (1977)
Driving Wheel – ABC Duke DLP-76 (1974)
The Best of Junior Parker – ABC Duke DLP-83 (1974)
Last two also later issued on ABC. Sonny Lester produced the albums of 1969 – 1972.

The Great R&B Pioneers

THE COASTERS' ORIGINAL LPs (US, UK, Sweden, Japan)



The Coasters – Atco 33-101 (November 1957). The Coasters' Greatest Hits – Atco 33-111 (October 1959), reissued on SD33-111 (1968) some stereo tks. One By One – Atco 33-123 and SD33-123 (July 1960). Coast Along with the Coasters – Atco 33-135 mono (August 1962). LP 111 issued on UK London HAE 2237, and LP 123 on UK London HAK 8033. **Note:** There are several off-shoot "Coasters" LPs issued – not listed here.



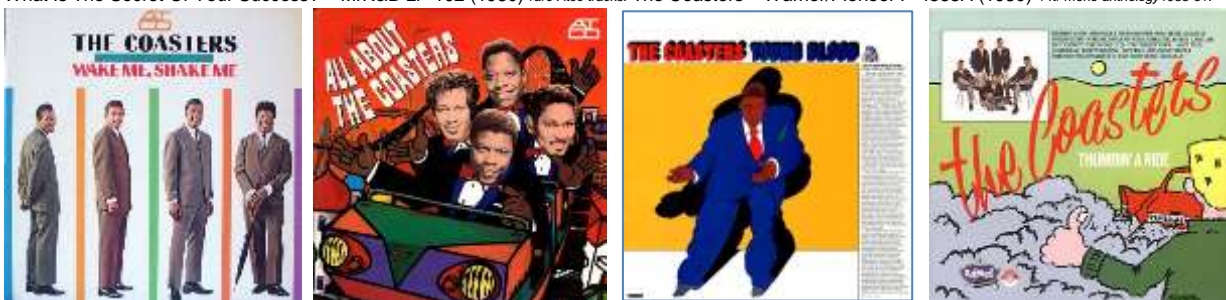
Coast Along with the Coasters – Atco SD33-135 stereo (ca 1962). That Is Rock & Roll – Clarion (Atco sub) LP 605 and SD-605 (January 1965). Great All Time Hits – Atlantic Special UK 590.015 (1967) reissue of 33-111. Their Greatest Recordings / The Early Years – Atco SD33-371. (November 1971). *Note:* SD33-135 features alternate stereo takes, as does SD-605 and SD33-371. SD33-135 reissued on UK Atlantic 588.134 (1968).



The Early Years – Atlantic UK K 30031 (1973) reissue of 33-371. On Broadway – King KS1146-498 (October 1972). On Broadway – London UK SHZ8460 (1973) reissue of King. 16 Greatest Hits – Trip TOP 16-7 (1975) ten 1973 Coasters plus six off-shoot.



Juke Box Giants – Phoenix20 P 20-602, AFE UK MP 1059 (1981) reissues of Trip. The Drifters Meet The Coasters – TVP 2-set 1002 w tracks from previous. 20 Great Originals – London UK K 30058 (1978) w. some stereo alternates. AD 2-4003 on UK Atlantic 60.163. Pioneer LPs below have some stereo alternates. What Is The Secret Of Your Success? – MrR&B LP 102 (1980) rare Atco tracks. The Coasters – Warner/Pioneer P-4583A (1980) 14tr mono anthology 1955-61.



Wake Me, Shake Me - Warner/Pioneer P-6188A (1981) 14tr anthology. All About The Coasters - Warner/Pioneer P-13013 (1982) 20tr anthology. Young Blood – Atlantic DeLuxe 2-set AD 2-4003 (July 1982) 24 mono incl three from King. Thumbin' A Ride – Edsel UK ED 156 (1984) 16 rare Atco tracks.

The Great R&B Pioneers

SIX SUCCESSFUL CLASSIC "DOO-WOP" GROUPS



The Five Keys - from Newport News, Virginia in 1951 - (formed 1945)
Ripley Ingram, Dickie Smith, Rudy West (top), Maryland Pierce, Bernie West, and pianist "Virginia" Joe Jones (center bottom).

Originally Ripley's brother Rafael was a member of a two-pair brothers quartet (the Ingrams and the Wests). Edwin Hall joined in early 1949 to make them a quintet. Rafael was replaced by Smith later that year - added by guitarist Joe Jones (who was replaced by the name-sake pianist in 1951). In early spring 1950 Pierce replaced Hall. Ramon Loper replaced Smith from late 1953 until late 1958 - when Smith returned. Foremost lead singers: Rudy West, Pierce and Smith.

The Hi Five:

- 1951 The Glory Of Love (RW/DS) - Aladdin
- 1951 Hucklebuck With Jimmy (MP/DS) - Aladdin
- 1952 Red Sails In The Sunset (RW/DS) - Aladdin
- 1955 Close Your Eyes (MP/RW) - Capitol
- 1956 Out Of Sight, Out Of Mind (RW) - Capitol



The Flamingos - from Chicago in 1955 - (formed 1950)

top Jake Carey (spokesman), Johnny Carter, Paul Wilson, bottom: Nate Nelson, Zeke Carey.

Paul Wilson replaced original baritone singer Judah Byrd early on. Sollie McElroy replaced original lead Earl Lewis in 1952, and was lead singer up to late 54, replaced by Nate Nelson. Tommy Hunt replaced Carter in 1956, and Terry Johnson joined in 1957, the group a sextet when Zeke had returned from two years of Army service in late 1958. Since 1961 Johnson has his own "modern" Flamingos..

The Hi Five:

- 1953 Golden Teardrops (SM) - Chance
- 1956 I'll Be Home (NN) - Checker
- 1956 The Vow (NN) - Checker
- 1958 Lovers Never Say Goodbye (TJ vcl. gtr / PW) - End
- 1959 I Only Have Eyes For You (NN) - End



The Moonglows - from Cleveland, Ohio in 1955 - (formed 1951)

Prentiss Barnes, Bobby Lester, Pete Graves, Harvey Fuqua, and bottom center guitarist Billy Johnson.

Billy Johnson joined in January 1955 (after the recording of "Sincerely"). Fuqua "re-organized" a new shortlived group in 1959, to a sextet featuring Chuck Barksdale and Marvin Gaye. Lester and Graves started a new rival Moonglows (no contract with Chess). Foremost leads: Lester and Fuqua.

The Hi Five:

- 1953 Baby Please (HF) - Chance
- 1954 Sincerely (BL) - Chess
- 1955 Most Of All (BL) - Chess
- 1957 Please Send Me Someone To Love (HF) - Chess
- 1958 Ten Commandments Of Love (HF) - Chess



The Platters - from Los Angeles in 1956 - (formed 1952)

Herb Reed, Tony Williams, David Lynch, Paul Robi, Zola Taylor.

Legend has it this group was originally called "the Flamingoes", featuring Cornell Gunter (who left around mid 1953 to form his Flairs with Richard Berry and Young Jessie), brothers Gaynel and Alex Hodge, Joe Jefferson and Curtis Williams (soon repl by Herb Reed). Lynch for Joe in 1953, Taylor for Gaynel in May 1954, and Robi for Alex Hodge in August. Foremost lead singer Williams joined in September 1953. He was succeeded by Sonny Turner in February 1960. Nate Nelson from the Flamingos replaced Robi in 1965. In 1970 Monroe Powell from the Dominoes became new lead. All males started their own off-shoot Platters later.

The Lucky Seven:

- 1954 Tell The World (TW) - Federal
- 1955 Only You (And You Alone) (TW) - Mercury
- 1956 The Great Pretender (TW) - Mercury (rec 1955)
- 1956 My Prayer (TW) - Mercury
- 1958 Twilight Time (TW) - Mercury
- 1959 Smoke Gets In Your Eyes (TW) - Mercury (rec 1958)
- 1966 I Love You 1000 Times (ST) - Musicor



The Cadillacs - from Harlem, New York City in 1956 - (formed 1954)

clockwise fr bottom left: Earl Carroll, Earl Wade, Charles Brooks, LaVerne Drake, Bobby Phillips

Cub Gaining was an early member of the Carnations (the fore-runners to the Cadillacs). Wade and Brooks had succeeded James Clark and Gus Wllingham (im right) directly after "Gloria" in 1954. J.R. Bailey replaced Drake in May 1956. Bobby Spencer sang with a 2nd group of Cadillacs in 1957, joined Carroll's group in late 1958 (and led the group up into the 1970s). Carroll reformed his group (with Phillips in 1981 - after singing with the Coasters from mid 1961 until late 1979 or poss early 1980). Foremost lead singers: Carroll, Wade, Bailey, Spencer.

The Eight Great:

- 1954 Gloria (EC) - Josie
- 1955 Let Me Explain (EW) - Josie
- 1956 Speedoo (EC) - Josie (recorded 1955)
- 1956 Woe Is Me (EC) - Josie
- 1957 My Girl Friend (JB) - Josie (2nd group)
- 1958 Peek-A-Boo (BS/EC/EW/JB/BP) - Josie
- 1959 Romeo (BS) - Josie
- 1960 Tell Me Today (EC) - Josie (featuring Roland Martinez, Kirk Davis and Ronnie Bright)



The Dells - from Harvey, Illinois in 1956 - (formed late 1952)

Marvin Junior, Verne Allison, Chuck Barksdale, Michael McGill, Johnny Funches.

Lucius McGill occasionally sang with the group in the early days. Johnny Carter from the Flamingos (right image - center bottom) joined the group around 1961, replacing original lead Johnny Funches. Barksdale and Carter joined Dinah Washington's back-up D's Gents in 1961 with Opal Courtney joining the three remaining Dells. In 1963 the group restarted their career (Opal out, Carter / Barksdale in again). Recorded for Checker 54 (as the El Rays), Vee-Jay 55-59, Argo 62-63, Vee-Jay again 64-65, Cadet 67-75 (and later a.o. Mercury and ABC). Foremost lead singers: Funches, Junior, Carter.

The Super Six:

- 1955 Dreams Of Contentment (JF) - Vee-Jay
- 1956 Oh What A Nite (MJ/JF) - Vee-Jay (with VJ exec Calvin Carter subbing for Barksdale)
- 1965 Stay In My Corner (MJ) - Vee-Jay
- 1968 Stay In My Corner (MJ) - Cadet
- 1969 Oh, What Night (JC/MJ?) - Cadet
- 1973 Give Your Baby A Standing Ovation () - Cadet



Acrobat 3CD ACTRCD9097
The Five Keys Collection 1951-58



Acrobat 3CD ACTRCD9068
The Flamingos Collection 1953-61



Acrobat 2CD ADDCD3188 1953-62
The Moonglows - The Complete Singles



Bear Family 9CD BCD15741 1955-64
Four Platters and One Lovely Dish



Bear Family 4CD BCD15648 DI 1954-60
The Cadillacs - The Complete Josie Sessions



Hip-O / Universal 2CD 314545106-2
The Dells - Anthology 1954-91

The Great R&B Pioneers



SIX SUPER R&B HARMONY GROUPS of THE GOLDEN '50s

The Dominoes - from New York City in 1951 - (formed Sept 1950)

Billy Ward (at the piano), Bill Brown, Clyde McPhatter, Charlie White, Joe Lamont. In September 1951 White left to form the Checkers (and later joined the Clovers) – replaced by James Van Loan. In February 1952 Brown also joined the Checkers – replaced in May by David McNeil (and later Cliff Givens). In September Jackie Wilson joined, but did not record with the group until Clyde left in April 1953 - and stayed with them up to December 1956 – to be replaced by Gene Mumford in April 1957. Exactly a year later Monroe Powell became new lead. Foremost lead singers: McPhatter, Wilson, Mumford, Powell.

The Eight Great:

| | |
|---|--|
| 1950 Do Something For Me (CMP) – Federal | 1953 The Bells (CMP) – Federal |
| 1951 Sixty-Minute Man (BB) – Federal | 1953 Rags To Riches (JW) – King |
| 1952 That's What You're Doing To Me (CMP) – Federal | 1954 I'm Gonna Move To The Outskirts Of Town (JW) - Fed. |
| 1952 Have Mercy Baby (CMP) – Federal | 1957 Star Dust (GM) - Liberty |



The Clovers - from Washington, DC in 1952 - (formed ca 1947)

Harold Lucas, Harold Winley, John "Buddy" Bailey, Matthew McQuater, Bill Harris (gtr). Originally formed as a trio by Harold Lucas with his high school friends Billy Shelton and bass Thomas Woods. Soon Bailey was added. Around 1948 McQuater replaced Shelton, followed by Winley replacing Woods. In 1950 they recorded "Yes Sir, That's My Baby" for Rainbow Records and soon after Harris entered. In August 1952 Bailey was drafted (shortly subbed by John Philip - only on stage). In February 1953 Charlie White took care of the lead vocals. In November he left, recorded with the Playboys and went solo, replaced by Billy Mitchell (from the Joe Morris outfit), who stayed on when Bailey returned in May 1954 – the group now a sextet. In later years Lucas and Winley each had their own Clovers. Foremost lead singers: Bailey, White, Mitchell.

The Tuff Ten:

| | |
|--|--|
| 1951 Don't You Know I Love You (BB) – Atlantic | 1955 Blue Velvet (BB) – Atlantic |
| 1951 Fool, Fool, Fool (BB) – Atlantic | 1956 Devil Or Angel (BB) – Atlantic |
| 1952 One Mint Julep (BB) – Atlantic (rec in 1951) | 1958 My Mother's Eyes (BM) - Poplar |
| 1953 Good Lovin' (CW) – Atlantic | 1959 Love Potion No. 9 (BM) - United Artists |
| 1954 Your Cash Ain't Nothin' But Trash (BM) – Atlantic | 1959 Stay Awhile (BB) – United Artists |



The "5" Royales - from Winston Salem, NC in ca 1954 - (formed 1942, secular 1951)

Obadiah Carter (top); Jimmy Moore, Gene and Johnny Tanner; Lowman Pauling (gtr). With roots in ca 1942 as the Royal Sons Quintet - consisting of loose members Lowman, Clarence and Curtis Pauling, Anthony Price, William Samuels, Windsor King, and pianist Royal Abbit, soon also Johnny Holmes and Johnny Tanner - the group turned secular in October 1951, now with Lowman, Johnny, Otto Jeffries (who turned road manager when Johnny's brother Gene joined in December 1953), Moore (who already had been there in 1949 when Johnny did military service), and Carter. Foremost lead singers: Johnny Tanner, Jimmy Moore, Gene Tanner.

The Tuff Ten:

| | |
|---|--|
| 1952 Courage To Love (JM) – Apollo | 1957 Tears Of Joy (GT) – King |
| 1952 Baby, Don't Do It (JT) – Apollo | 1957 Think (JT) – King |
| 1953 Help Me Somebody (JT) – Apollo | 1958 Dedicated To The One I Love (GT) - King |
| 1954 Let Me Come Back Home (JM) – Apollo (rec 1952) | 1958 Tell The Truth (JT) – King |
| 1956 When You Walked Through The Door (JT) – King | 1960 I'm With You (JT/GT) - King |



The Drifters - from Detroit in ca 1955-57 - (formed ca 1950)

Henry Booth, guitarist Cal Green, Lawson Smith, Sonny Woods, Hank Ballard. Originally the Four Falcons (no records), they changed to the Royals in late 1951. Joined by guitarist and arranger Alonzo Tucker (with Jackie Wilson, Little Willie John and even Levi Stubbs "hanging around"). Tucker organized the Royals with lead singer Charles Sutton, Booth, Smith (who had replaced original member Freddie Pride), and Woods. Ballard entered in May 1952 to replace Smith, who was drafted, but returned in late 1954 to sub for a short absence of Booth. Sutton left by January 1955, and Smith stayed on when Booth returned. Norman Thrasher replaced Woods in ca 1956. After the first pressing of "Work With Me Annie" (still as the Royals), the group again changed their name (not to be confused with the "5"). Cal Green became guitarist and bandleader around mid 1954 (replacing Tucker and Arthur Porter), J.C. Billy Davis subbed for Green during 1959-62 and ultimately replaced him.

The Exiting Eleven:

| | |
|--|---|
| 1952 Every Beat Of My Heart (CS) – Federal | 1957 Let 'Em Roll (HB) – Federal |
| 1953 Get It (HB) – Federal | 1959 The Twist (HB) – King c/w |
| (the two above as by The Royals) | 1959 Teardrops On You Letter (HB) - King |
| 1954 Work With Me Annie (HB) – Federal | 1960 Finger Poppin' Time (HB) - King |
| 1954 Sexy Ways (HB) – Federal | 1960 Let's Go, Let's Go, Let's Go (HB) – King |
| 1956 Tore Up Over You (HB) – Federal | 1961 The Continental Walk (HB) - King |



The Fabulous Five - from New York City in 1953 - (formed in June 1953)

Bill Pinkney, Willie Ferbie, Clyde McPhatter, Andrew Thrasher, Gerhart Thrasher. All of the above, except Ferbie (who died soon after "Money Honey", recorded in August, 1953), sang lead in the mid '50s. Pinkney formed his Original Drifters with the Thrashers in the early 1960s. In late 1958 the Crowns (with origins in 1952) were christened the Drifters (as all the old members were fired). Prominent Drifters leads: Clyde McPhatter 6/53-7/54; David Baughan 6/54-8/55 (who had sung with Clyde on the very first Drifters' recording in June, 1953 with members from Clyde's Mount Lebanon Singers – "Lucille"); Johnny Moore 8/55-8/57; Bobby Hendricks 8/57-5/58, Ben. E. King 6/58-6/59 on stage (shortly subbed by Johnny Lee Williams - 5/60 on recordings; Charlie Thomas 6/58-6/67; Rudy Lewis late/60-5/64 – including the original "Only In America" in 1963 (he died May 20, 1964 – just starting his solo career); Johnny Moore (back again) 4/63 - on and off up to his death Dec 30, 1998. Thomas has led his own "Drifters" ever since Moore's group settled in England in the early 1970s. King sang with Thomas' group in the 1970s, and subbed for Moore and then joined his group in the 1980s for some years.

The Fabulous Fifteen:

| | |
|---|---|
| 1953 Money Honey (CMP) – Atlantic | 1960 Save The Last Dance For Me (BEK) – Atlantic |
| 1954 White Christmas (CMP/BP) – Atl | 1961 Some Kind Of Wonderful (RL) - Atl |
| 1955 What'cha Gonna Do (CMP) - Atl (rec 1954) | 1962 When My Little Girl Is Smiling (CT) – Atl |
| 1955 Adorable (JM) – Atl | 1962 Up On The Roof (RL) - Atl |
| 1956 Ruby Baby (JM) – Atl (re 1955) | 1963 On Broadway (RL) - Atl |
| 1958 Drip Drop (BH) - Atl | 1964 Under The Boardwalk (JM) – Atl (rec May 21) |
| 1959 There Goes My Baby (BEK) – Atlantic | 1965 At The Club (JM) - Atl |
| | 1974 Kissin' In The Backrow Of The Movies (JM) - Bell |



The Coasters - from Los Angeles in (prob early) 1957 - (formed October 1955)

Carl Gardner, Bobby Nunn, Billy Guy, and center front Leon Hughes. Guitarist Adolph Jacobs was there by now (but not imaged here - he stayed with the group up into around 1960). The Coasters were formed on October 12, 1955 by two of the Robins' lead singers, Carl Gardner and bass Bobby Nunn (who were joined by Hughes and baritone Guy). In late 1957 Hughes and Nunn were succeeded by Cornell Gunter (from the Flairs), and Will "Dub" Jones (from the Cadets) – *im right*. The group now located to New York. In mid 1961 Cornell left, succeeded by Earl "Speedo" Carroll from the Cadillacs. In 1968 Ronnie Bright from the Valentines (and Cadillacs) replaced Jones, and in 1973 Guy was succeeded by Jimmy Norman. All of Gardner's fellow members of 1955–1960 (plus other off-shoots) have formed own "Coasters" in later years.

The Terrific Ten:

| | |
|---|--|
| 1955 Smokey Joe's Cafe - The Robins (CG) – Atco | 1959 Poison Ivy (BG/CG) - Atco |
| 1956 Down In Mexico (CG) – Atco | 1960 Shoppin' For Clothes (BG/WJ) – Atco |
| 1957 Searchin' (BG) / Young Blood (CG) - Atco | 1951 Little Egypt (BG) - Atco |
| 1958 Yakety Yak (CG/BG dual / bass WJ) – Atco | 1967 D.W. Washburn (BG w.CG) - Date |
| 1959 Charlie Brown (unison CG/BG/COG/WJ) – Atco | 1971 Love Potion Number Nine (CG) - King |



Acrobat 3CD ACTRCD9035
The Dominoes Collection 1950-1959



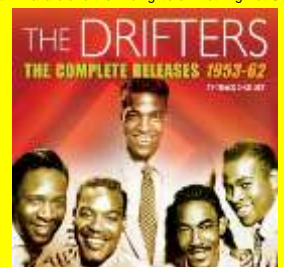
Jasmine 2CD JASCD 576
The Clovers - The Feelin' Is Good 1950-1959



RockBeat 5CD ROCCD 3101 1951-1967
Soul & Swagger – The Complete "5" Royales



Bear Family 5CD BCD16795 1952-1962
Hank Ballard and the Midnighters - Nothing But Good



Acrobat 3CD ACTRCD90055
The Drifters - The Complete Releases 1953-62



Rhino 4CD RHM2 7740 1954-1966
There's A Riot Goin' On - The Coasters On Atco

The Great R&B Pioneers

THE COASTERS ENDURANCE

(nostalgia Coasters: [PopBopRockTilYouDrop](#))

1955



Carl Gardner *lead*, Bobby Nunn *bass*,
Leon Hughes *tenor*, Billy Guy *baritone*

1956



Nunn, Gardner, Hughes, Guy

1957



Gardner, Guy, Nunn, Hughes,
Adolph Jacobs *guitar*

1958



Guy, Will "Dub" Jones *bass*, Gardner,
Cornell Gunter *tenor*, Adolph Jacobs

1959



Jones, Gardner,
Gunter, Guy, Jacobs

1960



Guy, Jones, Gardner, Gunter

1961



Jones, Gardner, Gunter, Guy

1960s



Gardner, Jones, (Palmer *guitar*),
Earl "Speedo" Carroll, Guy

1970s



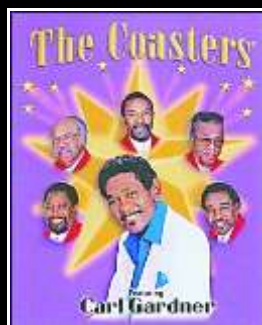
Carroll, Jimmy Norman, Ronnie Bright
Thomas "Curley" Palmer *gtr*, Gardner

1980s & 1990s



Bright *bass*, Norman *baritone*, Palmer,
Gardner (*lead/tenor* - center front)

The New Millenium



Alvin Morse, Palmer, Carl Gardner Jr,
Bright, Joe Lance Williams, Gardner

2011 - 2020



Robert Fowler - *bass* fr Jan 2015
(Eddie Whitfield 2009-2014) Ray Sabatello *MD*
Joe (JW) Lance Williams - *lead* fr July 2001
Primo Candelaria - *tenor* fr Oct 2008
Dennis Anderson - *baritone lead* fr July 2011

The Great R&B Pioneers

Wishful Thinking!

If the Coasters' classic rendition of "Zing! Went The Strings Of My Heart" suddenly makes a big hit anywhere in our world (which it truly deserves) this "list" of 34 Coasters recordings can help reissue producers (and disc-jockeys) to present an **Ultimate Dream Album of THE COASTERS** comprised of the following super songs. Imaged below left - the dream reissue single, "Zing" b/w "Brazil", I have wished for (for several years now)! Imaged below right - the CDs, from which the tracks are picked. "Zing!" and "Crocodile" - prefer the stereo master versions with studio chat. Tyler, Texas image: Gardner's 60th Birthday April 29, 1988. Imaged right - the CD version of the Swedish MrR&B Records (RBD-102) - which had the two parts of "Besame Mucho" connected into one track. And finally - don't miss the two wonderful Coasters double CDs on **History of RnB Records (R001 and R002)** with lots of alternates.



| Track | Song title | Notes | Recorded | Lead singer(s) | featuring | From CD album |
|-------|-------------------------------------|--|----------------------|-------------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|
| 1. | Zing! Went The Strings Of My Heart | stereo master | Mar 17 1958 | Will "Dub" Jones & Cornell Gunter | Gardner & Guy | Rhino 4CD RHM2 7740 |
| 2. | Smokey Joe's Cafe - The Robins | the original | July 7 1955 | Carl Gardner | Bobby Nunn and the Robins | " |
| 3. | Down In Mexico | recorded in Los Angeles | Jan 11 1956 | Carl Gardner | Nunn, Guy, and Leon Hughes | " |
| 4. | Searchin' | live at the Steve Allen NBC TV-show | Aug 25 1957 | Billy Guy | Gardner, Nunn, and Hughes w Adolph Jacobs | NBC TV, New York |
| 5. | Idol With The Golden Head | recorded in Chicago | July 24 1957 | Carl Gardner | Guy, Hughes, Nunn | Rhino 4CD RHM2 7740 |
| 6. | Wait A Minute | recorded in New York, edited December 4 | June 12/13 1957 | Billy Guy | Nunn, Gardner, Hughes | " |
| 7. | Yakety Yak | New York stereo master, original A-side of Zing! | Mar 17 1958 | Gardner & Guy duet | Jones & Gunter | " |
| 8. | I'm A Hog For You | undubbed stereo master | Aug 8 1958 | Unison | (Gardner, Guy, Jones, Gunter) | " |
| 9. | Poison Ivy | edited mono single version | July 16 1959 | Gardner & Guy dual leads | Gunter & Jones | " |
| 10. | What About Us | mono single version | July 16 1959 | Unison | (Gardner, Guy, Gunter, Jones) | " |
| 11. | Besame Mucho (Parts 1 and 2) | (the parts connected) | Feb 26 1960 | Will "Dub" Jones | (with tenor sax solo by King Curtis) | " |
| 12. | Shoppin' For Clothes | fans' favorite | July 29 1960 | Billy Guy & Will "Dub" Jones | Gardner & Gunter | " |
| 13. | Little Egypt (Ying-Yang) | mono single version | Feb 9 1961 | Billy Guy (with Gardner intro) | Jones & Gunter | " |
| 14. | The Slime (aka The Climb) | stereo master | July 31 1962 | Will "Dub" Jones | Gardner, Guy, Earl "Speedo" Carroll | " |
| 15. | The P.T.A. | Leiber-Stoller's last Atco production | Jan 10/11 1963 | Billy Guy | Gardner, Jones, Carroll | " |
| 16. | T'ain't Nothin' To Me | live at the Apollo, NYC | Nov 16 1963 | Billy Guy & Will "Dub" Jones | Gardner & Carroll | " |
| 17. | I Must Be Dreaming | the Coasters' version - New York City | Aug 28 1964 | Gardner & Guy joint leads | Jones & Carroll | " |
| 18. | What Is The Secret Of Your Success? | live at Shindig | Feb 10 1965 | Billy Guy (with Jones, bass) | Gardner & Carroll | ABC TV-show Los Angeles |
| 19. | Let's Go Get Stoned | the original | Apr 21 1965 | Billy Guy | Jones and girl vocals | Rhino 4CD RHM2 7740 |
| 20. | Down Home Girl | recorded in New York, first post-Atco single | Nov 18 1966 | Billy Guy | Gardner, Carroll, Jones | Varese Vintage CD 302 066 644 |
| 21. | She Can (Talkin' 'Bout A Woman) | based on I'm A Woman | Oct 30 1967 | Alternating leads | (Guy, Carroll, Gardner with Jones) | " |
| 22. | D. W. Washburn | the original, recorded in New York | Oct 31 1967 | Billy Guy (with Carl Gardner) | Jones & Carroll | " |
| 23. | Along Came Jones | live at the Boston Tea Party | of Mar 26, 1959 hit | Joint leads | (Guy, Gardner, Carroll, Ronnie Bright) | Time Machine CD TM-1001 |
| 24. | Speedo's Back In Town | live at the Boston Tea Party | remake of 1963 | Carl Gardner & Earl Carroll | Bright & Guy | " |
| 25. | Love Potion Number Nine | edited/dubbed in late 1971 | Feb 13/14 1968 | Carl Gardner | Carroll & Guy | Varese Vintage CD 302 066 644 |
| 26. | Young Blood | revival recording on Trip Records | poss rec 1975 | Carl Gardner | Norman, Carroll, Bright | ALE CD 192034 (or Masters CD 1127) |
| 27. | Little Egypt | live at Little Darlin's, Orlando | of original 1961 hit | Jimmy Norman | Gardner intro, Bright, Thomas Palmer gtr | Wisepack (E) LECD 076 |
| 28. | Smokey Joe's Cafe | "funky version" - live in Tyler, Texas | Apr 28 1988 | Carl Gardner | Bright with Norman & Palmer (Jim far right) | private Veta Gardner video tape |
| 29. | Sweet Georgia Brown | recorded in Los Angeles | Feb 12/15 1957 | Carl Gardner, Billy Guy, Bobby Nunn | Young Jessie | Rhino 4CD RHM2 7740 |
| 30. | The Shadow Knows | stereo master, recorded in New York | Aug 8 1958 | Billy Guy (with Jones, bass) | Gardner, Gunter | " |
| 31. | Crocodile | original master, recorded in New York | Aug 8 1958 | Unison | (Gardner, Guy, Jones, Gunter) | " |
| 32. | Charlie Brown | original single master - New York in stereo | Dec 11 1958 | Unison | (Gardner, Guy, Jones, Gunter) | " |
| 33. | Young Blood | original A-side of Searchin', recorded in L.A. | Feb 12/15 1957 | Carl Gardner | Nunn, Guy, Young Jessie | " |
| 34. | Brazil | the Coasters' very first recording - L.A. | Jan 11 1956 | Nunn, Guy, Gardner | Leon Hughes | " |



Gaynel Hodge, one of the original doo-woppers of Los Angeles, died June 20, 2020 in Amsterdam, the Netherlands - 83 years of age. He was singing and playing the piano, starting out with the Flamingoes (who became the early Platters), sang with the Hollywood Flames, the Turks, the Tangiers, and several other outfits in the early-mid 1950s, was co-writer of "Earth Angel", spending time with Jesse Belvin. He toured the world in later days.



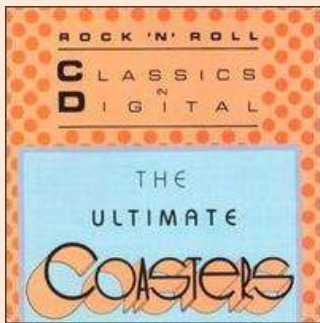
Jimmie Norman (Scott) - yes that's the underrated singer with Carl Gardner's Coasters from 1973 up to 1997 - was an original member of Jesse Belvin's RCA vocal group the **Chargers** in 1958, and also worked with the legendary H.B. Barnum, who produced several of Norman's late 1950s / early 1960 singles. 45.cat and discogs has over twenty singles listed on twelve different labels 1959-1975. He had a long career as a solo singer before his even longer stint with the Coasters, and was a Jamaica-influenced producer for several years (who even worked with reggae icon Bob Marley). Norman wrote many R&B songs (and refined "Time Is On My Side" for Irma Thomas (the Rolling Stones' hit).

A new book by Todd Baptista on the Flamingos and a New book by Andersen-Lauterbach on Robert Johnson - get'em!
Here are some interesting "public domain" CD on lowpriced **Avid Records** (and there are several more



A Collector's Super Choice of Coasters CDs

(but remember – you will have large portions of “duplicates”, although none has same tracks - # = the absolute musts)



The Ultimate Coasters
Warner Special Products 9-27604-2 (1986)



50 Coastin' Classics
Rhino R2 71090 (2CD 1992)



There's A Riot Goin' On – The Coasters On Atco
Rhino Handmade RHM2 7740 (4CD 2007)



Down Home
Varèse Vintage 302 066 844-2 (2007)



The Coasters
Sequel UK RSA CD 868 (1997)



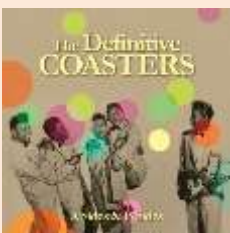
The Coasters' Greatest Hits
Sequel UK RSA CD 869 (1997)



The Coasters – One By One
Sequel UK RSA CD 870 (1997)



Coast Along with The Coasters
Sequel UK RSA CD 868 (1997)



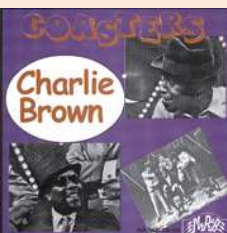
The Definitive Coasters
History of RnB UK
R001 (2CD 2013)



Those Hoodlum Friends
History of RnB UK
R002 (2CD 2013)



The Very Best of The Coasters
Rhino UK 32656 (1994)



Charlie Brown (#)
MR. R&B CD-102 (2000)
(Sweden/Czech)



What Is The Secret Of Your Success?
Mr R&B RBD 102 (1990)



The Best Of The Coasters
Atlantic EastWest (J)
AMCY-2277 (1997)



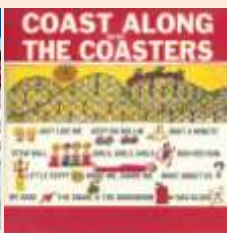
The Coasters ATCO
WEA International (J/EU)
812279045954 (2013)



The Coasters' Greatest Hits
Atco 33111-2 (1989)



The Coasters / One By One
Collectables COL-CD-7656 (2004)



Coast Along with The Coasters Collectables
COL-CD-6523 (2005)



The Complete Singles As & Bs 1954-62 UK
Acrobat ADDCD3190 (2CD2016)



The Coasters plus One By One
Hoodoo (EU) 263387 (2011)



Yakyak - The Coasters Collection
Warner Platinum UK 73225 (2005)



Court Jesters of Rock and Roll the 10 Trip rec
Allegro ALE 192034 (2006)



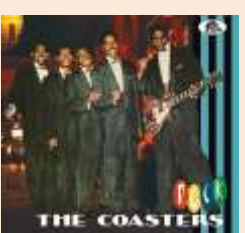
The Coasters' Greatest Hits In Concert (#)
Time Machine TM-1001 (2001)



The Very Best of The Coasters UK
Not Now NOT2CD552 (2014)

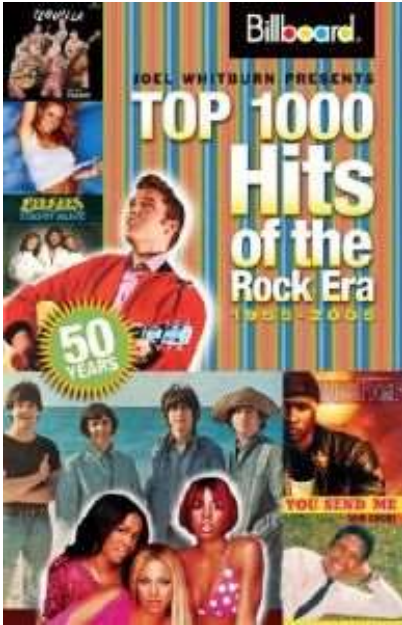


Extended Play - Original EP Sides UK
GVCRecords EXTPCD610 (2016)



Rock
Bear Family (G)
BCD 17526 (2020)

The Great R&B Pioneers



TOP R&B POP HITS according to Joel Whitburn's "Top 1000 Hits of the Rock Era" 1955 - 2005

A list of recordings performed by black artists hitting the Billboard's Pop Charts #1 position 1955 - 1963 (except last two, peaking at #2) plus "white covers" of R&B records.

The list starts with the Billboard's Pop Charts July 7, 1955: Ranking numbers are from the book. As you will find out - four out of a total of 20 top recordings per year crossed over from R&B to "mainstream top pop status". That's 20%. Those numbers would change in later years

A list of the "crossovers" rankings of the "breaking" year of 1955

(note: there had been other "R&B crossovers before 1955).

7. Ain't That A Shame - Pat Boone (cover)
9. I Hear You Knocking - Gale Storm (cover)
10. A Blossom Fell - Nat "King" Cole
11. He - Al Hibbler
12. Only You (And You Alone) - The Platters
21. Maybelline - Chuck Berry and his Combo

Pre-"Rock Around The Clock" 1955

- Sincerely - The McGuire Sisters (cover)
- Dance With Me Henry - Georgia Gibbs (cover of "The Wallflower")
- Hearts Of Stone - The Fontane Sisters (cover)
- Unchained Melody - Al Hibbler
- Ko Ko Mo (I Love You So) - Perry Como (cover)
- Tweedle Dee - Georgia Gibbs (cover)
- Earth Angel - The Crew-Cuts (cover)

Top Pop Hits

- 1955 Rock Around The Clock - Bill Haley & His Comets
- Sixteen Tons - "Tennessee" Ernie Ford
- 1956 Don't Be Cruel / Hound Dog - Elvis Presley
- Singing The Blues - Guy Mitchell
- 1957 All Shook Up - Elvis Presley
- Love Letters In The Sand - Pat Boone
- Jailhouse Rock - Elvis Presley
- 1958 At The Hop - Danny & The Juniors
- It's All In The Game - Tommy Edwards
- 1959 Mack The Knife - Bobby Darin
- 1960 The Them From "A Summer Place" - Percy Faith
- 1961 Tossin' And Turnin' - Bobby Lewis
- 1962 I Can't Stop Loving You - Ray Charles
- Big Girls Don't Cry - The 4 Seasons
- Sherry - The 4 Seasons
- 1963 Sugar Shack - Jimmy Gilmer & the Fireballs
- He's So Fine - The Chiffons
- 1964 I Want To Hold Your Hand - The Beatles

Rankings:

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| 62. Tossin' And Turnin' - Bobby Lewis (1961) | 322. Pony Time - Chubby Checker (1961) | 573. Easier Said Than Done - The Essex (1963) |
| 95. It's All In The Game - Tommy Edwards (1958) | 333. Soldier Boy - The Shirelles (1962) | 618. If You Wanna Be Happy - Jimmy Soul (1963) |
| 115. My Prayer - The Platters (1956) | 338. Duke Of Earl - Gene Chandler (1962) | 650. Chances Are - Johnny Mathis (1957) |
| 130. I Can't Stop Loving You - Ray Charles (1962) | 340. Blue Moon - The Marcells (1961) | 663. Twilight Time - The Platters (1958) |
| 169. I Almost Lost My Mind - Pat Boone ("cover" revival 1956) | 365. Fingertips - Little Stevie Wonder (1963) | 714. Yakety Yak - The Coasters (1958) |
| 200. Stagger Lee - Lloyd Price (1959) | 394. Ain't That a Shame - Pat Boone (cover 1955) | 769. Mother-In-Law - Ernie K-Doe (1961) |
| 219. He's Got The Whole World (In His Hands) - Laure London ("cover" 1958) | 400. The Great Pretender - The Platters (1956) | 784. Please Mr. Postman - The Marvelettes (1961) |
| 222. He's So Fine - The Chiffons (1963) | 512. Get A Job - The Silhouettes (1958) | 810. The Happy Organ - Dave "Baby" Cortez (1959) |
| 239. Baby Love - The Supremes (1962) | 516. Kansas City - Wilbert Harrison (1959 R&B revival) | 836. The Loco-Motion - Little Ecva (1962) |
| 246. The Twist - Chubby Checker (1960 R&B cover) | 518. Quarter To Three - U. S. Bonds (1961) | 841. So Much In Love - The Tymes (1963) |
| 261. You Send Me - Sam Cooke (1957) | 522. Hit The Road Jack - Ray Charles (1962) | 935. Our Day Will Come - Ruby & The Romantics (1963) |
| 287. Smoke Gets In Your Eyes - The Platters (1959) | 536. Will You Love Me Tomorrow - The Shirelles (1961) | 944. Stay - Maurice Williams & The Zodiacs (1960) |
| 301. Save The Last Dance For Me - The Drifters (1960) | 555. He's A Rebel - The Crystals (1962) | 960. Georgia On My Mind - Ray Charles (1960) |
| | 559. I'm Leaving It Up To You - Dale & Grace ("cover" revival 1963) | 984. Little Darlin' - The Diamonds (cover 1957, #2) |
| | | 997. Louie Louie - The Kingsmen ("cover" revival (1963, #2) |

These two backsides of **The Coasters' Greatest Hits** are from the original Atco LP 33-111 of October 1959 (with office address at 234 West 56th Street) - and from a simulated stereo reissue (one of many different pressings with differing logos and back covers) of around 1968 with a new office address - 1841 Broadway. Several different "stereo" versions surfaced in the late 1960s - up to the early 1980s with "electronically re-recorded to simulate STEREO" markings (alternating front and/or back) and with new ATCO logos in the United States and ended with a Rhino red "Super Saver" sticker on front cover (see next page).



The Great R&B Pioneers

"THE COASTERS' GREATEST HITS" album

When Acrobat Music issued the comprehensive Complete Singles 2-set CD in 2016 they also presented a chart of the Coasters' original early LPs, but only three out of four were presented. They probably deliberately left out the 1959 LP "The Coasters' Greatest Hits", seeing it as a compilation. Well, here it is – in all the different packages I have found in my "research". - We start with the original mono vinyl LP album, issued in **October 1959**, followed by some of the many different reissues and pressings I have found. (Although the last two imaged CDs below have nothing to do with 33-111, the two budget 10-track issued are presented for "completeness").

- Atco 33-111 (October 1959)**
- A 1 Poison Ivy
 - A 2 Along Came Jones
 - A 3 Down In Mexico
 - A 4 The Shadow Knows
 - A 5 I'm A Hog For You
 - A 6 Charlie Brown
 - B 1 Yakety Yak
 - B 2 Zing! Went The Strings Of My Heart
 - B 3 That Is Rock & Roll
 - B 4 Young Blood
 - B 5 Sweet Georgia Brown
 - B 6 Searchin'
- Masters C 11619 AT and C 11620 AT



33-111 (1960s US mono reissue – masters 11619, 11620), and the last stereo version: SD 33-111 reissue of ca 1981 (masters ST-C-681425-SP, ST-C-68126-SP).



Simulated stereo: Atco SD 33-111 (1968) with three different STEREO markings on cover. Masters ST-C-681425, 681426 (with five differing postfixes:

PR, MO, CT, RI, and SP; which stand for different pressing plants) - The two images top right: Rhino Super Saver version (1980s – yet another new Atco logo, see above right).
 - The two images bottom right: Atlantic ATL 20 264 (Germany 1982) titled "The Coasters Collection" - and Rumble RUM2011035 (Europe vinyl 2012).



London HA-K 2237, HA-E.2237 on label (UK 1959) - Atco 33-111 (Canada 1959) - Atlantic Special / Polydor 590.015 "Great All-Time Hits" same tracks (UK 1967).

Compact Discs



Atco 33111-2, 7567-90386-2 (1989), Poison Ivy and Yakety Yak are in true stereo. Several pressings have D 503828 as cat.number (or master) - Hallmark / Pickwick Netherlands 709362 (2010) - UK Sequel RSA CD 869 (1997) with ten tracks from the LP plus lots of bonus tracks (three images) - Rhino R2 398972 "Greatest Hits" (2008) is in fact R2 71597 "The Very Best of" repacked (with 8 tracks from 33-111) - and WPCR 16672 (Japan 2015), which also is a reissue of the 1994 CD. - Far right: Rhino Special Editions 71428 (1993) "Yakety Yak" with ten tracks (incl five from 33-111) - and Collectables Priceless Collection COL-CD-9525 (2000/2004) "Yakety Yak & Other Favorites", with inside disc Flashback R2 72663 (of 1997) "Yakety Yak And Other Hits" almost the same ten tracks (with five from 33-111). Counted together there's seven in all from 33-111 on these two (and a total of 14).

The Great R&B Pioneers

ENCORE of the LINER NOTES TO "The Very Best of The Coasters"

Rhino CD R2 71597 (1994) - 16 tracks 1954 - 1961

The Coasters emerged from an initial period group called The Robins, an act originally signed to Spark Records in 1954. The Spark label had been formed earlier that year in Los Angeles by the burgeoning record-publishing team of Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller, along with music industry veteran Lester Kline.

In 1954, after several meetings with the Robins, Leiber & Stoller agreed to charter Spark to exchange for an independent production office from Atlantic Records. When Leiber & Stoller proposed that the Robins join them at Atlantic, one of the group's members resigned. Only Carl Gardner and Robert Stone chose to stick with Leiber & Stoller, who then added Louis Hughes and Billy Gray to create The Coasters.

Over the years, the lineup of the group changed on several occasions. Both Louis Hughes and Bobby Stone exited by 1958 in the new direction that followed. The Coasters would include the "Young" Boogie, Cornell Gunter, the remarkable bass singer Will "Baby" Lewis, and Earl "Speedo" Gardner. Despite the various personnel changes, Carl Gardner and Billy Gray remained with the group throughout its lengthy string of successes.

Beginning with the double-ended smash "Searchin'" ("Young Blood"), The Coasters had a series of hit records on Atlantic's subsidiary Spark label. Their primary charting was consistently on the charts during the late '50s and early '60s, and their sales of over eight million in "Charlie Brown," "Baby Yank," and "Pistol Packin' Mama" captured the spirit of rock as the decade of the Pacific, disco, and soul, and helped establish.

Some of the songs on The Very Best of The Coasters were written and produced by Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller, 3 on about 100. The legendary duo in Los Angeles to get their thoughts and impressions about each of the tracks on the compilation.

"I Dreamed on the Top Records and Found out Jerry Leiber & Stoller took it from them."

"Hot in the City (Rock 'n' Roll)" - The Robins
 Jerry Leiber: The influence for a lot of the early songs — and most parts of the later ones — was the rock 'n' roll. In particular, regarding "Hot in the City (Rock 'n' Roll)," the opening is really from Camp David. The show opened up with a lot of back-to-back hits, a mix, some with some more, and then into that day's chapter. By the time I wanted to use it only The Robins, it had become kind of critical. I had undergone the program. I wasn't 17 years old anymore, but some of the old effects were still in the head.

"Smokers Join the Club" - The Robins
 Mike Stoller: "Smokers Join" got by Atlantic through Bobbi Epstein, who was out here. He made his brother and Jerry Walker aware of these big hit ball records that were getting some people, they also were selling nicely in the L.A. area, so they listened to our stuff, and they approached us with the notion that we give up the record company and make records for them. They took "Smokers Join," mentioned to me also, and I think they sold another 300,000 nationally.

"Down in the Valley"
 Mike: It was slightly Latin-tinged. I want to record out here so it showed they was producing records. Although I wouldn't say that it was a piece of Mexican music, it was somewhat inspired by that culture.

"Smoker"
 B.: "Smoker" was a heckle hit song. We always had to get four takes in those times because that made two singles. If you get three takes, you had one single, and you were to double with the record company. They'd say, "We're

the other side!"

So we were pleased for them. I think we had something like eight or nine records left. We had moved into the city, and then Jerry and the man there I thought that something had gone happened with Bobby Leiber's label. It seemed to be very, very funny. It seemed closer to a close record than anything I had ever heard on the West Coast. I really liked it. "Smokers" was a surprise. It was one of those moments in time that really happens, and it really was to be that happy to.

"Baby Yank - The Golden Rule"
 Mike: That record took place in Chicago. "Baby Yank" was a big hit. We didn't have anything in the can to release as a follow-up. They were approaching us in Chicago, so Jerry and I flew out there. We did three more at Chess Studios and "Baby" was one of them.

"Young Blood"
 B.: I was talking to Jerry Walker and they were in the office, and he said, "Look, I know that you guys like 'Baby Yank' very much, but can I get you something?" I said, "Sure." He said, "I got a hit that Otto Preuss came up with. I've talked to him the week, and he really had a way to make the song happen." I said, "You say now, this would appear to be a really hit?" He said, "Yes."

"Lulu (Baby Face)"
 Mike: This was the opinion of the music people that we were writing for The Coasters. I think "Baby Yank" was really the last word in that line. Although it wasn't as big a hit as "Baby Yank," "Charlie Brown," and "Along Came Jones" were, I think it was more interesting in its construction.

"Smokin' Joe (Chestnut)"
 B.: We had a rehearsal going very fast, and we were a couple of times later. Billy Gray came in and said, "Man, I found something on the radio. It sounded like one of our songs. What's the name of it?" He said, "I don't know." Of course, if he had known the hit, in the office who recorded it, we would have been out for it. So Billy called the first line of the song that he remembered and I found it. I really wanted to do it. So I took the lines that Billy remembered, and Mike and I ran down and wrote the rest of it. I was so convinced that the hit Billy had written was nothing but a follow-up record. Jerry, eventually, we worked out the better stuff.

Eventually, Leiber and Stoller's might have come with The Coasters would record later. By the late 1950s, there had changed. Mike and Jerry probably said, "There are only so many 'Charlie Brown' and 'Baby Yank' that you can do." Mike adds, "The thing that your record company has to do was that you were getting the record company — and so the Coasters themselves had some success — so he was influential."

According to Leiber, there is still plenty of "material" in the track that they did wanted to do with the group. When asked for an example of what material was recorded, he



Carl Gardner, Bobby Stone, Louis Hughes, Billy Gray

writer, Arthur Lange, had scored it. I have a vague recollection that Jerry and I were talking about something on that that caused me to return from the film, and he was really taken with the idea.

"That It Rock It Roll"
 B.: It's funny because the song's not really rock 'n' roll.

B.: To be frank, it didn't do what I wanted it to do. In fact, one of the Coasters was leaving, looking for a couple of days on the bridge, so I ended up singing them myself.

"Pistol Packin' Mama" - "I'm a Big Boy Now"
 Mike: "Pistol Packin' Mama" was a surprise hit. In one breath "I'm a Big Boy Now" was the 5-side, "hey" was a one-take at the end of a session. It wasn't hit, but we thought it was a 3-side when it came out. Fortunately, in those days record companies didn't make straight-up album copies, because this is the one that took off right away.

"What About Us"
 B.: "What About Us" is about the lyrics and the lyrics are.

Mike: I thought the song was interesting and dramatic, a poem.

"Baby Face"
 B.: William Stone wrote a record called "The Coasters" of "Baby Face." The track, which was written after "Baby Face," was about the fact that Nat Turner, who was a slave, didn't have to be dead. And once he found how to read, he was found and freed, and he became a singer.

"Baby Face" is, of course, in not as much of an intellectual exercise as "Baby Face," but it had that the meaning how to play poker, and once the meaning known how to play, he knows how to understand what things. And once he understands that he's being cheated and exploited, he becomes revolutionary.

"That It Rock It Roll"
 B.: There's nothing more polished than those that come out that way.

"Charlie Brown"
 B.: Contrary to "Baby Yank," when I tried to write a follow-up in the same vein of music, it took me weeks to write "Charlie Brown."

I remember listening Jerry Leiber's idea, looking out on the show, and realizing that that song — desperately trying to get it going.

"Along Came Jones"
 Mike: There was a 1958 movie about Leiber called "Along Came Jones," and my first record competition

opened a few days from a song titled "Whisky." What dropped the bomb and started the war? An "along" in one there fighter, who was right? Well, when you come back and you can't get a job. And the only way to make it is to be really and job.

Why, who was gonna fight?
 And when you gonna left?

The situation was very definitely over, and with the fact of that situation, a decade and a half or two months by the Coasters finally came to an end. But both Leiber and Stoller agree, "Of all the record artists we ever produced, the ones with The Coasters were the most fun. They were fun to work with, they were fun to write; they were a great bunch of fellows, and they made our song hit."

— Randy Poe



THE COASTERS – ON BROADWAY – King KS 1146-498 (1973) – with British and German versions and the fine US CD



London SHZ 8460 (1973)

Bellaphon BI 15238 (1969)

(all in stereo)



The Great R&B Pioneers

The original US LPs of IKE TURNER and of IKE & TINA TURNER: 1960s - early 1970s



Ike Turner: Ike Turner Rocks The Blues – Crown CLP-5367 (1963), A Black Man's Soul – Pompeii SD 6003 (1969), Blues Roots - UA UAS-6676 (1972), Bad Dreams – UA LA087-F (1973), The Edge – Fantasy F-9597 (1980), Ike Turner 1958-1959 – Paula PCD-16 (CD 1991).



Ike & (and) Tina Turner or Ike & Tina - Sue: The Soul of Ike & Tina Turner (LP 2001, 1961), Dance . Ike & Tina Turner's Kings of Rhythm (LP 2003, 1962 - instrumentals), Dynamite (LP 2004, 1963), Ike & Tina / Don't Play Me Cheap (LP 2005, 1963), It's Gonna Work Out Fine (LP 2007, 1963), Ike & Tina's Greatest Hits (LP 1038, 1965).



Kent and Sunset LPs:

Ike & Tina Turner Revue Live (KST 514, 1964), The Soul of Ike & Tina - Live (KST 519, 1966), Festival of Live Performances (KST 538, 1969), Please, Please, Please (KST 550, 1971), The Fantastic Ike And Tina Turner (SUS-5265, 1969 – reissue of Sue 2001), Ike And Tina's Greatest Hits (SUS-5286, 1969 – reissue of Sue 1038).



Warner Bros, Loma, Phyllis, A&M, Minit LPs: Live! The Ike & Tina Turner Show – Warner Bros. W 1579 (1965), Greatest Hits – Warner Bros WS1810 (1969), The Ike & Tina Turner Show Vol 2 – Loma 5904 (1966, reissued on Harmony HS 11360 as Ooh Poo Pah Doo 1969), River Deep – Mountain High - Phyllis PHLP4022 (promo no cover 1966), and on A&M SP-4178 (1969), In Person – Minit 24018 (1969)



Pompeii, Blue Thumb LPs: So Fine – Pompeii SD 6000 (1968), Cussin', Cryin' & Carryin' On – Pompeii SD 6004 (1969), Ike & Tina Get It Together – Pompeii SD 6006 (1969), Outta Season – Blue Thumb BTS 5 (1968, reissued 1971 as BTS-8805), The Hunter - Blue Thumb BTS 11 (1969), The Best of .. – Blue Thumb BTS 49 (1973)



Cenco, Capitol, Harmony, Liberty, Unart, United Artists LPs:

Get It – Get It - Cenco 104 (1966), reissued as Ike & Tina / Her Man, His Woman on Capitol ST-571 (1969), Ooh Poo Pah Doo – Harmony HS 11360 (1969 reissue of Loma), Something's Got A Hold On Me – Harmony H 30567 (1971, "budget" reissue of WB W 1579), Come Together – Liberty LST-7637 (1970), Workin' Together – Liberty LST-7650 (1970), What You Hear Is What You Get / Live at Carnegie Hall – UAS-9953 (2-set 1971), 'Nuff Said – UAS-5530 (1971), Feel Good – UAS-5598 (1972), Ike and Tina / Let Me Touch Your Mind - UAS-5660 (1972), **Left:** Ike & Tina's Greatest Hits – Unart S 21021 (1967 reissue of Sue 1038) **Right:** Greatest Hits – UAS 5667 (1973, reissued on UALA-592-G in 1976).



The Great R&B Pioneers

Sonny Boy II

at wikipedia (sl.ed)



Alex, pronounced **Aleck**, **Miller** (*né* **Ford**, possibly December 5, 1912–May 24, 1965), known later in his career as **Sonny Boy Williamson**, was a blues singer, harmonica player and songwriter. He was an early and influential blues harp stylist who recorded successfully in the 1950s and 1960s. Miller used various names, including **Rice Miller** and **Little Boy Blue**, before calling himself Sonny Boy Williamson, which was also the name of a popular Chicago blues singer and harmonica player. To distinguish the two, Miller has been referred to as **Sonny Boy Williamson II**.

He recorded with Elmore James on "Dust My Broom". Some of his popular songs include "Don't Start Me Talkin'", "Your Funeral And My Trial", "Checkin' Up on My Baby", "Help Me", and "Bring It On Home". He toured Europe with the American Folk Blues Festival and recorded with English rock musicians, including the Yardbirds, the Animals, and Jimmy Page. "Help Me" became a blues standard, and many blues and rock artists have recorded his songs.

Year of birth

Miller's date of birth is disputed. In a spoken word performance called "The Story of Sonny Boy Williamson" that was later included in several compilations, Miller states that he was born in Glendora, Mississippi in 1897. A counter claim is made that he was born Alex Ford (pronounced "Aleck") on the Sara Jones Plantation in Tallahatchie County, Mississippi. Another claim is that he was born on December 5, 1899. David Evans, professor of music and an ethnomusicologist at the University of Memphis, claims to have found census records that Miller was born around 1912, being seven years old on February 2, 1920, the day of the census. However, it has been argued that a census record claim of age without a birth certificate is not a reliable proof, as census clerks often made mistakes, especially in rural towns where few people could read or write. Miller's gravestone in or near Tutwiler, Mississippi, set up by record company owner Lillian McMurry twelve years after his death, gives his date of birth as March 11, 1908.

Early years

He lived and worked with his sharecropper stepfather, Jim Miller, whose last name he soon adopted, and mother, Millie Ford, until the early 1930s. Beginning in the 1930s, he traveled around Mississippi and Arkansas and encountered Big Joe Williams, Elmore James and Robert Lockwood Jr., also known as Robert Junior Lockwood, who would play guitar on his later Checker Records sides. He was also associated with Robert Johnson during this period. Miller developed his style and raffish stage persona during these years. Willie Dixon recalled seeing Lockwood and Miller playing for tips in Greenville, Mississippi, in the 1930s, (debuting with radio shows already in the late 1930s in Harrisburg, Illinois as "Little Boy Blue".ed.note). He entertained audiences with novelties such as inserting one end of the harmonica into his mouth and playing with no hands. At this time he was often known as "Rice" Miller, a childhood nickname stemming from his love of rice and milk.

In 1941 Miller was hired to play the *King Biscuit Time* show, advertising the King Biscuit brand of baking flour on radio station KFFA in Helena, Arkansas, with Lockwood. The program's sponsor, Max Moore, began billing Miller as Sonny Boy Williamson, apparently in an attempt to capitalize on the fame of the well-known Chicago-based harmonica player and singer Sonny Boy Williamson (birth name John Lee Curtis Williamson, died 1948). Although John Lee Williamson was a major blues star who had already released dozens of successful and

widely influential records under the name "Sonny Boy Williamson" from 1937 onward, Miller would later claim to have been the first to use the name. Some blues scholars believe that Miller's assertion he was born in 1899 was a ruse to convince audiences he was old enough to have used the name before John Lee Williamson, who was born in 1914.

Radio show in West Memphis

In 1949, Williamson relocated to West Memphis, Arkansas, and lived with his sister and her husband, Howlin' Wolf. (Later, for Checker Records, he did a parody of Howlin' Wolf, entitled "Like Wolf".) He started his own KWEM radio show from 1948 to 1950, selling the elixir Hadacol. He brought his King Biscuit musician friends to West Memphis - Elmore James, Houston Stackhouse, Arthur "Big Boy" Crudup, Robert Nighthawk and other - to perform on KWEM radio. Williamson married Howlin' Wolf's half-sister Mae and he showed Wolf how to play harmonica.

Recording career

Williamson's first recording session took place in 1951 for Lillian McMurry of Trumpet Records, based in Jackson, Mississippi. It was three years since the death of John Lee Williamson, which for the first time allowed some legitimacy to Miller's carefully worded claim to being "the one and only Sonny Boy Williamson". When Trumpet went bankrupt in 1955, Williamson's recording contract was yielded to its creditors, who sold it to Chess Records in Chicago. He had begun developing a following in Chicago beginning in 1953, when he appeared there as a member of Elmore James's band. During his Chess years he enjoyed his greatest success and acclaim, recording about 70 songs for the Chess subsidiary Checker Records from 1955 to 1964. His first LP record was a compilation of previously released singles. Titled *Down and Out Blues*, Checker released the collection in 1959. A single, "Boppin' with Sonny" backed with "No Nights by Myself", was released by Ace Records in 1955.^[1]

In 1972, Chess released *This Is My Story*, a compilation album featuring Williamson's recordings for the label. It was later included in Robert Christgau's "basic record library" of 1950s and 1960s recordings, published in *Christgau's Record Guide: Rock Albums of the Seventies* (1981).

1960s European tours

In the early 1960s he toured Europe several times during the height of the British blues craze, backed on a number of occasions by the Authentics, recording with the Yardbirds (for the album *Sonny Boy Williamson and the Yardbirds*) and the Animals, and appearing on several television broadcasts throughout Europe. Around this time he was quoted as saying of the backing bands who accompanied him, "those British boys want to play the blues real bad, and they do". Led Zeppelin biographer Stephen Davis writes in *Hammer of the Gods*, while in England Williamson set his hotel room on fire while trying to cook a rabbit in a coffee percolator. The book also maintains that future Led Zeppelin vocalist Robert Plant stole one of the bluesman's harmonicas at one of these shows. Robert Palmer wrote in his blues history "Deep Blues", that during this tour Williamson allegedly stabbed a man during a street fight and left the country abruptly.

Sonny Boy took a liking to the European fans, and while there had a custom-made, two-tone suit tailored personally for him, along with a bowler hat, matching umbrella, and an attaché case for his harmonicas. He appears credited as "Big Skol" on Roland Kirk's live album *Kirk in Copenhagen* (1963). One of his final recordings from England, in 1964, featured him singing "I'm Trying to Make London My Home", with Hubert Sumlin providing the guitar.

Death

Upon his return to the U.S., he resumed playing the King Biscuit Time show on KFFA, and performed in the Helena, Arkansas area. As fellow musicians Houston Stackhouse and Peck Curtis waited at the KFFA studios for Williamson on May 25, 1965, the 12:15 broadcast time was approaching and Williamson was nowhere in sight. Peck left the radio station to locate Williamson, and discovered his body in bed at the rooming house where he had been staying, dead of an apparent heart attack suffered in his sleep the night before. Williamson is buried on New Africa Road, just outside Tutwiler, Mississippi at the site of the former Whitman Chapel cemetery. Trumpet Records owner McMurry provided the headstone with an incorrect date of death.

The recordings made by John Lee Williamson between 1937 and his death in 1948 and those made between 1951 and 1964 by "Rice" Miller were all originally issued under the name Sonny Boy Williamson. It is believed that Miller adopted the name to suggest to audiences (and to his first record label) that he was the "original" Sonny Boy. To differentiate between the two musicians, scholars and biographers have referred to John Lee Williamson (1914–1948) as "Sonny Boy Williamson I" or "the original Sonny Boy" and to Miller (circa 1912–1965) as "Sonny Boy Williamson II".

On June 25, 2019, *The New York Times Magazine* listed Sonny Boy Williamson II among hundreds of artists whose material was reportedly destroyed in the 2008 Universal fire.



The Essential Sonny Boy Williamson – [CHD2-9343](#) (2CD-set 1993)

Disc I: Good Evening Everybody - Don't Start Me To Talkin' - All My Love In Vain - You Killing Me - Let Me Explain - Your Imagination - Don't Lose Your Eye - Keep It To Yourself - The Key (To Your Door) - Have You Ever Been In Love - Fattening Frogs For Snakes - I Don't Know - Like Wolf - Cross My Heart - Ninety Nine - Born Blind - Little Village - Unseen Eye - Your Funeral And My Trial - Keep Your Hands Out Of My Pocket - Unseeing Eye - Let Your Conscience Be Your Guide - The Goat. **Disc II:** Cool Disposition - Santa Claus - Checkin' Up On My Baby - Lonesome Cabin - Somebody Help Me - Down Child - Trust My Baby - Too Close Together - Too Young To Die - She's My Baby - Stop Right Now - Too Old To Think - One Way Out - Nine Below Zero - Help Me - Bye Bye Bird - Bring It On Home - Decoration Day - Trying To Get Back On My Feet - Close To Me - I Can't Be Alone.

Two live videos of "Keep It To Yourself, 1963" (and on *American Folk Blues Festival 1963*).



”Sonny Boy”

William E. Donoghue, of Seattle, Washington, (the true Sonny Boy Williamson expert) died January 16, 2017 in Healdsburg, Calif. His great website, **”Sonny Boy’s Lonesome Cabin”** (sonnyboy.com) is also gone – but here is some info based on his great research on Sonny Boy II. Also check **”The Mystery of Sonny Boy Williamson II”** in [Updates volume](#), - pages 30-31.

Sonny Boy II Told His Sisters **”Keep It To Yourself”** But They Told Me His Best-Kept Secret

By William E. Donoghue AKA 'Fessor Mojo (July 1997)



'He charms sophisticated European audiences into silence and roaring applause, he drinks too much and cannot keep food down without drinking first thing in the morning, does his famous radio show in prisoners' shackles after a drunken spree makes him miss the show, he hangs a white man's mule, he dies before he can tell his wife he loves only her (a message I humbly pass on to a lovely, stylish Alzheimer's victim 32 years later), and he dies at the peak of his career after touring the Delta visiting the sites of his greatest memories with one of his closest friends.' You know that the world hasn't forgotten Sonny Boy Williamson if no less than five new CD reissues have been released in the past two years, one of which, *Deep Harmonica Blues*, contains some of Sonny Boy's worst recordings (with Baby Boy Warren), which was for a time this Spring the best-selling blues CD in Europe (according to Red Lick). Sonny Boy's legacy is alive today but few know much about the man and his life's story is more fascinating than his music (and much of his best music is, in my opinion, still to be released.)

The Web Is Woven Tightly

The standard story most commonly told about Sonny Boy Williamson II emerged primarily from a series of interviews he did, mostly with Blues Unlimited in 1963-65 in Europe. I have yet to find evidence of a substantive original interview of Sonny Boy by an American blues writer. He is referenced everywhere only in the most respectful but superficial terms with little follow-up research. Sonny Boy, at the time, was clearly the star of the 1963 and 1964 American Negro (Folk) Blues Festivals. Along with Willie Dixon (the talent coordinator) and Horst Lippman (the promoter), he toured Europe during those two autumns along with Muddy Waters, Howlin' Wolf, Lightnin' Hopkins, Lonnie Johnson, Sleepy John Estes, Big Joe Williams, Otis Spann and a select cast of blues legends playing their most brilliant music with each other. Sonny Boy Williamson was the acknowledged and revered star of the tour. When he returned to Britain to tour the college circuit on his own with a very young Eric Clapton and the Yardbirds hanging on for dear life as his backup band, he extended his legend.

He recorded not only with his fellow legends Memphis Slim, Hubert Sumlin and Matt "Guitar" Murphy but also with the Clapton-era Yardbirds, the Animals and, on his final day in England, Jimmy Page, Brian Auger & The Trinity and two jazz sax players! He returned home to die a month later in his home of Helena Arkansas but not before returning to the juke joints and his beloved King Biscuit Time radio show and a final jam with Levon & The Hawks (yes, the folks who became The Band) who told the story in a memorable interview segment of "The Last Waltz." movie. Sonny Boy died in sleep in his humble apartment on May 25, 1965. The rumor is that, had he lived but four months longer, he would have been a member of The Band (then The Hawks) when they joined Bob Dylan. One can only wonder if Dylan would have been cheered rather than booed in 1966 if he had Sonny Boy with him on that tour. The mind boggles.

The "official" story was that he was born in the 1890s as Aleck Ford, illegitimate son of Millie Ford, who married his step-father, Jim Miller (identified on Sonny Boy's death certificate as "Jim Williamson"), and was nicknamed "Rice". So he was known to his black contemporaries as "Rice" Miller. He claimed that he had been the first to use the stage name "Sonny Boy Williamson" and that John Lee Williamson (Sonny Boy I, 1914-1947) had stolen the name from him when Sonny Boy I recorded "Good Morning Little School Girl" for Bluebird in 1937. "I'm the original Sonny Boy, the only Sonny Boy. There ain't no other," he told fascinated British interviewers. This is the story that emerged in various forms (he and his family gave a dozen different birth dates for him and he lived under a dozen names and nicknames) in the liner notes and articles on which his legend was told. Some experts even warned researchers that he would not talk about his past and that the true facts would never be known. The blues world's attention quickly

turned to the "rediscoveries" of Mississippi John Hurt, Skip James, Son House and others as the folk blues revival period began. With Sonny Boy dead and so many legends living, the search for Sonny Boy II's story came to a screeching halt until 1995.

The Legend Is Set in Stone

"Rice", Sonny Boy II, did not get into a recording studio until 1951, when Lillian McMurry of Jackson, Mississippi's Trumpet Records recorded a remarkable series of classics ("Eyesight To The Blind" which would later show up as part of The Who's rock opera, "Tommy"; "Dust My Broom" with "Elmo" James; "Mighty Long Time"; "Nine Below Zero"; and "Too Close Together."). In 1955 Chess/Checker bought his contract and launched a career which included "Don't Start Me Talkin'", "Help Me", "Keep It To Yourself," "Your Funeral and My Trial," "Fattenin'"/"Frogs For Snakes," "Bring It On Home" and his European theme song "Bye Bye Bird". Lillian McMurry had a headstone placed on his grave in 1980 which read: "Aleck Miller, Better Known As "Willie" Sonny Boy Williamson, Born Mar. 12, 1905, Died June 23, 1965, Son of Jim Miller and Millie Miller, Internationally Famous Harmonica and Vocal Blues Artist Discovered and Recorded By Trumpet Records, Jackson Miss. From 1950 To 1955." The details were based on the recollections of Sonny Boy's sister Julia Barner and Mary Ashford and Mattie Williamson, his widow. The details are not even close to the amazing truth.

August 1995, "Elvis Week", found me in the heart of the blues country, Memphis Tennessee. Discovering that the Delta was not where I thought it was (near the mouth of the Mississippi) but in Northwestern Mississippi just south of Memphis, I sought out a guide. Luck lead me to Jim O'Neal, co-founder of Living Blues Magazine and through him to the homes of Julia Barner and Mary Ashford, Sonny Boy's last two living sisters. Sitting in their living rooms I heard first hand stories of Robert Johnson, Elmore James and, of course, Sonny Boy II and their relationship with him. He was the "baby" of the family, the youngest of Millie Miller's 21 children, the only musician in the family and his name was Alex. They called him "Sonny" or "Rice." Sanctified members of the Church, his sisters loved and missed him dearly but disapproved of his itinerant life as a bluesman.

On October 11, 1995 both of Sonny Boy II's sisters perished in the same house fire at Mary's in the night. A niece of Sonny Boy's called to tell me of their death and asked naively, "Are you writing a book on my Uncle Sonny?" The idea was tempting and I filed the thought away. James Cotton and the Sonny Boy Blues Society had raised half the money for their burial at a fund raiser and I, out of appreciation for the sister's hospitality, made up the difference, much to the surprise of everyone involved. It was the beginning of a close relationship with his family.

A Black "Gone With The Wind"

"Rice" Miller's story was to reveal itself piece by piece. Every person who had been in his presence had an indelible impression of him. There were surprisingly few, if any, contradictions between stories. Each fact and impression was not only clear but reliable and added to the story. The stories began to weave together and with each additional interview (I have interviewed 40 people to date), cinematic moments with great dramatic impact emerged. Sonny Boy was a lay preacher, "Reverend Blue", who wandered the Delta with a brace of harps across his chest, on one occasion drawing an entire congregation out of a church. Soon, this mysterious stranger became an escaped convict who became an international blues star using another man's name. The man, the personification of Legba, the Hoodoo master of the crossroads, literally the intermediary between the secular and the profane, blows his harp and jail doors open, tornadoes tear down the jail and he walks off into the whirlwind.

The Great R&B Pioneers

Along the way he has memorable encounters with Robert Johnson (who allegedly died in his arms), Eric Clapton (recording his first guitar solo), Robert Jr. Lockwood (Johnson's stepson), harp legends and students James Cotton, Little Walter, (Sonny Boy Junior) Parker, Junior Wells, and Howlin' Wolf, recording executives including Trumpet Records' Lillian McMurry, Arhoolie Records' Chris Strachwitz, Delmark Records' Bob Koester, and Chess Records' Chess brothers, fellow bluesmen Muddy Waters, Buddy Guy, B. B. King (Sonny Boy gave him his first gig and radio exposure), Howlin' Wolf (Sonny Boy was married to his sister), Elmore James (including joining him on the classic original "Dust My Broom") and, of course, his King Biscuit Entertainers Pinetop Perkins, Joe Willie Wilkens, Peck Curtis, Robert Jr. Lockwood, Dudlow Taylor, and host, the legendary "Sunshine" Sonny Payne, who still hosts the show 56 years after its inception in 1941.

Sonny Boy was the inspiration for many of the English blues stars of the 1960s. Why? Because he made a deal with, not the devil, but the Lord to play his harp every day of his life. In the Delta there were many places to jam but in England in the 1960s, it took his manager's skills to find enough bands to allow him to keep his pact with the Lord. Hence the Moody Blues' first album would include "Bye Bye Bird", Led Zeppelin (with Jimmy Page) would include "Bring It On Home To Me", Ten Years After would record a classic "Help Me" and The Who would include "Eyesight To The Blind" in "Tommy." Sonny Boy's mark was everywhere.

Oh yes! The "lies" he told. We must deal with the "lies" he told on both continents. Our research tends to demonstrate that most of the "lies" turned out to have a large element of that rare commodity "the truth." For example, the claim that he recorded in 1929 for Ralph Lembo in Itta Bena, Mississippi who discovered Ishman Bracey and others. We found a source who told us that Sonny Boy, using that name as early as 1932, told him in 1932 he was going to audition for Lembo the next week! In fact, we found evidence that Sonny Boy attempted to get record contracts on six different occasions for six different companies -- Bluebird, Decca (?), Bullet, Vocalion (through H. C. Spier who discovered Robert Johnson), and whomever Lembo would have forwarded him to.

Sonny Boy's Best-Kept Secret

But it was the "Big Lie" that took us by surprise. Sonny Boy claimed that he was "an 1800s' man" and that was the evidence that he was much older than John Lee Williamson who had "stolen" his stage name "Sonny Boy Williamson" from him. When Sonny Boy II died even his death certificate prolonged his claim that his father's name was "Jim Williamson." He recorded "The Story of Sonny Boy Williamson" for Storyville Records in Copenhagen in 1963 in which he proclaims "I was born, 1897, in a little town, Glendora, Mississippi ..." That claim raised a lot of unanswered questions "Why was Sonny Boy not recorded in the twenties during the classic blues era?", "Why was Sonny Boy with such a strong talent not recorded in the next era of the blues recordings the late 1930s?", and "Why was he so overlooked?" The answer was found for us by Dr. David Evans, a longtime blues expert, who we retained to search the census records to trace Aleck "Rice" Miller's family. He found the family in 1900, with an "Allen Ford" who was born in 1888, in 1910 with a "Willie Miller" (Willie Sonny Boy Williamson was the

signature on Sonny Boy II's Trumpet Contracts on which he claimed he was born December 5, 1899) and reports that nine of Millie's eighteen children were still alive, and in 1920 with a seven year old "Alex Miller." Plausibly, depending on what you choose to believe, Sonny Boy II could have been any one of those people -- unless you had been with me on August 12, 1995 when I met Julia Barner and Mary Ashford, Sonny Boy's last two sisters. The only one of the three gentlemen listed above (Allen, Willie and Alex) who fits the description as the youngest of twenty-one children, the only musician in the family and is named Alex is, of course, Alex. That means that if he was seven on February 2, 1920, the date of the census, Alex "Rice" Miller was probably born in 1912, only two years before John Lee Williamson and one year before Robert Johnson. Bingo! We have found one key to Sonny Boy's story. While he looked to be over seventy when he died in 1965, he was only 53! Now rethink his history and his age and the key points in his life.

Sonny Boy was not recorded in the twenties because he was too young, in the late thirties because there was another artist named "Sonny Boy Williamson" and later because he insisted on using the other man's name on his radio show. His claim to being significantly older than John Lee Williamson is a lie. As to Robert Johnson, one must ask "If they were contemporaries and both playing at Three Forks the fateful night of Johnson's poisoning, were they rivals for the same married woman? If so...?" (use your imagination). We have not dealt yet with the mysteries of the friendly but troubled relationship between the two Sonny Boys, the amazingly short time that he was on King Biscuit Time (the radio show for which he was famous and which sold an astonishing amount of Biscuit Flour and Sonny Boy Corn Meal), the truth of what happened the night Robert Johnson died, and why Sonny Boy played in Chicago (almost always as "Sonny Boy Williams") so seldom when his records were outselling Muddy Waters'.

There is much to know about this man who was playing amplified harp with an electric guitarist on KFFA radio's "King Biscuit Time" as early as 1941 while Muddy Waters was recording acoustically for the Library of Congress (now who invented "Chicago Blues"?), who taught and inspired so many classic bluesmen, who created such a unique and plaintive harp sound no one has been able to recreate it today, whose career spans the history of modern blues.

"So, Bill, What Are You Going To Do With This Information?"

A video documentary on Sonny Boy is the obvious end product of this research. So is a major book on the life and times of this fascinating rascal. Beyond that, there seems to be a story here which begs for a screenplay. We started, however with a first installment of his story, a Special Collectors' Preview Edition of "Fessor Mojo's 'Don't Start Me To Talkin'". I don't tell everything I know (this was written in September of 1996 and our research is ongoing) but I do invite you to contribute to the greatly expanded book I am now writing and have included a U.S. \$100 reward if you are "the first person to provide us with a lead to the solution of each of these Sonny Boy Mysteries" in the book.

Note: Donoghue's original "Preview Edition" of his book on Sonny Boy was never finished to make a revised book, but his now deleted web site really was a treat!

Sonny Boy's Original Chess LPs

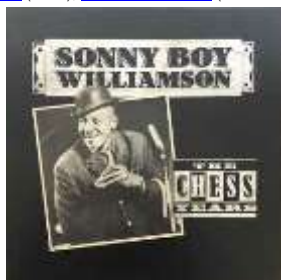


[Checker 1437](#) (1959), [Chess CRL 4510 UK](#) – and corresponding US issue [Chess 1503](#) (1965), [Chess 1509](#) (1966)



[Chess 1536](#) (1969), [Chess CHV-417](#) (1975), [Chess 2CH 50027](#) (2-set 1972), [Chess 2ACMB-206](#) (2-set 1976), Below: [Chess Box 1](#) (Italy 6-set 1987)

| Some representative songs: | |
|----------------------------|---|
| 1437 | Don't Start Me Talkin' Your Funeral And My Trail |
| 1503 | Checkin' Up On My Baby Bring It On Home |
| 1509 | Help Me Close To Me |
| 1536 | Lonesome Cabin Open Road |
| 417 | Keep It To Yourself One Way Out |
| 50027 | Ninety-Nine Nine Below Zero |
| 206 | Your Imagination I Can't Be Alone |
| Box 1 | Unseeing Eye One Way Out (alt) |





THE MIDNIGHTERS

UNIVERSAL ATTRACTIONS



Fr.l.: Lawson Smith, Sonny Woods, Henry Booth, Hank Ballard, and bottom guitarist Cal Green in 1955. This Midnighters line-up lasted until Norman Thrasher subbed for Sonny as bass singer from around late 1956 (or early 1957). Sonny Woods still worked with the group up until at least 1958 (and later). Inserted Ballard and his group in ca 1959 (with Norman Thrasher, Booth, and Smith).



Etta James (Jamesetta Hawkins) with her original backing vocal girls the Peaches in 1955. The three girls were originally known as the Creolettes from around 1953. Fr.l. Jean Mitchell, Etta, and Jean's older sister Abye. The sisters recorded behind Etta on "The Wallflower" for Modern on November 25, 1954 backed by musicians from the Johnny Otis band and male vocal assistance by Richard Berry. On later Modern recordings Etta had vocal backing by Berry and "his" female vocal group, the Dreamers, assisted by Jesse Belvin (featuring Maxwell Davis with Johnny Otis' pianist Devonia Williams, and Leard Bell still on on drums).

HOLLYWOOD FLAMES/ SATELLITES - 1957

DAVID
FORD

CURLEE
DINKINS



BOBBY
BYRD
(BOBBY
DAY)

EARL
NELSON

The Hollywood Flames started their recording career in Watts, Los Angeles with "Young Girl" for the tiny label Selective as **The Flames** with Bobby Byrd (later known as Bobby Day), David Ford, Willie Ray Rockwell, and Curlee Dinkins. They cont'd recording with different names (including **Hollywood Four Flames**) – the first as the Hollywood Flames issued in late 1953 on SwingTime. Other early "some-time members" were Leon Hughes, Clyde Tillis, and lead singer Gaynel Hodge. Bobby Day was occupied with his solo career, often backed by his old friends from 1957 - sometimes leaving the bass role for the Flames on stage to Don Wyatt. He and Earl Nelson also acted as Bob and Earl, making the Hollywood Flames, Satellites, Voices, and Bob & Earl a "real show". "**Buzz-Buzz-Buzz**" was the only big hit of the Hollywood Flames - issued in October 1957 on Ebb (written by Bobby Day - with Earl Nelson lead, Ford, Day, and Dinkins in there). One of the group's finest recordings was on Ebb issued in June 1959, "In The Dark" (most prob recorded 1958), featuring Earl Nelson, lead, still with David Ford in there, supplemented by Curtis Williams (the former Penguin), and Clyde Tillis. Some say Jesse Belvin often acted as uncredited fifth singer for the Ebb recordings. Ray Brewster (from the Penguins and later Cadillacs), and Eddie Williams sang with Earl and David in 1959-60 (temporarily stationed in New York).

Right 1958 and 1960.



DOO WOP



Features a wide range of vocal parts, harmonies, rhythms, a variety of vocal and guitar music influences.

The volume 2 CD album presents the music of the early to mid-1950s - 55 tracks, offering a variety of recordings interspersed by the genre and instrumentation, with an instrumental group. These tracks were released on a number of different labels, including independent companies during the height of the doo-wop era (1953 and 1954). The set is divided into two discs, with each disc featuring a different style of doo-wop. The tracks are arranged in chronological order, and the CD set is not only enjoyable on the way, but all of the tracks represent a true doo-wop sound. It is a must-have for anyone who loves the sound of the doo-wop era.






| CD 1: UPTEMPO NUMBERS | | CD 2: BALLADS | |
|--|---|---|---|
| THE CLASHES 1. The Clashes 2. The Clashes 3. The Clashes 4. The Clashes 5. The Clashes 6. The Clashes 7. The Clashes 8. The Clashes 9. The Clashes 10. The Clashes | THE CLASHES 11. The Clashes 12. The Clashes 13. The Clashes 14. The Clashes 15. The Clashes 16. The Clashes 17. The Clashes 18. The Clashes 19. The Clashes 20. The Clashes | THE CLASHES 21. The Clashes 22. The Clashes 23. The Clashes 24. The Clashes 25. The Clashes 26. The Clashes 27. The Clashes 28. The Clashes 29. The Clashes 30. The Clashes | THE CLASHES 31. The Clashes 32. The Clashes 33. The Clashes 34. The Clashes 35. The Clashes 36. The Clashes 37. The Clashes 38. The Clashes 39. The Clashes 40. The Clashes |



One of best of the vast volumes of "public domain" CDs with doo wop – Hoodoo Records 2CD 263589 (tracks 2017), 55 classic songs and nice informative booklet. It has the most well-known and successful, "accepted doo wop classics", incl several white groups. Recommended even if only 20% of them are on my 127 Favorites Lists. Some of the really "true" Doo Wop freaks may not agree that all my favorite "Doo Wop" songs really can be tagged "Doo Wop".

DOO WOP FREAK? Here is the basic collection!

If you are a true Doo Wop lover you most probably have these four CD-boxes – in total containing 404 (101 each) carefully chosen doo-wop classics from its great history (with super essays) – poss also the books!?

"The Doo Wop Box" - 4CD Rhino R2 71462 (1993) compiled by Bob Hyde and Walter DeVenne
 "The Doo Wop Box II" - 4CD Rhino R2 72507 (1996) by James Austin, Billy Vera, Richard Foos, Hyde and DeVenne
 "The Doo Wop Box III" - 4CD Rhino R2 79925 (2000) by Austin, Foos, Ed Osborne, and Hyde
 "The Super Rare Doo Wop Box" - 5CD Rock Beat ROC-3305 (2015) by Billy Vera and James Austin
 Encyclopedia of Rhythm & Blues and Doo-Wop Vocal Groups by Mitch Rosalsky (Scarecrow Press, US 2002)
 American Singing Groups by Jay Warner (Hal Leonard, US 2006, originally 1992)



DOO WOP ORIGINS: According to Jay Warner (and in some cases Marv Goldberg, Bill Dahl, Mitch Rosalsky – and others) Here are the locations - where and when - the "Doo Wop" groups on the following pages **approximately originated**, followed by year of first issued recording. Jay Warner's book is a "definitive" reference book, although I am a true fan of Rosalsky's. Jay missed a.o. the Flairs. Mitch has concentrated on the lineups – and with "easy reading", but several mis-haps there too. **Special note:** Ernie K-Doe's "Mother-In-Law", one of my absolute favorite R&B songs, is surely also "Doo Wop", although almost never presented as such by "experts". And definitely Bobby Day's "Rock-in Robin" qualifies - with vocal assistance from three of the 1958 Hollywood Flames: David Ford, Earl Nelson and Curtis Williams – the last one again subbing for Curlee Dinkins. Clyde Tillis was also a Flame in 1958 (Bobby out).



| THE FAVORITE DOO WOP GROUPS - ORIGINS | | | |
|---|--------------------|------|---------------------|
| Mills Brothers | Piqua, Ohio | 1925 | 1931 Brunswick |
| Ink Spots | Indianapolis, IA | 1931 | 1935 RCA |
| Golden Gate Quartet | Berkeley, Virginia | 1935 | 1937 Bluebird |
| Jubalaires | Jacksonville, FL | 1936 | 1941 Decca |
| Ravens | Harlem, NYC | 1946 | 1946 Hub |
| Orioles | Baltimore, MD | 1946 | 1948 It's A Natural |
| "5" Royales | Winston-Salem, NC | 1946 | 1951 Apollo |
| Clovers | Washington DC | 1946 | 1950 Rainbow |
| Swallows | Baltimore, MD | 1946 | 1951 King |
| Cardinals | Baltimore, MD | 1946 | 1951 Atlantic |
| Spiders | New Orleans | 1947 | 1953 Imperial |
| Robins | Watts, Los Angeles | 1948 | 1949 Savoy |
| Larks | Raleigh, NC | 1949 | 1950 Apollo |
| Hollywood Flames | Los Angeles | 1949 | 1950 Selective |
| (with Bobby Day) | | | |
| Five Keys | Newport News, VA | 1949 | 1951 Aladdin |
| Dominoss | New York City | 1950 | 1950 Federal |
| Royals / Midnighters | Detroit, MI | 1950 | 1952 Federal |
| Flamingos | Chicago, IL | 1950 | 1953 Chance |
| Willows | Harlem, NYC | 1950 | 1953 Pee Dee |
| Diablos | Detroit, MI | 1950 | 1954 Fortune |
| Jesse Belvin (grps) | Los Angeles | 1951 | 1951 Imperial |
| Crowns (A L Maye) | Los Angeles | 1951 | 1954 Modern |
| Richard Berry (grps) | Los Angeles | 1951 | 1953 Flair |
| Crows | Harlem, NYC | 1951 | 1953 Rama |
| Checkers | New York City | 1951 | 1952 King |
| Chords | Bronx, NYC | 1952 | 1954 Cat |
| Platters | Los Angeles | 1952 | 1953 Federal |
| Flairs (Young Jessje) | Los Angeles | 1952 | 1953 Flair |
| Moonglows | Cleveland, Ohio | 1952 | 1952 Champagne |
| El Dorados | Chicago, IL | 1952 | 1954 Vee-Jay |
| Spaniels | Gary, Indiana | 1952 | 1953 Vee-Jay |
| Valentines | New York City | 1952 | 1954 Old Town |
| Rivington's | Los Angeles | 1952 | 1953 Federal |
| (Lamplighters-Federal / Sharps) | | | |
| Harp-Tones | Manhattan, NYC | 1953 | 1953 Bruce |
| Dreamers (girl grp) | Los Angeles | 1953 | 1954 Flair |
| Drifters | New York City | 1953 | 1953 Atlantic |
| Cadillacs | Harlem, NYC | 1953 | 1954 Josie |
| Penguins | Los Angeles | 1953 | 1954 Dootone |
| Five Satins | New Haven, Conn. | 1953 | 1954 Red Robin |
| Nutmegs | New Haven, Conn. | 1953 | 1955 Herlad |
| Dells | Chicago, IL | 1953 | 1954 Vee-Jay |
| Famous Flames | Toccoa, Georgia | 1953 | 1956 Federal |
| Hearts (Andrews) | Philadelphia, PA | 1953 | 1954 Rainbow |
| Miracles | Detroit, MI | 1953 | 1958 End |
| Four Tops | Detroit, MI | 1953 | 1956 Chess |
| Cadets / Jacks | Los Angeles | 1954 | 1955 Modern/RPM |
| Cues / (Playboys) | New York City | 1954 | 1954 Lamp |
| Heartbeats | Queens, NYC | 1954 | 1955 Network |
| Crests | Manhattan, NYC | 1954 | 1957 Joyce |
| Olympics | Los Angeles | 1954 | 1956 Demon |
| Silhouettes | Philadelphia, PA | 1954 | 1957 Junior |
| Isley Brothers | Cincinnati, Ohio | 1955 | 1957 Teenage |
| Jayhawks / Vibrations | Los Angeles | 1955 | 1955 Flash |
| Falcons | Detroit, MI | 1955 | 1955 Mercury |
| Teenagers (Lymon) | New York City | 1955 | 1955 Gee |
| Coasters | Los Angeles | 1955 | 1956 Atco |
| Little Caesar's groups | San Diego, Calif. | 1955 | 1959 Flash |
| Pharaohs (w R Berry) | Los Angeles | 1955 | 1957 Flip |
| Dubs | New York City | 1956 | 1957 Johnson |
| Zodiaks / Gladiolas | Nashville, Tenn. | 1956 | 1956 Excello |
| Chips | Brooklyn, NYC | 1956 | 1956 Josie |
| Charts | Harlem, NYC | 1956 | 1957 Everlast |
| Edsels | Campbell, Ohio | 1957 | 1957 Dub |
| Impressions | Chicago, IL | 1957 | 1958 Vee-Jay |
| Dukays (Chandler) | Chicago, IL | 1957 | 1961 Nat |
| Drifters (2nd group) | New York City | 1958 | 1959 Atlantic |
| (originally the Five Crowns / Crowns NYC 1952-1958) | | | |
| Jive Five | Brooklyn, NYC | 1959 | 1961 Beltone |
| Marcells | Pittsburgh, PA | 1959 | 1961 Colpix |
| Flares | Los Angeles | 1959 | 1960 Felsted |
| Temptations | Detroit, MI | 1960 | 1961 Miracle |

89 GREAT DOO WOP FAVORITES

Special thanks to Marv Goldberg, Bob Hyde, Jay Warner, Bill Dahl, and Mitch Rosalsky.

My favorite "doo wop" songs: **THE TRUE DOO WOP CLASSICS?** (with rec. dates & line-ups on the actual recordings) - part 1


| | | |
|--|---|--|
| <p>Gloria – Mills Brothers – issued 10/1948</p>  <p><i>lead</i> Donald Mills</p> <p><i>clockwise from top right</i> father John (who replaced John Jr in 1936) with sons Donald, Harry, and Herbert. Hired guitarist for several years was Norman Brown. (image right features John Jr right)</p>  | <p>The Gypsy – Ink Spots – recorded 2/1946</p>  <p><i>lead</i> Bill Kenny</p> <p>1940s</p> <p>Bill Kenny replaced Jerry Daniels in 1936, Bowen replaced Deek Watson in 1943. Original member Hoppy Jones died in 1944, soon replaced by Herb Kenny.</p> <p><i>Imaged above:</i> Deek, Bill, Hoppy, and Charlie.</p> | <p>O' Man River – The Ravens – issued 6/1947</p>  <p><i>lead</i> Jimmy Ricks</p> <p>Jimmy Ricks (left) with <i>from bottom</i> Maithe Marshall (who had replaced original member Ollie Jones in 1947), Leonard Puzey, and Warren Suttles. Howard Biggs, pianist and "fifth member".</p>  |
| <p>It's Too Soon To Know - The Orioles - 7/1948 Original issued on It's A Natural, but soon on Jubilee (sam cat#)</p>  <p><i>lead</i> Sonny Til</p> <p><i>clockwise from bottom left</i> Tommy Gaither (gtr), Alexander Sharp, George Nelson, Sonny Til, and Johnny Reed</p>  | <p>Count Every Star - The Ravens – 3/1950</p>  <p><i>lead</i> Louis Heyward</p> <p>1950</p> <p><i>from top</i> Jimmy Ricks, Warren Suttles (actually repl by Louis Heyward, Leonard Puzey, and Maithe Marshall. Pianist now Bill Sanford.</p>  | <p>The Glory Of Love - The Five Keys – 3/1951</p>  <p><i>from left</i> Rudy West, Dickie Smith, Ripley Ingram, Maryland Pierce, Bernie West, and at the piano "Virginia" Joe Jones.</p> <p><i>lead</i> Rudy West, <i>bridge</i> Dickie Smith</p> <p>1951</p> |
| <p>Fool, Fool, Fool - 7/1951 and One Mint Julep - 10/1951 (iss 3/1952) The Clovers</p>  <p><i>from left</i> Harold Winley, Harold Lucas, John "Buddy" Bailey, Matthew McQuater, and guitarist Bill Harris. Bailey did military service mid 1952-54, soon replaced by Charlie White, and by Billy Mitchell in 1953. Mitchell stayed when Bailey returned in 1954, making them a sextet.</p> <p><i>lead</i> John "Buddy" Bailey</p>  | <p>Every Beat Of My Heart - The Royals – 1/1952</p>  <p>1952</p> <p><i>from left</i> Alonzo Tucker, Sonny Woods, Charles Sutton, Lawson Smith (inserted), and Henry Booth. Hank Ballard replaced Smith soon after "Every Beat". Smith returned when Sutton (lead of "Every Beat") quit. The group changed their name to the Midnighters directly after the first pressings of "Work With Me Annie" in 1954.</p> <p><i>lead</i> Charles Sutton, <i>bridge</i> prob Henry Booth</p> | <p>Flame In My Heart - The Checkers - 6/1952 and The Bells - Billy Ward and the Dominoes - 9/1952</p>  <p><i>from left</i> James "Buddy" Brewer, Charlie White, Irvin "Teddy" Williams, and top left Bill Brown. Original fifth member was John Carnegie.</p> <p><i>lead</i> Charlie White</p> <p>Clyde McPhatter, James Van Loan (repl Charlie White), Billy Ward, Joe Lamont, and David McNeil (replacing Brown and his shortlived successor Raymond Johnson in May). <i>lead</i> Clyde McPhatter</p> |
| <p>Baby Don't Do It - The "5" Royals - 10/1952 and Let Me Come Back Home – "5" Royals – recorded 10/1952, issued 7/1954</p>  <p><i>Baby lead</i> Johnny Tanner <i>Home lead</i> Jimmy Moore</p> <p><i>from left</i> Lowman Pauling (guitar), Johnny Tanner (right), Obadiiah Carter (left), Jimmy Moore (sec from top), and Otto Jeffries.</p>  | <p>Gee – The Crows – 4/1953</p>  <p><i>lead</i> Sonny Norton</p> <p>1953</p> <p><i>top</i> Bill Davis, Daniel "Sonny" Norton, <i>center</i> Marold Major, <i>bottom</i> Gerald Hamilton, <i>add</i> Mark Jackson, gtr/vcl.</p>  | <p>Crying In The Chapel - The Orioles – 6/1953</p>  <p><i>lead</i> Sonny Til</p> <p><i>top</i> Sonny Til, Johnny Reed, and Alexander Sharp, <i>center</i> Gregory Carroll (insert), Ralph Williams, <i>bot</i> Charlie Harris at the piano.</p>  |

The Great R&B Pioneers

My favorite "doo wop" songs: **THE TRUE DOO WOP CLASSICS?** (with rec. dates & line-ups on the actual recordings) - part 2

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| <p>Golden Teardrops - The Flamingos - 8/1953 and Baby Please - The Moonglows - 9/1953</p>  <p>top Paul Wilson, Sollie McElroy, Zeke Carey, bottom Jake Carey, and Johnny Carter. lead Sollie McElroy</p> <p>right image top fr / Bobby Lester, Harvey Fuqua, Pete Gravess, bottom Prentiss Barnes. lead Harvey Fuqua</p> | <p>A Sunday Kind Of Love - The Harp-Tones and Let's Talk It Over - The Hollywood Flames Actually the first with their most common name - issued 11/1953 and 12/1953</p>  <p>top Willie Winfield, middle fr / William Dempsey, Nicky Clark, Billy Brown, with Raoul Cita at the piano. lead Willie Winfield</p> <p>right image fr / Leon Hughes (repl by Gaynel Hodge at session time), Robert Byrd (later known as Bobby Day), Curlee Dinkins (who was in and out of the group for several years, poss subbed by Curtis Williams here), and long-timer David Ford. lead David Ford</p> | <p>Goodnite Sweetheart, Goodnite Spaniels - 12/1953</p>  <p>lead Pookie Hudson</p> <p>WILLIE C. JACKSON, GERALD GREGORY, ERNEST WARREN, POOKIE HUDSON</p> <p>Note: fifth singer Opal Courtney not imaged here. He left shortly after this (and was "subbed" by VJ exec Calvin Carter for a short while).</p> |
|---|---|--|

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| <p>What 'Cha Gonna Do Clyde McPhatter and The Drifters - 2/1954 Also recorded twice in 1953 - rejected</p>  <p>1954</p> <p>lead Clyde McPhatter</p> <p>clockwise fr, bottom left Gerhart Thrasher, Bill Pinkney, Clyde McPhatter, Andrew Thrasher, and inserted guitarist Jimmy Oliver.</p> | <p>Sh-Boom - The Chords - 3/1954</p>  <p>lead Carl Feaster</p> <p>fr / Claude Feaster, William Edwards (bass), Carl Feaster, Jimmy Keyes, Buddy McRae, with Rupert Branker, piano (later joining the Platters).</p> | <p>House With No Windows The Checkers - 3/1954</p>  <p>lead David Baughan</p> <p>clockwise fr / Brewer, Williams, Brown. In 1953 Charlie White, was replaced by Little David Baughan (inserted). Eddie Harris and Perry Heyward had now joined Bill Brown (Teddy and Buddy still there) Note the strong connections to the Dominoes, Clovers, and Drifters.</p> |
|--|--|--|

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| <p>Someday You'll Want Me To Want You The Drifters featuring Clyde McPhatter - 3/1954</p>  <p>fr / Bill Pinkney, Willie Ferbie (not featured - he died after "Money Honey"), Clyde, Andrew and Gerhart Thrasher. Jimmy Oliver (gtr) entered in October 1953 lead Clyde McPhatter, bridge Bill Pinkney</p> | <p>Gloria - The Cadillacs - issued 7/1954</p>  <p>lead Earl Carroll</p> <p>clockwise fr / Bobby Phillips, Earl Carroll, Laverne Drake, James "Poppa" Clark, and Johnny "Gus" Willingham (last two only for this).</p> | <p>Earth Angel (Will You Be Mine) The Penguins - early/mid 1954, issued 9/1954</p>  <p>lead Cleve Duncan</p> <p>clockwise fr / Cleve Duncan, Curtis Williams, Bruce Tate, and Dexter Tisby. (piano intro Curtis Williams, bridge Dexter Tisby).</p> |
|---|---|---|

| | | |
|--|--|---|
| <p>Sincerely - The Moonglows - 9/1954</p>  <p>lead Bobby Lester</p> <p>clockwise fr / Bobby Lester, Prentiss Barnes, Harvey Fuqua, and Pete Graves. Guitarist Billy Johnson joined in January, 1955.</p> | <p>Tonight Kathleen - The Valentines - 11/1954</p>  <p>lead Richard Barrett</p> <p>clockwise fr / Mickey Francis, Ronnie Bright, Richard Barrett (top), Raymond Briggs, and Donald Raysor (repl Carl Hogan, who returned in 1957). Eddie Edgehill repl Raysor for "Lily Maebelle" (Rama 1955).</p> | <p>Close Your Eyes - The Five Keys - 11/1954</p>  <p>lead Pierce, 2nd lead Rudy West</p> <p>clockwise fr / Ramon Loper, Maryland Pierce, Bernie West, Ripley Ingram and center Rudy West.</p> |
|--|--|---|























The Great R&B Pioneers

My favorite "doo wop" songs: **THE TRUE DOO WOP CLASSICS?** (with rec.dates & line-ups on the actual recordings) - part 3

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| <p>Story Untold - The Nutmegs – 12/1954</p>  <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">1955</div>  <p>lead Leroy Griffin</p> <p>top Leroy McNeil, James "Sonny" Griffin, Billy Emery, bottom Leroy Griffin, and James "Coco" Tyson.</p> | <p>The Door Is Still Open - The Cardinals - 1/1955</p>    <p>right image fr / Donald Jack Johnson, Meridith Brothers, Ernie Lee Warren, Leon Hardy, and gtr/vcl Jack Aydolette (on this session replaced by Johnny Douglas and/or vcl/pno Leander Tanner).</p> <p>The other (ca 1955) images: unknown distrib. lead Ernie Lee Warren</p> | <p>One Little Blessing c/w Gone Jesse Belvin - 3/1955</p> <p>with uncredited backing by Bobby Relf and the Laurels (prob not the Sharptones)</p> <p>image right: Eugene Church and Jesse Belvin (Church was one half of Belvin's the Cliques)</p>     <p>No image on the Laurels. The Laurels were Robert (Bobby) Relf (imaged bottom left center photo), Ronald and Ted Brown, Edwin Solomon, and Donplayelle Duconje (or poss Sam Jackson) lead Jesse Belvin</p> <p>Imaged fr / Jesse Belvin, Bobby Relf (bottom) with Earl Nelson, and right image Bobby Day with Earl Nelson. Relf joined Bobby Day in the Crescendos and recorded the Bob & Earl duet "Harlem Shuffle" in 1963 with Earl Nelson from the Hollywood Flames (who together with Bobby Day was the original "Bob" in the Bob & Earl duo).</p> |
| <p>At My Front Door - The El Dorados – 4/1955</p>  <p>fr / Louis Bradley, James Maddox, Jewel Jones, Richard Nickens, and Pirkle Lee Moses. lead Moses</p> | <p>When I Get Like This The "5" Royals - 5/1955</p>  <p>Jimmy Moore, Gene Tanner, Johnny Tanner, Obadiah Carter, and Lowman Pauling (gtr). Otto Jeffries is road manager now.</p>  <p>Johnny, Lowman, Jimmy, Gene, Obadiah. lead Johnny Tanner</p> | <p>Smokey Joe's Cafe c/w Just Like A Fool The Robins – 7/1955</p>   <p>lead Carl Gardner</p> <p>top "Ty" Terrell Leonard, middle fr / Billy Richard, Roy Richard, Bobby Nunn, Grady Chapman, and center front Carl Gardner.</p> |
| <p>Your Promise To Be Mine - The Drifters - 9/1955</p>  <p>This is the flip of "Ruby Baby" (with Moore the lead). Fr / Jimmy Oliver (gtr), Andrew Thrasher, Bill Pinkney, Johnny Moore, and Gerhart Thrasher. lead Gerhart Thrasher</p> | <p>Speedoo b/w Let Me Explain The Cadillacs – 9/1955</p>  <p>Earl Carroll (top), fr / Earl Wade, Bobby Phillips, Charles Brooks, and Laverne Drake. leads Earl "Speedo" Carroll b/w Earl Wade</p> | <p>Dreams Of Contentment - The Dells – 9/1955</p>  <p>fr / Marvin Junior, Verne Allison, Chuck Barksdale, Michael McGill, and Johnny Funchess (occ brother Lucias McGill also was there). lead Johnny Funchess</p> |
| <p>Devil Or Angel - The Clovers – 11/1955</p>  <p>top fr / John "Buddy" Bailey, Billy Mitchell, Matthew McQuater, and Harold Lucas, bottom Harold Winley and guitarist Bill Harris. That's the lineup on "Devil Or Angel". lead John "Buddy" Bailey</p> | <p>When You Walked Through The Door The "5" Royals – 12/1955</p>  <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">1956</div>  <p>lead Johnny Tanner</p> <p>Obadiah Carter (top), fr / middle Jimmy Moore, Gene Tanner, Johnny Tanner; Lowman Pauling (gtr). Otto Jeffries was by now the group's road manager.</p> | <p>Brazil and Down In Mexico The Coasters – 1/1956</p>  <p>Carl Gardner, Bobby Nunn, Leon Hughes, and Billy Guy (with gtr). Brazil shifting leads Nunn, Guy, and Gardner Mexco lead Carl Gardner</p> |

The Great R&B Pioneers

My favorite "doo wop" songs: **THE TRUE DOO WOP CLASSICS?** (with rec.dates & line-ups on the actual recordings) - part 4

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| <p>Please, Please, Please - James Brown with the Famous Flames - 2/1956</p> <p>Brown is shown left on the image right with the Famous Flames fr. top Keels, Knox, Terry, Byrd.</p>   <p>Fr./ Bobby Byrd, Nashpendle Knox, Sylvester Keels, Johnny Terry, and Nafloyd Scott, gtr. Fats Gonder is pianist and band leader. lead James Brown</p> | <p>Stranded In The Jungle - The Jayhawks - 10/55 cover hit by The Cadets - 5/1956</p>  <p>The Jayhawks recorded it with top Carver Bunkham, and fr/ Carl Fisher, Dave Govan and lead James Johnson. The Jayhawks turned into the Vibrations / Mathons in the 1960s joined by Richard Owens and Don Bradley (Bunkham out).</p>  <p>lead Will "Dub" Jones</p> <p>The Cadets made an even bigger hit with the song. Shortly before "Stranded", founding member Lloyd McGraw became the group's manager, and was replaced by Thomas "Pete" Fox. fr/ Will Jones, Willie Davis, Fox, and Aaron Collins. Fifth singer Prentice Moreland joined for this one. This group also recorded as the Jacks.</p> | <p>Gloria Arthur Lee Maye and the Crowns - 2/1956</p>  <p>This group featured Maye, left with Richard Berry, right, Johnny Coleman, bass; plus Charles Colbert, Johnny Morris, and Joe Moore, vcls. (Note: This is not the classic "Gloria", it's for the Dreamers' Gloria Jones). No group image. lead Maye, bridge Richard Berry.</p> |
| <p>In The Still Of The Nite - The Five Satins - 2/1956 (issued on Standard and Ember - later known as "I'll Remember")</p>   <p>lead Fred Parris</p> <p>top Fred Parris, with unkn order Al Denby, Jim Freeman, and Ed Martin, bass. (there were only four Satins on the recording, Stanley Dortch was out). Pianist Jesse Murphy. The hit was issued on Ember 5/1956..</p> | <p>Finders Keepers - The Crescendos - 3/1956 and My Prayer - The Platters - 4/1956</p>   <p>top Mitchell Alexander (bass with the Feathers), Prentice Moreland (from the Chanteclairs); bottom Earl Nelson (Bobby's Hollywood Flame buddy), Bobby Relf (from the Laurels), and Robert Byrd (later known as Bobby Day). Early on some said Will Jones was in (but now we know that's not so—even Young Jessie was credited in some files. Leiber-Stoller produced. Photo montage. lead Bobby Day</p> <p>Right image fr/1 Tony Williams, Herb Reed, David Lynch, Zola Taylor, and Paul Robi. lead Tony Williams</p> | <p>Oh What A Nite - The Dells - 5/1956</p>  <p>Verne Allison, Marvin Junior, Johnny Funches, Calvin Carter (insert), VJ exec subbing for bass Chuck Barksdale, and Michael McGill. leads Johnny Funches with Marvin Junior</p> |
| <p>The Vow - The Flamingos - 7/1956 and A Thousand Miles Away - The Heartbeats - ca 8/1956 Originally issued on Hull, hit on Rama.</p>   <p>Top Nate Nelson (replacing Sollie McElroy in late 1954), Jake and Zeke Carey, bot Paul Wilson and Johnny Carter. lead Nate Nelson</p> <p>Heartbeats fr/ Robbie Tatum, Wally Roker, James Sheppard, Vernon Sievers, and Albert Crump. lead James "Shep" Sheppard</p> | <p>Sweet Georgia Brown and Young Blood The Coasters - 2/1957</p> <p>1957</p>  <p>Leon Hughes (left), top Billy Guy and Carl Gardner, Bobby Nunn (center front), with guitarist Adolph Jacobs (center image), Hughes was subbed by Young Jessie (imaged far right) for this session. SGB shifting leads Gardner, Guy, Nunn YB lead Carl Gardner</p> | <p>Star Dust - Billy Ward and his Dominoes - 3/1957 and Deserie - The Charts - issued 5/1957</p>   <p>fr/ Milton Grayson, Cliff Givns, Billy Ward, Milton Merle, and Gene Mumford. lead Gene Mumford</p> <p>fr/ Glenmore Jackson, Ross Buford, Leroy Binns, Stephen Brown, and Joe Grier. lead Joe Grier</p> |
| <p>Long Lonely Nights - Lee Andrews and the Hearts - issued 6/1957 First issued on MainLine - then on Chess..</p> <p>and Get A Job -The Silhouettes -. 10/1957 First issued on Junior - then on Ember</p>     <p>Andrews, Roy Wendell Calhoun, and Ted Weems on the record, but but Gerald Thompson and Butch Curry also in the group later.</p> <p>lead Lee Andrews (real name Arthur Thompson). Silhouettes: Earl Beal, Horton, Ray Edwards, and Richard Lewis. lead Biull Horton</p> | <p>Just To Say Hello - Jesse Belvin and Group - issued 11/1957</p>  <p>Thomas "Buster" Williams and Will "Dub" Jones (color insert), who both backed Jesse several times, listed in files for this record (it sounds like more than two backings, though). Jesse did many "doo wops" featuring "friends" of his - Marvin Phillips, Laurels, Sharptones, Californians, Sheiks, Gassers, Cliques with Eugene Church, Tangiers with members of Hollywood Flames Capris, Spice Riders, Sheiks, Saxons (imaged fr top Belvin, Johnny "Guitar" Watson, Gaynel Hodge, and Eugene Church), Searchers, X-Tones, the Hollywood Flames - and finally the Chargers (Benny Louis Easley, brothers Dunbar John and Johnny "Junior" White, Jimmy Norman Scott, and Mitchell Alexander, bass), Gaynel & Alex Hodge and Buster Williams of the Turks also sang behind Belvin for RCA in 1958. lead Jesse Belvin</p> | <p>Zing! Went The Strings Of My Heart The Coasters - 3/1958</p> <p>1958</p>   <p>fr/ Billy Guy, Will "Dub" Jones, Carl Gardner, Cornell Gunter, and guitarist Adolph Jacobs. Shifting leads Will Jones and Cornell Gunter</p> |




The Great R&B Pioneers


My favorite "doo wop" songs: **THE TRUE DOO WOP CLASSICS?** (with rec.dates & line-ups on the actual recordings) - part 5

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| <p>For Your Precious Love – Jerry Butler and The Impressions - issued 5/1958 <i>and</i> Western Movies – The Olympics – iss 6/1958</p>  <p><i>left image top</i> Jerry Butler, Sam Gooden, Arthur Brooks; <i>front</i> Richard Brooks and Curtis Mayfield (gtr). Record also issued on Falcon – later Abner (the hit record). <i>lead</i> Jerry Butler <i>center early 58 fr</i> Walter Ward, Edde Lewis, Melvin King, and Charles Fizer (who left shortly after the recording – subbed by Walter Hammond (<i>third from l sec image</i>), who stayed on when for a while when Fizer returned. <i>lead prob</i> Walter Ward</p> | <p>Ten Commandments Of Love Harvey and The Moonglows - issued 8/1958 Recorded 12/57 (4 min), overdubbed and mastered in 1958 (2:43)</p>  <p><i>fr l</i> Harvey Fuqua, Prentiss Barnes, Bobby Lester, Pete Graves, and Billy Johnson (gtr). It is not confirmed if all Moonglows were present at either sessions. <i>lead</i> Harvey Fuqua</p> | <p>16 Candles - The Crests - 8/1958</p>  <p>Patricia Van Dross (not with the group on this and later recordings), Johnny Maestro, Harold Torres, Talmadge "Tommy" Gough, and J.T. Carter. <i>lead</i> Johnny Maestro</p> |
| <p>Lovers Never Say Goodbye The Flamingos – 9/1958</p>  <p><i>fr l</i> Zeke Carey, Terry Johnson, Nate Nelson (top), Paul Wilson, Tommy Hunt, and Jake Carey.</p> <p>This lineup (a sextet) was "composed" in the summer of 1958, when Zeke returned from Army service, Johnny Carter had left in 1956 (and replaced Funchess in the Dells in 1961). Hunt left in 1961. <i>leads</i> Terry Johnson and Paul Wilson</p> | <p>Smoke Gets In Your Eyes The Platters - 9/1958 (recorded in Paris, France)</p>  <p>Herb Reed, Zola Taylor, Paul Robi, David Lynch, <i>lead</i> Tony Williams, and manager Buck Ram.</p> | <p>You're So Fine - The Falcons - issued 1/1959</p>  <p>Eddie Floyd, Joe Stubbs, Lance Finnie (gtr), Bonnie "Mack" Rice, and Willie Schofield. Issued on Flick and a hit on Unart. <i>lead</i> Joe Stubbs</p> |
| <p>Those Oldies But Goodies (Remind Me Of You) Little Caesar and the Romans – issued 3/1961</p>  <p><i>fr l</i> Johnny Simmons, Leroy Sanders, Carl Burnett, Early Harris, and David "Little Caesar" Johnson. <i>lead</i> Johnson</p> | <p>My True Story The Jive Five - 2/1961</p>  <p><i>top</i> Norman Johnson, Richard Harris, and Eugene Pitt; <i>bottom</i> Billy Prophet, and Jerome Hanna. <i>lead</i> Eugene Pitt</p> | <p>Duke Of Earl - Gene Chandler - <i>actually</i> by The Dukays - 11/1961 Originally planned for Nat 4003 (prob unissued).</p>  <p><i>top</i> Eugene Dixon (that's Gene Chandler) with his Dukays. <i>second from top</i> Ben Broyles (bass), <i>bottom</i> James Lowe, Shirley Jones, and Earl Edwards. <i>lead</i> Gene Chandler</p> |
| <p>I Found A Love - The Falcons – 1/1962 Possibly also recorded as an Atlantic demo 7/1961.</p> <p>Issued on Lu Pine 103 and on Atlantic distributed Lu-Pine 1003.</p>  <p>This is the 1960-62 lineup of the group. Wilson Pickett (<i>inserted</i>). Ben Knight prob featured as bass singer (shortly repl co-composer Willie Schofield) – and Joe Stubbs may (or may not) still be in there. Robert Ward (gtr), Joe Edward Hunter (pno). <i>lead</i> Wilson Pickett</p> | <p>The Way You Do The Things You Do - 1/1964 <i>and</i> My Girl – 11/1964 - The Temptations</p>  <p>Otis Williams, David Ruffin (replacing original member Elbridge "Al" Bryant), Eddie Kendricks, Melvin Franklin, and Paul Williams. <i>leads</i> <i>The Way</i> Eddie Kendricks - <i>My Girl</i> David Ruffin</p> | <p>Stay In My Corner - The Dells - late 67/early68 issued 3/1968</p>  <p><i>lead</i> Marvin Junior</p> <p>The group recorded the original version for Vee-Jay in February 1965. <i>Lineup</i> 1968 as above <i>clockwise from l</i>: Marvin (Curtis) Junior, Chuck Barksdale, Verne Allison, Michael McGill, and Johnny Carter (from the Flamingos), who succeeded Dallas Taylor (Taylor had been Johnny Funchess' replacement from 1961). Carter first subbed for and later replaced Taylor (who left before the Cadet period). Sounds like added girl group backing.</p> |




The Great R&B Pioneers

TRUE DOO WOP CLASSICS? - part 6 - THE TOP R&B VOCAL GROUP RECORDS OF THE 1950s !

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| <p>Tell Me So - The Orioles - rec July 1948 Recorded at same date as "It's Too Soon To Know"</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1949</p>  <p><i>top fr</i> Alexander Sharp, Sonny Til, George Nelson, <i>bot</i> Tommy Gaither (gtr) and Johnny Reed (bass vcl and string bass, who just had replaced original bass Richard Williams). "It's Too Soon To Know" was broadcasted by the group, known as the Vibra-Naires in May (before recording). Pianist Charles Harris (<i>bot right im</i>) was added in 1950 and Ralph Williams repl Gaither. <i>lead</i> Sonny Til</p> | <p>Double Crossing Blues - Johnny Otis Quintette / The Robins and Little Esther - December 1, 1949</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1950</p>  <p><i>top</i> "Ty" Terrell Leonard and Billy Richard, <i>center</i> bass lead Bobby Nunn, and <i>bottom</i> Roy Richard. Johnny Otis (vibes) and Little Esther (Jones, later Phillips). <i>leads</i> Esther with Nunn</p> | <p>Sixty-Minute Man - The Dominoes December 30, 1950</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1951</p>  <p><i>lead</i> Bill Brown <i>clockwise fr bottom left</i> Joe Lamont, Billy Ward, Bill Brown, Charlie White, and Clyde McPhatter.</p> |
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| <p>Have Mercy Baby The Dominoes - January 28, 1952</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1952</p>  <p><i>Bill Brown</i> (who left in February to join White in the Checkers – first subbed by Raymond Taylor and around May succeeded by David McNeill from the Larks), Clyde McPhatter, DJ Bill Hawkins, James Van Loan (repl White), Billy Ward, and Joe Lamont (who was replaced by Milton Merle early 1953). <i>lead</i> McPhatter</p> | <p>Money Honey – Clyde McPhatter and the Drifters – August 9, 1953</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1953</p>  <p><i>fr</i> Bill Pinkney, Gerhart Thrasher, Clyde, Willie Ferbie (who died, shortly after this session), and Andrew Thrasher. <i>lead</i> Clyde McPhatter</p> | <p>Work With Me Annie – The Royals / The Midnighters - January 14, 1954 Originally issued as by the Royals – and very soon repressed as by the Midnighters.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1954</p>  <p><i>fr</i> Henry Booth, Charles Sutton, guitarist Alonzo Tucker, Hank Ballard, and Sonny Woods. Tucker (who was a long-time associate to Jackie Wilson) was succeeded by Cal Green soon after this, and in 1955 original member Lawson Smith returned to replace Sutton. <i>lead</i> Hank Ballard</p> |
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| <p>Only You (And You Alone) The Platters – April 26, 1955 (group had recorded the original version for Federal in 5/1954 with Tony and Alex)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1955</p>  <p><i>lead</i> Tony Williams <i>top</i> David Lynch and Paul Robi (who had succeeded original member Alex Hodge), <i>center fr top</i> Tony Williams (early on replacing Cornel Gunter), Herb Reed, and Zola Taylor (repl. Gaynel Hodge in 1954).</p> | <p>The Great Pretender The Platters - September 1955</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1956</p>  <p><i>fr</i> Herb Reed, David Lynch, Zola Taylor, Paul Robi, and Tony Williams. <i>lead</i> Tony Williams</p> | <p>Searchin' - The Coasters February 15, 1957</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1957</p>  <p><i>fr</i> Carl Gardner, Billy Guy, Bobby Nunn, Leon Hughes (subbed by Obie "Young" Jessie on this session), and Adolph Jacobs, gtr. <i>lead</i> Billy Guy</p> |
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| <p>Yakety Yak The Coasters - March 17, 1958</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1958</p>  <p><i>fr</i> Carl Gardner, Will "Dub" Jones, manager Lester Sill, Billy Guy, and Cornel Gunter. Guitarist Adolph Jacobs still in the group. <i>dual leads</i> Carl Gardner and Billy Guy</p> | <p>There Goes My Baby The Drifters - March 6, 1959</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1959</p>  <p>This was the lineup on the session March 6, 1959. Charlie Thomas, Benjamin Earl Nelson (that's Ben E. King), Dock Green, and Elsbear Hobbs. <i>lead</i> Ben Nelson</p> | <p>Let's Go, Let's Go, Let's Go Hank Ballard and the Midnighters - July 26, 1960</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1960</p>  <p><i>fr</i> Ballard, Norman Thrasher, Henry Booth, and Lawson Smith. <i>lead</i> Hank Ballard</p> |
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The Great R&B Pioneers



The truly "Ultimate" DOO-WOP Collection

"Street Corner Symphonies – The Complete Story of DOO WOP" [Bear Family 15 digipak CDs](#), each containing 30 or more super-classics (issued 2012-2013). Volume 1 covering 1939-1949 and the next 14 cover one year each from 1950 until 1963. Terrific liner notes by reissue producer/compiler **Bill Dahl** in the superbbooks (more than 80 pages each) – presenting every group and its songs on the CDs. I am sure super-impressed by this series!!! (just as I am by Bear Family's "Blowing The Fuse" R&B-series).



Part Seven - 23 "Super-Classic" personal favorite Doo Wop songs

- mostly picked from the "Street Corner Symphonies" series on Bear Family, with recording dates, origins and * lineup on the recording - images 1-21 close to session dates - top to bottom fr left. See next page for label shots. x = chart hit



1. x **If I Didn't Care** - Ink Spots - Decca 1/1939 (from Indianapolis, IA) (fr I Watson, lead Bill Kenny center front, Jones, and Fuqua) * Bill Kenny (lead), with vocals by Harvey Fuqua (gtr), Deek Watson (gtr), and Orville "Hoppy" Jones (cellobass)
2. **Shadrack** - Golden Gate Quartet - Columbia 5/1946 (from Berkeley, Virginia) (image unknown features ca late 1930s) * Willie Johnson (lead - repl by Orville Brooks in 1948), Clyde Riddick (replacing William Langford - who had replaced original member Eddie Griffin), Orlandus Wilson (bassvcl replacing Robert Ford), and Henry Owens.
3. x **I Know** - The Jubalaires - Decca 11/1945 (from Jacksonville, Florida) * Orville Brooks (lead - repl by Willie Johnson in 1948 -see above), Caleb Ginyard, Theodor Brooks, John Jennings (repl Willie Wright), and George McFadden (repl Elish Wright) (top Ginyard, McFadden, bot Orville, Everett Barksdale - gtr., Ted)
4. **It Ain't The Meat** - The Swallows - King 9/1951 (from Baltimore, MD) (fr I Hurley, Johnson, Rich, Mack, and Junior Denby (often lead). Before the last two entered Buddy Crawford, William Ace Thomas, and Irving Turner were among early members)
5. **My Reverie** - The Larks - Apollo 5/1951 (from Raleigh, North Carolina) (fr I top Bunn, Mumford, Barnes, bottom McNeil, Ruth) * Gene Mumford (lead), Thermon Ruth, Alden "Allen" Bunn, Raymond Barnes, and David McNeil. Sixth member Haide Rowe had just gone into military service
6. x **Good Lovin'** and **I Confess** - The Clovers - Atlantic 3/1953 (from Washington DC) (fr I Lucas, McQuater, lead Charlie White, and Winley) * Charlie White (lead, replacing Buddy Bailey), Harold Lucas, Matthew McQuater, Harold Winly and guitarist Bill Harris. White originally intended to join the Clovers in Sept 1951 (but landed with the Checkers), only sang with the Clovers from March to September 1953.
7. x **You're The One** - The Spiders - Imperial 12/53 (from New Orleans, LA) (fr I Chick, Maxon, Howard, lead Chuck Carbo, West) * Hayward "Chuck" Carbo (lead), Leonard "Chick" Carbo, Matthew West, Oliver Howard, and Joe Mixon
8. **The Wind** - The Diablos featuring Nolan Strong - Fortune 9/1954 (from Detroit) (top lead Nolan Strong, guitar Bob Edwards) * Nolan Strong (lead), Quentin Eurbanks, Juan Gutierrez, Willie Hunter, and Bob "Chicago" Edwards (gtr)
9. x **Church Bells May Ring** - Willows - Melba early/1956 (from Harlem, NYC) (fr I top Steele, Ralph, bottom lead Tony Middleton, Joe, and Richie Davis) * Tony (Wright) Middleton (lead, who had replaced Bobby Robinson in 1952), twins Ralph and Joe Martin, Richie Davis, and Richard Simon (replacing original bass singer John "Scooter" Steele). New bass singer Freddy Donovan soon replaced Simon
10. **Rubber Biscuit** - The Chips - Josie 8/1956 (from New York City) (unknown lineup) * Charles "Kenrod" Johnson (lead), Paul Fulton (bass), Sammy Strain, Nathanel Epps, and Shedrick Lincoln
11. **Let 'Em Roll** - The Midnighters - Federal 5/1957 (from Detroit, MI) (fr I Smith, Woods, Booth, Ballard and Green, gtr - ca 1956) * Hank Ballard (lead), Lawson Smith, Henry Booth, prob Sonny Woods (or poss Norman Thrasher), Cal Green (gtr)
12. x **Could This Be Magic** - The Dubs - Gone 8/1957 (from New York City) fr I Carlislem, Miller, Blandon, Still, and Grate) * Richard Brandon (lead), Cleveland Smith, Billy Carlisle, James "Jake" Miller, and Tommy Grate (replacing Thomas Gardner)
13. **Little Bitty Pretty One** - Bobby Day and the Satellites - Class, issued 11/57 (actually singers from the Hollywood Flames) * Bobby Day (real name Robert Byrd, lead) with Earl Nelson, David Ford, and Curlee Dinkins (later Curtis Williams and Clyde Tillis replaced Dinkins and Byrd -the latter also subbed by Don Wyatt) (imaged fr I top Ford, Dinkins bottom Bobby and Earl)
14. x **The Twist** - Hank Ballard and the Mdnights - King 11/1958 (fr I lead Ballard, Lawson Smith, Norman Thrasher, Henry Booth.) * Hank Ballard (lead), Norman Thrasher, Henry Booth, Lawson Smith (Cal Green still on guitar - Hank Moore, tenorsax)
15. x **I Only Have Eyes For You** - The Flamingos - End issued 3/1959 - recorded in 1958 (from Chicago, IL) (fr I top Tommy, Paul, Jake, Terry, bottom Zeke and lead Nate Nelson) * Nate Nelson (lead), Jake and Zeke Carey, Tommy Hunt, Paul Wilson, and Terry Johnson (vcl/gtr)
16. x **Love Potion No. 9** b/w **Stay Awhile** - The Clovers - United Artists 6/1959 (from Washington DC) (fr I Winley, Mitchell, Lucas, McQuater, and Bailey) * Billy Mitchell (lead "Love"), John "Buddy" Bailey (lead "Stay"), Harold Lucas, Mathew McQuater, and Harold Winley
17. **Shout** (parts 1 and 2) - The Isley Brothers - RCA Victor 7/1959 (from Cincinnati, Ohio) (O' Kelly botom lead Ronald, and Rudolph) * Ronald "Ronnie" Isley (lead) and his older brothers Rudolph and O'Kelly (youngest brother Vernon had died in 1954)
18. x **Blue Moon** - The Marcells - Colpix 2/1961 (from Pittsburgh, PA) (mid 1961 top Mundy, Harp, Maddo, bottom Allen and Fred Jaihson) * Cornelius Harp (lead), Ronald Mundy, Gene Bricker, Richard Knauss, and bass singer Fred Johnson. Soon after this Allen Johnson and Walt Maddox replaced white singers Knauss and Bricker
19. **Papa-Oom-Mow-Mow** - The Rivingtons - Liberty mid/1962 (with origins in the Lamplighters and Sharps from Los Angeles) (probably top left Sonny Harris, top right Rocky Wilson, bottom left Al Frazier, and Carl White bottom right). * Carl White (lead), Al Frazier (founder), Turner "Rocky" Wilson Jr (bass vcl), and John "Sonny" Harris
20. x **You've Really Got A Hold On Me** - The Miracles - Tamla 10/1962 (from Detroit, MI) (1962 top Bobby, Marv, Ronald, bottom lead Smokey Robinson, and Claudette - now Robinson - original member Emerson "Sonny" Rogers' sister, cousin to Bobby. Moore was drafted in 1962). * William "Smokey" Robinson (lead), Ronald "Ronnie" White, Robert "Bobby" Rogers, Claudette Robinson, and Marvin "Marv" Tarplin (gtr). Most likely extra girl singers here. Original member Warren "Pete" Moore returned to the group after his service,
21. x **Baby I Need Your Lovin'** - Four Tops - Motown 4/1964 (from Detroit, MI) (imaged fr I Lawrence, lead Levi Stubbs, Abdul, and Ronaldo) * Levi Stubbs (lead), Ronaldo "Obie" Benson, Lawrence Payton, and Abdul "Duke" Fakir - with the Andantes girl group



The Great R&B Pioneers



Original labels of the 23 More Personal Favorites + the two noted [check the doo-wop blogg for odd groups](#)



Note: the "extra" doo wopa: **Mother-In-Law** by Ernie K-Doe (from New Orleans) on Minit was recorded 4/1960 with Larry Williams, Art Neville, and bass Benny Spellman (backing vocals) and Allen Tossaint, pno.
Rock-In Robin by Bobby Day was recorded with his Hollywood Flames friends (Earl Nelson, David Ford, and Curtis Williams) ca 5/1958 on Class. Many will say: Why did you miss all the fine girl groups? - well- that's who I am - the girl groups didn't really get "involved" until the mid (almost late) 1950s, but sure there are several good ones with the Dreamers, the Cookies, the Chantels, the Bobettes, the Shirlees and others - to enjoy!

Part 8 - Seven Extra Special Favorite West Coast "Doo Wop?" Songs

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| <p>Riot In Cell Block #9 - 4/1954 and Framed - 8/1954 - both by The Robins</p>   <p><i>fr /</i> Carl Gardner, bass Bobby Nunn, poss Roy Richard (or is it Grady Chapman? - Grady was not on these recordings anyhow), "Ty" Terrell Leonard, and Billy Richard. Most discographies tell us that <i>Richard Berry</i> subbed for Nunn on "Riot" (although some - incl me - doubt it). On the ad right the Richard brothers <i>left</i>, Nunn and Leonard <i>center</i>, with Carl Gardner <i>far right</i> (who joined the group in March, 1954). <i>lead</i> (definitely on "Framed") Bobby Nunn</p> | <p>Lonesome Desert - "Young" Jessie - late 1953 with members of the Flairs - and of the Dreamers and In The Dark - The Hollywood Flames - issued 6/1959 (poss rec in late 1958)</p>   <p><i>image fr /</i> Cornell Gunter, Obie "Young" Jessie, Pete Fox, Beverly Thompson, Richard Berry, <i>im right</i> Fanita Barrett, Gloria Jones, bottom Nanette and Anette Williams. <i>lead</i> "Young" Jessie <i>Flames image bottom (1958) clockwise fr left</i> Earl Nelson, Curtis Williams (sometimes Don Wyatt), Clyde Tillis, and David Ford. Some say Jesse Belvin often acted as uncredited fifth singer on the Ebb sides. Bobby Day now out. <i>lead</i> Earl Nelson</p> | <p>Louie Louie <i>b/w</i> You Are My Sunshine Richard Berry and The Pharaohs - 3/1957 Foot Stomping - The Flares - issued mid 1961</p>   <p><i>lead</i> Richard Berry Richard Berry, <i>left</i> with his Pharaohs (also recording as the Cyclones) <i>in unkn order</i> Cuddy Colbert (relative of Charles Colbert in Arthur Lee Maye's Crowns), Robert Harris, and Noel Collins. Gloria Jones of the Dreamers was in this session. Stanley Henderson was fifth male member (wife Dorothy Berry and/or Gene Maye, subbing for Gloria). <i>Flares fr /</i> Willie Davis, George Hollis (bass), Thomas Miller, and Aaron Collins. Davis and Collins were from the Cadets (and sang with the last line-up of Flairs. Hollis and Miller came from the Ermines/Flairs. Line-ups changed (see below). Fifth singer on stage was a girl - Beverly King subbed by Betty Collins and Patience Valentine. <i>dual lead</i> Willie Davis, Aaron Collins</p> |
| <p>The Four Flames "Tabarin" group 1951 <i>fr /</i> Clyde Tillis, David Ford, Robert Byrd (that's Bobby Day), and Curlee Dinkins (often subbed by Willie Rae Rockwell or Leon Hughes in the early Flames). In late 1953 Gaynel Hodge became lead (leaving the Platters - and soon forming the Turks) - and in 1956 Earl Nelson entered - originally as backup on Robert Byrd's recordings as the Voices. Curtis Williams was in and out of the group during the years and David Ford in throughout (1949-1965). fr / Be Seeing You (Nov 10, 1958 - lead Ford)</p> |   <p>HOLLYWOOD FLAMES - 1958 EARL NELSON, CURTIS WILLIAMS, CLYDE TILLIS, DAVID FORD</p> | <p><i>Left:</i> Shirley Gunter (Cornell's blind sister) and the Flairs in 1955. The original Flairs were Cornell Gunter, Richard Berry, Obie "Young" Jessie, Beverly Thompson, and Thomas "Pete" Fox. In 1955 Berry had left to be replaced by Randy Jones, and Thompson had already been succeeded by Charles Jackson (only on recordings though). In late 1955 Gunter formed the Ermines (sometimes also performing as the Flairs) with George Hollis, Thomas Miller, and Kenneth Bylee. Pete Fox joined the Cadets in late 1955 to replace Lloyd McCrow (who became their manager). Miller, Bylee and Hollis were the ones forming The Flairs in 1960 with Robbie Robinson and Eddie King. In 1961 "Foot Stomping" lineup, the group featured Willie Davis and Willie Davis (from the Cadets - both had sung with a late Flairs lineup too) with Hollis and Miller. On stage there were several different "fifth singer" featured - a girl, often from the backgrounds of the Queens. Randy Jones repl Hollis later. <i>Below:</i> The Platters in ca 1956 - fr / Herb Reed, Tony Williams, David Lynch and Paul Robi with Zola Taylor. All of the groups (except Cadets) were managed by Platters-manager Buck Ram for most of their careers. <i>Center below</i> Carl Gardner of the Coasters in 1991.</p> |

Of the 127 Favorite Doo Wop Songs listed in this section, the following groups are featured more than once.

| | |
|--|---------------|
| Clovers | 7 |
| Coasters | 7 |
| Robins | 5 |
| "5" Royales | 5 |
| Royals / Midnighters | 5 |
| Drifters | 5 |
| Bobby Day groups | 4 (incl 1 HF) |
| Dominoes | 4 |
| Platters | 4 |
| Flamingos | 4 |
| Orioles | 3 |
| Moonglows | 3 |
| Jesse Belvin groups | 3 |
| Richard Berry groups | 3 |
| Jayhawks (also as / Marathons/Vibrations | 3 |
| Cadillacs | 3 |
| Dells | 3 |
| Five Keys | 2 |
| Ink Spots | 2 |
| Ravens | 2 |
| Checkers | 2 |
| Hollywood Flames | 2 |
| Falcons | 2 |
| Temptations | 2 |

The groups at bottom – page 93: The Ravens with Ollie Jones (bottom left 1946), the Orioles (1948), the Clovers (1951), the Dominoes with producer Ralph Bass (late 1950), the Royals with Alonzo Tucker, Sonny Woods, Charles Sutton, new member Hank Ballard, and Henry Booth (mid 1952 – later known as the Midnighters – when original member Lawson Smith returned, replacing Charles Sutton – soon Cal Green replaced Tucker; and Norman Thrasher subbed Woods from around 1956, replacing him in around 1958), the Moonglows with Billy Johnson, guitar (1955), and the "5" Royales with Gene and Johnny Tanner center right (ca 1957).

DOO WOP TIME-LINE SIGNIFICANT EVENTS IN DOO WOP HISTORY

- Excerpts from Rhino "Doo-Wop Box" by Bob Hyde, Walter DeVenne, and Gary Petersen – with some editing.

[The 220 Greatest Doo-Wop Songs 1953-1964](#) [Part Two](#)

Fall 1902

The Victor Talking Machine Company, precursor of RCA-Victor, makes the first recordings of black singers ever – Virginia's Dinwiddie Colored Quartet. The group cuts five gospel songs and one "pop" item, "Down At The Old Camp Ground".

1910s

Vocal groups are barely visible in popular music and exists primarily as college glee clubs or black gospel quartets and choirs. Vaudeville performers are the pop stars of the day, often appearing in "blackface" (Al Jolson) to present black music without "offending" proper white audiences.

1930s

The Mills Brothers, a black family vocal group from Ohio, scores hit after hit with a smooth in which the vocalists simulate musical instruments in their led-less harmony and the bass voice is prominent. The group also enjoys hits backing up vocalists like Bing Crosby, Ella Fitzgerald, and Louis Armstrong and will continue to sell well into the mid-1950s.

1939

The Selah Jubilee Singers, a highly respected gospel group (following the Golden Gate Jubilee Quartet's successes) will record successfully throughout the '40s and eventually involve into the **Larks** of the early '50s, record a number of hits that sell well in the black community.

Summer 1939

The Ink Spots record their first hit for Decca – "If I Didn't Care" – and go on to score pop hit after pop hit, most featuring the lead vocal of Bill Kenny. Later in the year they also record the original version of "My Prayer", later a giant hit for the Platters.

1939-1944

Golden Gate Quartet (as they were now called) release a number of hits in the black community.

1940

The Ink Spots record "**When The Swallows Come Back To Capistrano**" and "We Three", two hit songs hinting at a vocal sound that will later be called "rhythm & blues".

Summer 1940

The Cats and the Fiddle score with "I Miss You So", a standard that will be recorded by numerous vocal groups in the '50s (most notably the Orioles). The Charioteers, a gospel group, also hit the pop charts with the classic "So Long".

1941-42

The 4 Clefs score hits with "Dig These Blues" and "4 Clefs' Woogie", both capitalizing on the boogie-woogie craze of the era.

1943

The 4 Vagabonds, a male quartet featuring guitar, score three pop hits including "Comin' In On A Wing And A Prayer".

1944

The 5 Red Caps, a vocal and instrumental group, score three pop hits.

1946

The Delta Rhythm Boys, a gospel-oriented vocal group, score with "Just A Sittin' And A Rockin'". They had enjoyed success in 1945 backing up Jimmie Lunceford on his biggest hit, the cover of Joe Liggins' classic "The Honeydripper".

Summer 1946

The Jubalaires, a vocal group known for their "close" harmony, score a pop hit with Andy Kirk and his Orchestra, "I Know".

Spring 1947

The Sentimentalists, who began as Deek Watson and the Brown Dots, and who as the Four Tunes, will score two national pop hits in 1954, score both a pop and "race" hit backing thrush Savannah Churchill on "I Want To Be Loved (But By Only You)".

Early 1948



The Ravens, a New York group (the first "bird" group), score "race" hits with "Write Me A Letter", and "Ol' Man River", both with a unique (at the time) bass lead by Jimmy Ricks. For the winter holidays "White Christmas" is released with Jimmy Ricks and Maithe Marshall sharing leads (model for the Drifters' later version).

The Trumpeteers, a gospel group from Baltimore, score a Top 10 "race" hit with "Milky White Way"

Fall 1948

The Orioles, a five-man group, also from Baltimore, score a #1 "race" hit with "It's Too Soon To Know", often called the first pure rhythm & blues vocal effort. Lead singer "Sonny" Til will become the black singing idol of the day.



The Orioles 1948

The Mills Brothers record the first vocal group version of "Gloria" (written by Leon René in 1946, recorded by a band and solo vocalist for his Exclusive label, and by Charles Brown solo vocal with Johnny Moore's Three Blazers). Later (after some basic lyric and arrangement changes) to become the standard test for all aspiring street-corner vocal groups and most successfully rendered by the Cadillacs in 1954.

1949

The Hollywood Four Flames, a group that will record with various personnel for the next 15 years, form in Los Angeles as one of the first West Coast R&B groups.

1950

After an R&B hit of their own in late '49, **the Robins**, another West Coast group, gain more prominence with their #1 R&B hit backing Little Esther on Johnny Otis' "Double Crossing Blues", a tremendously popular record in the black community.

March 1950

The Ravens record "**Count Every Star**", the first song with any exposure to feature classic elements (a prominent bass with a "soaring" falsetto) of the doo wop style. Joe Thomas, the Ravens' old vocal coach as well as the one who introduced them to Ben Bart (much later James Brown's manager) and arranger /pianist Howard Biggs, is put in charge of Decca's R&B division in April 1950; the group though still at National Records. Louis Heyward had replaced Warren Suttles on this recording, and Bill Sanford was the new pianist. In 1952 bass singer Jimmy Ricks was the only original Raven in the group. The originals where Ollie Jones – soon replaced by Maithe Marshall, Ricks, Warren Suttles, and Leonard Puzey. Ricks left the group in early 1956

(with Joe Van Loan, Jimmie Steward, Louis Frazier, and bass Tommy Evans, who had subbed for Ricks before, the new Ravens).

1951

The R&B charts open up to a number of new vocal groups, listing hits by the Four Buddies, the Swallows, the Larks, the Cardinals, and the Mellow-Moods, alongside those by the now-stalwart Ravens and Orioles.

Spring 1951

Cleveland DJ Alan Freed begins programming rhythm & blues records on his radio program and starts to develop a reputation as a "hit-maker". He will eventually move to New York in 1954, coin the term "rock 'n' roll", and lead the charge in promoting the "new" music, becoming perhaps the most famous DJ of them all. In the fall of '52 he records and releases the first Moonglows record on his own Champagne label. **The Clovers** begin a dominant period on the black (R&B) charts with

their first #1 hit, "Don't You Know I Love You". The song will also be the first vocal group hit for the fledging Atlantic label and the group, along with singers Ruth Brown and Joe Turner, will carry the label in its early years.

At the same time, **the Dominoes** actually crack the pop (white) Top 20, the first for an R&B vocal group, with the somewhat off-color "Sixty-Minute Man".

Summer 1951

The Five Keys top the R&B charts with their classic version of "The Glory Of Love". The group, which will score significant pop hits with a more stylish sound a few years later on the Capitol label, will produce a number of particularly fine recordings for Aladdin 1951-1953.

Fall 1951

Bobby Robinson starts his first R&B label, Robin Records (changed soon after to Red Robin) and releases "Where Are You" by the Harlem group the Mellow-Moods. With a variety of labels, Whirlin' Disc, Fury, Fire, Everlast, and Holiday, among others – he and his brother Danny will issue scores of classic doo wop recordings throughout the '50s.

1952

The Dominoes, Clovers, and Orioles continue to top the R&B charts alongside one-shot hits by groups like the Four Blazes, Swallows and Cardinals.

Spring 1952

Legendary vocalist Clyde McPhatter steps out in front to lead the Dominoes on a wild, gospel-tinged up-tempo jump song called "Have Mercy Baby" (#1 R&B). McPhatter had already led the group on their debut single, recorded in December 1950, with a wonderful ballad, "Do Something For Me". A new group, **the Royals**, record the first version of "Every Beat Of My Heart", eventually the first hit by Gladys Knight and the Pips in 1961. The Royals would transform to the Midnighters in 1954.

Fall 1952

Shirley & Lee, the first black hit duet, reach the R&B charts, scoring their first hit with "I'm Gone". Jubilee Records issues a relatively dreadful single by a new group called the 5 Sharps. The rare record – chestnut "**Stormy Weather**" – stiffs completely, but 40 years later will be known as the most valuable R&B single ever released.

The Great R&B Pioneers

DOO WOP TIME-LINE continued

1953

Vocal group records begin to take a greater share of the R&B market, as records by new groups like the Crickets, Du-Droppers, "5" Royales, Vocaleers, Coronets, Royals, Spaniels, and Four Tunes all hit the R&B charts, along with entries by the still-dominant Orioles, Clovers, and Dominoes.

Spring 1953

Latin music label owner George Goldner starts his first R&B label, Rama, and releases an odd amateurish vocal group record called "Gee" by the Crows. The record will fail to sell initially (even though the flipside, "I Love You So", will be a strong entry in its own right). Meanwhile [the Flamingos](#), often called the finest R&B vocal group ever, record their first single for Chicago's Chance Records.

Summer 1953

Despite numerous cover versions, the Orioles place high on the pop charts with a cover of a country & western / gospel number, "Crying In The Chapel". It signifies the first real rhythm & blues crossover record, competing successfully against many white versions. Clyde McPhatter quits the Dominoes and forms [the Drifters](#), later one of the two most successful black vocal groups of the '50s and early '60s (the Platters was the other - and the Coasters the third). The Drifters' first hit, "Money Honey", sets the tone for a string of superb gospel-inflected recordings.

1954

The R&B vocal group really comes into its own, as the number of groups recording quadruples and the trend gets noticed by the record industry.



Spring 1954

The Crows' "Gee" picks up steam and actually hits the pop chart with the first of what might be considered a rock 'n' roll vocal style (although Atlantic execs call it "cat music"). Instrumentation is still an afterthought. Perhaps more significantly, an Atlantic label group, the Chords, records a lightweight, nonsense-syllable-filled ditty called "Sh-Boom". A white group on a major label, the Crew-Cuts, covers the record and has a bigger pop hit with it, inspiring a practise that will reach its peak in the following year.

Summer 1954

The Midnighters' (formerly known as the Royals) "Work With Me Annie" becomes the focal point of an outcry against "dirty lyrics" in R&B records; the fight is led by mainstream music publishing conglomerate ASCAP.

Fall 1954

Starting on the West Coast, [the Penguins](#)' "Earth Angel (Will You Be Mine)", a crudely recorded love song with youthfully innocent lyrics, becomes a gigantic hit. At the same time a group called Shirley Gunter and "the Queens" scores the first R&B hit by an all-girl group with "Oop Shoop", and the first vocal group albums - of the 10inch variety - as was common at the time - appear, featuring the Midnighters and the Dominoes. The first vocal-group EP, featuring the Orioles, is also issued.

1955

White pop acts from Pat Boone to the Fontane Sisters scramble to record homogenized versions of black doo wop and R&B hits; their effort would be successful for about a year, until, thanks to the efforts of DJs like Alan Freed, the black groups hit on their own and vanquish the white "cover" versions. At the same time R&B vocal groups proliferate and take an even bigger share of the R&B market. The Orioles and Dominoes no longer dominate the charts; their place are taken by the Drifters, Turbans, Robins, Jacks, Cardinals, Nutmegs, and many more. [The Moonglows](#)' "Sincerely", and [the Platters](#)' "Only You" - followed by "The Great Pretender" in 1956, become super-standards - recorded by the new "super-groups".

Early 1955

After calling his radio program *The Moondog Show* for a few years, Alan Freed is forced to change the name when a street poet with the same name sues. The show now becomes *The Rock 'N' Roll Party*, and the phrase enters the popular vernacular.

(Arthur Lee Maye and the Crows)

Summer 1955

Bill Haley and his Comets' "(We're Gonna) Rock Around The Clock", seen in the film *Blackboard Jungle*, crystallizes the public perception of "teenagers" and the new "Rock 'n' Roll" music

Late 1955

The Robins enter the R&B chart (followed by the pop charts in early 1956) with "Smokey Joe's Cafe". Lead singer Carl Gardner (since 1954) and original bass lead Bobby Nunn leave the group after this recording to form the Coasters in Los Angeles (with Billy Guy singing baritone, and Leon Hughes, tenor) in October.

Early 1956

Rock 'n' Roll rear sits head, and the world will never be the same. Frank Sinatra and Mitch Miller are baffled by the new music. Youngsters Frankie Lyman and the Teenagers rock the pop world with their own composition "[Why Do Fools Fall In Love](#)" on George Goldner's new Gee label. At the same time some country yokel named Elvis Presley also makes a minor impression on the world. The Five Satins' basement-recorded "In The Still Of The Nite" will become one of the two or three most popular "doo wop oldies" of all time.

1957

A trend that really picks up steam is the acquisition of hit master recordings by larger labels from smaller ones. Dot picks up the Dell-Vikings from Fee Bee, Chess the Tune Weavers from Casa Grande, George Goldner the Dubs from Johnson, and so on. The Dell-Vikings, a racially integrated vocal group, become the first such aggregation to have a pop hit, "[Come Go With Me](#)". Goldner breaks with the Roulette Records group and forms two new labels, Gone and End - soon only recording vocal groups with hit after hit. The Flamingos' "I Only Have Eyes For You" of 1958, the most famous.

Fall 1957

The Bobbettes and the Chantels become the first female doo wop groups to score national hits, with "Mr. Lee" and "Maybe" respectively. In late 1957 Jerry Leiber & Mike Stoller, soon followed by the Coasters, move to New York. Carl and Billy are now joined by veteran West Coast residents Will "Dub" Jones (bass from the [Jacks/Cadets](#)) and Cornell Gunter (from [the Flairs](#), who actually was featured in the very first lineup of the Platters in 1952/53 - before Tony Williams entered).

1958

A number of formerly successful independent R&B labels, including Specialty, Modern, and Aladdin begin their decline.

Spring 1958

Dion and the Belmonts become the first white group to hit the pop Top 40 with a doo wop sound with their single "I Wonder Why".

Summer 1958



The Fiestas

Groups like the Impressions, Falcons, and Fiestas (the latter with a revival of "So Fine" on Old Town) begin heading toward a more gospel-oriented sound that eventually will be called "soul music".

Summer 1959

The first *Oldies But Goodies* compilation album is released, primarily featuring doo wop hits from a few years earlier, and becomes a best-seller on Original Sound. At the same time the newly formed "second version" of [the Drifters](#) score the first R&B pop hit to feature a prominent string (violin) arrangement, "There Goes My Baby" (with Benjamin Earl Nelson, lead - later known as Ben E. King).

Fall 1959

The payola hearings investigating payoff to DJs in exchange for airplay, send a number of DJs on a downward career course, most notably Alan Freed, who will never really recover, and die a broken man a few years later.

1960

Motown releases its first records by the Miracles, who score a #1 R&B hit (#2 pop) with "Shop Around" on the Tamla label.

Early '60s

The first "oldies" stores are founded in the New York and Philadelphia areas. The Record Museum debuts in Philly while the Relic Rack is formed in New Jersey. A few years later House of Oldies will be established in Manhattan.

1961-1963

White vocal groups like the Capris, 4 Seasons, and Jay & the Americans, mostly Italian-American, begin hitting the charts with a style reminiscent of the black groups of the mid-'50s.

December 1963 - January 1964

The Beatles hit with "I Want To Hold Your Hand" and turn the pop music industry upside down. Although soul music (e.g. the Temptations and the Supremes) will continue and grow throughout the '60s, doo wop as a hit style dies. Manhattan Transfer and the Persuasions modernize doo wop in the '70s and help keep it in the public eye.

Doo Wop Oldies Circuit Today

All of the most successful doo wop groups still show up on various oldies shows. Even if most - or all - of the original members have died. The groups have splintered into several off-shoots ever since the Ink Spots declined. The Platters, who had their last hit with original lead Tony Williams in 1960 ("Harbor Lights") and later scored some more with Sonny Turner, have turned into at least 20 off-shoots (probably even more) through the years.



The Great R&B Pioneers

LABEL SHOTS

of the "HIT ISSUES" of
THE FAVORITE
DOO WOP SONGS

- see page 91 for the other 25 favorites.

Section One:

Records listed in order
of entering the
R&B and / or Pop charts.
Next session - the non-charters



The Great R&B Pioneers



The Great R&B Pioneers



My Favorite Doo Wop CD

Specialty spcd 7921-1 (1992)
 A truly rare compilation, featuring 28 tracks, acquired by Specialty (most of the tracks are from the Ebb years - that is recordings for Art Rupe's ex-wife during the prime years). The compilation almost covers the group's whole career (1951 - 1959, from "Tabarin" to "Romance In The Dark") with several previously unissued songs. Billy Vera compiled, produced and wrote great liner notes. Songs recorded as The Four Flames, David Ford & the Ebbettes and especially the Hollywood Flames. Bobby Day is not featured much, but David Ford, Gaynel Hodge, and Earl Nelson are.

LABEL SHOTS
 of the "NON-CHARTERS"
 of the "CLASSIC"
FAVORITE DOO WOP
SONGS

Section Two:
 Records listed in approximative
 order of recording dates.











The Great R&B Pioneers



The Great R&B Pioneers

Doo Wop - Part Nine: These also "qualify" as important "doo wop" classics!

As you may have noticed I have concentrated my list on African-American male groups – although (mostly Italian-American) white groups also entered the doowop craze. When compiling a list of the most important doo wop songs and using your own judgement, one can miss some of the ones who others would have listed (e.g. the Dell-Vikings "Come Go With Me", several girl-groups recordings, and songs by Dion & the Belmonts).. Anyone who tries to get the most important ones on a list of 100 or 200 songs is sure to miss lots – there are thousands of vocal group songs out there from which to choose. Anyhow, here are six more who many would have listed among their favorites. Well - now you have a total of 125 songs covering "doo wop" history presented.

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| <p>Burn That Candle – The Cues - Capitol 8/1955</p>   <p><i>lead Jimmy Breedlove</i></p> <p>top Robie Kirk (aka Winfield Scott – successful songwriter), Ollie Jones (from the original Ravens), <i>bot fr fr</i> Edward Barnes, Abel De Costa, and Jimmy Breedlove. This group "specialized" in supporting solo stars (mainly Atlantic), but had several recordings of their own.</p> | <p>Why Do Fools Fall In Love – The Teenagers Featuring Frankie Lymon - Gee ca 11/1955</p>   <p>Jimmy Merchant, Herman Santiago, Joe Negroni, Sherman Gardnes, and <i>center front lead</i> Frankie Lymon</p> | <p>Lama Rama Ding Dong – The Edsels – Dub 1957/58 reissued as Rama Lama Ding Dong - Twin 4/1961</p>   <p>Dub got the title wrong. George "Wydel" Jones Jr (<i>lead</i>), Larry Green, James Reynolds, Harry Green, and Marshall Sewell (<i>Jones prob center</i>).</p> |
| <p>Stay - Maurice Williams & the Zodiacs – Herald ca 7/1960</p>   <p>Mauricie Williams (former lead of the Gladiolas), Wiley Bennett, Henry Gaston, Charles Thomas, Willie Morown (dms), and Albert Hill (dbl bass). <i>lead Williams (also piano)</i></p> | <p>Peanut Butter – The Marathons – Arvee ca 3/1961 same master on Argo 5/1961 and Chess this is actually the Vibrations – and a "remake" of the Olympics "Hully Gully"</p>   <p>top Carl Fisher, Ricky Owens, <i>bot fr l</i> Don Bradley, Dave Govan, and James Johnson (producer on Arvee H.B. Barnum) <i>lead</i> Carl Fisher</p> | <p>My Girl Sloopy - The Vibrations – Atlantic 1/1964 Most likely audience dub</p>   <p>Carl Fisher, Dave Govan, James Johnson, Don Bradley, and Ricky Owens. This was a big hit later by the McCoys as "Hang On Sloopy". <i>lead</i> Carl Fisher</p> |



SOLOMON BURKE
– The King of Rock 'N' Soul
The Atlantic Recordings 1962 – 1968. (Aug 2020)

The true ultimate CD of Solomon Burke, covering all of his available masters from 1960 – on - including the ones bought from Singular) up to and including his one with the Soul Clan, all known alternates, all non-LP survivors, all tracks from his last Atlantic LP ("I Wish I Knew") from 1965, plus all tracks of his earlier five albums on Atlantic. Simply a must for all Burke-fans, with a great essay by Bob Fisher (from Jasmine). A true Soul Icon. It's on SoulTime Records 3CD-set QSMCR 5193T.



ARETHA FRANKLIN
– Aretha
4-set CD SoulTime & Rhino - due November 20

Among the collection's 81 remastered tracks, 19 are making their CD and digital debuts, including alternate versions of classic hits, demos, rarities, and live tracks, like her stunning performance of '(You Make Me Feel) Like A Natural Woman' at The 38th Annual Kennedy Center Honors in 2015. To put Franklin's life and career into perspective, the collection is accompanied by liner notes written by Rochelle Riley, author and director of arts and culture for the City of Detroit, and David Nathan, a music journalist and soul historian who interviewed Franklin more times than any other living writer. Similar but not same as Rhino's box from 2014.



The Great R&B Pioneers

THE HAND-PICKED COASTERS - forming the 33 first years of the group

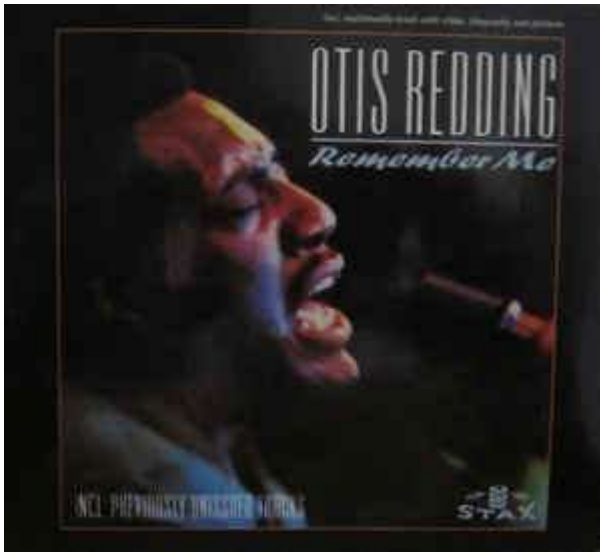
All of the members of the original Coasters have been head-hunted "professionals" (almost veterans) - joining the Coasters. Just take a look at this chart!

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| <p>Carl Gardner</p>  <p>Bobby Nunn</p>  <p>Billy Guy</p>  <p>Leon Hughes</p>  <p>Cornell Gunter</p>  <p>Will "Dub" Jones</p>  <p>Earl Carroll</p>  <p>Ronnie Bright</p>  <p>Jimmy Norman</p>  | <p>Pre-Coasters recordings and group member of:</p> <p>The Robins on March 1954 – July 1955 recordings in Los Angeles Singing lead on such classics as "Loop De Loop Mambo", "I Must Be Dreamin' 1954 and "Smokey Joe's Cafe" b/w "Just Like A Fool" 1955 (all for Spark Records).</p> <p>The Robins on 1948 – July 1955 recordings in Los Angeles Singing lead on a.o. "My Baby Done Told Me" (as the Four Bluebirds on Excelsior 1948), "If It's So Baby" (Savoy), "Around About Midnight" (Score), "Double Crossing Blues" (co-lead with Little Esther on Savoy), and "Our Romance Is Gone" (Savoy), - all four recorded in 1949, "That's What The Good Book Says" (Modern 1950), "Get It Off Your Mind" (RCA 1953), "The Hatchet Man", possibly "Riot In Cell Block #9", and "Framed" (all three on Spark in 1954). Solo recs for a.o. Hamptone, Blue and Dootone (1950-51), and duet with Little Esther again (for Federal in 1952).</p> <p>Bip & Bop Southern California duo 1954 - 1955 recording "Ding Dong Ding" and "Du-Wada-Du" (Aladdin) with Mexican Emmanuel Perez and Johnny's Combo (Johnny Otis) on March 25, 1955.</p> <p>The Lamplighters Los Angeles group 1952 (original non-recording member)</p> <p>The (Four) Flames ca late 1952 - 1953 later known as the Hollywood Flames Participates on the Flames' recordings for Aladdin and 7/11 Records. His classmate Willie Ray Rockwell of the Four Flames joins the Lamplighters (Federal), as Hughes shortly replaces him in the group, succeeded by Gaynel Hodge in mid 1953. Recording with the Celebrity's, and the Signeals in 1956 (his own groups).</p> <p>The Flamingoes (known as The Platters from September 1953) 1952 – early 1953 (Los Angeles group - no recordings) This group doing back-up works as the Flamingoes, before they were the Platters on "Nervous Man Nervous" (Federal) in July, 1953 for Big Jay McNeely (probably without Gunter, but Gaynel and Alex Hodge, David Lynch, Herb Reed, and probably the new lead singer Tony Williams).</p> <p>The Debonairs, known as The Flairs from 1953 - L.A. recs late 1952 – 1955 Leads "I Had A Love" as the Hollywood BlueJays in December 1952, and re-recording it for Flair Records as the Flairs - see page 91 - (issued July 1953), "Hold Me, Thrill Me, Chill Me" (1954), "My Darling, My Sweet" (1955) and others (as the Flairs for Flair with Gunter, Richard Berry, Young Jessie, Beverly Thompson, and Pete Fox). Records with Shirley Gunter & the Flairs in 1955 (with Charles Jackson repl Thompson, and Randy Jones replacing Richard Berry) and as Cornell Gunter and the Flairs, "She Loves To Rock", for ABC-Paramount in 1956.</p> <p>The Ermines on 1956 – 1957 recs in L.A. (some recorded as Cornell Gunter & the Flairs) incl "True Love" on Loma in 1956. A great rendition of "You Send Me" (as Cornell Gunter on Dot in 1957) and more solo recordings for Liberty and Eagle. Subbing on stage with the Platters shortly in 1957.</p> <p>Santa Monica Soul Seekers ca 1952-1954 gospel group (no recs), becoming The Cadets on 1955 -1957 recordings in Los Angeles for Modern</p> <p>The Jacks same group for RPM (Modern sub) with Lloyd McCraw (soon the group's manager, and Pete Fox from the Flairs replacing), Willie Davis, Aaron Collins, Ted Taylor (soon going solo), and "Dub" - singing lead on a.o. the following "covers": "Smack Dab In The Middle" (the Jacks 1955), "Heartbreak Hotel", "Stranded In The Jungle", "Dancin' Dan", "I Got Loaded", and "Fools Rush In" (1956). Also leads "Love Bandit", and as Will Jones & the Cadets for Modern in 1957 - "Hands Across The Table". The group backs Young Jessie on "Mary Lou" in 1955 for Modern, and Richard Berry on several recs. Jones was not on any Bobby Day/Crescendos recording, but sings with Jesse Belvin on some recordings for Modern in late 1957.</p> <p>The Carnations 1954 (no recordings) - soon known as The Cadillacs recordings 1954 – mid 1961 in New York City Sings lead on a.o the following Josie recordings: "Gloria" (1954), "Speedoo" (1955), "Woe Is Me" and "That's All I Need" (1957), "Speedo Is Back" (1958), "Copy Cat" (1959), "Tell Me Today" and "Rock 'N' Roll Is Here To Stay" (1960).</p> <p>The Dreamers 1954 (male New York vocal group unreleased) - soon known as The Valentines on 1954 – 1957 recs - BigTown and Rama ("Lily Maebelle" 1955).</p> <p>Speedo and the Cadillacs on early 1960 recordings for Josie Session work behind Barry Mann "Who Put The Bomp" (ABC-Par 1961), Jackie Wilson "Baby Workout" (Brunswick), and Johnny Cymbal "Mr. Bass Man" in 1963.</p> <p>Ronnie and The Schoolmates on Coed in 1965 - "Don't, Don't, Don't (Dropout)" c/w "Just Born". Toures with the Deep River Boys 1964 - early 1968 (imaged).</p> <p>The Chargers 1958 – 1959 (Jesse Belvin's protege group for RCA in L.A.) Leads "Here In My Heart", rec October 1, 1958. The Chargers were not Belvin's RCA backup.</p> <p>The Dyna-Sores 1960 lead with a cover of "Alley Oop" in L.A. (Rendezvous) Does a great "Here Comes The Night" issued in Febr 1961 on H.B. Barnum's Good Sound label in L.A. - A Super One! Has two hits as a soloist, "I Don't Love You No More" (on Little Star 1962 in Los Angeles) and "Can You Blame Me" (on Samar 1966 in New York). Makes more than 20 singles as a solist, and does songwriting and production works in his New York studio during several years in the mid/late 1960s. Rewrites "Time Is On My Side" for Irma Thomas in 1964, records with Jimmy Hendrix in New York in 1966 and works with Bob Marley in Bronx in 1968.</p> | <p>Members of the original Coasters PROVING THE QUALITY !</p>  <p>Carl Gardner From October 12, 1955</p>  <p>Bobby Nunn Oct 1955 – late 1957</p>  <p>Billy Guy Oct 1955 – 1972</p>  <p>Leon Hughes Oct 1955 – late 1957</p>  <p>Cornell Gunter Dec 1957 – May 1961</p>  <p>Will "Dub" Jones Dec 1957 – Jan 1968</p>  <p>Earl "Speedo" Carroll June 1961 – late 1979</p>  <p>Ronnie Bright April 1968 – Nov 1909</p>  <p>Jimmy Norman subbing from 1969 / member 1973 - Febr 1988</p>  |
|--|--|--|



The Great R&B Pioneers

Otis Redding – "Remember Me" - an extra CD – even if you have his "Soul Manifesto" box!



22 unissued takes from Redding's career on SCD-8572-2 (and several other catnumbers) with alternate takes, unissued masters, alternates and outtakes throughout his Stax period. A super-interesting compilation to add to your Redding collection. This album has been issued ever since 1992 in different forms and shapes (also as "It's Just Sentimental" with a few lesser tracks).



Amendment to "Top Rhythm & Blues Records" volume of the R&B Pioneers series:

page 14



1968 – Editor's Favorite - Try It Baby

with Melvin Franklin, Diana Ross, and Paul Williams lead singers - and a great arrangement by H.B. Barnum (featuring the Temptations and the Andantes), recorded in Hollywood in September 1968 (written by Berry Gordy for Marvin Gaye in 1964 – recorded by him with the Temptations backing vcls). Dennis Edwards had by now replaced Ruffin in the Temptations, but note the super-great lead by Paul Williams at the end (and that the Andantes most prob. replaced the Supremes on this).



René Hall (1912 – 1988) – guitarist, arranger, conductor, talent scout

René Hall is quite possibly the most underrated musician in America's pop and blues history. As a guitarist he was certainly amongst the very best and is as equally important as an arranger and conductor on myriad classic pop, rock and R&B recordings to come out of Los Angeles (and some also in other cities). Here is a list of classic r&b songs in which he participated (in one way or another) published by Blues & Rhythm magazine. One learns all the time (I really didn't know all of this).

(based on wikipedia): Born in Morgan City, Louisiana, René Hall first recorded in 1933 as a banjo player with Joseph Robichaux in New Orleans. He then worked around the country as a member of the Ernie Fields Orchestra, with whom he made his earliest recordings. In the group he was known by the nickname *Lightnin'*. Later he joined Earl Hines as musical arranger. During the 1940s as a black musician, he built up a considerable reputation as a session musician in New York City. In the late 1940s, he formed his own sextet which recorded for various labels including Jubilee, Decca, and RCA. He also worked as a talent scout for King Records, discovering such acts as Billy Ward and the Dominoes.

In the mid-1950s, Hall moved to Los Angeles, California, and began doing session work with famed saxophone player, Plas Johnson, pianist Ernie Freeman, and drummer Earl Palmer including Ernie Field's rock version of "In The Mood" in 1959 prob with Ernie Freeman at the piano (Freeman was the original tack pianist on **B. Bumble & the Stingers** on "Bumble Boogie" in 1961, with Fields poss the "regular" pianist). Hall, Johnson, Palmer, Freeman and Fields recorded for many of the emerging rock and roll and R&B artists on such labels as Aladdin, Rendezvous (the Leon and Otis René label house band), and Specialty Records. In 1958, Hall recorded the electric bass track using a Danelectro Baritone guitar on the Ritchie Valens hit, "La Bamba", with Buddy Clarke on the upright acoustic bass. He worked with the Impressions, and Lou Rawls.

Throughout his career, Hall was the featured guitarist on such tracks as "Number 000" (Otis Blackwell), "That's It" (Babette Bain), "Cincinnati Fireball" (Johnny Burnette), "Chattanooga Choo Choo" (Ernie Fields), "In The Mood" (Ernie Fields), "Hippy Hippy Shake" (Chan Romero), and "Dizzy Miss Lizzy" (Larry Williams). He also released numerous recordings as both René Hall and the René Hall Orchestra. Hall arranged Ike & Tina Turner's 1963 album *Don't Play Me Cheap*. He also arranged some of Sam Cooke's best-known recordings including the 1964 song, "A Change Is Gonna Come", in which Hall devised a dramatic arrangement with a symphonic overture for strings, kettledrum, and French horn. He also prepared arrangements for many of Motown's most successful artists including Marvin Gaye. Rene also was an advocate for up and coming new groups. He came into Bill Withers' Tiki Studios in San Jose and worked out the arrangements for two of San Francisco's own Cordial Band. He arranged "Wave" and "A Special Love" written by Raymond Coats and Danny Dinio. He also played guitar on Marvin Gaye's "Let's Get It On" and did a lot of work for Bobby Womack. René Hall died of heart disease in Los Angeles, California at the age of 75. The list below is just a short one of some of the classics he worked on.

The Dominoes (Federal 1950-51)
Do Something For Me
Sixty-Minute Man
René Hall Orchestra (Specialty 1957)
Flippin'
Sam Cooke (1957)
You Send Me (Keen)
I'll Come Running Back To You (Specialty)
Larry Williams (Specialty) (1958)
Slow Down
Don & Dewey (Specialty) (1958)
Justine
Ritchie Valens (Del-Fi 1958)
Donna / La Bamba
Ed Townsend (Capitol 1959)
For Your Love



List from "Blues & Rhythm" magazine (Steve Propes)

Hank Ballard & The Midnighters (King 1959)
The Twist
Larry Bright (Tidd 1960)
Mojo Workout (Dance!)
Ray Charles
Hit The Road Jack (ABC-Par 1961)
(Night Time Is) The Right Time (Atlantic 1958)
Sam Cooke (RCA)
Bring It On Home To Me (1962)
Cupid (1961)
The Righteous Brothers (Moonglow 1962)
Little Latin Lupe Lu
Johnnie Morissette (SAR 1962)
Meet Me At The Twistin' Place
James Brown (King 1963)
Prisoner Of Love

The first two attempts at "Twist and Shout"

(written by Phil Medley and Burt Berns aka Burt Russell)

The Top Notes - [Atlantic 2115](#) - issued in August, 1961
recorded in New York City February 23, 1961



arr/dir by Teddy Randazzo, produced/supervised by Phil Spector with Howard Guyton (lead vocal left) and Derek Martin (second vcl). They had been members of the Pearls from Detroit, also featuring David Clowney (later known as Dave "Baby" Cortez). Here the Cookies probably are the girl vocal backing (poss Dorothy Jones, Earl-Jean McCrea and Margaret Ross). Further male vocals may be present.

Musicians: King Curtis, tenorsax; Ernie Hayes, pno/org; John "Bucky" Pizarelli and Alen Hanlon, gtrs; Abie Baker, bs; Panama Francis and Gary Chester, dms; Phil Kraus (xyl).
No charting.

The Isley Brothers - [Wand 124](#) - issued in May, 1962
recorded in New York City early 1962



arr/dir by Teacho Wiltshire, produced by Burt Russell with Ronald (lead vocal), O'Kelly and Rudolph Isley.

Musicians; King Curtis, tenorsax; Eric Gale, Trade Martin, and Cornell Dupree, gtrs; Paul Griffin, piano; Chuck Rainey; bs; and Gary Chester, dms

Entered the Billboard Hot R&B Sides chart on June 16, 1962 – peaking at #2 for two weeks (Pop Billboard #17, Cash Box #7):

The Platters and Friends at Little Darlin's in Orlando in 1988. In this Paul Robi Platters video featuring baritone Robi and tenor Elmer Hopper (Robi died the following year, of a sudden cancer) we also find a terrific rendition of "Young Blood" – after 8:10 by the Coasters (with Carl Gardner, Jimmy Norman and Ronnie Bright). Look and Listen!!! And also several other nostalgia Friends!

A couple of corrections

- * to **Top Rhythm & Blues Records (01)** page 16: Add to Editor's Favorites 1961 "Here Comes The Night" by Jimmy Norman.
- * to **the Amendments volume (13B)** pages 2 and 3: Sonny Terry died in 1986. "Blues All Around Me" co-writer is David Ritz.

THE GOLDEN '50s - "TOP 30" R&B PERFORMERS

RHYTHM & BLUES according to Big Al Pavlow's "The R&B Book"

Based on R&B recordings' popularity in R&B and Pop "markets". **Edited with Rankings for 1949** included in the Blues & Rhythm Years.

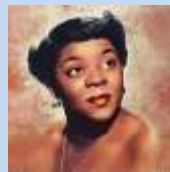
(1949 – 1954: performers with 2,000+ "ranking points", 1955 – 1959: performers with 3,000+ "ranking points"). *Imaged: positions 1-6.*

Note: Fats Domino, Clyde McPhatter, and the Drifters are the only performers "top-ranked" in both charts below.

The Blues & Rhythm Years 1949 – 1954



1. **Amos Milburn**
2. The Clovers
3. Ruth Brown
4. Johnny Otis Orch
5. Dinah Washington
6. Louis Jordan
7. Charles Brown
8. The Dominoes
9. Joe Turner
10. B. B. King
11. Fats Domino
12. Roy Brown
13. The Orioles
14. Johnny Ace
15. Joe Morris Orch
16. Clyde McPhatter w. the Drifters
17. The Midnighters



The Rock 'n' Roll Years 1955 – 1959



1. **Fats Domino**
2. The Platters
3. Chuck Berry
4. Little Richard
5. Clyde McPhatter
6. The Coasters
7. Ray Charles
8. LaVern Baker
9. Lloyd Price
10. Sam Cooke
11. Brook Benton
12. Jackie Wilson
13. The Drifters
14. Bill Doggett
15. Chuck Willis
16. Little Willie John



THE GOLDEN '50s - TOP ARTISTS YEAR-BY-YEAR

RHYTHM & BLUES according to Big Al Pavlow's "The R&B Book"

Based on R&B performers' charted recordings in R&B and Pop "markets". (1960 from Joel Whitburn - approx)

| | | | |
|---|--|---|--|
| <p>1949 top label: Aladdin</p>   <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Amos Milburn 2. Charles Brown 3. Louis Jordan 4. The Orioles 5. Wynonie Harris 6. Bull Moose Jackson 7. Paul Williams | <p>1950 top label: King</p>   <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Johnny Otis Orch 2. Larry Darnell 3. Ivory Joe Hunter 4. Roy Brown 5. Dinah Washington 6. Lowell Fulson 7. Louis Jordan | <p>1951 top label: Atlantic</p>   <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Percy Mayfield 2. The Dominoes 3. The Clovers 4. Charles Brown 5. Ruth Brown 6. Johnny Otis w. Mel Walker 7. Amos Milburn | <p>1952 top label: Atlantic</p>   <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. B. B. King 2. The Clovers 3. Lloyd Price 4. Ruth Brown 5. Rosco Gordon 6. Dinah Washington 7. The Dominoes |
| <p>1953 top label: Atlantic</p>   <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The "5" Royales 2. The Clovers 3. Willie Mabon 4. Billy Ward & His Dominoes 5. Joe Morris Orch 6. B. B. King 7. Ruth Brown | <p>1954 top label: Atlantic</p>   <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Midnighters 2. Clyde McPhatter w. the Drifters 3. Roy Hamilton 4. Faye Adams 5. Ruth Brown 6. The Clovers 7. Joe Turner | <p>1955 top label: Atlantic</p>   <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fats Domino 2. Ray Charles 3. LaVern Baker 4. The Platters 5. Chuck Berry 6. Johnny Ace 7. Roy Hamilton | <p>1956 top label: Atlantic</p>   <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fats Domino 2. The Platters 3. Little Richard 4. Frankie Lymon & the Teenagers 5. Bill Doggett 6. Little Willie John 7. Shirley & Lee |
| <p>1957 top label: Atlantic</p>   <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fats Domino 2. Little Richard 3. The Platters 4. Chuck Berry 5. The Dell Vikings 6. Larry Williams 7. The Coasters | <p>1958 top label: Chess</p>   <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Chuck Berry 2. Sam Cooke 3. The Platters 4. Chuck Willis 5. The Chantels 6. Little Richard 7. Clyde McPhatter | <p>1959 top label: Atlantic</p>   <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lloyd Price 2. Brook Benton 3. Fats Domino 4. Jackie Wilson 5. The Coasters 6. LaVern Baker 7. The Platters | <p>1960 top label: Mercuy</p>   <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Brook Benton 2. Jackie Wilson 3. Hank Ballard & the Midnighters 4. Ray Charles 5. Dinah Washington 6. The Drifters 7. Sam Cooke |








TOP Rhythm & Blues ARTISTS by Decade

Rankings from Joel Whitburn (*R&B performers limited to R&B chartings*)



the 1940s



| | | | | |
|--|--|---|---|---|
|  1. Louis Jordan |  2. King Cole Trio |  3. Ink Spots |  4. Duke Ellington |  5. Erskine Hawkins |
|--|--|---|---|---|



the 1950s



| | | | | |
|--|--|---|--|--|
|  1. Fats Domino |  2. Ruth Brown |  3. Dinah Washington |  4. The Clovers |  5. The Drifters |
|  6. B. B. King |  7. Joe Turner |  8. Little Richard |  9. Ray Charles |  10. Chuck Berry |



the 1960s



| | | | | |
|---|---|---|--|---|
|  1. James Brown |  2. Ray Charles |  3. Marvin Gaye |  4. The Temptations |  5. Bobby Bland |
|---|---|---|--|---|

Is the Larks the most "underrated" R&B vocal group?

Presented by [Marvin Goldberg](#).

THE FIRST LARKS GROUP



Clockwise from top left: Allen Bunn, Gene Mumford, Raymond Barnes, Theron Ruth, and David McNeil (front left). Sixth singer Hadie Rowe had been drafted in early 1951.

The Larks were an extraordinary group: beloved by collectors today and revered by their peers at the time. The only ones who didn't seem to idolize them were the record-buying public. Just two of their songs ("Eyesight To The Blind" and "Little Side Car") ever made the national R&B charts, and then only for a week each. And yet, the influence they had on up-and-coming groups is incalculable. The history of the Larks begins with Theron Ruth, who had formed the **Selah Jubilee Singers** in Brooklyn around 1927. By the 1940s, they were operating out of Raleigh, North Carolina and were composed of Theron Ruth, Alden ("Allen") Bunn, Junius Parker, Melvin Colden (who had been in the Norfolk Jazz Quartet and Norfolk Jubilee Quartet, starting in 1937, and whose name is often misspelled as "Coldten"), and Jimmy Gorham. The Selahs had a daily program of jubilee music that aired over WPTF in Raleigh. Sometime after the Selahs released a single secular record, as the "Cleartones" ("Cielito Lindo"/"Am I Asking Too Much" - Signature 15242 - January 1949), Theron Ruth and Allen Bunn left with the intention of forming their own gospel group. This was probably in the summer of 1949.

Allen Bunn came from Wilson, North Carolina, where there was a gospel group that had a Sunday morning radio show. Theron could hear the show in Raleigh, and he asked Allen to go around to the studio and try to recruit them. This quintet consisted of bass David McNeil, baritone Hadie Rowe, Jr., tenor Raymond "Pee Wee" Barnes, lead Freddy Rowe (Hadie's brother), and guitarist James Finch. (Unfortunately, Barnes had forgotten the name of the group.) After some negotiations, Raymond, David, and Hadie agreed to join with Theron and Allen. They called themselves the "Jubilators" (oh, if it were only that simple!). Now they were five, but there was to be one more. Back in early 1945, Theron had heard Eugene Mumford singing with the 4 Intermes, and, after meeting him, was determined to get him as a tenor lead for the Selahs. However, that goal became impossible to achieve due to some bizarre circumstances. In July 1945, Mumford had been arrested and jailed by the army Military Police. It was innocent enough at the start: the MPs were rousting people looking for marijuana. They turned him over to civilian authorities, whom he satisfied of his innocence. But just as he was leaving police headquarters, a white woman pointed at him and said "He's the one!" Subsequently re-arrested, he was charged with attempted rape, housebreaking, and assault. The case took a year to come to trial (during which time he was free on bail; he was mentioned as being part of a North Carolina tour, with blues singer Virginia Reid, that was due to start on June 1, 1946) and, in spite of an alibi, he was found guilty, a conviction that was upheld in the subsequent appeal. Sent to prison, Mumford spent two and a half years on a prison work gang maintaining the roads in North Carolina. But Gene's father never lost faith and never stopped working on his behalf along with the State Bureau of Investigation. Finally, enough evidence came to light that he was granted a full pardon from the governor of North Carolina. (This was treated as a miracle; a black man in the 1940s South being pardoned after having been accused by a white woman.) In June 1949, after having served 29 months in jail, Gene Mumford was a free man. [Note that Gene had a brother, Ira Mumford, who sang bass with the International Clavichords in Camden, New Jersey. They recorded as the Rivals, on Apollo, in 1950.]

This happy occurrence coincided with the formation of **the Jubilators**. When Theron heard that Gene had been released, he wasted no time in recruiting him for the group. (It's not that Gene could have been forgotten over the years. Each day, as Theron was heading to the radio station, he passed Gene on the work gang.) The Jubilators thus consisted of Gene Mumford (tenor), Raymond "Pee Wee" Barnes (tenor), Alden "Allen" Bunn (baritone), Hadie Rowe (baritone), Theron Ruth (baritone), and David McNeil (bass). Theron hired two teachers to get them into shape according to his standards, and for a few months they were taught how to sing together and to have stage presence. The Jubilators then competed against other gospel and jubilee groups in the state, even winning a 50 pound cake in a contest with the Selah Jubilee Singers! Finally, the Jubilators decided it was time to get on record. So all six of them piled into Bunn's car and drove up to New York. They stayed with some of Ruth's relatives on 143rd Street in Harlem and for about a week they rehearsed constantly. Then, when they were ready, they set out for what was possibly the most amazing day of recording in history: October 5, 1950.

First, they went to Jerry Blaine's Jubilee Records (at 315 West 47th Street in Manhattan).

There, they recorded four gospel songs, all released later in the month: "Why Not Today" (led by Hadie Rowe and Allen Bunn), "Down Here I've Done My Best" (Theron Ruth), "Sorrow Valley" (Allen Bunn and David McNeil) and "Since Mother's Been Gone" (Hadie Rowe; note that the song was mistitled "Since Mother's Done Gone" on the label). (The religious songs that the group recorded that day were a mixture of gospel and jubilee; I'm not an expert, so I'll just refer to all of them as "gospel.") So far, nothing unusual. However, the Jubilators were broke, and Theron had been around long enough to know that they'd never see any royalties, only up-front payments for the session. So they told Jubilee that they were the **Selah Singers**, got their money and headed across the Hudson River into New Jersey. Their first stop in New Jersey was the Braun brothers' Regal Records at 20 East Elizabeth Avenue, in Linden. This time they used the name "Jubilators," and recorded another four songs: "Mother Called My Name" and "Get On The Road To Glory" (both led by Allen Bunn), "Seek And Ye Shall Find" (led by Gene Mumford), and "I've Got Heaven On My Mind" (fronted by Hadie Rowe). Then they drove up to Newark and knocked on the door of Savoy Records (at 58 Market Street). There, they cut another four masters, this time secular tunes: "Easy Dying Blues" (led by Allen), "Got To Go Back Again" (a Korean War lament - "I just got home and I've got to go back again" - led by David McNeil), "Lonely Heart" (Gene), and "Lemon Squeezer" ("The way I squeeze your lemons is a low-down dirty shame" - not exactly a song for gospel audiences; also led by David). To further disguise their plans, the sextet called themselves the **4 Barons** on this session.

Finally, they drove back to Manhattan, to the offices of Apollo Records at 457 West 45th Street. Calling themselves the **Southern Harmonaires** this time, they were taken back to the same Mastertone Recording Studios that the "Selah Singers" had used that very morning. They laid down five gospel tracks: "Honey In The Rock" (led by Hadie), "Crucifixion" (Gene), "I'm So Glad" (Gene), "Who Will Your Captain Be" (Gene), and "Shadrack" (Allen). And then disaster struck! Someone at the studio remembered them from the Jubilee Records session that morning and spilled the beans to Apollo owner Bess Berman. Bess decided she wanted them badly enough to make a deal with the other companies. When the dust had settled, Apollo had the contract, but Jubilee, Regal, and Savoy/Regent got to issue the masters that had been recorded under the "Selah Singers," the "Jubilators," and the "4 Barons." (Incidentally, they not only changed the group's name with every session, but they also invented different names for *themselves* each time they signed on the dotted line.) In one day: seventeen masters, for four companies, under four different group names, and twenty-four personal names. That has to be some sort of record.

Now they had a real recording contract. But it wasn't quite the end of the beginning of the story. Bess Berman didn't want a gospel group; she wanted a pop or R&B group. So the Jubilators faded into history (at least for several years), and the **5 Larks** emerged (even though there were still six of them). Theron Ruth deliberately selected the name to fit in with the Ravens and Orioles, as a "bird group." As far as the other recordings they made on October 5, all of the Jubilee sides (as the Selah Singers) were released that same month. Regal issued the Jubilators' "Mother Called My Name" and "Seek And Ye Shall Find" in November 1950; "Get On The Road To Glory" and "I've Got Heaven On My Mind" in March 1951. Savoy released "Got To Go Back Again" and "Lemon Squeezer" by the "4 Barons," on their Regent subsidiary in November 1950. "Lemon Squeezer"/"Got To Go Back Again" were reviewed the week of December 2. Sometime in December 1950, they had their first Larks session for Apollo. During the month of November, they'd made the decision to move up to New York, so they were putting everything they had into this. The session produced two masters, both led by Gene: "Coffee, Cigarettes And Tears" and a cover of "My Heart Cries For You" (a hit for Guy Mitchell, Dinah Shore, and Vic Damone; but not the Larks). Released that same month, neither side even hinted at the greatness inherent in the group; actually, both sides are rather boring.



On January 18, 1951, all that was to change. The sextet returned to the studios to cut a couple of classics. With Gene on the lead once again, they laid down "It's Breaking My Heart" (a pretty ballad that Apollo chose never to issue), "When I Leave These Prison Walls," and "Hopefully Yours." The latter two songs had been written by Gene when he was in jail and show a certain hope for the future. "I'm gonna ball/When I leave these prison walls" and "Hopefully yours/That's who I long to be/Darling when I am free/To be hopefully yours." You want a mystery? OK, I'll give you one. The masters of "When I Leave These Prison Walls" and "Hopefully Yours" were entered on the books of Jubilee Records on November 30, 1950 (two and a half months *before* they were seemingly waxed for Apollo). They were entered as by the Jubilators, with the *same* master numbers that were eventually used by Apollo (AP3373 and AP3374). Also entered under that date were "Your Family Prayer" and "In My Heart," but these had Jubilee master numbers (JR8008 and JR8009). I have no idea what to make of this (other than that recording companies don't care at all about researchers), but it does fit in with the recollections of both Theron Ruth and Allen Bunn that "Hopefully Yours" was recorded *before* "My Heart Cries For You." (However, neither Theron nor Raymond remembered "Your Family Prayer" or "In My Heart.") As was the custom, the record company presented past fact as future

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accomplishment. Apollo announced the signing of the 6-man "Southern Harmonaires from North Carolina" in early January. Apollo claimed that they'd be doing religious, Pop, and blues songs. Strangely, there was no mention of the Larks. Later that month, Apollo issued **the Southern Harmonaires** "I'm So Glad"/"Who Will Your Captain Be" (songs that had been recorded on that frantic day back in October 1950).



The Larks were then booked on their first tour, probably in February. They drove down to Washington, D.C., when they lost Hadie Rowe to the army. (He'd gotten his draft notice and now couldn't continue on with the group. This is probably the reason that the "5" was dropped from the group's name by the time "Hopefully Yours" was released—even though they now actually *had* five members.) On February 14, 1951, they got national exposure by singing "Lucy Brown" on the Perry Como TV show (the *Chesterfield Supper Club*). This was a song that had been recorded in 1938 by the Norfolk Jazz Quartet (as "Suntan Baby Brown"). Therman had learned it from Melvin Coldten (of the Selah Jubilee Singers), who had also been in the Norfolk Jazz Quartet. While Therman would sing lead on the recorded version, it's Gene out in front on the Como show. (Strangely, Allen Bunn plays the guitar, but rarely opens his mouth to sing.) Sometime in March 1951, the Larks recorded "Let's Say A Prayer" (led by Gene) and "My Reverie" (Gene). Not long after, on March 27, the quintet waxed seven more tunes: first came "I Ain't Fattenin' Frogs For Snakes" (Allen and David), "Darlin'" (Gene), "What's The Matter" (Allen), "Ooh...It Feels So Good" (David), "Lucy Brown" (Therman), and "I Don't Believe In Tomorrow" (Allen and Gene; this song was given to them by bandleader Lucky Millinder.) After graciously allowing June Gardner to record a couple of masters, the Larks came back to do "Eyesight To The Blind" (a down-home blues led by Allen Bunn, who also plays a mean gut-bucket guitar). The classic from this session is, of course "My Reverie." It had been written by bandleader Larry Clinton back in 1938 (based on *Réverie* by Claude Debussy), and was the song that propelled him (and vocalist Bea Wain) to stardom. Gene didn't follow the original lyrics too closely, however. They should be: Their next TV appearance was on the *Arthur Godfrey Talent Scouts* show, where Gene Mumford led them to victory with their version of Patti Page's "Tennessee Waltz," a song that was still riding the charts. Their win entitled them to appear on Godfrey's morning variety show the next week. "Hopefully Yours," backed with "When I Leave These Prison Walls," was released in April, but doesn't seem to have been reviewed. However, "Hopefully Yours" was subsequently listed as a territorial tip in New York the week of May 5. In May, Apollo issued "My Reverie" and "Let's Say A Prayer." The record was reviewed the week of May 19, 1951, along with Roy Brown's "Wrong Woman Blues," the Cardinals' "Shouldn't I Know," Joe Turner's "Chains Of Love," and the Buddy Johnson Orchestra's version of "My Reverie" (which got a higher rating than the Larks).

The Larks appeared at the Apollo the week of June 8, 1951, along with Cab Calloway and Moms Mabley. In June, Apollo issued "Eyesight To The Blind"/"I Ain't Fattenin' Frogs For Snakes." The record was reviewed the week of June 30, 1951. The week of July 21 found "Eyesight To The Blind" to be a tip in Chicago. It was only on the national R&B charts for a single week, but it held down the #5 position.



The Larks' next session was on July 26, 1951. Only two songs were recorded this time: "Hey Little Girl" and "Little Side Car" (fronted by Allen). "Little Side Car" was a reworking of a wonderful double-entendre tune ("I'm in love with you baby/Let me ride in your automobile") that seems to have originally been done by Smokey Hogg (as "Too Many Drivers") for Modern in 1947. Other versions were by Rosetta Howard & Big Three Trio ("Too Many Drivers") on Columbia in 1948, Willie Love and His 3 Aces ("Little Car Blues") on Trumpet in 1951, Lowell Fulson ("Let Me Ride Your Little Automobile") on Swing Time in 1953, and Smiley Lewis ("Too Many Drivers") on Imperial in 1954. August saw the release of "Little Side Car"/"Hey Little Girl." Both sides got excellent reviews the week of September 8, 1951. "Little Side Car" became the Larks' second chart hit, climbing to #10. However, it too only lasted a mere week, and these were the *only* two chart hits the Larks would have!

But Apollo, smelling sales blood, wasted no time in issuing another record in September: the beautiful "I Don't Believe In Tomorrow" (which proved Allen Bunn could sing as sweet a ballad as Gene Mumford), backed with David McNeil's rocker "Ooh...It Feels So Good." Therman Ruth told Todd Baptista: "We didn't work day jobs. It was a little rough. Bess [Berman of Apollo Records] would give a loan to us once in a while. I'd tell her Gene was going to quit or something, and she'd give us a little money."

On October 18, the Larks went back into the studio and recorded four more tunes: "How Long Must I Wait For You" (led by David), "My Lost Love" (Gene sings "I've placed ads in the Lost and Found/Still, nobody's seen my lost love around), "Christmas To New Years" (Allen), and "All I Want For Christmas" (Gene). For some reason, the two Christmas songs, which were never released, never received master numbers either. However, Apollo seems to be one of those companies that assigned master numbers on some basis other than actual recording order, so they aren't completely helpful anyway. November 11 found the Larks in Cincinnati, about to kick off a Midwest tour, along with Percy Mayfield. In December 1951, Apollo released "My Lost Love"/"How Long Must I Wait For You." These were recorded the week of January 26, 1952, along with the Johnny Otis Orchestra's "Oopy Doo," the Ray-O-Vacs' "She's A Real Lovin' Baby," and the Jive Bombers' "Brown Boy." In January 1952, Apollo issued two more sides from the October 1950 "Southern Harmonaires" session: "Shadrack" and "Honey In The Rock." This time, however, they were credited to the Larks.

The last regular Larks session took place on February 18, 1952, when they waxed four ballads, all led by Gene Mumford. This has been rightfully placed in the running for the finest single session by an R&B group. The tunes recorded were: "Stolen Love," "Hold Me," "I Live True To You," and "In My Lonely Room." "Hold Me" had been written by Jack Little, Dave Oppenheim and Ira Schuster in 1933; that year it was a hit for both Eddy Duchin and Ted Fio Rito. On December 12, 1951, Allen Bunn, although still with the group, recorded several solos for Apollo: "She'll Be Sorry," "The Guy With A '45'," "Discouraged," "I Got You Covered," and "You're A Little Too Slow." The first two were released in February 1952. "The Guy With A '45'" got excellent reviews the week of March 22, 1952. Other records reviewed that week were Roscoe Gordon's "No More Doggin'," Wini Brown & Her Boyfriends' "Be Anything - Be Mine," and Calvin Boze's "Hey Lawdy, Miss Claudie." Also in February, Apollo issued "Stolen Love" and "In My Lonely Room." As beautiful as these songs were, the public wasn't buying. The record was reviewed the week of March 15, 1952, along with Joe Turner's "Sweet Sixteen," Ruth Brown's "5-10-15 Hours," the Clovers' "One Mint Julep," the Dominoes' "When The Swallows Come Back To Capistrano," Buddy Johnson's "Root Man Blues" (with vocal by Geezil Minerve), Moose Jackson's "Nosey Joe," and the Heartbreakers' "You're So Necessary To Me." For all the good it did, "Stolen Love" was a tip in New York the week of April 19. Apollo's next release, in April, was "Darlin'" and "Lucy Brown" (one of my personal favorites), the song that they'd sung on the Perry Como show a year before.

The Larks final Apollo session took place sometime in May 1952. This time they were used to back up gospel singer Mahalia Jackson on four songs: "In The Upper Room, Part 1," "In The Upper Room, Part 2," "He Said He Would," and "He's My Light." Both parts of "In The Upper Room" were released in June, but the Larks received no label credit. After this session, the disintegration began. Allen Bunn left to concentrate on his solo career and Raymond Barnes just left. By July, Gene Mumford was singing with the Golden Gate Quartet. However, since the Larks had some contractual appearances to fulfill, Gene came back, bringing baritone Orville Brooks, of the Golden Gate Quartet to replace Bunn and Barnes. Therefore, for a few appearances, the Larks were Gene Mumford, Orville Brooks, Therman Ruth, and David McNeil. Once those obligations had been satisfied, David McNeil left to join the Dominoes, and the first Larks group was history. The next Allen Bunn solo release, "Discouraged" and "I Got You Covered," were released in June, but don't seem to have been reviewed. The final Larks record came out in July 1952: "Hold Me"/"I Live True To You." The Larks record was reviewed the week of July 26. There was another Allen Bunn session held on August 20, 1952. This produced "Wine," "My Flight," "Baby I'm Gonna Throw You Out," and "Two Time Loser." "Two Time Loser" and "My Flight" were issued in September. The record was reviewed the week of October 11, 1952, along with Willie Mae Thornton's "Mischievous Boogie," Little Esther's "Mainliner," Paul Bascomb's "Mumbles Blues," Ray Charles' "I Can't Do No More," and Annie Laurie's "You Belong To Me."

This was almost the end of the line for the Larks. Around October 1952, Apollo released Mahalia Jackson's "He Said He Would" (the flip was a solo). Sometime in 1953, "He's My Light" was issued (coupled with a Mahalia Jackson solo). The Larks weren't given credit on either of these sides. June of 1953 saw the final Allen Bunn solos: "Baby I'm Gonna Throw You Out," backed with "Wine." There was one more record to go (although by this time the group was ancient history): in March 1958, Apollo released "Honey In The Rock" and "I'm So Glad" by the **Southern Harmonaires**, two of the songs recorded by the group back in October 1950. The Larks, who had such a beautiful sound, got very little out of their singing career. With virtually no hits, appearances dried up and they had trouble finding work (a major problem when the main source of your income comes from appearances). Even when they got to perform, the money was never enough to support a full-time career. Their managers didn't help much either; the first one was Lou Fromme, followed by Beverly Green.

This is what subsequently happened to the Larks:

- * Therman Ruth relocated back to North Carolina by the late autumn of 1952, eventually becoming a famed gospel DJ and MC (as "T. Ruth").
- * David McNeil joined the Dominoes, replacing Bill Brown (he would later be a member of Charlie Fuqua's Ink Spots for many years).
- * Gene Mumford initially joined the Golden Gate Quartet (whose other members were Orville Brooks, Clyde Riddick, Orlandus Wilson, and Glenn Burgess), then formed the second Larks group (see below). After that, he recorded the old standard "When You're Smiling" for Old Town's Whiz subsidiary with a group called the Serenaders. Finally, he ended up with the Dominoes on Liberty. After leaving them in mid-1958, he had some solo releases on Columbia and Liberty (1958-1960) before re-joining the Golden Gate Quartet for a couple of years. After that, he worked with several Ink Spots groups. Unfortunately, Gene was a drinker and that, along with diabetes finally killed him. Therman Ruth told Todd Baptista: "If Gene Mumford had lived a good life and was living today, he'd be one of the greatest. Drinking liquor killed him." On the other hand, Isaiah Bing told Todd: "He drank around us, but he always did his work. Strange as it may sound, he did better work when he had a drink. Maybe he was less inhibited."

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THE LARKS (cont'd)

* Allen Bunn continued on with his solo career, later calling himself "Tarheel Slim." (In the later 50s and into the 60s he recorded with his wife, Anna Sanford, as both "The Lovers" and as "Tarheel Slim and Little Ann.") He was also involved with the Wheelss / Federals. Note: In November 1953, Red Robin released an Allen Bunn solo called "My Kinda Woman" (which sounds much like "Eyesight To The Blind"). While Bunn himself later said that the uncredited group backing him up was the Larks, Theron Ruth said it wasn't; nor, per David Bowers (see below), was it the second Larks group. The best we can do here is possibly a "Larks" group that Gene Mumford *might* have put together for some appearances. (How's that for hedging?)

* Raymond Barnes switched careers in 1957 to become a free-lance jazz and rock 'n' roll guitarist. He became sick of the dynamics of a group, no longer wanting to depend on others to show up for rehearsals and performances.

Of the original Larks group, Gene Mumford died (age 51) on May 29, 1977, followed shortly thereafter (August 21, 1977) by Alden "Allen" Bunn (age 52). Hadie Rowe died on September 19, 1998 at age 70. Thurmon Ruth passed away on September 13, 2002, at the grand old age of 88. David McNeil (age 72) died on January 8, 2005. As of 2008, Raymond Barnes was the only one out of both Larks groups still alive.

THE SECOND LARKS GROUP



In 1953, after less than a year singing with the Golden Gate Quartet, tenor Gene Mumford decided to return to secular music. To this end he recruited fellow Gates Orville Brooks (a baritone who had also been with the Jubalaires and with the original Larks for some appearances at the end of their career) and pianist Glenn Burgess (who had been with the King Odom Quartet before joining the Gates) and set about looking for some other singers. Burgess recommended bass David "Boots" Bowers and tenor Isaiah Bing, both of whom had been members of the King Odom Quartet.

These five (including Burgess) took the name of Mumford's old unit, calling themselves **the Larks**. They then returned to Apollo Records, home of the original Larks. Bill Bing (Isaiah's brother, who had also been a member of the King Odom Quartet) was grabbed up by the Gates as a replacement for Orville Brooks. By the time of the Larks' first session, the 4 Tunes' "Marie" was a big pop hit and Apollo owner Bess Berman, feeling that this was the wave of the future, wanted her new group to develop in this vein rather than R&B. This explains the totally different sound between the two sets of Larks. At this time the Dominoes were also using a pop sound. This was an attempt to "legitimize" black groups and have them accepted by mainstream white pop audiences.

The new Larks' first session was held on January 25, 1954. They recorded four sides: "Margie" (led by Orville and Gene), "If It's A Crime" (led by Gene and David), "Tippin' In" (Orville and Gene), and "Rockin' In The Rocket Room" (Gene and David). Once again, a record company waited until after the fact to announce a group's signing: in February, Bess let it be known that the Larks were back, and that Alan Freed had called them "One of the best groups in years." The first record by the new Larks was "Margie"/"Rockin' In The Rocket Room," released in March on Apollo's new Lloyds subsidiary. Also in March, the Larks appeared at the "Festival of Music and Dance," held at Manhattan's Savoy Ballroom, and sponsored by radio station WLIB. Others on the bill were the 4 Tunes, the Harptones, Carmen Taylor, Otis Blackwell, and Slim Gaillard. In May, Bess' publicity item to the trades claimed that the Larks had gotten back together (even though Gene Mumford was the only carryover). She said she was excited over their flair for pop music.

Also in May, the Larks had two sessions for Lloyds. At the first of these (on May 4), they acted as backup for white pop singer Barbara Gale on "When You're Near," "Who Walks In When I Walk Out," "Johnny Darlin'," and "You're Gonna Lose Your Gal" (a song Jimmy Ricks had recorded, with the Benny Goodman Sextet, back in 1950). The first two of these were released in June. The other session took place on May 13, at which time they recorded "The World Is Waiting For The Sunrise" (all), "No Other Girl" (Gene), "If You Were The Only Girl In The World" (Orville), and "For The Love Of You" (Orville). "Tippin' In"/"If It's A Crime" were released in June and reviewed the week of June 19, 1954 (as

Pop tunes). In late July, the Larks appeared on the *Arthur Godfrey Talent Scouts* show, winning the competition by singing "The World Is Waiting For The Sunrise." The reaction to this was so positive that Apollo rushed to issue the song in early August, backed by "No Other Girl." There doesn't seem to have been a review of it, but Walter Winchell gave it his highest praise ("orchids") in his syndicated entertainment column. In spite of all these accolades, the song didn't sell. Then it was on to the Apollo, where the Larks appeared the week of August 13, along with Ruth Brown, Willis "Gatortail" Jackson, the Hines Kids, and Pigmeat Markham.

Their last Apollo session was held on September 2, 1954; it resulted in four more tunes: "No, Mama, No" (led by Gene), "Honey From The Bee" (Gene), "Os-Ca-Lu-Ski-O" (Gene and David), and "Forget It" (all/David). When I interviewed David Bowers, he admitted that he had no idea what "Os-Ca-Lu-Ski-O" was about. While the Larks were in town to do an appearance at the Apollo Theater, they got the chance to appear in an early form of music video. They were taken to the midtown Manhattan sound stage of Studio Films, where they filmed five numbers for eventual inclusion in the movie *Rhythm & Blues Revue* ("The World Is Waiting For The Sunrise") and the *Showtime At The Apollo* TV series (all the others). Introduced by the almost painfully unfunny Willie Bryant, they sang "Without A Song" (led by Gene and David) "Danny Boy" (David and Gene), "Margie" (Orville), "The World Is Waiting For The Sunrise" (David), and "Shadrack" (Orville and Gene). "Rhythm & Blues Revue," which also featured Joe Turner, Count Basie, Ruth Brown, Faye Adams, Amos Milburn, and the Paul Williams Orchestra, finally debuted over a year later (during Christmas week 1955, at the Royal Theater in Baltimore). By that time, it was too late for the Larks to gain any value from it; they had already broken up.

"Os-Ca-Lu-Ski-O" and "Forget It" were released in October 1954, and were reviewed (as Pop tunes) the week of October 9. In November, Apollo released the other two songs by Barbara Gale and the Larks: "Johnny Darlin'" and "You're Gonna Lose Your Gal." In March 1955, the Larks appeared at the Rainbow Room in York, Pennsylvania. You'll notice that I haven't said much about the Larks' appearances. They simply didn't make it to the trade papers very often. The final Larks record was issued in June 1955, this time on the parent Apollo label. "Honey From The Bee"/"No, Mama, No" were reviewed (as R&B this time) the week of July 2, 1955, along with the Cardinals' "Come Back My Love," the Tenderfoots' "Sindy," the Jacks' "Since My Baby's Been Gone," the Meadowlarks' "Always And Always," the Smoothtones' "Bring Back Your Love," and the poorly-rated "Death Of An Angel," by Donald Woods and the Bel-Airs.

The breakup of the Larks occurred during a 1955 gig at the Apollo Theater. It was somehow rumored that Gene and Isaiah would be pulled offstage by police because of non-payment of alimony. They refused to go on and through some fancy manipulation, the Orioles finished out the week for them. This served to break up the Larks which saddened David Bowers; he always felt that it was the finest group he'd ever been with.

The recordings of the second Larks show the huge amount of talent contained in this group; it's a shame that, from an R&B standpoint, the quality of material that they got to record was so poor (only "If It's A Crime" being reminiscent of the earlier Larks to which this group must invariably be compared).

Around a year later, David Bowers joined the Argo Ravens; Gene Mumford eventually ended up with the Dominoes, singing lead on their tremendous hit of "Stardust"; and pianist Glenn Burgess went back to the Golden Gate Quartet. In 1959, Orville Brooks and David Bowers joined with Joe Van Loan (of the Ravens, Du Droppers, and Bells) and Willie Ray (of the Du Droppers) to form the Buccaneers, who toured extensively, but made no recordings. When David left, he was replaced by Bob Kornegay, the Buccaneers changed their name to the Valiants, and they recorded "Let Me Go Lover"/"Let Me Ride," released in February 1960 on the Joy label.



In addition to Gene Mumford, the rest of the second Larks group (Orville Brooks, David "Boots" Bowers, Isaiah Bing, and Glenn Burgess) are all deceased.

Unlike most groups, the Larks had two histories. When I interview singers and ask them who their inspirations were, most will mention the Larks in the same breath with the Orioles, the Ravens, the Moonglows, the Flamingos, and the 5 Keys. This is proof positive of the tremendous influence of the Larks.

By Marvin Goldberg based on interviews with Theron Ruth, Raymond Barnes, and David Bowers.

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THE LARKS DISCOGRAPHY

JUBILEE (as Selah Singers)

3002 Why Not Today? (HR/AB)/Down Here I've Done My Best (TR) - 10/50
3003 Sorrow Valley (AB/DM)/Since Mother's Done Gone (HR) - 10/50

REGAL (as Jubilators)

3301 Mother Called My Name (AB)/Seek And Ye Shall Find (GM) - 11/50
3316 Get On The Road To Glory (AB)/I've Got Heaven On My Mind (HR) - 3/5

REGENT (as 4 Barons)

1026 Lemon Squeezer (DM)/Got To Go Back Again (DM) - 11/50

UNRELEASED REGENT

Easy Dying Blues (AB)
Lonely Heart (GM)

APOLLO (as Southern Harmonaires)

237 I'm So Glad (GM)/Who Will Your Captain Be (GM) - 1/51
529 Honey In The Rock (HR)/I'm So Glad (GM) - 3/58

UNRELEASED APOLLO

Crucifixion (GM)

APOLLO (as 5 Larks)

1177 Coffee, Cigarettes And Tears (ALL/GM)/My Heart Cries For You (GM) - 12/50
1184 My Reverie (GM)/Let's Say A Prayer (GM) - 5/51

APOLLO (as Larks)

1180 When I Leave These Prison Walls (GM)/Hopefully Yours (GM) - 4/51
1184 My Reverie (GM)/Let's Say A Prayer (GM) - 5/51
427 Eyesight To The Blind (AB)/I Ain't Fattenin' Frogs For Snakes (AB/DM) - 6/51
429 Little Side Car (AB)/Hey Little Girl (ALL) - 8/51
430 I Don't Believe In Tomorrow (AB/GM)/Ooh...It Feels So Good (DM) - 9/51
435 My Lost Love (GM)/How Long Must I Wait For You (DM) - 12/51
1189 Shadrack (AB)/Honey In The Rock (HR) - 1/52
1190 Stolen Love (GM)/In My Lonely Room (GM) - 2/52
437 Lucy Brown (TR)/Darlin' (GM) - 4/52
262 In The Upper Room, Pt 1 (MJ)/Pt 2 (MJ) - ca. 6/52
1194 Hold Me (GM)/I Live True To You (GM) - 7/52
269 He Said He Would (MJ)/God Spoke To Me - Mahalia Jackson] - ca. 10/52
304 He's My Light (MJ)/If You Just Keep Still - Mahalia Jackson] - 53

UNRELEASED APOLLO

Christmas To New Year's (AB)
All I Want For Christmas (GM)
What's The Matter (AB)
It's Breaking My Heart (GM)



LLOYDS

108 Margie (OB/GM)/Rockin' In The Rocket Room (GM/DB) - 3/54
110 If It's A Crime (GM/DB)/Tippin' In (OB/GM) - 6/54
111 When You're Near (BG)/Who Walks In When I Walk Out (BG) - 6/54
112 No Other Girl (GM)/The World Is Waiting For The Sunrise (ALL) - 8/54
114 Os-Ca-Lu-Ski-O (GM/DB)/Forget It (ALL/DB) - 10/54
115 Johnny Darlin' (BG)/You're Gonna Lose Your Gal (BG) - 11/54

APOLLO

475 Honey From The Bee (GM)/No, Mama, No (GM) - 6/55

UNRELEASED LLOYDS

If You Were The Only Girl In The World (OB)
For The Love Of You (OB)

FILMED FOR *Rhythm & Blues Revue* and *Showtime At The Apollo* in 1954

Without A Song (GM/DB)
Danny Boy (DB/GM)
Shadrack (OB)
The World Is Waiting For The Sunrise (DB)
Margie (OB/GM)

LEADS: GM = [Gene Mumford](#); AB = Allen Bunn; HR = Hadie Rowe, Jr.; TR = Theron Ruth; DM = David McNeil; OB = Orville Brooks; DB = David Bowers; MJ = Mahalia Jackson, backed by the (first) Larks; BG = Barbara Gale, backed by the (second) Lark

TWO WONDERFUL *BIG*, GREAT BOOKS



Nothing But the Blues – The Music and the Musicians

Editor: Lawrence Cohn, Abbeville Press (1993, rev ed 1999), 432 pgs (10,9 inch high)

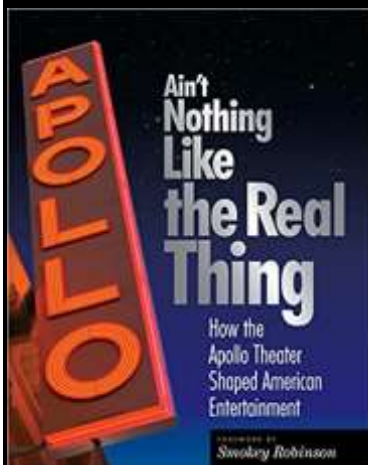
With chapters written by Samuel Charters, David Evans, Richard K. Spottswood, Mark A. Humphrey, Bruce Bastin, Charles Wolfe, John H Cowley, Barry Pearson, Jim O'Neal, and Mary Katherine Aldin. Foreword by B. B. King.

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Ain't Nothing Like the Real Thing – How the Apollo Theater shaped American Entertainment

Editors: Richard Karlin and Kinshasha Holman Conwill, Smithsonian Books (2010), 264 pgs

Featuring 26 interesting contributors. Foreword by Smokey Robinson.

A Must-Have for music lovers. (11,35 inch high)

The Apollo Theater has provided a stage for performers and a setting for the creativity of black American music that has hugely influenced American music in general. Recognizing the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Apollo Theater, this book offers essays by entertainment historians, critics, and journalists chronicling the legacy of the storied theater. The Apollo opened in Harlem in 1934 when black musicians faced severe limitations on where they could perform and how far their careers might go. Long before American Idol, the Apollo was offering a chance for talented amateurs to launch their careers, among them, Ella Fitzgerald, Sarah Vaughan, James Brown, Dionne Warwick, the Jackson Five, and others. Contributors recall memorable performances, tributes, and rallies, including a celebration of the election of Barack Obama. Photographs enhance this history of the Apollo, which is set against the backdrop of historical changes in musical styles and genres, from burlesque to bebop to rhythm and blues to hip hop, as well as the social and racial changes as segregation ebbed and black music went mainstream. Music lovers and historians will appreciate this tribute. -- *Vanessa Bush*

The Great R&B Pioneers

From Galen Gart's **FIRST PRESSINGS - August 1953** (plus unca marvy, 45.cat, and wikipedia)

16 Year-Olds Produce Disk Click for Flair

HOLLYWOOD, Aug. 1—Latest phenomenon in these parts is the growing popularity of a quintet of youngsters known as "The Flairs." The group's members, all 16 years of age, attend Jefferson High School here. They have no professional voice training and are still in their third year of high school.



THE FLAIRS

Group was picked up and put on wax by young Joe Bihari, of the well known Bihari recording family. He soon realized the possibilities of the group and signed them to a two-year contract. Their first two sides, "I Had a Love" and "She Wants to Rock," were recently released on the Flair label.

The Flairs will make their first professional appearance at the upcoming Gene Norman jazz concert at the Shrine Auditorium, Hollywood. The lads, Obie Jessie, Cornelius Gunter, Thomas Fox, Beverly Thomson and Richard Berry, write their own material.

Flair's sister label, Modern, is currently hot with Johnny Moore's "Dragnet Blues" with Frankie Ervin on the vocal.



Issued in July for Modern Records' new subsid Flair, recorded in the spring of 1953. Originally recorded for John Dolphin's Recorded in Hollywood in circa December 1952 - when the group called themselves the Debonairs (issued in January, 1953) as by the Hollywood Blue Jays and later reissued in 45rpm speed - *image prob bootleg*. Song is written by Young Jessie, but both versions have Cornell Gunter singing lead.

Left image fr l: Beverly Thompson, Richard Berry (born April, 1935), Cornelius "Cornell" Gunter (born November 1936 - some files say 1938), Thomas "Pete" Fox, and Obie "Young" Jessie (born December 1936) - all attending Jefferson High in 1953. See the Flairs' origins as the Flamingos and the Platters at [The Flairs by unca marvy](#).

















TWELVE - carefully selected - 1950s BLUES GIANTS CLASSICS

- with rec dates - and youtube links + some live [bonus incl X](#)

| | | | |
|---|---|--|---|
| <p>1950 April 19 in Cincinnati</p> <p>Roy Brown</p> | <p>1952 Dec 1951 in Los Angeles</p> <p>T-Bone</p> | <p>1953 May 12 in New Orleans</p> <p>Big Joe</p> | <p>1954 January 7 in Chicago</p> <p>Muddy</p> |
| <p>1954 Sept 27 in Dallas</p> <p>Lowell</p> | <p>1954 October 5 in Chicago X</p> <p>Walter J.</p> | <p>1956 January in Chicago</p> <p>the Wolf</p> | <p>1956 March 17 in Chicago X</p> <p>JLH</p> |
| <p>1956 April/May in Little Rock X</p> <p>Blues Boy</p> | <p>1957 April 3 in Chicago</p> <p>Boss Man</p> | <p>1958 March 27 in Chicago</p> <p>Sonny Boy</p> | <p>1959 Nov 3-4 in Chicago</p> <p>Elmo J.</p> |

THE GOLDEN FIFTIES: year-by-year TOP R&B RECORDS

Charting weeks, combined on "Race Records" (early 1949), R&B "Juke Box" (up to June 17, 1957), R&B "Best Sellers" (up to Oct 13, 1958), R&B "Disc Jockeys" (from Jan 22, 1955), and from Oct 20, 1958 "Hot R&B Sides".
16 TOP HIT RECORDS - Based on The Great R&B Files - with Big Al Pavlow, Joel Whitburn, and Billboard sources. (Total charting weeks) and hitting #1 month.

| | | | |
|---|--|--|--|
| <p>(32w) 14 weeks at #1 March</p>  <p>1949 The Huckle-Buck</p> | <p>(27w) 15 weeks at #1 June</p>  <p>1949 Trouble Blues</p> | <p>(25w) 13 weeks at #1 May</p>  <p>1950 Pink Champagne</p> | |
| <p>(30w) 14 weeks at #1 June</p>  <p>1951 Sixty-Minute Man</p> | <p>(20w) 10 weeks at #1 June</p>  <p>1952 Have Mercy Baby</p> | <p>(26w) 7 weeks at #1 July</p>  <p>1952 Lawdy Miss Clawdy</p> | |
| <p>(21w) 10w at #1 Sept</p>  <p>1953 Shake A Hand</p> | <p>(21w) 11w at #1 Nov</p>  <p>1953 Money Honey</p> | <p>(21w) 14 weeks at #1 January</p>  <p>1954 The Things That I Used To Do</p> | <p>(26w) 7 weeks at #1 May</p>  <p>1954 Work With Me Annie</p> |
| <p>(26w) 11 weeks at #1 June</p>  <p>1955 Ain't It A Shame</p> | <p>(30w) 7 weeks at #1 October</p>  <p>1955 Only You</p> | <p>(28w) 13 weeks at #1 August</p>  <p>1956 Honky Tonk</p> | |
| <p>(22w) 13 weeks at #1 June</p>  <p>1957 Young Blood / Searchin'</p> | <p>(14w) 7w at #1 June</p>  <p>1958 Yakety Yak</p> | <p>(22w) 7 weeks at #1 Dec 15, 1958</p>  <p>1959 Lonely Teardrops</p> | |

"Three Mississippi Neighbors" - The John Lee Hooker entry

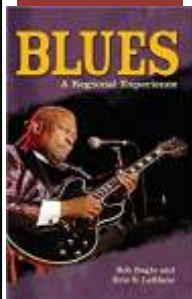
in *Blues – A Regional Experience* by Bob Eagle and Eric S. LeBanc
- the great book on births and deaths of blues performers! (no images)



John Lee Hooker (v/g/h) (Tutwiler, Tallahatchie County, August 22, 1912⁸³⁴—at home, Los Altos, Santa Clara County, California, June 21, 2001), Son of William Hooker and Minnie Ramsey. Burial at Chapel of the Chimes Columbarium and Mausoleum, Oakland. He was in many ways the archetypal rural bluesman, and one of the most recorded of all bluesmen. He was renowned as a solo guitarist and singer with a primitive style, often employing foot tapping, and with incoherent moaning vocals. When speaking, he had a stammer, and even recorded "Stuttering Blues." He enjoyed R&B hits with "Boogie Chillen," "Boom Boom," "Crawlin' King Snake" (covering Tony Hollins), "Hobo Blues," "Hoogie Boogie," "Huckle Up Baby," "I Love You Honey," "I'm In the Mood," and "No Shoes" (covering Eddie Kirkland). These were recorded for independent record pioneers such as Elmer Barbee, Bernie Besman, Joe Bihari, James Bracken, Vivian Carter Bracken, and John Kaplan. Between 1966 and 1989, he recorded albums for ABC/BluesWay/Impulse, Black and Blue, and in 1970 for Imperial Records with rock-blues group, Canned Heat. From 1989, with Roy Rogers producing, he recorded with many of his musical friends and found worldwide fame.

834. 1920 census, Tallahatchie County, February 3, age 7 and 1930 Census, Tallahatchie County, April 24, age 18. During his lifetime, he gave 1917 and 1920 as his year of birth. His SS-5 card (courtesy of Jim O'Neal), registered on October 19, 1942 while living in Lambert, Mississippi, states that Johnie [sic] Lee Hooker was born in Glendora, Tallahatchie County, on August 22, 1917, to William Hooker and Lee Ethel Moore.

The book's cover has yet another "Mississippi Delta Embayment" neighbor in the State of Mississippi.



"Three Mississippi Neighbors" - The Sonny Boy Williamson and Muddy Waters entries in *Blues – A Regional Experience* by Bob Eagle and Eric S. LeBanc

Sonny Boy Williamson (Alex "Rice" Miller) (v/f/songwriter) (Money,⁸³⁶ LeFlore County, December 5, 1912⁸³⁷—at home, Helena, Arkansas, May 25, 1965). Son of Jim and Millie Miller. Burial at Whitfield Baptist Church Cemetery, Tutwiler, Mississippi.⁸³⁸ Alex always insisted that Sonny Boy Williamson (John Lee Williamson) was an impersonator and he was the original Sonny Boy Williamson, even though the younger man first recorded in 1937 and Rice first recorded in 1951! An original in every other way, he only recorded three songs associated with the other artist, "Apple Tree Swing," "Checking Up On My Baby," and "Decoration Day" although his "Good Morning Everybody," has its roots in "King Biscuit Stomp," a recording by Big Joe Williams featuring John Lee Williamson. In 1951, Trumpet recorded the first recordings of Elmore James, Willie Love, and Sonny Boy Williamson (Miller). After four years with Trumpet, Miller recorded for Chess/Checker (1955–1965), and then in Europe from 1963 to 1965. His important recordings include "Bring It On Home," "Don't Start Me Talkin'," "Eyesight to the Blind," "Fattening Frogs for Snakes," "Help Me," "Keep Your Hands Out of My Pocket," "Mighty Long Time," "Mr. Downchild," "Nine Below Zero," "Sad to Be Alone," and "Too Young to Die."

836. Despite him singing that he was born in 1897 in Glendora, Tallahatchie County.

837. The birth year 1912 comes from his Alex Miller entry in the 1920 Census at Money, where he was raised.

838. His gravestone has the following incorrect dates: March 11, 1908–June 23, 1965.

Muddy Waters (McKinley A. Morganfield) (Mack Morganfield) ("James "Sweet Lucy" Carter") (v/g/songwriter) (Jug's Corner Community, Isaquena County, April 4, 1913—dead on arrival, Good Samaritan Hospital, Downers Grove, Illinois, April 30, 1983). Son of Ollie Morganfield and Berta Grant. Burial at Restvale Cemetery, Worth. He was raised by his grandmother, Della Grant, on Stovall Plantation, Coahoma County. Muddy Waters was a key figure in the postwar development of blues, and was a popular entertainer for four decades. His grainy singing style and simple but biting electric slide guitar were well known and his contribution to the addition of electricity to the native Mississippi style helped launch the "Chicago Blues" sound. He first recorded in 1941 as part of the Coahoma County Project. In 1947, he started a 29-year recording career for Chess. Influenced by Son House and Robert Johnson, these were country delta blues such as "Honey Bee," "I Can't Be Satisfied," "Louisiana Blues," "Rollin' Stone," "She Moves Me," and "Walkin' Blues." In 1953, he recorded with electric band that included Chicago's finest bluesman, containing Little Walter and Otis Spann. His band recordings include "Blow Wind, Blow," "I Want You to Love Me (Mad Love)," "I'm Your Hoochie Coochie Man," "I Just Want to Make Love to You," "Trouble, No More," and "Forty Days & Forty Nights." In 1976, he recorded for Blue Sky.



The Great R&B Pioneers

Pat "Lover" Patterson and the Roots of the "2nd" Drifters

[The Five Crowns](#) from New York City in 1952 with (*left image*) John Clark, Nicky Clark, Wilbur "Yonkie" Paul, James "Papa" Clark, and Dock Green. – and as **the Crowns** (*right image*) in 1958 with Dock Green, Elsbeary Hobbs, manager Pat "Lover" Patterson, James "Papa" Clark (who shortly left to join the Carnations - soon the Cadillacs – but returned to the Crowns later), and bottom Benjamin Earl Nelson (Ben E. King), and Charlie Thomas- who both joined in around late 1957. Sy Palmer subbed for Clark. *Center image* 1957 - Thomas, Lover, King, Palmer, Hobbs. Clark left when the Crowns became the Drifters (remember – he left the Cadillacs also early on). Over the years, Pat "Lover" Patterson, who started out as the Orioles' valet, would manage a host of groups, many with interchangeable names, including the very early Cadillacs, the Swans, the Millionaires, the Duvals, and the Drapers. The last two were basically one and the same group (with different line-ups), which actually backed Ben E. King on the "Spanish Harlem" and "Stand By Me" classics (and in 1963 shortly featured ex-Drifters Tommy Evans, Johnny Moore, Charlie Hughes – and even Dock Green). He also was Ben E. King's early personal manager, the second Drifters' road manager – and the manager of the Coasters from 1961 (up to his untimely death in 1965).



the FAMOUS LINE-UPS of The "5" Royals


| 1951 – 1953 | 1954 – ca 1963 |
|---|---|
| <p><i>Left image from top:</i> Otto Jeffries, Jimmy Moore, Obadiah Carter (<i>far left</i>), Johnny Tanner, and Lowman Pauling. <i>Right image:</i> top Pauling, <i>fr l</i> Carter, Johnny T, Moore, and Jeffries.</p> | <p><i>Left im:</i> middle Jimmy Moore, Gene Tanner (from December 1953 with Jeffries turning road – and personal – manager, and sometimes sixth singer), and Johnny Tanner, <i>top</i> Obadiah Carter, <i>gtr</i> Lowman Pauling. <i>Right im fr l:</i> Moore, Carter, Gene and Johnny Tanner, and Pauling.</p> |

some FAMOUS LINE-UPS of The Cadillacs

| Early 1954 | 1956-57 | 1957-59 |
|--|---|---|
| <p><i>Top</i> Earl Carroll (lead), Laverne Drake, James "Papa" Clark, <i>bot</i> Bobby Phillips (bass), and Gus Willingham.</p> | <p><i>Top left image:</i> top Earl Wade, Charles Brooks, and Laverne Drake, <i>bot</i> Earl Carroll and Bobby Phillips. <i>Right</i> Carroll, far left. Same line-up. Note: J. R. Bailey (third lead, <i>imaged left</i>) joined in May 1956, replacing Drake. Bailey and Bobby Spencer also recorded as the Cadillacs in "competition" with Carroll in 1957 (and later).</p> | <p>Bobby Spencer (lead), Bobby Phillips, J.R. Bailey, and Earl Carroll. Earl Wade (<i>imaged right</i>) was fifth member (on the screen/ TV-shots J.R. did not participate, but Wade was there). Spencer and Bailey recorded as the Cadillacs up to 1972. Carroll went to the Coasters in 1961 (later joined by his 1960 Cadillac – buddy Ronnie Bright).</p> |
| <p>late 1954-1955</p> <p><i>Top</i> Earl Carroll, <i>fr l</i> Earl Wade (second lead), Bobby Phillips, Charles Brooks, and Laverne Drake.</p> | | |

THE DOMINOES

Gallery (main members, year-by-year) [ctsy unca marvy](#)

| | | |
|---|---|--|
|  <p>Billy Ward and original manager Rose Marks</p> |  <p>The 5 International Gospel Singers of South Carolina with Joe Lamont and Bill Brown (plus James "Buddy" Brewer - later with the Checkers)</p> |  <p>The Mount Lebanon Singers of 1949 with top William Anderson, David Baldwin, Clyde McPhatter, and bottom Wilmer Baldwin, James Johnson and Charlie White</p> |
| <p>1950</p>  <p>Producer Ralph Bass, Charlie White, Clyde McPhatter, Bill Brown, Joe Lamont and pianist and coach Billy Ward</p> | <p>1951</p>  <p>left image Joe Lamont, Billy Ward, Bill Brown (bass), Clyde McPhatter (lead - center bottom), and Charlie White</p> | <p>late 1951</p>  <p>James Van Loan (repl White), Clyde, Bill Brown, and Joe</p> |
| <p>early 1952</p>  <p>Clyde, Van Loan, Lamont, David McNeil (replacing temp member Raymond Johnson, who was the first successor to Bill Brown), and center front Billy Ward</p> | <p>late 1952</p>  <p>Name change from the Dominoes to Billy Ward and his Dominoes</p> | <p>1953</p>  <p>left: Milton Merle (repl temp singer - valet Johnny Oliver and Joe Lamont, who turned road manager), Billy Ward, Jackie Wilson (repl Clyde, who made his last rec with the group in September of 1952), and bottom Cliff Givens (repl McNeil), and James Van Loan. right: same line-up</p> |
| <p>1954</p>  <p>Left: Merle, Givens, Ward, Van Loan, and Wilson Right: Billy Ward, top with James Van Loan, Cliff Givens, Milton Merle, and Jackie Wilson</p> | <p>1954-1956</p>  <p>Photo from 1954 with Merle, Givens, Wilson, Van Loan, and bottom Ward - and a 1956 ad with a 1952 photo</p> | <p>1957</p>  <p>Milton Grayson (repl Van Loan and sub Prentice Moreland), Ward, Milton Merle, and new lead singer Gene Mumford (April 1957 - ca April 1958)</p> |
| <p>1957</p>  <p>Givens, Grayson, Mumford, Merle (center), and Ward (bot)</p> | <p>1958-1959</p>  <p>Left: May 1958 with Ward, Phil Colbert (repl Grayson), Merle, Robbie Robinson (doing Mumford leads), and Givens Right: a 1960 photo. Monroe Powell (far right) joined in April 1958 and left in 1962 (the group didn't have too many gigs in those years)</p> | <p>1960</p>  <p>Bruce Cloud, Cliff Givens, Billy Ward, Monroe Powell (lead), and Milton Merle</p> |

HANK BALLARD AND THE MIDNIGHTERS – Gallery (year-by-year) cisy.unca.marvy



January 1952 (the Royals)
"Every Beat Of My Heart"

Founder Alonzo Tucker (gtr), Andra "Sonny" Woods (bass), Charles Sutton (lead), Lawson Smith (baritone - inserted, repl original non-recording member Freddy Pride), and Henry Booth.



November 1952 (the Royals)
"Are You Forgetting"

Henry Booth, Hank Ballard (repl Smith - drafted), Charles Sutton, Alonzo Tucker, and Sonny Woods.



1953 (the "original" Royals)
"Get It" (May)

Alonzo Tucker, Charles Sutton, Hank Ballard, Henry Booth, and Sonny Woods.



January 1954 (the Royals)
"Work With Me Annie"

Henry Booth, Charles Sutton, Alonzo Tucker (gtr), Hank Ballard, and Sonny Woods.



April 1954

(the Midnighters, formerly the Royals) "Sexy Ways"

Alonzo Tucker (or poss Arthur Porter), gtr, Hank Ballard (bottom right), Charles Sutton, Sonny Woods, and Lawson Smith (returning - subbing for Henry Booth).



December 1954 (the Midnighters)

"Annie's Aunt Fannie" (Sept)

Henry Booth, Lawson Smith (replacing Sutton), Sonny Woods, Cal Green (gtr), and Hank Ballard.



1955 (the Midnighters)

"It's Love Baby" (June)

Lawson Smith, Sonny Woods, Henry Booth, Hank Ballard, and guitarist Cal Green.



1956 (the Midnighters)

"Tore Up Over You" (March)

Sonny Woods, Lawson Smith, guitarist Cal Green, Henry Booth, and Hank Ballard.



1957 (the Midnighters)

"Let 'Em Roll" (May)

Cal Green, Henry Booth, Lawson Smith, Sonny Woods (sometimes subbed by Norman Thrasher), and Hank Ballard



1959 (Hank Ballard and the Midnighters)

"The Twist" / "Teardrops On Your Letter" (Nov 1958)

Hank Ballard, Lawson Smith, Noman Thrasher (replacing Woods), and Henry Booth.



1960-1963 (Hank Ballard and the Midnighters)

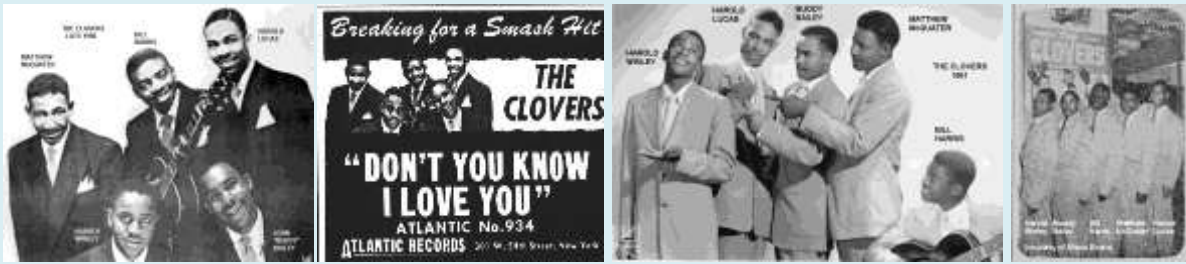
"Let's Go, Let's Go, Let's Go" (July 1960)

Hank Ballard, Norman Thrasher, Henry Booth, and Lawson Smith. Guitarist J.C Billy Davis subbed for Green in 1959-1961 (and replaced him from 1962).



Hank Ballard (after 1965)
with his revived Midnighters
in later years

THE CLOVERS Gallery (ctsy.unca.marvy)



First image late 1950, ad of 1951 and two photos of 1951 with Harold Winley (bass), Harold Lucas (founder), John "Buddy" Bailey (lead), Matthew McQuater, and guitarist Bill Harris. Below: Also 1951.



First image above still 1951 the others from 1952 with sama line-up as above (the EP is a later issue but with a 1952 image).



February 1953 ad (Buddy Bailey drafted – shortly replaced by John Philip on stage), followed by images from 1953 with Harold Lucas, Matthew McQuater, Charlie White (lead, subbing for "Buddy" Bailey on stage – and recordings), and Harold Winley with Bill Harris and his guitar. At the Apollo in September (with White right of Ahmet Ertegun) receiving an award for over three million records sold .



Early 1954 with **Billy Mitchell** (*great youtube videos*) replacing Charlie White (singing Buddy's and Charlie's leads). In May 1954 Buddy returned – and Mitchell stayed on. Colored image August 1956, followed by November – the Clovers a sextet. Image right: February 1957 (with Buddy temp out).

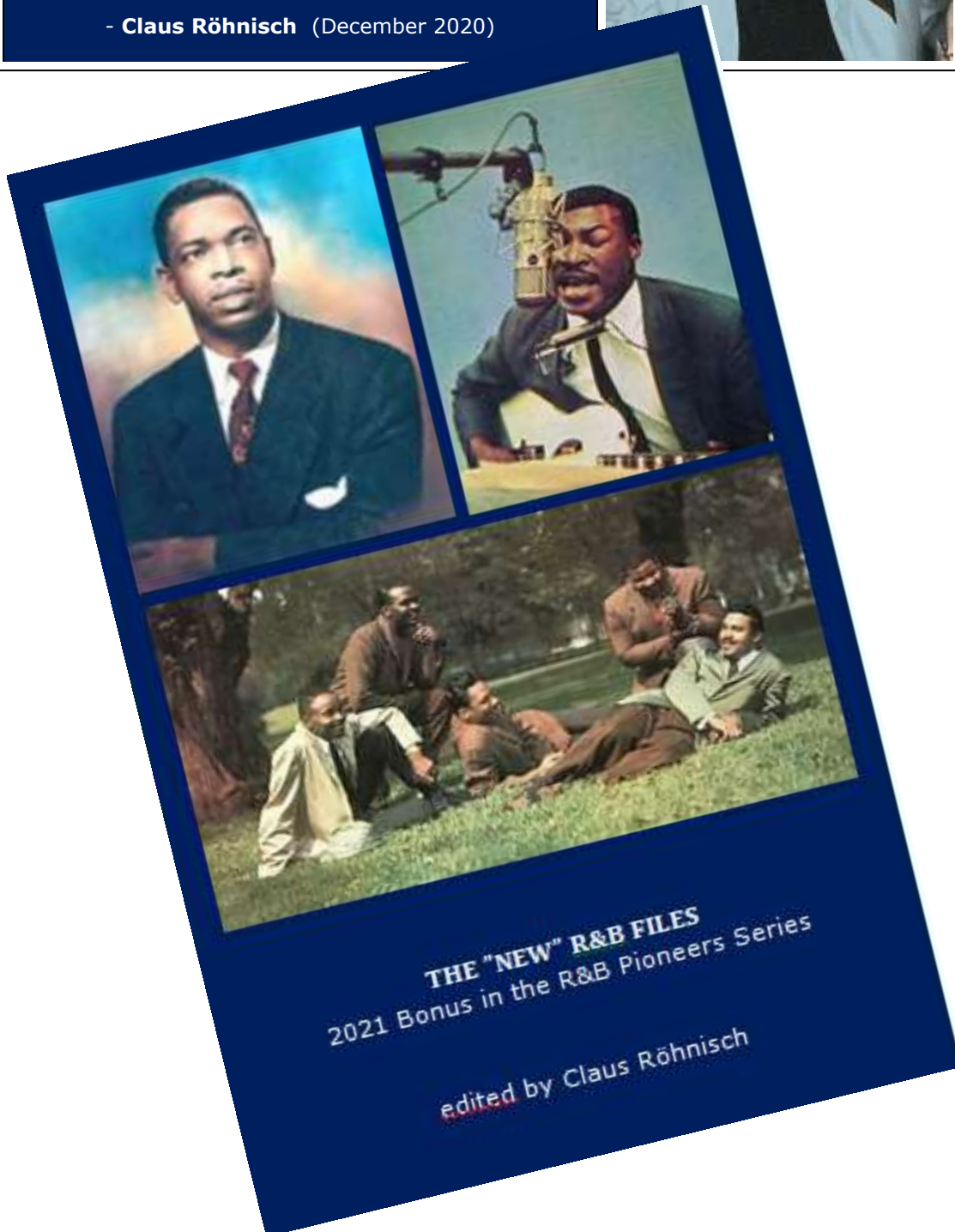


1958 – the five singers (Bill Harris gone solo now). The trio of 1963 with Harold Lucas, Buddy Bailey and Harold Winley. Lucas' group of 1975. 1988 reunion with McQuater, Lucas, (Kim Wilson from Fabulous Thunderbirds), Winley, and Bailey. Last survivor Harold Winley in 2013.

The Great R&B Pioneers

This Extra Special Supplement (13C) is the final volume in the R&B Pioneers Series..... but check out for a BONUS feature coming in 2021, titled **THE "NEW" R&B FILES**, which will give you even more information on the history of Rhythm & Bues (from Roy Brown to James Brown) and also cover some basic re-caps and further "nostalgic" analyses of the most interesting part of American Music!
You will discover lots of new facts (and figures) and learn things which did miss the original series and you will also find newly "researched" information.

- **Claus Röhnisch** (December 2020)





The original **Coasters** in late 1955/early 1956 with Carl Gardner, Bobby Nunn, Leon Hughes, and Billy Guy.

Inserted: 1965 with Carl Gardner, Will "Dub" Jones, Earl "Speedo" Carroll, and Billy Guy.

The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame **Coasters** in August, 1958 with Will "Dub" Jones, Carl Gardner, Cornell Gunter, and Billy Guy.



The Great R&B Pioneers



- The Great R&B Files
The R&B Pioneers Series
- 01 Top Rhythm & Blues Records (Hits from 30 Classic Years of R&B)
 - 02 The John Lee Hooker Session Discography
 - 02B The World's Greatest Blues Singer (Part II of John Lee Hooker)
 - 03 Those Hoodlum Friends – The Coasters
 - 04 The Clown Princes of Rock and Roll (The Coasters – part II)
 - 05 The Blues Giants of the 1950s (Twelve Great Legends)
 - 06 THE Top Ten Vocal Groups of the Golden '50s (Rhythm & Blues Harmony)
 - 07 Ten Sepia Super Stars of Rock 'n' Roll (Idols Making Music History)
 - 08 Transitions from Rhythm to Soul (Twelve Original Soul Icons)
 - 09 The True R&B Pioneers (Twelve Hit-Makers from the Early Years)
 - 10 Predecessors of the Soul Explosion in the 1960s (Twelve Famous Favorites)
 - 11 The Top 30 Favorites (R&B Pioneers Supplement)
 - 12 Clyde McPhatter – the Original Soul Star
 - 13 Updates Aug - Oct 2019
 - 13B Amendments Nov 2019 – June 2020
 - 13C Extra Special Supplement from June 2020 – on
 - 14 Extra "Hardback Covers" for the Series