THE Top Ten Vocal Groups of the Golden ‘50s

Rhythm and Blues Harmony

Presented by Claus Röhnisch
The R&B Pioneers Series - Volume Six of twelve

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The R&B Pioneers Series – Volume Six of twelve
The Top Ten Vocal Groups of the Golden ‘50s

Two great "reference" books on Doo-Wop:

The Doo-Wop Decades, 1945-1965
by B. Lee Cooper and Frank W. Hoffman
CSIPP, US 2017

The Top 1000 Doo-Wop Songs
by Anthony Gribin and Matthew Schiff
Tigpress, 2014
THE Top Ten Vocal Groups of the Golden ‘50s

Rhythm and Blues Harmony
- presented by Claus Röhnisch
with special thanks to Marv Goldberg and Todd Baptista

Introduction

Of all the countless (and mostly black) vocal groups, who gave us that exciting and wonderful harmony singing in the 1950s, I have selected ten outstanding pioneer R&B groups. Two of them represent the 1930s and 1940s “church” ballads and jazz roots, at least two gospel-influenced groups can be tagged fore-runners of “soul”, two represent the later defined “doo-wop” style (coupled with jump origins), two groups went top pop (well, actually three), and two can truly be called rock ‘n’ roll groups. Some of your absolute favorites may be missing (there sure are others – the Ravens, Orioles, Larks, Hollywood Flames, Robins, Swallows, Five Keys, Harptones, Spaniels, Dells, Flairs, Penguins, Cadets/Jacks, Valentines, Five Satins, Falcons, Jayhawks/Vibrations – to name a few). A terrific introduction essay on the rise of vocal group harmony is written by Peter Grendysa for “The Drifters Box” (Rhino, 1996), and Bob Hyde compiled the (probably best) vocal group Box set in 1993 – “The Doo Wop Box” (Rhino 71463). The groups presented in “THE Top Ten” are – in the mind of the editor of this work – the definitive giants of quartet/quintet singing. You will (hopefully among many other surprises) find out that almost all of the groups multiplied (with constant judicial row) as soon as the hits dried out - a trend that had started already with the Ink Spots (and later video) in 1952. The stories here concentrate on the original groups and their recordings.

Thank you Marv Goldberg, Todd Baptista, Peter Grendysa, Jim Dawson, Bill Dahl, Steve Propes, Galen Gart, Billy Vera, Jay Warner, Tony Rounce, Barry Hansen, George Moonogian, Bob Hyde, Mitch Rosalsky, Bob McGrath, Victor Pearlín, Bruce Eder, Bob Fisher, Peter Burns, Paul Watts, Joel Whitburn, and all others who have contributed to let us know more about the fascinating world of vocal groups. Below you’ll find the total number of R&B Top 3 (and Top 10) Hits for each group, plus their number of Pop Top 10 Hits.

Please note

that the years span in parentheses after a singer are approximate membership periods. Also note that the R&B chartings are presented without prefix and that some hits, peaking below the R&B Top 10, may not be listed, although the number of R&B Top 40 Hits is presented. Top 20 Pop Hits are marked P1 etc. The total of 25 #1 R&B Hits the groups have mustered are noted with the date (month/day) they first peaked. The chart data is from Joel Whitburn’s “Hot R&B Songs” (2010), “The Billboard Book of Top 40 R&B and Hip-Hop Hits” (2006), “The Billboard Book of Top 40 Hits” (2004), and “Top R&B Singles” (1988). I have entered the initials of some of the songs’ lead singers (especially when the singer is not presented as lead). Records could be issued featuring leads, who long before had left the group. The Jasmine 2CD-sets (plus some more) are British “public domain” CDs – most of the others presented here are legal, regular U.S. or European issues. As a special feature a complete Robins Discography is added at the end.

Claus Röhnisch (updated May 16, 2018) Click on / touch artists below for link to youtube

THE Top Ten Vocal Groups of the Golden ’50s

R&B Top 3 (Top 10) Pop Top10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>R&amp;B Top 3</th>
<th>Pop Top10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>The Dominoes</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>The Clovers</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1952</td>
<td>The “5” Royales</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1953</td>
<td>The Midnighters</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1953</td>
<td>The Flamingos</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1953</td>
<td>The Moonglows</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1953</td>
<td>The Drifters</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1954</td>
<td>The Platters</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>The Cadillacs</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>The Coasters</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Read more

http://www.uncamarvy.com/marvart.html
http://www.eonet.ne.jp/~pelican-studio/

The R&B Pioneers Series – Volume Six of twelve
THE DOMINOES

Complete singles As & Bs from their Federal, King, Jubilee, Decca & Liberty years

87-TRACK 3-CD SET


THE DOMINOES

were one of the most important and influential of the vocal groups of the 1950s, bringing together the styles which shaped the vocal group genre from its beginnings in gospel quartets and subsequent development through secular doo wop to the R&B styling that was the basis for ‘60s soul. Led by the legendary singer, writer and entrepreneur Billy Ward, the group’s line-ups provided a stepping stone to solo fame for Clyde McPhatter and Jackie Wilson, both of whose voices were an essential element of the group’s distinctive sound. This collection, a great-value 87-track 3-CD set, is almost certainly the most comprehensive to have been released, including material from the very beginning of their career in 1951, and encompassing the A and B sides of all their single releases for Federal, King, Jubilee, Decca and Liberty up to 1959. It naturally features all their hits, such as the landmark “Sixty Minute Man”. It also includes the two singles where they provided the backing for Little Esther (later known as Esther Phillips). All their fine lead vocalists are featured – not only their leader Billy Ward, and the great Clyde McPhatter and Jackie Wilson, who came to fame with the group before launching solo careers, but also Bill Brown, Charlie White, Johnny Oliver, David McNeil, Milton Merle, Cliff Givens, Prentice Moreland, Milton Grayson, Gene Mumford and Monroe Powell.
The first successful gospel-influenced R&B vocal group - formed by Billy Ward, pianist/composer,arranger, with Rose Marks (died July, 1955) as manager and co-writer of several of their hits in New York City. Group originally called The Ques (no recordings), comprising of two singers from the Mount Lebanon Singers of Harlem (McPhatter and White) and two singers from the 5 International Gospel Singers of South Carolina (Lamont and Brown). Won talent contest at the Apollo in 1950 and debuted on TV that same year as The Dominoes. Their "Sixty-Minute Man" (recorded December 30, 1950) was the first R&B hit to "cross-over", reaching Pop #17 (Ralph Bass producing), Group billed and labeled Billy Ward & His Dominoes from December, 1952 (starting with "I'd Be Satisfied"), lead singer Clyde McPhatter billed as Clyde Ward ("brother of coach Billy Ward"). The group located to Las Vegas and Los Angeles in 1955.

**Recording debut:**
New York November 14, 1950 *Chicken Blues* (BB) / *Do Something For Me* (C-MP) - Federal 12001.

**Records for:**

**Original recording lineups:**
- Clyde McPhatter, lead (50-ca April 53) born Nov 15, 1932 - died June 13, 1972 - who by the summer of 1953 formed The Drifters and soon went on to a solo career after his military service
- Charlie White, ten (50-ca September 51) left for the Checkers; and sang lead with the Clovers in 1953, managed by Lou Krefetz, and also tried his luck as solo singer
- William Joe Lamont, bar (50-53) left shortly after Clyde
- Bill Brown, bass (50-Febr 52) also left for the Checkers (replaced by Raymond Johnson, who did not record with the group)
- Billy Ward (real name Robert Williams), coach/pro (50-65) lead singer on several recordings after 1952. Ward tried to re-form the group several times during the late 60s without any success. Born in Georgia in September, 1921 - died in California February 16, 2002. Early guitarist: Ralph Williams, and later Rene Hall.

**Later leads:**
- Jackie Wilson (Sept 52-Dec 56) born Detroit June 9, 1934 - died January 21, 1984. Jackie did not record with the group until after Clyde had left. Became a soul star (working with Berry Gordy)
- Gene Murford (April 57 - April 58) former lead of the Larks; born Durham, NC June 24, 1925 - died May 29, 1977 - also sang with various lineups of Golden Gate Quartet and Ink Spots. Gene replaced Stanley Mitchell (who was the original replacement for Wilson but did not record with the Dominoes)
- Monroe Powell (April 58-62) switched to the Ink Spots during the '60s. He went on to lead Buck Ram's Las Vegas stationed Platters for 25 years. Future leaders included besides Ward himself, Al Anderson, Lou Ragland and members of the Jack Halloran Singers.

**New early members:**
- James Van Loan, ten (ca Sept 51-56) sang with the Ravens later
- David McNeil, bass (ca May 52-late 52) from The Larks. He left for the armed forces and soon joined Charlie Fuqua's Ink Spots up to Fuqua's death in 1971 (and kept that group for several further years).
THE Top Ten Vocal Groups of the Golden '50s

THE MIGHTY CLOVERS

The Clovers in August 1956. From left: Buddy Bailey, Billy Mitchell, Matthew McQuater, Harold Lucas, and front Harold "Jerome" Winley and Bill Harris (gtr).

Right: In March, 1953 featuring Charlie White (Harris not imaged).
THE CLOVERS

"The Mighty Closvers" - Pioneer group of the East Coast tradition, mixing blues with gospel and jazz-crooning styles - and the most popular R&B vocal group of the early 1950s. Formed as a trio by Harold Lucas in 1946 in Washington, DC with Billy Shelton (replaced by McQuater in 1948) and Thomas Woods (replaced by Winley in early 1950). The originals returned to Lucas as he reformed the group during the '70s and '80s. Became The 4 Closvers when John Bailey joined. Manager: Lou Krefetz from Baltimore, who after one record for Rainbow introduced the group to Atlantic in late 1950 (coached by Jesse Stone). Many of the Closvers' early hits were written by Ahmet Erleuqen. In 1954 they appeared on the first Alan Freed show and in the "Showtime at the Apollo" TV series. Bailey entered the Army in 1952, returning in 1954 - but his soon-to-be replacement Billy Mitchell (who had sung and recorded with the Joe Morris outfit) stayed with the group, now including a saxet, which toured Europe in 1958. The Closvers had the same members for many years (although Mitchell left for a short while in 1957; McQuater was out for a while in 1958). From the '60s several different Closvers led by Lucases and by Bailey toured the circuit. Harold Lucases was the first (with Billy Mitchell - even recording for Atlantic). Lucases and Winley were still active during the late '90s. Lately Johnny Mason led the group during the '70s and '80s. Bailey entered the band in 1966, shortly replaced by John Phi- lipp, later joined the group as a lead (with Mitchell left for a while in 1957). McQuater was out for a while in 1958). From the '60s several different Closvers led by Lucases and by Bailey toured the circuit. Harold Lucases was the first (with Billy Mitchell - even recording for Atlantic). Lucases and Winley were still active during the late '90s. Lately Johnny Mason led the group during the '70s and '80s.
THE CLOVERS & THE “5” ROYALES: One Per Year (plus) 1951-1960

1951

1952

1953

1954

1955

1956

1957

1958

1959

1960

1951/52

1954

1955

1956

1957

1958

1959

1960
### THE CLOVERS & THE “5” ROYALES

#### The "5" Royales' original LPs
(note that only 580 and the Dr. Horse LP have the “5” – although inside labels often had the “5”), and note the Royals spelling on 955.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LP Title</th>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Year</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Rockin’ 5 Royales</td>
<td>Apollo LP 488</td>
<td>(1956)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dedicated To You</td>
<td>King 580</td>
<td>(1957)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The 5 Royales Sing For You</td>
<td>King 616</td>
<td>(1959)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Five Royales</td>
<td>King 678</td>
<td>(1960)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 All Time Hits</td>
<td>King 955</td>
<td>(1966)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 Hits</td>
<td>King 5014</td>
<td>(1978)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Down Home</td>
<td>Apollo FR 418</td>
<td>(bootleg?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Real Thing</td>
<td>Dr. Horse H-802</td>
<td>(1964)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Roots of Soul</td>
<td>Charly 1096</td>
<td>(1985)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baby Don’t Do It</td>
<td>Relic 8015</td>
<td>(1987)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Laudromat Blues</td>
<td>Relic 8016</td>
<td>(1987)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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*Top: Matthew McQuater, Buddy Bailey, Harold Lucas, bottom: Harold Winley, and Bill Harris
*Jimmy Moore, Johnny Tanner, Lowman Pauling, Gene Tanner, and Obadiah Carter*
THE “5” ROYALES

Mid-late 1950s: Jimmy Moore (far left), Gene Tanner (center), Obadiah Carter (top), Johnny Tanner (right), and bottom left Lowman Pauling; plus the Rockbeat Records 5CD-set issued 2014.

Finally inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame (2015)
The first rock & roll record is a matter of debate. This is not: The first rock & roll group was the "5" Royales, a street-corner-harmony institution from North Carolina powered by guitarist-songwriter Lowman Pauling, Jr., whose meaty swing and solid-body-Gretsch attack marked an early dawn for instrumental soul in the age of doo-wop. This five-CD set brings together the "5" Royales’ long run of 45s across the Fifties and Sixties, as they jumped out of gospel (as the Royal Sons) into dynamic, secular harmonizing and Pauling compositions that became turning-point covers for James Brown, Ray Charles and the Shirelles. Also hear Pauling's slashing-treble solos predict Sixties electric-blues and garage-rock guitar in the two takes of 1958’s “The Slummer the Slum.” More than a half-century later, he and the Royales finally were inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.

Soul 014, 015, 016 – Three 2-set CDs on History of Soul Records and Soul 025 – the 6CD-box http://www.historyofsoul.net/
THE "5" ROYALES

"The Apollo Kings" – "The First Soul Group" - Underrated, but passionate, truly raw church-styled high-quality pioneer R&B vocal group (with the tonation on "a-flat"), originally a gospel group formed in the late 1940s (some say 1948), named The Royal Sons Quintet in Winston-Salem, North Carolina; consisting of loose members including cousins Lowman (nicknamed "Pete") Pauling (who became the only one surviving the secular transition) and Clarence Pauling (later Clarence Paul, 1928-1995), Anthony Price, William Samuels, and Windsor King (sometimes also brother Curtis Pauling and pianist Royal Abbit); later also featuring Johnny Holmes. Johnny (John) Tanner and Otto Jeffries joined the group early on. Jimmy James, sometimes also called Johnny) Moore replaced Tanner around 1949 and stayed with the group when Tanner returned from military service. Obadiah Carter replaced Samuels in late 1951. The group turned secular and transformed into the most down-home sounding R&B vocal group of all. Some albums and reissues were released as The Five Royales. The 5 Royales, and as The 5 Royals (but they themselves preferred The '5' Royales - the group often actually were six singers even during the 1950s). All six members sang leads, although Johnny Tanner took care of most of the songs (written by member Lowman Pauling). The group's manager: Carl LeBow, produced by Henry Glover on several King tracks (some possibly by Ralph Bass). Pauling and later the whole group joined the James Brown Revue in the '60s.

Recording debut: Winston-Salem, NC August 1951 as the Royal Sons Quintet (actually with William Samuels, lead – Carter not yet in) Bedside Of A Neighbor / Journey's End - Apollo 434; first secular recording New York City October, 1951 Too Much Of A Little Bit (OJ) / Give Me One More Chance (JT/OJ) as by The Royals - Apollo 434; then New York City (now a sextet featuring Johnny Holmes, and Carter) August 5, 1952 Come Over Here / Let Nothing Separate Me (JT) - Apollo 556 as the Royal Sons Quintet; and as The "5" Royales same session Courage To Love / You Know I Know (both JM) - Apollo 441.

Records for:

Secular recording lineup:
Johnny L. Tanner, lead (51-63) born in Forsyth, NC, Nov 28, 1926 - died in Winston-Salem, NC Nov 8, 2005
Jimmy (Jimmy) E. Moore, ten (51-ca 64) lead on some early tracks, died in New York August 16, 2008 at the age of 82
Obadiah Carter, bar (51-ca 65) born 1925; died July 1994
Otto Jeffries, bass (51-60) turned road manager and occasional singer when Gene arrived (lived 1912-1975)
Lowman "El" Pauling, gtr (51-ca 66) extra bass vocal. Born July 14, 1926; died from epileptic seizure on December 26, 1973

New members (1960-64):
Robert "Pee Wee" Burris, gtr, subbing for Pauling (and staying)
Royal Abbit, pric rings (born 1932, died 1995).

Later lineup:
Tom "T-Bone" Prutt, gtr and Larry Robinson, lead
Larry Taylor and Lebanon Washington, vocals

Essential CD:
Monkey, Hips And Rice-Anthology (2CD) - Rhino R2 71546 (1995)
It's Hard But It's Fair – Ace UK CDCHD 1038 (2005) (26 King gems)
Catch That Teardrop (1960-64) – Ace UK CDCHD 1055 (2007)

To Get You Excited:
1952 Courage To Love (JM)
1953 Laudronat Blues
1953 I Wanna Thank You
1954 Let Me Come Back Home (JM)
1954 Put Something In It
1955 When I Get Like This
1956 Women About To Make Me Go Crazy
1956 When You Walked Through The Door
1957 Just As I Am
1958 Dedicated To The One I Love (GT)
1958 The Feeling Is Real (GT)
1958 Tell The Truth
1959 I Know It’s Hard But It’s Fair
1959 Wonder Where Our Love Has Gone
1960 I'm With You (JT/GT)

R&B Top 10 Hits: (7 of 7 Top 40)
1953 Baby, Don’t Do It 3w #1 2/21 (rec October 30, 1952)
1953 Help Me Somebody 5w #1 6/13 (rec November 3, 1952)
1953 Crazy, Crazy, Crazy #5
1953 Too Much Lovin’ #4
1954 I Do #6
1957 Tears Of Joy #9 (GT)
1957 Think #9 (JT)

Don’t Miss the US and UK newly issued CD-paks (imaged left)!

Reading:
The Real Rhythm and Blues by Hugh Gregory (UK 1998)

The lineup of The "5" Royales early Apollo years. Right top to bottom: Otto Jeffries, Jimmy Moore, Obadiah Carter, Johnny Tanner, Lowman Pauling.

The Real Rhythm and Blues by Hugh Gregory (UK 1998)
Top Vocal Groups - Collectors’ Favorites – part one

**Top Ten Vocal Groups of the Golden ’50s**

**The R&B Pioneers Series – Volume Six of twelve**

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**Billy Ward and His Dominoes**

*I’d Be Satisfied*

Cincinnati Oct 17, 1952

**THE CLOVERS**

*I Confess*

New York March 4, 1953

Atlantic 1046 (issued Oct 1954)

Charlie White, lead; Sam Taylor, tenalt.

Matthew McQuarter, Harold Lucile, Harold Winley, Bill Harris (gtr)

Alternate version rec in New York April 8, 1953

**S” Royales and Orchestra**

*Let Me Come Back Home*

New York Oct 10, 1952

Apollo 458 (issued July 1954)

James E. Moore, lead; Lowman Pauling, Johnny Tanner, Obadiah Carter, Otto Jefferies

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**The Midnighters**

*Don’t Change Your Pretty Ways*

Cincinnati March 17, 1955

Federal 12243 (issued Dec 1955)

Hank Ballard, lead; Carl Green, gtr;

Harry South, Lawson Smith, Sonny Woods

**The Flamingos**

*The Vow*

Chicago July, 1956

Checker 846 (issued August 1956)

Nate Nelson, lead; Johnny Carter, Zeke Casel, James Casey, Paul Wilson

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**The Moonglows**

*219 Train*

Chicago January 10, 1954

Chance 1161 (issued Sept 1954)

Harvey Fuqua, lead; Bobby Lester, Pete Greaves, Prentice Barnes

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**The Drifters featuring Clyde McPhatter**

*Someday You’ll Want Me To Want You*

New York March 14, 1954

Atlantic 1043 (issued Oct 1954)

Flip of Big Bam (#7 Nov 1954)

Clyde McPhatter, lead; Bill Pinkney, co-lead

Gerhart Thrasher, Andrew Thrasher

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**The Platters**

*Only You (And You Alone)*

Los Angeles May 20, 1954

Federal 12244 (issued Nov 1955)

Tony Williams, lead; Buck Ram, poss pno;

Alex Hodge, David Lynch, Neale Reed, Zola Taylor

The hit version was rec for Mercury April 28, 1955, and issued in May

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**The Cadillacs**

*Gloria*

New York 6 July 1954

Josie 765 (issued July 1954)

Earl Carroll, lead;

James Clark, LaVern Drake, Gus Williamson, Bobby Phillips

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**The Robins**

*Smokey Joe’s Cafe*

(Later issued on several Coasters albums)

Los Angeles July 5, 1955

Spark 122 (Atco 6096 #10, Dec 1955)

Carl Gardner, lead; Bobby Nunn, Terrell Leonard, Billy and Roy Richard, poss Garry Sherman; Gil Bernal: tens

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**The “S” Royales**

*Think*

New York Feb 28, 1957

King 5052 #9 Sept 1957

Johnny Tannor, lead; Lowman Pauling (voc/pno)

Gene Tanner, James E. Moore, Obadiah Carter

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**The Coasters**

*Zing! Went The Strings Of My Heart*

(Flip of Yakety Tak)

New York March 17, 1958

Atco 6114 (issued April 1958)

Will “Dub” Jones and Cornelia Gunter, leads;

Carl Gardner, Billy Guy, King Curtis, tenors

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THE Top Ten Vocal Groups of the Golden ‘50s

Top Vocal Groups - Collectors’ Favorites – part two

**BILLY WARD and his DOMINOES**

- **Star Dust**
  - Los Angeles April/May 1957
  - Liberty 55071 #5, July 1957
  - Gene Mumford, lead; Vic Sahian, arr/dir;
  - Milton Grayson, Milton Merle, Cliff Greens

**THE CLOVERS**

- **Your Cash Ain’t Nothin’ But Trash**
  - New York April 16, 1954
  - Atlantic 1035 #6, August 1954
  - Billy Mitchell, lead; Bill Harris, gtr;
  - Matthew McQuater, Harold Lucie, Harold Winley, Jesse Stone, arr/dir
  - Alternate version rec in New York Dec 15, 1953

**THE “5” ROYALES**

- **I’m With You**
  - New York Febr 3, 1960
  - King 5329 (issued March 1960)
  - Johnny Tanner and Gene Tanner, leads;
  - Lionel Pauling, James E. Moore, Obadiah Carter

**THE MIDNIGHTERS**

- **Let ‘Em Roll**
  - New York May 15, 1957
  - Federal 12305 (issued late 1957)
  - Hank Ballard, lead; Cal Green, gtr;
  - Henry Booth, Lawson Smith, Sonny Woods;
  - Joe Hunter, pno; James Moore, tenor sax

**THE FLAMINGOS**

- **Lovers Never Say Goodbye**
  - New York September 26, 1958
  - End 1035 #25 March, 1959
  - Tony Williams, lead; Herb Reed, co-lead;
  - Nate Nelson, Tommy Hunt, Zola Taylor, Jaka Carey

**THE MOONGLOWS**

- **Foolish Me**
  - Chicago c. March 1955
  - Chess 1598 (issued April 1955)
  - Bobby Lester, lead;
  - Harvey Fuqua, Pete Graves, Prentice Barnes, Billy Johnson (gtr)
  - Alternate version w Fuqua, lead also recorded

**THE DRIFTERS**

- **When My Little Girl Is Smiling**
  - New York October 26, 1961
  - Atlantic 2134 (issued Jan 1962)
  - Charlie Thomas, lead; Rudy Lewis (intro);
  - Doc Green, Tommy Evans, Billy Davis (gtr)

**THE PLATTERS**

- **You’ll Never Never Know**
  - New York (or Chicago) mid/late 1956
  - Mercury 79958 (#9 Oct 1956)
  - Tony Williams, lead; Herb Reed, co-lead;
  - David Lynch, Paul Robi, Zola Taylor;
  - Rupert Branker (pno)

**THE CADILLACS**

- **Woe Is Me** (flip of Betty My Love)
  - New York May 16, 1956
  - Josie 798 (issued mid 1956)
  - Earl Carroll, lead;
  - James Bailey, Charles Brooks, Earl Wade, Bobby Phillips, Jesse Powell (bandleader)

**THE COASTERS**

- **I’m A Hog For You** (flip of Poison Ivy)
  - New York, edited July 17, 1959
  - Atco 6146 (issued August 1959)
  - Carl Gardner, Billy Guy, Cornell Gunter, and Will "Dub" Jones (unison lead); King Curtis (tenor sax);
  - George Berry, Melvin Bester, Al Clark, or Alan Newton (stx)
  - Original master (totally different) rec August 10, 1959

**THE CLOVERS**

- **Stay Awhile** (flip of Love Potion No. 9)
  - New York June 8, 1959 (edited in L.A.)
  - United Artists 180 (issued July 1959)
  - John "Buddy" Bailey, lead; Billy Mitchell, Matthew McQuater, Harold Lucie, Harold Winley

**THE COASTERS**

- **D. W. Washburn**
  - New York October 31, 1967
  - Date 1617 (issued July 1968)
  - Carl Gardner, lead; Earl Carruth, co-lead;
  - Earl Carroll, Will "Dub" Jones;
  - Artie Butler, arr – featuring:
    - Mike Stoller, Artie Ryerson, Eric Gale
THE MIDNIGHTERS

Two great CDs featuring Hank Ballard’s very first and very late recordings on Federal / King  
(with great inlays written by Marv Goldberg and Tony Rounce).

THE MIDNIGHTERS

The original Midnighters: Booth, Ballard, Sutton, Tucker, and Wood.

“THE ORIGINAL MOTOWN GROUP” - “THE TWISTERS” - Emotional, gospel-influenced Detroit pioneers, formed around 1950, originally named The Four Falcons (no recordings), soon called The Royals and involved with Johnny Otis (their first manager) on their first record “Every Beat Of My Heart” (in Cincinnati, Ohio with Otis on vibes). Before that Jackie “Sonny” Wilson, Little Willie John, and even Levi Stubbs (later of the Four Tops) hung around the group together with the group’s originator Alonzo Tucker, who was an early Detroit musician and organizer (and later worked with LaVern Baker, and with Jackie Wilson again – all artists, including the Royals, managed by Al Green in the early years). The group changed name to the Midnighters on the second pressings of “Work With Me Annie” (recorded January 14, 1954) after it became a hit, using the same catalogue number. The group had two successful music craze periods - mid 50s (produced by Ralph Bass and Henry Glover) and in the early 60s, as the group re-formed and changed billings to Hank Ballard and The Midnighters on Federal’s “mother” King “The Twist” was originally recorded by Ballard and his group for Henry Stone in Florida (unissued at that time) before Syd Nathan accepted it for King in 1956. Hank had been awarded already in 1990, but in 2012 The Midnighters were inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.

Recording debut as The Royals:
Cincinnati, Ohio January 8, 1952 Every Beat Of My Heart (CS) / All Night Long (SW featuring Wynonnie Harris) - Federal 12064. First lead with Hank Ballard November 1, 1952 Are You Forgetting and I Feel So Blue (issued on two separate Federal singles). Hank had already sung with the Royals on I’ll Never Let Her Go and Fifth Street Blues (both Booth) and Moonshine (CS) on May, 10. Records for: Federal 52-58, King (Hank Ballard and The Midnighters) 59-67.

The Royals lineup: (First recording session – Every Beat… ) Henry Booth, ten (52-63), lead – came from the Serenaders. Born 1935, died in 1979 (as reported in “Every Beat…”), replaced original, non-lead Eddie Woods on display on their first record. Charles Sutton, ten (52-55) sang lead on several early classics incl. “Every Beat…”, and left the group in early 1955.
Lawson Smith, bar (52, 55-63) replaced original, non-recording baritone Freddy Pride; and in turn was replaced by Hank Ballard when Smith joined the forces mid 1952.
Alonzo Tucker, gtr and extra vcl (52-55) rose born November 21, 1915. He helped Sutton to form the Tornadoes in 1955 and stayed on-off-and-on with the group, although not performing after 1954.

Lineup from May, 1952: (Royals’ second session) as above with Hank Ballard (lead from November) replacing Smith Ballard became definitive lead & spokesman in 1953 with “Get It”. He was born Henry Bernard Ballard (and John Henry Hendricks – after his father), on November 18, 1927 in Detroit (not 1936 as most files said). He was known as Henry “Hank” Ballard. Moved (individually) to Stirlington Alabama as a Detroit child - singing gospel, and came back to Detroit at the age of 14. Hank died in Los Angeles on March 2, 2003 after a long treatment of throat cancer. Ballard also acted as soloist and lead for The Dapps in the late 60s’ and was featured with The James Brown Revue. He moved to Los Alamitos in California with his guitarist Billy C. Davis in 1986. Hank Ballard was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1990.

Later members up to 1963:
Lawson Smith (55-ca 63) returned in late 1954 as temporary substitute for Henry Booth, who was away for awhile, and replaced Sutton, when Booth returned in January, 1955.
Norman Thrasher (56-65) born June 4, 1944, entered in 1956, replaced Woods in 1958 on recording sessions. He came from Detroit’s Royal Jokers and from the Serenaders. He is cousin to the Drifters’ Thrashers.
Arthur Porter, gtr (54) from early 1954 - succeeded by Cal Green later that year (54-59) born June 22, 1935 in Dayton, Texas, died July 6, 2004 in California.
Green became the leader of The Midnighters’ touring and recording band. He was jailed for 21 months during 1959-62 (substituted by J.C. Billy Davis), rejoined the Midnighters - and later made a solo career. During the very late ‘50s (and in the early ‘60s) not all Midnighters followed Ballard on stage or in the recording studios, when Ballard, despite his newfound “Mr. Rhythm & Blues” fame, together with Davis, concentrated on the touring band (a resemblance to James Brown’s career).

Lineup from ca 1963 or poss earlier:
Hank Ballard, Norman Thrasher (later replaced by Walter Miller), Frank Stanford, Wesley Hargrove. Hank reformed his group several times during later years with guitarist J.C. Billy Davis (born 1938), who also played with Jackie Wilson for several years.

Essential CD:

Reading: King of the Queen City - The Story of King Records by Jon Hartley Fox (US 2009).

R&B Top 10 Hits: (14 of 20 Top 40)
1953 “Get It” (The Royals) #6 (HB) 1954 Work With Me Annie (formerly known as The Royals) 7w #1 5/22 P22
1954 Sexy Ways (formerly The Royals) 1w #2 1954 Annie Had A Baby 2w #1 9/25 P23 1955 Annie’s Aunt Fannie #10 1955 It’s Love Baby (24 Hours A Day) #10
Hank Ballard and the Midnighters

More For Your Delight:
HANK BALLARD & THE MIDNIGHTERS: ONE (plus) PER YEAR 1953 – 1963

1953 (Hank's first lead with the Royals), 1954 (original issue), and the repressing

1955, 1956, 1957

Recorded 1958 (and a hit in 1959), plus its flip (a hit in 1960), and a 1960 single.

1960, two from 1961, plus 1962, and 1963
The first five of the ultimate Vocal Group CD-series were released in 2012. A total of 15 volumes were to be issued (five in July 2012 – five in August 2012 and five in February 2013). The series spans one year each from 1950-1963 plus volume one of 1939-1949. Each volume is a 1-CD DigiPac (4-plated) with 84-page booklet, mostly more than 30 tracks per CD.

This series has been compiled and annotated by R&B music’s foremost scholar, Chicago’s Bill Dahl, and every song comes with detailed notes and illustrations. There have been plenty of Doo-Wop compilations, even a few Doo-Wop boxed sets, but this series is the last word on the genre. Truly definitive! Every hit, every underground classic, every song that lit up the airwaves at the dawn of rock ‘n’ roll.

Detailed info on all volumes:
– see the pages at the ending of this publication!!

The History of Doo-Wop

What is this glorious music we call doo-wop? It’s a style conveying naivete and young love in a way no genre did before. It’s an attitude harking back to the birth of the teenager in the 1950s. For a lot of us, it represents nostalgia for an era we may or may not have experienced. Technically, doo-wop is an amalgam of five key characteristics that are explored in the 24-page booklet that accompanies this CD and richly evidenced in the choice of recordings. This CD, the first in a set of six, covers the formative years of doo-wop, offering astonishing vocal harmonies, vibrant instrumentation and a fun collection of songs that will not fail to please the amateur while being of interest to the serious collector. Compiled and annotated by Anthony J Gribin & Matthew M Schiff, the Doctors of Doo-Wop.

“THE GRANDFATHERS OF DOO-WOP”
THE FLAMINGOS

A qualitative - long-lasting doo-wop (and jump) - vocal group formed in the South Side of Chicago in late 1952 as the Swallows by Jake and Zeke Carey, Johnny Carter, and Judah Byrd (replaced by Carter’s friend Paul Wilson around 1951) - all black Hebrews. They soon changed name to the Five Flamingos or “5 Flamingo Boys” when Earl Lewis entered (neither group any recordings), and due to an already existing Swallows group. The Flamingos are regarded as one of the most possible groups of early R&B and worked out a professional stage act. The group signed for George Goldner’s End Records in 1958, where the big success finally struck. The Careys are not brothers and not cousins - not relatives at all, although Zeke moved in with the Jake Carey family in Baltimore and both left for Chicago around 1950. They still acted with Flamingo lineup in the ’50s. The Flamingos were inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 2001.

Lineup after April, 1961 (recording in September):
Eddie Williams (lyric tenor), Billy Clarke (tenor and drums), Zeke Carey (tenor and bassist), Paul Wilson (baritone), Jake Carey (bass), Alan Fontaine (guitar), and Julian Vaught (saxophone). In 1963 Doug McClure (tenor) joined as sixth singer; and the group hung on (although with further changes).


Reading:
http://www.equinoxpublications.com/doo_wop/The_Flamingos.html

R&B Top 10 Hits: (2 of 8 Top 40)
1956: I'll Be Home #5 (NN) [Vee-Jay/Parrot]: I Only Have Eyes For You 2w #3 (NN) P11

Treat Yourself With These:
1953 Golden Teardrops (SM)
1954 Listen To My Plea (JC)
1954 Jump Children (Vooli-Vooli) (SM)
1955 I'm Yours (NN) - Parrot
1955 I Want To Love You (NN/JC)
1956 The Vow (NN)
1958 Lovers Never Say Goodbye #25 (TJ/PW)
1959 Goodnight Sweetheart (NN)
1960 Mio Amore #27 (NN)

U. S. Patent and Trademark Office Rules In Favor Of Flamingos’ Hall of Famer by Todd Baptista (October 30, 2008)

Rock and Roll Hall of Fame inductee Terry Johnson, who wrote and sang lead on the Flamingos’ 1958 doo wop smash, “Lovers Never Say Goodbye” and arranged the music and vocals and sang on the group’s signature tune, “I Only Have Eyes For You”, has scored a major victory with the United States Patent and Trademark Office in regard to the Flamingos name. “Johnson, performing under Terry Johnson’s Flamingos, is the only remaining member of the group who currently has Federal trademark protection over a trademark including the term Flamingos,” the July 28 ruling states. “It has been my goal to prevent anyone from tarnishing the respected name of the Flamingos with sub par performances and claims of original members,” Johnson explained in a points judgment. “I want to thank Jon Baumans of the Truth In Music Act, my attorney Wiley Horton, and his assistant, Adrianna Love, for all their hard work in securing the legality of this great music and glory to the original artists.” The Flamingos were founded in Chicago, Illinois by Johnny Carter, Paul Wilson (1935-1980), Jacob Carey (1923-1997), and Ezekiel Carey (1933-1995) when they made their first recordings in January of 1953. When Carter and Ezekiel Carey were drafted in 1956, Johnson and Tommy Hunt were recruited to take their places. Carey rejoined the group after they signed with End Records and recorded “Lovers Never Say Goodbye” in 1958. McElroy had previously been replaced by Nate Nelson (1932-1984). Carter later went on to sing with the Dells. Today, at age 74, he remains a member of that Rock and Roll Hall of Fame act. Hunt, the only other living member, abandoned the name, and has resided in Europe for nearly 40 years. Johnson played guitar and sang first tenor and second lead with the Flamingos from December of 1956 through the spring of 1961, writing many and arranging all their best known recordings including “Mio Amore”, “Time Was”, and “Love Walked In”. After leaving the act, he formed his own groups, Terry Johnson’s Flamingos and Terry Johnson and the Modern Flamingos, which also included Nelson, whose lead voice graced “I Only Have Eyes For You”. Jacob and Ezekiel Carey continued recording and performing as the Flamingos until their deaths in the late 1990s. According to the Commissioner for Trademarks, the Careys filed a registration to trademark the Flamingos name in 1976. The mark was granted in 1979. The Commissioner ruled that the Careys ‘make false statements under oath that the general partnership, composed of the applicants, believed itself to be the owner of the mark sought to be registered and that no other person, firm, corporation, or association has the right to use such mark in commerce.’ The ruling makes note of the Careys’ knowledge of Johnson’s use of the Flamingos name as early as 1961. “Ezekiel Carey ceased any intended use of the mark, to any on-stage performance as of 1999 when he passed away,” the Commissioner wrote. “There is a difference in the terms ‘founding member’ and ‘original member’, Johnson, 69, explains. ‘The founding members were Wilson, Carter, and the Careys. There were four founding members, not two. The original members of the Flamingos would be defined as persons who were on the original recordings that brought the group to the height of their success and were recognized by the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame as being Paul Wilson, Jake Carey, Johnny Carter, Tommy Hunt, Nate Nelson, Zeke Carey, Sollie McElroy, and myself. Johnson, who also served as a writer-producer and artist at Vee-Jay records in the 1960s and ’70s, takes issue with latter-day members who make claims to a group’s name, an issue that many original performers, including the Flamingos, have had to contend with. ‘Other singers who have been hired through the years for performances by Zeke and Jake Carey or myself are not members of the original Flamingos and not entitled to use the name. Some consider themselves to be by association, but they are hired performers. My hope is to bring clarity to this situation, and to continue to do my best to bring a high quality performance and the Flamingos sound that our fans expect and deserve.’ The Flamingos recorded ‘I Only Have Eyes For You’ 50 years ago, on October 31, 1958. Image: Terry Johnson’s Flamingos with Tommy Hunt
THE MOONGLOWS

Important doo-wop, and blues-oriented group, baptized by rock and roll "coiner" Alan "Moondog" Freed. They originally were formed as a trio called the Crazy Sounds (with Harvey Fuqua, Danny Coggins, and Barnes - no recordings) in Cleveland, Ohio 1951. Moved to Chicago in 1953. Several late '50s records by the Moonglows were issued as Harvey & the Moonglows. Bobby Lester was a childhood friend of Harvey in Kentucky, and both toured with Ed Wiley's band in 1950. He sang lead on "Sincerely", recorded October 1954 (and also on some Checker recordings as Bobby Lester & The Moonlighters - who were the Moonglows). Marvin Gaye was a short-time member when Lester quit, but soon after the group disbanded. Fuqua - songwriter and founder of the group created and produced the Spinners in 1961 (after the Moonglows had split) and became heavily involved in the leadership of Motown Records. Later Harvey sometimes acted with the members of the Sheps in a revival Moonglows group. The Moonglows were inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 2000.

Recording debut: Cleveland, Ohio early 1953 / Just Can't Tell No Lie (HF/BL) / I've Been Your Dog (PB) - Champagne 7500, Chicago October, 1953
Baby Please - Chance 1147 and Just A Lonely Christmas (both HF) / Chance 1150.
Records for: Chance 53-54, Chess 54-58 ("Sincerely" issued as by The Moonglows), Checker (as Bobby Lester & The Moonlighters) 1954, RCA 1972.

Original lineup: (the Champagne single)
Harvey Fuqua, Bobby Lester, Danny Coggins. Prentice Barnes

Famous lineup:
Bobby Lester, lead (53-58) born Robert Dallas January 13, 1930, Louisville - died October 15, 1980. Childhood friend of Harvey in Kentucky. After leaving the Moonglows he tried his luck with a new group with Pete Graves, Milton Turner and Doc Williams-Green (a new contract with Chess was not to be). In the late 1960s his new group featured Clyde McPhatter's son Billy, Gary Rodgers, and Robert Ford
Alexander "Pete" Graves, ten (August 53-58) born as Alexander Walton April 17, 1930 in Cleveland, replaced Danny Coggins. After his stint with Lester's new group he recorded as The Moonglows with members from the Velvets for the Lana label in 1964
Prentice Barnes, bass (53-58) born April 25, 1925 in Chatewa, MS - died October 1, 2006 in Magnolia, MS

Harvey’s “new” Moonglows of 1959-1960:
A sextet with Harvey Fuqua, Chester Simmons, Reese Palmer, James Nolan, Marvin Gaye, and Chuck Barksdale.

Revived lineup of 1970-72:
Fuqua, Lester, Graves, Doc Williams and Chuck Lewis
The Moonglows of 1959: Bruce Martin, Gene Kelly, Pete Crawford, and Gary Rodgers.

THE Top Ten Vocal Groups of the Golden ‘50s

PHOTO GALLERY

Dominoes, Clovers, “5” Royales, Midnighters, Flamingos, Moonglows

The Dominoes, 1957, with Gene Mumford top right.

The Clovers of 1953, with Buddy Bailey bottom right, and left image center.

The Clovers in the spring of 1954 with Billy Mitchell center (spring of 1954).

The “5” Royales at the Apollo with Lowman Pauling left and Johnny Tainer at the solo mike.


The successful Flamingos sextet (Nate Nelson third from left, and newcomers Tommy Hunt and Terry Johnson back, far right.

The Moonglows in 1954.

The “new” Moonglows of 1959 with Harvey in front and Marvin Gaye fourth fr.
PHOTO GALLERY

Drifters, Platters, Cadillacs

Two early Drifters lineups, 1953 and 1954.


The Platters 1956 with Tony Williams, center; The Buck Ram managed Platters with Edwin Cook, Geno Williams, Monroe Powell, Harold Howard, and Geri Holiday in 1978; and Speedo Carroll and his new Cadillacs in 1981.
THE TOP TEN VOCAL GROUPS of the 1950s - the “origina"s

THE DOMINOES - late 1950

THE CLOVERS - late 1950

THE "5" ROYALES - The Royal Sons Quintet 1951

THE MIDNIGHTERS - (The Royals: Booth, Sutton, Ballard, Woods) 1952/53

THE FLAMINGOS - 1953

THE MOONGLOWS - late 1953/1954
THE Top Ten Vocal Groups of the Golden ‘50s

The Mount Lebanon Singers - 1949 (most of them later the first Drifters)
The Platters – (Taylor not yet there) 1954

THE DRIFTERS - late 1954/1955

THE PLATTERS - 1955/1956

THE COASTERS - (Gardner, Nunn, Hughes, Guy) late 1955/1956


The R&B Pioneers Series – Volume Six of twelve

23
INTERESTING CD Anthologies by the TOP GROUPS (mostly Jasmine)

- The Zoom Singles As & Bs 1954-1959 (43 tracks, Note: not the best choice of cover!) – Jasmine 2CD JASCD 556 (2013).
THE ORIGINAL “NEW” (2ND generation) DRIFTERS

June 1958 – The Drifters (formerly The Crowns):
Top: Dock Green, James “Poppa” Clark, Elsbeary Hobbs.
Bottom: Benjamin Earl (Ben E. King) Nelson, and Charlie Thomas.
Note. Clark left before the new Drifters made their first recordings on March 6, 1959. Below: Later line-ups of the “new” Drifters
The Drifters emerged into at least three different touring groups during the 70s: 1. Bill Pinkney’s Original Drifters (by many regarded as “the best”, featuring David Baughan, the Thrasher brothers, Bobby Hendricks, Bobby Lee Hollis, and Jimmy Lewis - on and off - and who have recorded several times - remnants of this group kept touring under Bill’s lead - lately including Charlie Hughes son Ron). 2. Moore’s “legal” and heavily touring Europe group up to Moore’s death (Bobby Hendricks led Faye Treadwell’s US Drifters after Moore’s death up to around 2003 - but as the UK Drifters awake again Hendricks started using the name the Bobby Hendricks Drifters). 3. Charlie Thomas’ touring and recording group (that group has been recording since 1972 - often featuring Beary Hobbs – who’s name is nowadays fronting the Larry Marshak group of 2000+). The first Thomas group was managed by Larry Marshak and they actually won the U.S. rights to the name through an early court decision in the 1970s, nowadays rejected (see below). Even Ben E. King re-joined both Thomas’ (1970s) and Moore’s (1980s) groups. Just prior to Bill Pinkney’s death, Pinkney, Ben E. King, Charlie Thomas and Bobby Hendricks worked on stage together for a reunion meeting 15-17 May, 2007 (also featuring Pinkney’s Original Drifters and Charlie Thomas’ back-up - Lou Bailey, Jerome Manning and Stephen Brown). Charlie Thomas’ Drifters recorded a CD album “Charlie Thomas’ Drifters Live - The Original Legacy Continues” around 2007. Lately Tina Treadwell’s UK Drifters have called themselves The Official Drifters.
Re-formed lineup from June, 1956:
The Crowns became The Drifters. Ben E. King's manager Lover Patterson and James "Pop" Clark were associated with the Crowns, but Clark did not join when the new Drifters were formed by the Drifters' manager Treadwell.


**Charlie Thomas**, lead/tenor (6/58-6/67) from Virginia, born April 7, 1937 - some files say 1939

**Dock Green**, tenor (6/58-ca 1/63) Born October 9, 1934. Lover Patterson helped Dock to start a rival Drifters, featuring Charlie Hughes and Tommy Evans.

**Elsbear (Beary) Hobbs**, bass (6/58-late 60) born ca 1936 - died May 31, 1996 - other files say 2000, after several years of touring with Thomas' group

**Reggie Kimber**, gtr (58-59)

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**Leaders 1959-1960:**
Ben E. King only spent his original time with the group from the starting point June, 1958 (with the first recordings in March, 1959) until ca May, 1960. On "Save The Last Dance For Me" The Drifters are co-credited with "Vocal Quartet & Ben E. King". The group singing behind King's solo hits were not the Drifters, but singers possibly recruited by Patterson.

Johnny Lee Williams extra lead a short period 1959/60, as plans for King's solo career were made.

Charlie Thomas continued to sing lead on several tracks up to 1968. He left the Drifters around mid 1967. In 1971 he started his own Drifters-group with Hobbs, and was still active in 2016.

**New leads entering early 1960s:**

Johnny Moore (4/63- ) back again - with short leavings in 72, 82, 86. The Drifters became a singing quintet up to Lewis' death with three great lead singers.

**New members during the '60s:**
Billy "Abdul Samad" Davis, gtr (mid 59-67) went to Thomas' group for several years. Not identical to McIntosh's guitarist or Billy "Ropeal" Davis.


Gene Pearson, baritone (ca 1/63-9/66) from the Rivileers and Clefflones, replacing Green. Born 1935 - died on April 6, 2000

Johnny Terry, bass (1/63-7/66) replacing Evans. He later joined David Lynch's new "Original Platters", This is not the James Brown Terry


Bill Fredericks, bass/baritone (12/67-74, 81-83) replaced Brent. Dan Danbridge (66) and Charles Baskevire (67) shortly joined. Milton Turner, baritone during 1967-69

Don Thomas entered in 1969 as baritone/bass; left during 1970.

**Lineup 1970:**
Moore, Sheppard, Don Thomas, Fredericks, Butch Mann (guitar up to 76). Ronald Quinn sang with Moore and Fredericks on their last Atlantic recording in January, 1971 (a trot).
Moore's group moved to England in 1972.

**Lineup mid 1970s:**
Moore, Clyde Brown, Butch Leake, and Grant Kitchings, soon replaced by Billy Lewis. Joe Blunt replaced Leake in the late 70s.

**Lineup 1982:** Ben E. King, Fredericks, Ray Lewis and Louis Price

**Lineup 1983-1985:** Moore, Ben E. King, Clyde Brown, Joe Blunt

**Line-up mid 1980s:**
Moore, Ray Lewis, Billy Lewis plus different fourth singers

1990s: Johnny Moore, Rohan Turner, Roy Hennings, Joe Cole

**Early 2000s:** Peter Laman (90-91 and from 96), Patrick Alan, Rohan Turner, Victor Bynoe.**

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**Essential CDs:**

**The Best CDs:**
- Rockin' & Driftin' (3CD) - Rhino R2 72417 (1996) or: The Greatest Hits Of - WEA (UK) 029 (1994) (24 tracks)

**Editor's choice:** The 7CD series: The Drifters Anthology - Sequel

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**R&B Top 10 Hits:** (26 of 35 Top 40)

**Clyde McPhatter and The Drifters or The Drifters featuring Clyde McPhatter (2):**
- 1953 Money Honey 1w #1 11/21
- 1954 Such A Night 3w #2
- 1954 Lucille #7
- 1954 Honey Love (f.) 8w #1 7/10 P21
- 1954 Bip Bam (#) #7
- 1954 White Christmas (f. & Bill Pinkney) 1w #2 (also #5 in 1955)
- 1955 What Cha Gonna Do 2w #2

**The Drifters:**
- 1955 Adorable 1w #1 12/31 (JM)
- 1955 Steamboat #5 (BP)
- 1955 Ruby Baby #10 (JM)
- 1957 Fools Fall In Love #10 (JM)
- 1959 There Goes My Baby 1w #1 7/27 P2
- 1959 (If You Cry) True Love, True Love #5 (LM)
- 1959 Dance With Me 3w #2 P15
- 1960 This Magic Moment #4 P16
- 1960 Lonely Winds #9
- 1960 Save The Last Dance For Me 1w #1 10/31 P1
- 1961 I Count The Tears #6 P17
- 1961 Some Kind Of Wonderful #6 (RL)
- 1961 Sweets For My Sweet #10 (CT) P16
- 1962 Up On The Roof #4 (RL) P5
- 1963 On Broadway #7 (RL) P9
- 1964 Vaya Con Dios #10 (RL)
- 1964 Under The Boardwalk 3w #1 7/25 (JM) P4
- 1964 Saturday Night At The Movies #6 (JM) P18
- 1965 At The Club #10 (JM)
THE Top Ten Vocal Groups of the Golden '50s

**Essential Bonus Songs:**

1. Someday (You’ll Want Me To Want You) (1955) 
2. Only You (1957) 
3. Drip Drop (1958) 
4. Suddenly There’s a Valley (1961) 
5. Please Stay (1961) 
6. The Most Beautiful Girl in the World (1962) 
7. What to Do (1962) 
8. Only in America (1963) 
9. The Drifters’ Greatest Hits (1964) 
10. The Drifters’ Original Atlantic LPs (1965)

**The Drifters’ original Atlantic LPs:**

- 1961: The Drifters’ Original Atlantic LPs
- 1962: The Drifters’ Greatest Hits
- 1963: The Drifters’ Original Atlantic LPs
- 1964: The Drifters’ Greatest Hits
- 1965: The Drifters’ Original Atlantic LPs

**Court decision Thursday, August 19, 1999 Drifters’ Manager Wins Right to Continued Use of Name**

Newark, N.J. - July 30, 1999 - Judge Politan upheld a jury finding that, in 1976, Drifters Records Inc. obtained a trademark that included the name of the original Drifters. The Drifters, the original and long-time performers of the famous group, has been left singing the blues.

The Drifters' name in the United States, and therefore no promotion of music groups that perform under famous names, has served as the group's manager since then. Together, they had made, in Judge Politan's words, "all final decisions relating to the performances, soundtracks, appearance bookings, financial accounts, and personnel changes" in the period in which the classic Drifters' hits were first recorded. Indeed, the Treadwells had been responsible for creating the image and sound that made those songs chart-toppers.

Judge Politan ruled that uninterrupted and continuing royalties from ongoing recording sales and airplay of original Drifters' songs belonging to The Drifters, Inc., a corporation owned by Ms. Treadwell. The threat of suits based on that fraudulently obtained trademark had kept Ms. Treadwell's group from performing in the United States. Ms. Treadwell managed the group with her late husband, George Treadwell, the group's original manager, from their marriage in 1955 until his death in 1987. Ms. Treadwell has served as the group's manager since then. Together, they had made, in Judge Politan's words, "all final decisions relating to the performances, soundtracks, appearance bookings, financial accounts, and personnel changes" in the period in which the classic Drifters' hits were first recorded. Indeed, the Treadwells had been responsible for creating the image and sound that made those songs chart-toppers.

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BEN E. KING: the most Famous Lead of THE DRIFTERS

Benjamin Earl Nelson on September 28, 1938, in Henderson, North Carolina, and moved to Harlem, New York, at the age of nine in 1947. He died in Hackensack, New Jersey on April 30, 2015. He began singing with the Lover Patterson managed The Crowns in late 1957 and became lead singer for the original line-up of the second generation of Drifters from June 1958 (although recordings started first in 1959) to May 1960. He also sang with later Drifters: old friend Charlie Thomas' group (sometime in the 1970s) and subbed for Johnny Moore's later group from late 1981 and stayed with them (when Johnny returned) through 1985. There was an interesting Atlantic single with King as lead from 1963, featuring Ray Lewis, Louis Price, and Bill Fredericks (“You Better Move On” b/w a reissued original “Save The Last Dance For Me”) which soon was withdrawn (probably some legal difficulties with British Bell/Arista).

Ben E. King Early Discography

Before the The Crowns (originally named The 5 Crowns) - with James Clark replacing Palmer and Dock Green joining in early 1958 - became the new Drifters, Ben sang with them from 1957 (for Caravan and for R&B (although no lead). Charlie Thomas, who joined The Crowns at the same time as Ben, was the natural lead singer (with a voice not far from Ben's). He met a fate similar to Paul Williams in the The Temptations - only sporadically allowed to lead on The Drifters’ records. Note that King’s name is credited on “Save The Last Dance For Me” (Vocal Quartet & Ben E. King). George Treadwell was still The Drifters manager.

There were rumors circulating that Ben E. King's manager Pat “Lover” Patterson used singers from his group The Duvals/Drapers backing King on his early solo recordings (27 October 1961). It sounds more like a mixed male/female back-up group. The Drapers masqueraded as “The Drifters” early on.

The Drifters (Atlantic, New York)

Ben E. Nelson (King), lead; Charlie Thomas, lead-1, Dock Green, Elsbeary Hobbs.

6 March 1959

3396 Hey Senorita
2062, LP 8041
3397 There Goes My Baby
2025, LP 8041
3439 Baltimore -1
2050, LP 8041
3999 Oh My Love
2025, LP 8041

9 July 1959

Ben E. King, lead; Johnny Lee Williams, lead-1, Thomas, Green, Hobbs.

3726 (If You Cry) True Love, True Love -1
2040, LP 8041
3737 Dance With Me
2040, LP 8041

23 December 1959

3987 This Magic Moment
2050, LP 8041
3988 Lonely Nights
2062, LP 8041
3989 Temptation
unissued

19 May 1960

4565 Save The Last Dance For Me
2071, LP 8059
4566 Nobody But Me
2071, LP 8059
4567 I Count The Tears
2087, LP 8059
4568 Sometimes I Wonder
2151 (issued 1962)

Ben E. King (Atco, New York)

17 December 1959

3965 Brace Yourself
6135, LP 142
3966 Show Me The Way
6135, LP 142
3967 I Promise Love
LP 142
3968 Hearts Of Stone
unissued

7 June 1960

LaVern Baker & Ben E. King
4585 How Often
Atlantic 2067
4586 A Help-Each-Other Romance
Atlantic 2067


27 October 1960

5161 Spanish Harlem
6185, LP 133
5162 First Taste Of Love
6185, LP 142
5163 Young Boy Blues
6207, LP 142
5164 Stand By Me
6194, LP 142

27 March 1961

5441 Here Comes The Night
6207, LP 142
5442 On The Horizon
6194, LP 142
5451 Amor
29 March 1961
5453 Souvenir Of Mexico
6203, alt on LP 133

Note: 28-29 March, 1961 more recordings, only issued on LP 135, were recorded – and later more songs/singles for LP 142.

Atlantic LP 8059 (3/1964) and Atco LP 5033-165 (1964 – King's fourth album) Note that neither of the new Drifters' LPs had Ben E. King featured on the sleeves.
THE DRIFTERS: ONE (plus) PER YEAR 1953 – 1966

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Song 1</th>
<th>Song 2</th>
<th>Song 3</th>
<th>Song 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1953</td>
<td>Money Honey</td>
<td>Moanin’ at Midnight</td>
<td>I’ll Be Doggin’ You</td>
<td>You Got Me C.O.D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1954</td>
<td>Such a Night</td>
<td>Lover’s Jam</td>
<td>Do You Love Me</td>
<td>I’m Walking with a Girl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>Be My Girl</td>
<td>Do the Clam</td>
<td>I’ll Forget About You</td>
<td>Please Stay with Me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>Please Stay</td>
<td>When My Little Girl is Smiling</td>
<td>Up on the Roof</td>
<td>On Broadway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>Please Stay</td>
<td>When My Little Girl is Smiling</td>
<td>Up on the Roof</td>
<td>On Broadway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1958</td>
<td>Please Stay</td>
<td>When My Little Girl is Smiling</td>
<td>Up on the Roof</td>
<td>On Broadway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1959</td>
<td>Please Stay</td>
<td>When My Little Girl is Smiling</td>
<td>Up on the Roof</td>
<td>On Broadway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>Please Stay</td>
<td>When My Little Girl is Smiling</td>
<td>Up on the Roof</td>
<td>On Broadway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>Please Stay</td>
<td>When My Little Girl is Smiling</td>
<td>Up on the Roof</td>
<td>On Broadway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962</td>
<td>Please Stay</td>
<td>When My Little Girl is Smiling</td>
<td>Up on the Roof</td>
<td>On Broadway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963</td>
<td>Please Stay</td>
<td>When My Little Girl is Smiling</td>
<td>Up on the Roof</td>
<td>On Broadway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964</td>
<td>Please Stay</td>
<td>When My Little Girl is Smiling</td>
<td>Up on the Roof</td>
<td>On Broadway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>Please Stay</td>
<td>When My Little Girl is Smiling</td>
<td>Up on the Roof</td>
<td>On Broadway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>Please Stay</td>
<td>When My Little Girl is Smiling</td>
<td>Up on the Roof</td>
<td>On Broadway</td>
</tr>
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</table>
THE DRIVERS – Atlantic Albums Gallery  (selective after 1971)

Clyde McPhatter & the Drifters: Rock & Roll – 8003 (1956 or 3/57), The Drifters: Rockin’ & Driftin’ – 8022 (1958),
The Drifters’ Greatest Hits – 8041 (September 1960), The Drifters: Save The Last Dance For Me – 8059 (February 1962)

Up On The Roof: The Best Of The Drifters – 8073 (July 1963), Our Biggest Hits – 8026 (June 1964 – soon withdrawn – See On Broadway),
Under The Boardwalk – 8099 (almost identical to Our Biggest Hits with Under The Boardwalk added and Drip Drop stereo alternate excluded, 1964 - two different covers, reissued 1967),
The Drifters – Clarion 608 (1964 – an Atlantic subsidiary label)

The Good Life with The Drifters – 8103 (January 1965), I’ll Take You Where The Music’s Playing – 8113 (September 1966),
The Drifter’s Golden Hits – 8153 (February 1968), Their Greatest Recordings: The Early Years – Atco SD33-375 (November 1971 - Atlantic subsidiary label)

Let The Boogie Woogie Roll: Greatest Hits 1953-1958 – 81927 (1988 2-set LP), and with alternate later cover – also issued on 2CD with bonus tracks;
All-Time Greatest Hits & More: The Drifters 1959-1965 – 81931 (1988 2-set LP, also issued on 2CD with bonus tracks),
The Very Best of The Drifters – Rhino (Atlantic) R2 71211 (April 1993)

The Drifters Box: Rockin’ & Driftin’ (3CD box) – Rhino R2 72417 (1996),
The Definitive Drifters (2CD) – Warner (Atlantic) 66150 (2003), The Definitive Soul Collection (2CD) – Rhino/Atlantic 77662 (2006),
## THE DRIFTERS: the Lead Singers – their first lead with the group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Song</th>
<th>Lead</th>
<th>Recorded</th>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Issued</th>
<th>Writers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Money Honey (R&amp;B #1)</td>
<td>Clyde McPhatter</td>
<td>“Money Honey” rec in New York City 9 August 1953</td>
<td>Atlantic 1006</td>
<td>September 1953</td>
<td>w. Gerhart Thrasher, Andrew Thrasher, Bill Pinkney, Willie Farlow, and Walter Allen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honey Bee</td>
<td>David Baughan</td>
<td>Rec in New York City 21 April 1955</td>
<td>Atlantic 1026</td>
<td>March 1961</td>
<td>w. Gerhart Thrasher, Andrew Thrasher, Bill Pinkney, and Jimmy Oliver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adorable (R&amp;B #1)</td>
<td>Johnny Moore</td>
<td>Rec in Los Angeles 19 September 1955</td>
<td>Atlantic 1078</td>
<td>October 1955</td>
<td>w. Gerhart Thrasher, Andrew Thrasher, Bill Pinkney, and Jimmy Oliver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steamboat (R&amp;B #5)</td>
<td>Bill Pinkney</td>
<td>Rec in Los Angeles 19 September 1955</td>
<td>Atlantic 1078</td>
<td>October 1955</td>
<td>w. Gerhart Thrasher, Andrew Thrasher, Johnny Moore, and Jimmy Oliver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your Promise To Be Mine</td>
<td>Gerhart Thrasher</td>
<td>Rec in Los Angeles 19 September 1955</td>
<td>Atlantic 1088</td>
<td>February 1956</td>
<td>w. Johnny Moore, Andrew Thrasher, Bill Pinkney, and Jimmy Oliver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drip Drop</td>
<td>Bobby Hendricks</td>
<td>Rec in New York City 28 April 1958</td>
<td>Atlantic 1187</td>
<td>May 1958</td>
<td>w. Gerhart Thrasher, Jimmy Millinder (Miner), Tommy Evans, and Jimmy Oliver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suddenly There’s A Valley</td>
<td>Tommy Evans</td>
<td>Rec in New York City 28 April 1958</td>
<td>Atlantic 2050</td>
<td>January 1960</td>
<td>w. Ben E. King, Dock Green, Elsbeary Hobbs, and Reggie Kimber</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There Goes My Baby (R&amp;B #1)</td>
<td>Ben E. King (Nelson)</td>
<td>Rec in New York City 6 March 1959</td>
<td>Atlantic 2025</td>
<td>May 1959</td>
<td>w. Charlie Thomas, Dock Green, Elsbeary Hobbs, and Reggie Kimber</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baltimore</td>
<td>Charlie Thomas</td>
<td>Rec in New York City 6 March 1959</td>
<td>Atlantic 2050</td>
<td>January 1960</td>
<td>w. Elsbeary Hobbs (sec.lead), Ben E. King, Dock Green, and Reggie Kimber</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(If You Cry) True Love, True Love (R&amp;B #5)</td>
<td>Johnny Lee Williams</td>
<td>Rec in New York City 9 July 1959</td>
<td>Atlantic 2040</td>
<td>September 1959</td>
<td>w. Ben E. King, Charlie Thomas, Dock Green, Elsbeary Hobbs, and Bill Davis (Abdul Samad)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some Kind Of Wonderful (R&amp;B #5)</td>
<td>Rudy Lewis</td>
<td>Rec in New York City 1 February 1961</td>
<td>Atlantic 2096</td>
<td>March 1961</td>
<td>w. Charlie Thomas, Dock Green, Tommy Evans, and Bill Davis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If You Don’t Come Back</td>
<td>Johnny Moore</td>
<td>Rec in New York City 12 April 1963</td>
<td>Atlantic 2191</td>
<td>May 1963</td>
<td>w. Rudy Lewis, Charlie Thomas, Eugene Pearson, Johnny Terry, and Bill Davis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1953

1955

1958

1959

1961

1963
THE LATER “LEGAL” DRIFTERS

The Drifters Now

**Lead:** Johnny Moore
Johnny’s group moved to England in 1972.

Rec in New York City 1972
Bell LP-219 (UK) (issued 1973)
w. Butch Leake, Grant Kitchings,
Bill Fredericks, and Butch Mann, gtr
1972

Live at Harvard University

**Lead:** Charlie Thomas

Rec in Cambridge, Massachusetts 1976
A&D LP 8001 (issued 1976)
w. Bobby Ruffin, Dock Green, Elsbeary Hobbs, and Bill Davis (Abdul Samad), gtr
1976

You Better Move On

**Lead:** Ben E. King
King “guessted” both Charlie’s group in the 1970s and subbed for Moore in Johnny’s group from late 1971, and stayed with them up to 1985 after Johnny’s return in 1983.

Rec (prob in New York) in 1982
Atlantic K 17743 (UK) (issued 1982)
w. Bill Fredericks, Ray Lewis, Louis Price
1982

Images left: The Musicor single 1498 “A Midsummer Night in Harlem” with Charlie Thomas and The Drifters, recorded in New York, 1974, possibly featuring Dock Green, Elsbeary Hobbs, and Al Banks. Left: The British based Drifters of the early 2000s (Peter Lamarr, Vic Bynoe, Rohan Turney & Patrick Allan) here with a 2006 CD on Studio T.
THE Top Ten Vocal Groups of the Golden '50s

TOP TEN VOCAL GROUPS’ LPs 1954-1960  part one


TOP TEN VOCAL GROUPS’ LPs 1954-1960  
part two


The Platters – Federal 549 (1956, reissued on King 651 in 1959 – it’s the King LP imaged – Federal, see page 35), The Platters – Mercury MG-20146 (1956)  
Note: A total of nine LPs on Mercury (MG20000-series) were issued with The Platters during 1956-1960 – shown on page 24.


The Coasters – Atco 33-101 (November 1957), The Coasters’ Greatest Hits – Atco 33-111 (October 1959), The Coasters One By One – Atco 33-123 (July 1960), Billy Ward and his Dominoes featuring Clyde McPhatter and Jackie Wilson - King 773 of 1961 (which was reissue of LP 548).
The Platters

In the ’60s Tony Williams activated his own new Platters for some years, since his solo career didn’t work out as hoped. Beyond the many phony groups sporadically acting as Platters, at least seven groups have evolved from Ram’s group: 1. Monroe Powell’s Ram-succesion and qualitative group in Las Vegas (still active, mostly in Florida and no longer under the Ram banner - touring as "Monroe Powell’s Platters Revue") - recently settling their legal matters with Herb Reed’s Platters out of court; 2. Williams’ revived group after several unsuccessful solo years in the early ’90s featuring Herb Reed; 3. David Lynch’s "Original Platters" formed in 1967 with Robi and Taylor pining. 4. Sonny Turner’s "new" Platters. 5. Herb Reed’s touring "The Five Platters" lineup (initially including Nate Nelson), nowadays called "Herb Reed’s Platters" (stopped by the "Ram"-managed Platters to call themselves just "The Platters"); 6. Robi’s revival group (nowadays managed by Robi’s widow). 7. The Buck Ram Platters (remnants from the original group - without any original Platter and with new management, Jean Bennett, Ram’s former agent). Europe had its own false Platters. The groups to check out live in later years were really Powell’s in Florida (Monroe also acts with a late lineup of Ink Spots), and Herb Reed’s.


Four Platters and One Lovely Dish - Bear Family (9CD) (1994) BCD 15741 II (with all Mercury recordings 1955-64 and 56-page booklet)

Reading: Setting the Record Straight (2007) and Vol 2 (2009) by Anthony P. Musso (Authorhouse)

Essential CD:

The Ultimate Collection – NotNow (3CD) NOTNCD 72 (2014) 60 tracks or:

Enchanted - The Best of - Rhino RHCD 70326 (1993) or:

All-Time Greatest Hits - Mercury CD 175502 (18 tracks) (2004) or:


For the Collector:

Recording debut: Los Angeles, California September 15, 1953 Give Thanks (TW) / Hey Now (HR) - Federal 12153, and I’ll Cry When You’re Gone / I Need You All The Time (both TW) - Federal 12181. The final Federal session took place in January, 1955, again featuring Linda Hayes.


Tony Williams, David Lynch, Alex Hodge, Gaynell Hodge, and Herb Reed.

Third session (Buck Ram new manager) May 20, 1954:

Zola Taylor (repl Gaynell). Not long after Paul Robi replaced Alex.

Famous recording lineup:

Tony Williams, lead (53-early 60) born April 5, 1928, Elisabeth, New Jersey, died August 14, 1992 in New York. Sang his first solo recordings already in 1959 (for Mercury) and was replaced on stage by Tony’s friend Johnny Barnes.

David Lynch, ten (53-67) born July 3, 1929 in St. Louis; died January 2, 1981. David left the group in early 1967 to start a new "Original Platters" (Robi and Zola joined him in the new group).

Paul Robi, bar (August 54-65) born August 20, 1931 in New Orleans; died February 1, 1989. Replaced Alex Hodge. He also tried his luck in later years with an own group.

Herb Reed, bass (53-69) originally sharing leads with Cornell Gunter. Born August 7, 1928 (prob not 1931) in Kansas City. Died in Boston, June 4, 2012. Herb was the longest lasting original member, leaving in 1969 to start a rival Platters (originally featuring Nate Nelson).


Later members:

Charles "Sonny" Turner, (Feb 60-70, definite lead from October, 1960 – Tony had left by May), born in Fairmont, West Virginia September 24, 1939 and settled in Cleveland, Ohio (and sang lead there with the Metronotes/Five Jades).

Nate Nelson (65-69) from the Flamingos, succeeding Robi. Barbara Randolph (replaced Taylor in 1964), soon Betty Jackson arrived (neither one staying long).

Sandra Dawn (became new soprano in 1966). Larry Johnson (replaced Lynch in 1967), Paul Wilson from the Flamingos sang with them in 1968, and Milton Bullock and Tony High also were members during the very late 1960s. Further changes in 1970.

Monroe Powell, lead from 1970. He had led the Dominoes, now taking over from Turner; and was lead singer for the Buck Ram Platters for over 25 years in Las Vegas (with lots of new lineups).

New lead from 1995: Tyrone Sweet

The Platters Reference 4-10-15 8336: The Ultimate Collection – NotNow (3CD) NOTNCD 72 (2014) 60 tracks or:

Enchanted - The Best of - Rhino RHCD 70326 (1993) or:

All-Time Greatest Hits - Mercury CD 175502 (18 tracks) (2004) or:


For the Collector:


Four Platters and One Lovely Dish - Bear Family (9CD) (1994) BCD 15741 II (with all Mercury recordings 1955-64 and 56-page booklet)

Reading: Setting the Record Straight (2007) and Vol 2 (2009) by Anthony P. Musso (Authorhouse)
Buck Ram, composer, musical director, and producer, was the driving force behind the success of The Platters. He originally persuaded Mercury Records to sign them to a record deal, and stuck with them until his death in 1991. He was a genius songwriter, and is considered the mastermind behind the success of The Platters. He wrote and edited the first Personality Plugger in 1954. This publicity paper was first released to disk jockeys, agents, magazines, and record companies on February 15, 1954. By 1956, Bennett had moved to Los Angeles and purchased Personality Productions from Ram. Ram continued to work very closely with Personality until his death in 1991. Sue Hackett, a current co-worker of Bennett's, said, "She was the lady with The Platters. Took the title of secretary for society to accept her. She was the lady executive." Today, Bennett maintains her right to the Platters name is still valid and has her own group, which is booked as 'The Bucks Ram Platters', based out of Las Vegas. Current members of this group include Tony Williams, Cord G. Coslor, and J. Michael Davis. While no original members are in this group, J. Michael Davis did perform with The Platters during the Ram era in the 1980s. Bennett says she and her company vigorously pursue groups which are illegally using the Platters name. "We don't have it right for people to make money out of our name, or anybody else's mouth," said Hackett. At the same time, Bennett has licensed two other groups to perform. A group located in Branson, MO using the name of The Platters, Five Platters, Inc. owned, was cancelled. Since that time, Bennett has continued to put out a very successful show with The Buck Ram Platters, and continues to discourage the use of the name. "That's something we're very, very adamant about," Bennett recently said, and a judgement against Monnie Powell, who was performing with the name The Platters Featuring The Legendary Monnie Powell. She says that Powell refused to sign a contract extension in the mid-1980s and took to perform with his own group. "I put a lot of time in with him and it really breaks my heart to have it turn into something like this." Monnie maintains that after the 1980 lawsuit between Robi and Bennett, Bennett said he would manage the company to Mary Fanning, where he continued his employment with the Platters. Bennett acknowledges that Powell's statement is indeed true, but that the company under Fanning's direction ended operations all together. Bennett maintains that her current Personality Productions company continues to own all rights to The Platters name. Recent court rulings have shown Bennett to have rights to the name, but several former Platters vehemently disagree with this idea. "I was there almost from the conception of them, but I was secretary and then a partner to Buck Ram. She feels she owns the 'Platters'. Just because you were in management, how do you own the name?" said Sunny Turner. Turner went on to say, "I don't know where she gets the power and authority to license anyone.... at least my contribution has been significant to the Platters." It is evident that Bennett has helped nurture many very successful and powerful company over the years, but controversy remains over her right to use the name. Along with Bennett, several others have also won rights via the judicial system. What is very clear, is that Bennett was ahead of her time in the music industry. Some sources close to The Platters say Bennett was a simple secretary, but the facts show she indeed purchased the management company in the mid-1960s from Buck Ram. Sue Hackett says she, "Personnel, really is me and other people. We are where we are because of people like Jean Bennett." Hackett said, "no, it's not the original Platters, but where would they have been without Buck Ram's music.... without people like Jean Bennett?" The Buck Ram Platters are planning the release of a new album in 2000.
THE Top Ten Vocal Groups of the Golden ’50s

THE FLYING PLATTERS

David Lynch, Paul Robi (top), Tony Williams, Herb Reed, and Zola Taylor (ca 1956) - with Bear Family CD “The Ballads of…” BCD 17326 (2013) and “Rock” BCD 17558 (2017)
THE PLATTERS – The Early LPs (1956-1961)

The Platters – Federal 549 (1956, reissued on King 651 in 1959 – red cover, see page 31), The Platters – Mercury MG 20146 (April 1956), The Platters Volume Two – MG 20216 (August 1956)


Remember When? – MG 20410 (alternate cover), Reflections – MG 20481 (Nov 1960), Encore Of Golden Hits – MG 20472 (Dec 1959),

More Encore Of Golden Hits - MG 20591 (June 1960), Life Is Just A Bowl Of Cherries – MG 20589 (October 1960), Encore! – Mercury/Wing MGW 12112 (November 1961)
THE MODERN VOCAL GROUPS SERIES

Issued 1999-2001, this is a six-volume series, comprising comprehensive review of vocal group recordings from the Modern stable. Focusing on 1950-54, covering various flavours of doo wop. In addition to the Modern label itself, the Los Angeles based Bihari brothers released vocal group sides on the Crown, Flair and RPM marques. Guiding us through the compilations for the Modern Vocal Groups series have been the guys at EarlyBird Records in Long Island, New York, featuring info-laden annotations by Gordon Skadberg.
THE Top Ten Vocal Groups of the Golden ‘50s

Some Great Books on Vocal Groups and the definitive Coasters (issued in February 2013)

- Doo-Wop: The Forgotten third of Rock ‘n’ Roll by Anthony J. Gitlin, Matthew M. Schiff (1992)

- reprinted as The DaCapo Book of American Singing Groups (2000); updated in 2006 as American Singing Groups: A History from 1940 to Today
- Group Harmony - Echoes of the Rhythm and Blues Era by Todd R. Baptista (2007)
- They All Sang On The Corner by Philip Groia (1973)
- More Than Words Can Say/The In Spots and their Music by Marv Goldberg (1998)
THE CADILLACS

The Cadillacs were also the first to extensively use professional choreography (Cholly Atkins and Horni Coles). They soon turned into two different groups for the same label. Today they have fans all over the world and revived and active, and touring extensively for the last couple of decades. Earl Carroll left the Coasters in late 1979 after almost 20 years away from his origins and revived his old group, back in business again with his old childhood friend and original Cadillac Bobby Phillips.

Second group 1957:
James R.J. Bailey, lead; Robert "Bobby" Spencer, ten (57-72); Bill Lindsey, bar; Champ Rollow, b&bs (real name Wadlo Chapman)

"The Original Cadillacs" 1957:
Carroll, Phillips, Wade, Brooks, plus sometimes Bailey

"United" lineup November, 1957- January, 1959:
Spencer, Carroll, Phillips, Wade (who did not always follow on tours), and Bailey (who did not participate on the screen shows)

Second group 1959 (Romeo):
Spencer, Wade, Bailey, Phillips

"Speedo's Cadillacs" early 1960:
Carroll, Roland Martinez, ten; Kirk Davis, bar; Ronnie Bright, bass

Late 1960:
Carroll, Martinez, Phillips, and Reggie Barnes, lead ten

Second line-up 1960 (billed as The Original Cadillacs): Wade, Martinez, Phillips, and Junior Glanton, bar

1961 for Smash:
Carroll, Ray "Bobby" Ray Brewster, ten; Curtis Williams, bar (both from a late line up of Hollywood Flames; and Curtis from the original Penguins - singing the bridge on "Earth Angel"); Irving Lee Gail, bass.

For Capitol 1962-64:
Bobby Ray, Roland Martinez, Bobby Spencer, and James Bailey

After these recordings the group also featured: a. Milton Love, Fred Barksdale, and Leroy Binns (although Spencer and Phillips stayed along for a while). 1970-72:
Bailey, Spencer, Leroy Binns, Steven Brown, and sometimes Phillips and Wade

1981 - on:
Earl Carroll, Bobby Phillips, Gary Lewis, John Brown (from 2003 a trio without Brown)

The original Jubilee (Josie) LPs:
The Fabulous Cadillacs – JSM-1045 (1957)
The Crazy Cadillacs – JSM-1089 (1959)
Twisting With The Cadillacs – JGM-5099 (1962)
The Very Best of The Cadillacs – Murray Hill LP 1195 (1982)
For Collectors Only – Murray Hill SLP09X58 (1983)

Essential CD: The Best of - Rhino L2 70955 (1990) or:
Rock - Bear Family BCD 12281 AB (2008) (34 tracks, 44-page booklet)

For Collectors:
The Complete Josie Sessions (4CD) - Bear Family BCD 15684 DI (1995) or:
For Collectors Only (3CD) - Collectables COL-CD-8909 (1992) or:
Zoom (2CD) – Jasmine JASCD 556 (2009) (43 Josie single tracks)

Reading:
They All Sang on the Corner by Philip Groia (Edmond Publ 1973)

R&B Top 10 Hit: (1 of 4 Top 40)
1956 Speedoo - (2w #3 - recorded September 28, 1955, P17)
The Top Ten Vocal Groups of the Golden '50s

Collectors’ Gems:
1954 Gloria (EC)
1955 Down the Road (EW)
1955 Let Me Explain (EW)
1956 Woe Is Me (EC)
1956 Betty My Love (EC)
1956 The Girl I Love (EC)
1956 About That Girl Named Lou (EC)
1956 Sugar-Sugar (EC)
1957 My Girl Friend (JB)
1958 Holy Smoke Baby
1958 Speedo’s Back (EC) P28
1958 Peek-A-Boo #20
1959 Please Mr. Johnson
1959 Romeo (BS)
1960 Louise (EC)
1960 Tell Me Today (EC)
1960 Rock ‘N Roll Is Here To Stay (EC)

The Cadillacs - original Josie singles
Note: There are more Josie recordings (LP) and several later singles on Smash, Capitol, Artic, Mercury and Polydor.
1954-1956
1954-1956 The Cadillacs (featuring Earl Carroll, lead; and Bailey*, sec.ten)
765 I Wonder Why - Gloria
769 Wishing Well - I Want To Know About Love
773 No Chance - Sympathy
778 Down The Road - Window Lady
785 Let Me Explain - Speedoo
792 Zoom - You Are
805 That's All I Need - The Girl I Love*
807 Shock-A-Doo - Rudolph The Red Nosed Reindeer*
812 About That Girl Named Lou* - Sugar-Sugar*
1957
The Cadillacs (featuring J.R. Bailey and Bobby Spencer)
820 Broken Heart - My Girl Friend
The Original Cadillacs (featuring Earl Carroll)
821 Hurry Home – Lucy
Earl Carroll and the Original Cadillacs (feat. Carroll and Bailey)
829 Buzz-Buzz-Buzz - Yes Yes Baby
Jesse Powell and The Caddy’s (with Bailey and Spencer)
834 Turnpike (instr) - Ain’1 You Gonna
1958-1959
Earl Carroll
(with Carroll, Spencer, Bailey, Wade, and Phillips)
836 Speedo Is Back (EC lead) - A’ Looka Here
842 Holy Smoke Baby - I Want To Know (rec 1957 with Bailey)
846 Peek-A-Boo - Oh, Oh Lolita
857 Jay Walker - Copy Cat (EC lead)
861 Please, Mr. Johnson - Cool It Fool
1959
Speedo and The Pears (feat Carroll)
865 Who Ya Gonna Kiss - Nagglty Nag
The Cadillacs (featuring Spencer, Wade, Bailey and Phillips)
866 Romeo - Always My Darling
870 Bad Dan McCoon – Dumbell
1960
Speedo and The Cadillacs (feat Carroll)
876 Tell Me Today - It’s Love (with Ronnie Bright, bass)
883 That’s Why - The Boogie Man (with Phillips, bass)
1963
The Original Cadillacs
(with Earl Wade and Bobby Phillips)
915 I’ll Never Let You Go - Wayward Wanderer (rec earlier)

Note:
Among the only-on-LP issued tracks are the Carroll-led “Dum Dee Dum Dum” (Nov. 1959) and “Rock ‘N Roll Is Here To Stay” (June 1960).
THE "STREET CORNER" CADDYS

Main image: Earl "Speedo" Carroll (top), Earl Wade, Bobby Phillips, Charles Brooks, LaVerne Drake (1955)
Inserted: same line-up (1955)
THE CLASSIC TEMPTATIONS – the group who was deeply influenced by The Cadillacs.

David Ruffin, Melvin Franklin, Eddie Kendricks, Paul Williams, Otis Williams (clockwise from bottom left) (c. 1965)
THE CLASSIC COASTERS

Cornell Gunter, Will "Dub" Jones, Billy Guy, and Carl Gardner (1959)
THE COASTERS

"Those Hoodlum Friends" - "The Clown Princes of Rock 'N' Roll" - the pre-eminent vocal group of the original rock 'n' roll era, and the first to be inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame (1987). Originated from the Robins - an R&B vocal group from Los Angeles, who had conquered California since 1949 - and had worked with the young composing/producing team of Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller on-and-off in 1951, in 1953 and during 1954-55. In September of 1955 Leiber-Stoller and manager Lester Sill decided to launch a professional group for Atlantic's new subsidiary Atco.

The two foremost lead singers (tenor and bass) of the Robins quit that group and completed the new quartet with two hand-chosen vocalists on the first Coasters recordings in Los Angeles, with several fine ghetto blues. They also most probably backed LaVern Baker on her L.A. recording of "Jim Dandy Got Married" in March, 1957. The remnants of the Robins continued for the second half of 1950s without significant success. The original Coasters lineup only lasted for a couple of years until the group re-formed (still with Californians) and moved to New York. They used the best musicians on recordings (especially King Curtis on sax from 1958) and reached international fame in 1959. The group was Leiber-Stoller’s favorite vehicle for their 2-minute playlets and the group worked with them 1954 - 1963, 1966-1968 and 1971-1972.

All of the early members have launched their off-shoot Coasters’ recording groups during later years. There was Bobby Nunn’s Coasters, Mark II (formed in 1963) - nowadays acting as Billy Richards’ Coasters. Grady Chapman (of the Robins) toured with a "Coasters" group (often featuring Bobby Sheen). Cornell Gunter’s Fabulous Coasters (formed not long after Gunter’s leave from the original) is still active with off-spring members as the "Original" Cornell Gunter’s Coasters. Billy Guy has issued records as Billy Guy & The Coasters. Leon Hughes called a group The World Famous Coasters (both Bobby Nunn and later Will Jones have guested) and still leads his own group calling himself "The Original". And if that isn’t enough, former members of those off-shoots have embarked new bogus Coasters groups. There also was Will Jones’ World Famous Coasters (which often featured Billy Guy). Guy later semi-coached promoter Larry Marshall’s fake group, which now tours in several versions as yet another Cornell Gunter’s Coasters. The true Coasters, though, were still semi-coached by Carl Gardner and by manager Veta Gardner with Carl’s son Jr as lead singer.

When Carl Jr launched his off-spring group in 2011 J.W. Lance became lead.

The Robins lineup on Spark 1954-55:
Carl Gardner, lead - debuting with the Robins in Los Angeles February-March, 1954 (Spark)
Bobby Nunn, bass (who sang with Little Esther on the Robins’ "Double Crossing Blues" from December, 1949 and was lead of the Robins for a.o Savoy, Modern/RPM/Crown, and RCA)
"Ty" Terrell Leonard, tenor
Billy and Roy Richard, baritones and in early 1954 Grady Chapman, second lead

Original Coasters lineup 1956-57:
Leon Hughes, tenor (55-57) born in California August 26, 1932
Billy Guy, baritone (55-72) was during his last years in the group frequently substituted on stage by Vernon Harrell and later by Jimmy Norman. Billy was born in Texas June 20, 1936; died November 5, 2002
Bobby Nunn, bass (55-57) born in Alabama September 20, 1925; died in L.A. November 5, 1986 – a true West-Coast legend
Adolph Jacobs, guitar (up into early 1959) born April 15, 1939.
Died as Al Jacobs in L.A. July 23, 2014.

Famous classic lineup 1958-1961:
Carl Gardner and Billy Guy, with Cornell Gunter, tenor (up to June 1961 including "Little Egypt" recorded in February) former lead with the Flairs; born November 14, 1936 in Shreveport, Louisiana May 14, 1928; died in Long Beach, California on January 16, 2000.

Later recording members:

Carl Gardner’s debut with the Robins:

The Coasters’ recording debut:
Los Angeles, January 11, 1956 Down In Mexico / Turtle Dovin’ (both CG) - Atco 6064, released in February, 1956.

Records for:
Spark 54-55 (Robins), Atco 56-66, Date 66-68, King 71-73.

The Coasters of March 1950 and 1955.


THE TOP TEN VOCAL GROUPS OF THE GOLDEN '50S
The longest lasting lineup circa 1980-1997:
Carl Gardner, Ronnie Bright, Jimmy Norman, Thomas Palmer.

Lineup from 1998:

Bright (up to Nov. 2009 replaced by "Fast" Eddie Whitfield, subbed by Robert Fowler from early 2015.

Alvin Morse, baritone (up to September 2001) born February 1951, replaced by Primo Candelaria

J.W. Lance (aka Joe Lance Williams), tenor (from 2001) born in New Orleans June 16, 1949. Stayed with the group when Jr returned


Essential CD: The Very Best of - Rhino R2 71597 (1994)


The best collections:
50 Coasters Classics - Rhino (2CD) R2 71090 (1992) (51 tracks)
50 Coasters Classics - Rhino (2CD) R2 71090 (1992) (51 tracks)
and:
Down Home – Varise Sarabande 66844 (2007) (12 Date/King tracks)

For the connoisseur: The 4CD series: Rhino Handmade 4CD 66844 (1992)

The 4CD series: Rhino Handmade 4CD 66844 (1992) – Extra Hits & Outstanding Entertainment:
1954 Riot In Cell Block #9 - The Robins (guest lead Richard Berry or poss BN)
1955 Framed - The Robins (BN)
1956 Brazil (BN/CG/BG)
1957 Idol With The Golden Head (CG) rec. in Chicago
1957 What Is The Secret of Your Success (BG) Chicago
1958 Zing! Went The Strings Of My Heart (WJ/CoG) New York
1958 The Shadow Knows (BG)
1959 Along Came Jones #14 (unison) P9
1959 I'm A Hog For You (unison)
1960 Wake Me Shake Me #14 (BG)
1960 Shoppin' For Clothes (BG/WJ)
1961 Little Egypt (Ying-Yang) #16 (BG) P23
1962 The Slime (WJ)
1963 The P.T.A. (BG)
1964 'Tain't Nothin' To Me #20 (BG/WJ)
1964 I Must Be Dreamin' (CG/BG)
1965 Let's Go Get Stoned (BG)
1966 Down Home Girl (BG)
1967 She Can (Talkin' Bout A Woman) (joint leads)
1968 D.W. Washburn (BG)
1971 Love Potion Number Nine (CG)


THE COASTERS, vocal group – "HI-FIVE"
2. as above with Guy-lead (featuring Mike Stoller, pno) - same session: 57C-107 Young Blood - Atco 6087 (#1, charted 17w total)
3. as above with Guy-lead featuring Mike Stoller, pno) - same session: 57C-108 Searchin’ - Atco 6087 (#1, 2w)
58C-365 Yakety Yak - Atco 6116 (#1, 14w)
5. as above with Guy and Jones leads featuring King Curtis, sax) - New York, July 16, 1959:
59C-3607 Poison Ivy - Atco 6146 (#1, 16w)
6. as above with Guy and Jones leads featuring King Curtis, sax) - New York, July 29, 1960:
60C-4754 Shoppin’ For Clothes - Atco 6178

R&B Top 10 Hits: (7 of 14 Top 40)
1955 Smokey Joe’s Cafe - The Robins #10
1956 Down In Mexico #8 (BG)
1957 Young Blood 1w #1 6/3 (CG) P8
1957 Searchin’ 12w #1 6/10 (BG) P3
1958 Yakety Yak 7w #1 6/23 (CG/BG dual) P1
1959 Charlie Brown 2w #2 (CG/BG dual) P2
1959 Poison Ivy 4w #1 10/5 (CG/BG) P7

With manager Lester Sill and the golden platter of "Yakety Yak in 1958.

THE PIONEERS, vocal group – "HI-FIVE"
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THE COASTERS On Atco

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1965 Let’s Go Get Stoned (BG)
1966 Down Home Girl (BG)
1967 She Can (Talkin’ Bout A Woman) (joint leads)
1968 D.W. Washburn (BG)
1971 Love Potion Number Nine (CG)
THE COASTERS – the original US LPs

**Atco**
- 33-101: The Coasters
  - 11/57 (14tr)
- 33-111 (SD33-111): The Coasters’ Greatest Hits
  - 10/59 (12tr)
- 33-123 (SD33-123): The Coasters One By One
  - 07/60 (12tr)
- 33-135 (SD33-135): Coast Along With The Coasters
  - 07/62 (12tr)

**Clarion**
- LP 605 (SD-605): That Is Rock & Roll
  - 01/65 (10tr)
- Atco SD33-371: Their Greatest Recordings – The Early Years
  - 11/71 (14tr)
- King KS1146-498: The Coasters On Broadway
  - 12/72 (12tr)

**Trip TOP 16-7**
- 16 Greatest Hits
  - 1975 (16tr)

**Atlantic Deluxe (2-LP compilation)**
- AD 2-4003: Young Blood
  - 07/82 (24tr)

THE ROBINS’ SPARK RECORDS

(only Robins’ recordings featuring Carl Gardner are on Spark)
- 103 6/54: Spark (later all on Coasters Atco/Rhino albums)
- 107 10/54: Rout In Cat Block #9 / Wrap It Up
- 110 2/55: If Teardrops Were Kisses / Whaddaya Want?
- 113 4/55: One Kiss / I Love Parts
- 116 6/55: I Must Be Dreamin’ / The Hatchet Man
- 122 9/55: Smokey Joe’s Cafe / Just Like A Fool

**Atco**
- 6064 2/56: Down In Mexico / Turtle Dovin’
- 6073 7/56: One Kiss Led To Another / Brazil
- 6267 3/57: Young Blood / Searchin’
- 6098 8/57: Idol With The Golden Head / (When She Wants Good Lovin’ / My Baby Comes To Me
- 6104 11/57: Sweet Georgia Brown / What Is The Secret Of Your Success?
- 6111 1/58: Gee, Golly / Dance!
- 6116 4/58: Yakety Yak / Zing Went The Strings Of My Heart
- 6126 8/58: The Shadow Knows / Sorry But I’m Gonna Have To Pass
- 6132 1/59: Charlie Brown / Three Cool Cats
- 6141 5/59: Along Came Jones / That Is Rock & Roll
- 6146 8/59: Poison Ivy / I’m A Hog For You
- 6153 11/59: What About Us / Run Red Run
- 6163 3/60: Besame Mucho (Parts I & II)
- 6168 6/60: Wake Me, Shake Me / Stewball
- 6178 9/60: Shoppin’ For Clothes / The Snake And The Book Worm
- 6186 1/61: Wait A Minute / Thumbin’ A Ride
- 6192 4/61: Little Egypt (Ying Yang) / Keep On Rolling
- 6204 8/61: Girls Girls Girls (Parts I & II)
- 6210 11/61: Ain’t That Just Like Me / Bad Blood
- 6219 2/62: Ridin’ Hood / Teach Me How To Shimmy
- 6234 9/62: The Climb (vocal & instrumental)
- 6251 1/63: The P.T.A. / Bull Tick Waltz
- 6287 2/64: T’ Ain’t Nothin’ To Me / Speedo’s Back In Town
- 6300 5/64: Bad Detective / Lovey Dovey
- 6321 10/64: Wild One / I Must Be Dreaming
- 6341 2/65: Lady Like / Hungry
- 6356 5/65: Let’s Go Get Stomped / Money Honey
- 6379 9/65: Crazy Baby / Bad Bobby’s Slacks And A Chinese Kimono

**Spark**
- 6407 3/66: She’s A Yum Yum / Saturday Night Fish Fry
- 6552 3/67: Soul Pad / Down Home Girl
- 6607 5/68: She Can / Everybody’s Woman
- 6617 7/68: D.W. Washburn / Everybody’s Woman
- 6694 3/69: Turntable

**King**
- 6385 11/71: Love Potion Number Nine / D.W. Washburn
- 6389 4/72: Cool Jerk / Talkin’ Bout A Woman
- 6404 1973: Soul Pad / D.W. Washburn

**Wicked**
- 8103 1976: Hush Don’t Talk About It / The World Keeps On Turning

THE COASTERS’ ORIGINAL SINGLES

- Aceto
- 6204 8/61: Girls Girls Girls (Parts I & II)
- 6210 11/61: Ain’t That Just Like Me / Bad Blood
- 6219 2/62: Ridin’ Hood / Teach Me How To Shimmy
- 6234 9/62: The Climb (vocal & instrumental)
- 6251 1/63: The P.T.A. / Bull Tick Waltz
- 6287 2/64: T’ Ain’t Nothin’ To Me / Speedo’s Back In Town
- 6300 5/64: Bad Detective / Lovey Dovey
- 6321 10/64: Wild One / I Must Be Dreaming
- 6341 2/65: Lady Like / Hungry
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The R&B Pioneers Series – Volume Six of twelve
## The Top Ten Vocal Groups of the Golden ‘50s

### The R&B Pioneers Series – Volume Six of twelve

#### The Coasters – One Record Per Year – Part 1: 1954 - 1961

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Record</th>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Peak Chart Position</th>
<th>Release Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1954</td>
<td>Riot In Cell Block #9 – The Robins</td>
<td>Spark 103 (6/54)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Rec in Los Angeles ca March 1954; prob Richard Berry, lead; Gardner, Nunn, Leonard, Billy and Roy Richard, plus poss Chapman. feat Gil Bernal, tenorsax</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>Smokey Joe’s Café – The Robins</td>
<td>Spark 122 (9/55) - Atco 6059 (10/55) R&amp;B #10 (1/56)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Rec in Los Angeles July 7, 1955 (or 1/55); Carl Gardner, lead; Nunn, Leonard, Billy and Roy Richard, and prob. Chapman. feat Bernal, and Barney, gtr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>Down In Mexico</td>
<td>Atco 6064 (2/56) R&amp;B #8 (4/56)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Rec in Los Angeles January 11, 1956; Carl Gardner, lead; Bobby Nunn, Billy Guy, Leon Hughes. feat Gil Bernal, tenorsax; Chico Guererro, congas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>Searchin’</td>
<td>Atco 6087 (3/57) R&amp;B #1 (6/57)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Rec in Los Angeles February 15, 1957; Billy Guy, lead; Gardner, Nunn, and Young Jessie. feat Mike Stoller, pno</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1958</td>
<td>Yakety Yak</td>
<td>Atco 6116 (4/58) R&amp;B #1 (6/58)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Rec in New York March 17, 1958; Carl Gardner and Billy Guy, dual lead; Cornell Gunter, Will &quot;Dub&quot; Jones. feat King Curtis, tenorsax; Clifton Best, banjo; Alan Hanlon, gtr; Chino Pozo, congas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1959</td>
<td>Poison Ivy</td>
<td>Atco 6146 (6/59) R&amp;B #1 (10/59)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Rec in New York July 16, 1959; Carl Gardner and Billy Guy, joint leads; Gunter and Jones. feat George Barnes, Mickey Baker, gtrs; Willie Rodriguez, bongo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>Shoppin’ For Clothes</td>
<td>Atco 6178 (9/60) Cash Box Pop #57 (10/60)</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>Rec in New York July 29, 1960; Billy Guy and Will &quot;Dub&quot; Jones, leads; Gardner and Gunter. feat King Curtis, tenorsax; Gary Chester, dms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>Little Egypt (Ying-Yang)</td>
<td>Atco 6192 (4/61) R&amp;B #16 (6/61)</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Rec in New York February 8, 1961; Billy Guy, lead; Gardner (intro lead); Gunter and Jones. feat King Curtis, tenorsax; Barnes and Hanlon gtrs; Stoller, pno</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Record</td>
<td>Label</td>
<td>Notes</td>
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<tr>
<td>1962</td>
<td>The Climb</td>
<td>Atco 6214 (9/62)</td>
<td>Rec in New York July 31, 1962; Will &quot;Dub&quot; Jones, lead; Gardner, Guy, Earl Carroll; feat Alan Lorber, dir; Mike Stoller, elpno; Billy Butler, Bucky Pizzarelli, and Thomas &quot;Curly&quot; Palmer, gtrs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1963</td>
<td>The P.T.A.</td>
<td>Atco 6251 (1/63)</td>
<td>Rec in New York January 11, 1963; Billy Guy, lead; Gardner, Jones, Carroll; feat Teacho Wiltshire, dir; Artie Butler, pno; Buddy Lucas, tensax; Panama Francis, dms. Written by Tobias-Evans, prod by Leiber-Stoller.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964</td>
<td>T'Ain't Nothin' To Me</td>
<td>Atco 6287 (2/64)</td>
<td>Cash Box R&amp;B #20 (3/64); Rec live New York November 16, 1963; From Atco LP &quot;Apollo Saturday Night&quot; (33-199); Billy Guy, lead; Gardner, Jones, Carroll; feat King Curtis, bandleader and dir; Thomas &quot;Curly&quot; Palmer, gtr.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>Down Home Girl</td>
<td>Date 1552 (3/67)</td>
<td>Rec in New York November 18, 1966; Billy Guy, lead; Gardner, Jones, Carroll; feat James Booker and Mike Stoller (arr/dir), keyboards; George Devens, vbs.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>She Can</td>
<td>Date 1607 (5/68)</td>
<td>Rec in New York October 30, 1967; Carl Gardner, Billy Guy, Earl Carroll, joint leads, and Will &quot;Dub&quot; Jones; feat Artie Butler, arr/dir/prob keyboard; Pretty Purdie, dms.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>D. W. Washburn</td>
<td>Date 1617 (7/68)</td>
<td>Rec in New York October 31, 1967 (edited January 4, 1968); Billy Guy, lead; Gardner (sec lead), Jones, Carroll; feat Mike Stoller, tackpiano; Eric Gale, gtr; Artie Ryerson, banjo.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>Love Potion Number Nine</td>
<td>King 6385 (11/71)</td>
<td>Pop #76 (12/71); Rec in New York February 13-14, 1968 (edited in late 1971); Carl Gardner, lead; Billy Guy and Earl Carroll; feat Taco Meza, flute (dubbed in 1971).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PHOTO GALLERY

The Coasters


In Germany 1974 with Bright, Norman, Gardner, and Carroll.

1979 with clockwise: Bright, Gardner, Carroll, and Palmer.


1965 (Speedo Carroll second from left); and in 1974 with Carroll, Norman, Palmer, Bright, and Carl Gardner (center front).
THE Top Ten Vocal Groups of the Golden '50s

The R&B Pioneers Series – Volume Six of twelve
The Definitive Coasters – A Sides & B Sides
A Sides & Hits, B Sides and Bonus Tracks

The Coasters are widely considered to be the pre-eminent vocal group of the original rock ’n’ roll era both in sound and attitude, and to have created some of the best vocal group harmonies ever waxed. They had made their musical debut as the Robins during the early years of rhythm and blues and as the Coasters they contributed to shape rock’n’roll with some of the most cheeky, exciting and entertaining songs of the 50s. The original line-up disbanded early but the crucial team of singers and their mentors Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller, moved from California to New York and created most of the greatest hits we know today. They were important influences for many later artists who covered their songs, such as the Beatles, the Stones, the Who and the Kinks. This compilation includes 19 hits listed in the Billboard pop and R&B charts between 1956 and 1962 and an accompanying 24-page booklet with many rare photos and notes on the group’s evolution.

Those Hoodlum Friends – The Coasters In Stereo
Outtakes, Stereo Versions and Album Tracks

The Coasters had the benefit of recording in the best studios, backed by the best musicians and produced by the top producers of their generation, Leiber and Stoller. Naturally, they were required to run through as many takes of each song as was necessary to satisfy the exacting demands of their mentors. Luckily for us, many of these alternate takes have survived. Mono was the standard recording format until the late 1960s, but many of the big selling artists also recorded alternate versions specifically for the stereo market, which was targeted to the discerning adult listener. Disc One features all the alternate stereo versions of Coasters songs that were issued at the time on album and subsequently on CD. Disc Two takes you deep into the heart of Coasters sessions with composite tracks which combine studio chatter together with the finest moments from various different takes. This disc contains several outtakes which have until now been unavailable anywhere and gives an invaluable insight into the genesis of many well-loved tracks and also into the character and working practice of the Coasters and of their producers Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller. The accompanying 28-page booklet includes many rare photos and an exhaustive session discography by Claus Röhnsch. A collection for Coasters and early rock ’n’ roll aficionados!
The Top Ten Vocal Groups of the Golden ‘50s

The Definitive Coasters – A Sides & B Sides and Those Hoodlum Friends – The Coasters In Stereo


R001 includes a 24-page booklet featuring a complete career summary, lineups sheet 1954-1967, and a detailed hits chart.

R002 includes a 28-page booklet featuring a single & LP discography, an exhaustive session discography 1954-1962, and a touring schedule of the same period.

Corrections: original album issues.

Disc One: Track 3 Rhino CD R2 71090. Disc Two: Track 29 Clarion LP 605.
Disc Three: Tracks 3-4 CBCD-102; Tracks 9-15 Atco SD33-135; Tracks 17-28 Atco SD33-123.
Disc Four: Track 1 Previously unissued; Track 3 CBCD-102; Track 4 – Mr&B LP 102; Track 5 CBCD-102; Track 6 Atco LP SD33-135; Track 10 CBCD-102; Tracks 11-21 parts prev on CBCD-102; Track 14 Rhino Handmade CD RHM2 7740.

Note: "Crocodile" (take 1) only issued on Rhino Handmade. The complete take 12 previously unissued.

Profiles of the Top Ten Vocal Groups

The list is selected to the early recording lineups. Members after 1964 are strictly limited to the most important.

For more accurate details, see the entries of the groups.

| Anderson, William | Drifters (ten) | Moongloes (lead) |
| Bailey, James J. R. | Cadillacs (lead/ten) | Closers (lead) |
| Bailey, John “Buddy” | Clovers (lead) | Drifters (lead) |
| Baldwin, David | Drifters (bar) | Clovers (bar) |
| Ballard, Hank | Midnights (lead) | Platters (ten) |
| Barnes, Prentice | Moonglows (bass) | Cadillacs (ten) |
| Baughan, David | Drifters (ten/lead) | Flamingos (lead) |
| Booth, Henry | Midnights (ten) | Dominoes (bass) |
| Branker, Rupert | Platters (pno) | Dominoes (lead) |
| Brewster, “Bobby” Ray | Cadillacs (lead) | Drifters (lead) |
| Bright, Ronnie | Cadillacs (bass) | Clovers (ten) |
| Brooks, Charles | Cadillacs (bar) | “5” Royales (ten/lead) |
| Brown, Bill | Dominoes (bass) | Drifters (lead) |
| Carey, Jake | Flamingos (bass) | Dominoes (lead) |
| Carey, Zeke | Flamingos (ten) | Flamingos (lead) |
| Carter, Johnny | Flamingos (lead/ten) | Platters (ten) |
| Carroll, Earl | Cadillacs (lead) | Coasters (bar) |
| - | Coasters (ten) | Coasters (bass) |
| - | “5” Royales (bar) | Closers (bass) |
| Carter, Obediah | Cadillacs (ten) | Drifters (gt) |
| Clark, James “Poppa” | Moonglows (ten) | Drifters (gt) |
| Coggin, Danny | Drifters (gt) | “5” Royales (gt/vcl) |
| Davis, Billy “Abdul Samad” | Midnights (gt) | Drifters (bar) |
| Davis, J. C. Billy | Cadillacs (bar) | Cadillacs (bass) |
| Davis, Kirk | Platters (sopr) | Pinkney, Bill |
| Davis, Guy | Cadillacs (ten) | Drifters (bass) |
| Davis, Tommy | Platters (bass) | Dominoes (lead) |
| Davis, Willard | Drifters (bass) | Drifters (bass) |
| Douglass, Alexander “Pete” | Drifters (bar) | Midnights (gt) |
| Grayson, Milton | Clovers (lead/bar) | Platters (lead) |
| Green, Cal | Closers (gt) | Platters (bass) |
| Green, Donk | Platters (bass) | Platters (bass) |
| Gunter, Cornell | Platters (ten) | Platters (bar) |
| Fugue, Harvey | Drifters (ten) | Midnights (bass) |
| Gardner, Carl | Coasters (lead) | Midnights (bass) |
| Givens, Cliff | Dominoes (bass) | Midnights (gt) |
| Graves, Alexander “Pete” | Moonglows (ten) | Closers (lead/ten) |
| Mack, Milt | Dominoes (ten) | Closers (lead) |
| McElroy, Sollie | Midnights (gt) | Dominoes (ten) |
| McNeil, David | Moonglows (gt) | “5” Royales (lead) |
| McIntyre, Clyde | Drifters (gt) | “5” Royales (lead/ten) |
| McClure, Matthew | Flamingos (gt/vcl) | “5” Royales (lead/ten) |
| Merle, Milton | Platters (bar) | “5” Royales (lead/ten) |
| Millender, Jimmy | Platters (pno) | Platters (bar) |
| Mitchell, Billy | Cadillacs (lead) | Closers (lead) |
| Moore, Jimmy | Clovers (lead) | Dominoes (bass) |
| Moore, Johnny | Drifters (lead) | Dominoes (lead) |
| Mumford, Gene | Moonglows (bar) | Closers (lead) |
| Nelson, Nate | Platters (ten) | Clovers (lead) |
| - | Clovers (lead) | Dominoes (lead) |
| Norman, Jimmy | Drifters (bar) | “5” Royales (ten/lead) |
| Nunn, Bobby | Clovers (bass) | Platters (bass) |
| Oliver, Jimmy | Platters (bass) | Dominoes (lead) |
| Palmer, Thomas “Curly” | Platters (bar) | Drifters (bar) |
| Pauling, Lowman | Drifters (bass) | Closers (bass) |
| Pearson, Gene | Midnights (gt) | Clovers (bass) |
| Phillips, Bobby | Clovers (lead) | Dominoes (lead) |
| Pinkney, Bill | Cadillacs (lead) | Drifters (lead) |
| Porter, Arthur | Platters (bass) | Closers (lead) |
| Powell, Monroe | Platters (lead) | Clovers (lead) |
| Reed, Herb | Platters (bass) | Clovers (lead) |
| Robi, Paul | Platters (ten) | Clovers (lead) |
| Smith, Lawson | Platters (bar) | Clovers (lead) |
| Spencer, Bobby | Midnights (gt) | Clovers (lead) |
| Sutton, Charles | Clovers (lead/ten) | Cadillacs (lead/ten) |
| Tanner, Gene | “5” Royales (lead/ten) | Midnights (ten/lead) |
| Tanner, Johnny | “5” Royales (lead/ten) | “5” Royales (lead/ten) |
| Taylor, Zola | “5” Royales (lead/ten) | Drifters (ten) |
| Terry, Johnny | “5” Royales (lead/ten) | “5” Royales (lead/ten) |
| Thomas, Charlie | “5” Royales (lead/ten) | “5” Royales (lead/ten) |
| Thrasher, Andrew | “5” Royales (lead/ten) | “5” Royales (lead/ten) |
| Thrasher, Gerhart | “5” Royales (lead/ten) | “5” Royales (lead/ten) |
| Tucker, Norman | “5” Royales (lead/ten) | “5” Royales (lead/ten) |
| Tucker, Alonzo | “5” Royales (lead/ten) | “5” Royales (lead/ten) |
| Turner, Sonny | “5” Royales (lead/ten) | “5” Royales (lead/ten) |
| Van Loan, James | “5” Royales (lead/ten) | “5” Royales (lead/ten) |
| Wade, Earl | “5” Royales (lead/ten) | “5” Royales (lead/ten) |
| Ward, Billy | “5” Royales (lead/ten) | “5” Royales (lead/ten) |
| White, Charlie | “5” Royales (lead/ten) | “5” Royales (lead/ten) |
| - | “5” Royales (lead/ten) | “5” Royales (lead/ten) |
| Williams, Johnny Lee | “5” Royales (lead/ten) | “5” Royales (lead/ten) |
| Wilson, Paul | “5” Royales (lead/ten) | “5” Royales (lead/ten) |
| Williams, Tony | “5” Royales (lead/ten) | “5” Royales (lead/ten) |
| Willingham, Gus | “5” Royales (lead/ten) | “5” Royales (lead/ten) |
| Wilson, Jackie | “5” Royales (lead/ten) | “5” Royales (lead/ten) |
| Winley, Harold “Jerome” | “5” Royales (lead/ten) | “5” Royales (lead/ten) |
| Clyde McPhatter (Dominoes and Drifters), John “Buddy” Bailey (Closers), Johnny Tanner (“5” Royales), Hank Ballard (Midnights). | | |
Profiles of the Top Ten Vocal Groups

Jackie Wilson (Dominoes), Billy Mitchell (Clovers), Nate Nelson (Flamingos and Platters), Bobby Lester, and Harvey Fuqua (Moonglows), Ben E. King, Johnny Moore, Charlie Thomas, and Rudy Lewis (Drifters), Tony Williams (Platters), Earl Carroll (Cadillacs and Coasters), Carl Gardner, Billy Guy, and Will "Dub" Jones (Coasters).
Super-Sounding “unknown classics” from the Golden Fifties – part 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Record</th>
<th>Artist(s)</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1953</td>
<td>Baby It’s You – The Spaniels</td>
<td>Vee-Jay 101/Chance 1141</td>
<td>R&amp;B #10 9/53 Rec in Chicago May 4, 1953; James “Pookie” Hudson, lead; Gerald Gregory, bass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1954</td>
<td>Boot ‘Em Up – The Du Droppers</td>
<td>Groove 0046 (9/54)</td>
<td>Rec in New York August 11, 1954; Caleb Ginyard, lead; Bob Kornegay, bass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1953</td>
<td>Baby It’s You – The Spaniels</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1953</td>
<td>The Way You Dog Me Around – The Diablos featuring Nolan Strong</td>
<td>Fortune 518 (10/55)</td>
<td>R&amp;B #12 1/56 Rec in Detroit 1955; Nolan Strong, lead; George Scott, bass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>Bacon Fat – Andre Williams (Mr. Rhythm) and His New Group</td>
<td>Fortune 831 (11/56), Epic 9196 (12/56)</td>
<td>R&amp;B #9 2/57 Rec in Detroit 1956; Andre Williams, lead</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>Rubber Biscuit – The Chips</td>
<td>Josie 803 (1956)</td>
<td>Rec in New York August 3, 1956; Charles Johnson, lead; Paul Fulton, bass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>Baby Oh Baby – The Shells</td>
<td>Johnson 104 (summer 1957)</td>
<td>Rec in New York; Little Nate Bouknight, lead</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>Why Do You Have To Go – The Dells</td>
<td>Vee-Jay 236 (2/57)</td>
<td>Rec in Chicago January 11, 1957; Johnny Funchess, lead; with Verne Allison and Mickey McGill, tenors, Marvin Junior, baritone, and Chuck Barksdale, bass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>Deserie – The Charts</td>
<td>Everlast 5001 (5/57)</td>
<td>Billboard’s Pop Charts in July and October Rec in New York 1957; Joe Grier, lead</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
THE Top Ten Vocal Groups of the Golden ‘50s

Super-Sounding “unknown classics” from the Golden Fifties – part 2

Picked from Bar Family’s “Street Corner Symphonies” - CD-series compiled by Bill Dahl 2012.

1957

Could This Be Magic – The Dubs
Gone 5011 (9/57) Billboard Pop #23 in Nov
Rec in New York August 1957
Richard Brandon, lead

Don’t Say Goodnight – The Valentines
Rama 228 (4/57)
Rec in New York March 15, 1957
Carl Hogan, lead; Richard Barrett, ten; David "Baby Carter" Clowney, ten and pno; Mickey Francis, bar; Ronnie Bright, bass

1957

Four O’Clock In The Morning
- Stanley Mitchell and The Tornados
Chess 1649 (early 1957)
Recorded in Chicago 1956
Stanley Mitchell, lead; William Weatherspoon, ten; Charles Sutton, bar; Ben Knight, bass
Alonzo Tucker, road manager

1958 (Ronde-Ronde)

I Met Him On A Sunday - The Shirelles
Tiara 6112 (2/58) / Decca 30688 (Pop #49)
Rec in New York early 1958
Shirley Owens (Alston-Reeves, lead; Addie Harris (McPherson), Doris Coley (Kenner-Jackson), Beverly Lee

http://www.bear-family.de/bear-family-serien/street-corner-symphonies/

Oldies but goodies DooWop El Sillon De Nene: Great DooWop Show (1 Hour Live)
THE Top Ten Vocal Groups of the Golden ‘50s

Group Harmony – THE REAL ROOTS 1930-1945

MILLS BROTHERS (Piqua, Ohio)

Formed 1925; originally as The Four Kings of Harmony; Recording from 1931: Famous Hits Paper Doll (1942), Till Then (1944), Gloria (1948); Hi Profiles: Donald, John Jr (who also played guitar) - replaced by John Mills Sr as singer in 1936 - Harry, and Herbert Mills, plus later guitarist Norman Brown.

INK SPOTS (Indianapolis, Indiana)

Formed as “Kitty, Jack and the Jesters” and renamed to The 4 Ink Spots in 1934 after relocating to New York. Recording from 1935: Famous Hits If I Didn’t Care (1939), Into Each Life Some Rain Must Fall (1944), The Gypsy (1946); Hi Profiles: Jerry Daniels (soon replaced by Bill Kenny), Charlie Fuqua, Orville “Happy” Jones (later replaced by Cliff Owens and soon Herb Kenny Bill’s twin brother), and Dewey Watson.

GOLDEN GATE QUARTET (Norfolk, Virginia)

Formed 1930 as The Golden Gate Jubilee Quartet (up to ca 1941), Recording from 1937: Famous Hits My Prayer (1940), Atom And Evil (1946), Shadrack (1947); Hi Profiles: Eddie Griffin (soon replaced by William Langford and later Clyde Ruddick), Willie Johnson (substituted by Cliff Owens), Otis Wilson (bass), Harry Owens, later Caleb Ginyard (from The Jubalaires and The Dixieaires), and Gene Mumford.

THE CATS AND THE FIDDLE (Chicago) and DELTA RHYTHM BOYS (Langston, Oklahoma & New Orleans)


Delta Rhythm formed 1933 as The Frederick Hall Quartet. Recording from 1940: Famous Hits: Dry Bones (1941), The Honeydripper (1945); Hi Profiles: Lee Gaines (bass), Traverse Crawford, and later Carl Jones.

5 RED CAPS (Los Angeles)

Formed 1940 as the Four Toppers; Recording from 1943: Famous Hit: I Learned A Lesson I’ll Never Forget (1944); Soon known as Steve Gibson and The Red Caps. Hi Profiles: Steve Gibson, Jimmy Springs, and later female singer Damita Jo.

THE JUBALAIRES (New Haven, Conn) and BIG THREE TRIO (Chicago)

Jubalaires formed as The Royal Harmony Singers ca 1941, recording from 1942 as The Royal Harmony Quartet and as The Jubalaires in November, 1945. Famous Hit: I Know (1946). Hi Profiles: Ted Brooks (who wrote “I Know” with John Jennings, and later joined the Golden Gate Quartet, when Willie Johnson from that group joined the Jubalaires), Caleb Ginyard (who went to the Golden Gate Quartet and later formed The Du-Droppers), George McFadden, Orville Brooks (lead); Later came Wilie Wright and guitarist Bill Johnson (sixth member).

Big Three formed by Willie Dixon (vcl/bass) and Leonard Caston (vcl/gtr) as The Five Bees 1939; The Big Three Trio formed 1946, adding Bernando Dennis (vcl/gtr, soon replaced by Ollie Crawford), Famous Hit: You Sure Look Good To Me (1947).

THE R&B Pioneers Series – Volume Six of twelve

60
THE TOP TEN VOCAL GROUPS OF THE GOLDEN ’50S

**Group Harmony - THE REAL ROOTS 1945-1950**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The BROWN DOTS (New York) and THE FOUR TUNES (New York)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The BROWN DOTS formed 1944 by Ivory &quot;Deek&quot; Watson (who’d left the Ink Spots to deal with his old employers); Recording from 1945: Famous Hits: Sentimental Reasons (1945); Hi Profiles: Joe King (soon replaced by Jimmy Nabbie), Jimmy Gordon, and Pat Best. The FOUR TUNES formed 1946; Recording from 1947: Famous Hits: I Want To Be Loved with Savanna Churchill as The Sentimentalists (1947), Care our Tunes (1948), Ol’ Man River (1948), Ricky’s Blues (1949), Rock Me All Night Long (1949) and replacing him in 1956. Prominent band members included: Girard &quot;Gerry&quot; Gorgan (bass lead), and later Danny Owens. The BROWN DOTS included: Deek Watson's business partner) in Los Angeles in 1947. Famous Hits: By And By (1950); I Want To Be Loved (1951), Beside You (1952), My Reverie (1951), Tell Mo So (1949); Hi Profiles: Sonny Til, Alexander Shipp (replaced by R.B. Robinson (from the Highway QC’s). The FOUR TUNES included: Joe King (soon replaced by Jimmie Nabbie), Jimmy Gordon, and Pat Best (all leaving Deek Watson’s Brown Dots), and later Danny Owens.</td>
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<tr>
<th>The SOUL STIRRERS (Trinity, Texas) and THE PILGRIM TRAVELERS (Houston, Texas)</th>
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<th>The RAVENS (New York)</th>
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<tr>
<td>The RAVENS formed 1940 and recording from that year. Famous Hits: Write Me A Letter (1948), Oof Man River (1949), Rock Me All Night Long (1952). Hi Profiles: Jimmy Ricks (bass lead, substituted by Tommy Evans in 1954 and replacing him in 1956). Dillo Jones – who later formed The Blenders and The Cues (he was soon replaced by Malthe Marshall and later by Joe Van Loan tenor lead), Leonard Puzey, Warren Suttles (replaced by Louis Heyward), and pianist Howard Biggs (replaced by Bill Sanford).</td>
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<th>The ORIOLES (Baltimore, Maryland)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The ORIOLES formed as The Vibra-Naires 1947; Recording from 1948: Famous Hits: It’s Too Soon To Know (1948), Forgive And Forget (1949), Tell Mo So (1949); Hi Profiles: Sonny Til (tenor lead), Alexander Sharp, George Nelson (replaced by Gregory Carrol), Johnny Reed, Tommy Gathier (replaced by Ralph Williams, gtr/vcl). The group’s early pianist (and vcl) was Charlie Harris.</td>
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<tr>
<th>The ROBINS (Los Angeles)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The ROBINS formed 1947 as The Four Bluebirds; Recording from 1947 (as the Robins from 1949); Famous Hits: If It’s So Baby (1949), Fool Such As I (1953), riot In Cell Block #9 (1954), Smokey Joe’s Cafe (1955); Hi Profiles: Bobby Dunn (bass lead), later Grady Chapman (tenor lead) and in 1954-55 Carl Gardner (lead).</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<th>The (5) LARKS (Durham, North Carolina) and THE SWALLOWS (Baltimore, Maryland)</th>
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</thead>
</table>
Essential CDs

Rhino: Sixty Minute Men - The Best of Billy Ward & his Dominoes (1993)
Rhino: The Very Best of The Clovers (1998)
Rhino: The Very Best of The Platters (1993)

Wamar 2CD: The Definitive Drifters (2003)
Rhino: The Very Best of The Cadillacs (1990)
Rhino: The Best of The Moonglows (1997)

Sources

The list of sources is by no means a full one. Several other books, magazines, and album covers and inlays have been studied since 1980, but the below is a list of the main sources used in this work.

Books
- The Very Best Of The Drifters (2003)
Papers
- Those Ukele Boys Groups – A Guide to 50's Record Collecting by Steve Propes (1975)
- The Definitive Drifters (2003)

Web sites
- Rhino Album Notes
- Rhino Jukebox

Periodicals
- Articles in various editions of the deceased magazines
- The Doo Wop Biography, Groups & Discography at http://www.uncamarvy.com/
- Doo Wop Biography, Groups & Discography at
- Doo Wop by Anthony P. Musico at
- Unca Marvy's R&B Page by
- Some great collector's gems:
- The History of Rhythm & Blues by Big Al Pavlow (1983)
- The Rolling Stone Illustrated History of Rock & Roll
- A Guide to 50's Record Collecting by Steve Propes (1973)
- Behind the Rhythm and the Blues
- A Discography of Rhythm & Blues and Rock 'n' Roll Vocal Groups 1945-1965
- Those Ukele Boys Groups – A Guide to 50's Record Collecting by Steve Propes (1975)
- A Discography of Rhythm & Blues and Rock 'n' Roll Vocal Groups 1945-1965

Album notes
- Everett Gribin et al. in
- The Best of The Clovers (1991)
- The Best of The Cadillacs (1990)
- The History of Rhythm & Blues by Big Al Pavlow (1983)
- The Rolling Stone Illustrated History of Rock & Roll
- A Guide to 50's Record Collecting by Steve Propes (1973)
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- Those Ukele Boys Groups – A Guide to 50's Record Collecting by Steve Propes (1975)
- A Discography of Rhythm & Blues and Rock 'n' Roll Vocal Groups 1945-1965

Some great collector's gems:

- Sexual with bonus track: The Clovers, and
- Ace
- The "5" Royales – It's Hard But It's Fair (2000)
THE TOP TEN VOCAL GROUPS

**THE DOMINOES**
Billy Ward and His Dominoes - Federal 295-94 (10inch) (1955) and Federal 548 (1957)

**THE CLOVERS**
The Clovers (Rock and Roll) - Atlantic 1248 (1956) reissued as The Clovers – Atlantic 8009 (1957) 2nd pressing

**THE “5” ROYALES**
The Rockin’ 5 Royales – Apollo 488 (1956) Dedicated To You - King 580 (1957)

**THE MIDNIGHTERS**
Sing Their Hits – Federal 295-90 (10inch) (1954) reissued as Their Greatest Hitson Federal 541 (1957)

**THE FLAMINGOS**
The Flamingos - Chess 1433 (1959)

**THE MOON-GLOWS**
Look! It’s The Moonglows - Chess 1430 (1958)

**THE DRIFTERS**
Rock & Roll: Clyde McPhatter & the Drifters – Atlantic 8003 (1956)

**THE PLATTERS**
The Platters – Federal 549 (1956)
The Platters – Mercury 20146 (1956)

**THE CADILLACS**
The Fabulous Cadillacs - Jubilee 1045 (1957)

**THE COASTERS**
The Coasters – Atco 101 (1957)
The Top Ten Vocal Groups — the tracks (and singles) on their very first LPs - pt. 1

**Federal 295-90 - The Midnights: Their Greatest Hits [1954]**

- Work With Me Annie (12169) Jan 14, 1954 Cincinnati
- Moonrise (Hank featured, but Sutton, lead) (12088) May 10, 1952
- Sexy Ways (12185) April 24, 1954
- Get It (12133) May 2, 1953
- Annie Had A Baby (12195) July 30, 1954
- She's The One (12200) Sept 23, 1954 Hollywood
- Annie's Aunt Fanny
- Crazy Loving (Stay With Me)

**Federal 295-94 - Billy Ward and His Dominoes [1955]**

- Sixty Minute Man (12022) Dec 30, 1950 New York
- Do Something For Me (12001) Nov 14, 1950
- Have Mercy Baby (12068) Jan 28, 1952 Cincinnati
- Don't Leave Me This Way (12129) May 14, 1951 New York
- The Bells (12114) Sep 17, 1952 Cincinnati
- I'd Be Satisfied (12105)
- These Foolish Things Remind Me Of You (12129)
- When The Swallows Come Back To Capistrano (12059) Jan 28, 1952

**Atlantic 1248 – The Clovers (Rock ’n’ Roll) [1956]**

- Lovey Dovey (1022) Sept 24, 1953
- Yes It’s You (899) Aug 7, 1952
- Ting-A-Ling (969) March 18, 1952
- I Played the Fool (977)
- Hey Miss Fanny (977) Aug 7, 1952
- Don't You Know I Love You (934) Feb 22, 1951
- Middle of the Night (963) Dec 19, 1951
- Blue Velvet (1052) Dec 16, 1954
- Little Mama (1022) Sept 24, 1953
- Crawlin' (869) Aug 7, 1952
- Here Goes A Fool (1000) April 8, 1953
- I've Got My Eyes On You (1035) Sept 24, 1953
- Devil Or Angel (1083) Nov 11, 1955

**Mercury MG 20146 - The Platters [July 1956]**

- My Prayer (7083) April 17, 1956 New York
- Why Should I? (7083) April 17, 1956 New York
- Remember When (first version) (7083) April 17, 1956 Hollywood
- Bewitched, Bothered And Bewildered (71036) April 26, 1955 Hollywood
- I Wanna (71036) April 26, 1955 Hollywood
- I'm Sorry (71032) April 17, 1956 New York
- Someone To Watch Over Me (71032) April 17, 1956 New York
- Have Mercy (71032) April 17, 1956 New York
- At Your Beck And Call (71032) April 17, 1956 New York
- On My Word Of Honor (71032) April 17, 1956 New York
- Heaven On Earth (71032) April 17, 1956 New York
- Glory Of Love (71032) April 17, 1956 New York
**The Top Ten Vocal Groups — the tracks (and singles) on their very first LPs - pt. 2**

### Clyde McPhatter & The Drifters

**Atlantic 8003 – Rock & Roll [1956 or 3/1957]**

- **Without Love** (There Is Nothing) (CMP) - (1117) Oct 10, 1956 New York
- **Someday You’ll Want Me To Want You** - (1043) March 14, 1954
- **Treasure Of Love** (CMP) - (1082) March 4, 1956
- **I'm Not Worthy Of You** (CMP) - (1081) Aug 25, 1955
- **White Christmas** - (1048) Febr 4, 1954
- **I Make Believe** (CMP) - (1117) March 4, 1956

### The Fabulous Cadillacs

**Jubilee JLP-1045 - The Fabulous Cadillacs [1957]**

- **Zoom** - (792) March 22, 1956 New York
- **I Wonder Why** - (765) July 1954
- **Sympathy** - (773) autumn 1954
- **Woe Is Me** - (798) May 16, 1956
- **That’s All I Need** - (805) Sept 28, 1955
- **Wishing Well** - (769) July 1954

### The Rockin' 5 Royales

**Apollo LP-488 - The Rockin’ 5 Royales:**

- **Baby Don’t Do It** - (443) Oct 30, 1952 New York
- **Too Much Lovin’** - (448) Nov 3, 1952
- **Help Me Somebody** - (448) Nov 3, 1952

---

* = originally recorded in New York April 21, 1955 with "dubs" in L.A.
### The Top Ten Vocal Groups — the tracks (and singles) on their very first LPs - pt. 3

#### Chess LP-1430 - Look! It's The Moonglows [late 1958]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Track/Title</th>
<th>Label, Year, Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Love Is A River</td>
<td>Chess, Dec 5 or 16, 1956 Chicago</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue Velvet</td>
<td>EP 5122, ca June 1958</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This Love</td>
<td>(1701 – in ca 1960)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When I'm With You</td>
<td>July 1956</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I'll (Never- sic) Stop Wanting You</td>
<td>Dec 5 or 16, 1956</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't Say Goodbye</td>
<td>(1651)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Ten Commandments Of Love</td>
<td>Dec 2, 1957</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiss Me Baby</td>
<td>July 1956</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Penny Arcade</td>
<td>EP 5123, *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean Old Blues</td>
<td>(1705) Dec 2, 1957</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweeter Than Words</td>
<td>(1701 – in ca 1960)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cold Feet (Fuqua lead)</td>
<td>unknown (prob 1956/58)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Checker LP-1433 - The Flamingos [July 1959]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Track/Title</th>
<th>Label, Year, Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dream Of A Lifetime</td>
<td>(915) July 1956 Chicago</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ko Ko Mo</td>
<td>(Parrot 812) November 1954 (recorded for Parrot)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whispering Stars</td>
<td>(915) June 15, 1955</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On My Merry Way'</td>
<td>(Parrot 808) July 1954 (recorded for Parrot)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Vow</td>
<td>(846) July 1956</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would I Be Crying</td>
<td>(853) August 1956</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Kiss From Your Lips</td>
<td>(837) ca February 1956</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shilly Dilly</td>
<td>(846) August 1956</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stolen Love</td>
<td>July 1956</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chickie Um Bah</td>
<td>ca October 1955</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nobody’s Love</td>
<td>July 1956</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Atco 33-101 - The Coasters [November 1957]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Track/Title</th>
<th>Label, Year, Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Searchin’</td>
<td>Los Angeles (6087)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One Kiss Led To Another</td>
<td>(6073) Jan 11, 1956</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>(6073)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turtle Dovin’</td>
<td>(6064)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smokey Joe’s Café *</td>
<td>(S 122/A 6059) July 7, 1955</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wrap It Up *</td>
<td>(S 103) ca March/April 1954</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riot In Cell Block Number Nine *</td>
<td>(S 103)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young Blood</td>
<td>(6087) Feb 15, 1957</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loop De Loop Manbo</td>
<td>(S 107) ca August 1954</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One Kiss *</td>
<td>(S 113)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I Must Be Dreamin’ *</td>
<td>(S 116)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lala</td>
<td>Febr 12, 1957</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Framed *</td>
<td>(S 107) ca August 1954</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Down In Mexico</td>
<td>(6064) Jan 11, 1956</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Atco 33-111 – The Coasters’ Greatest Hits [October 1959]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Track/Title</th>
<th>Label, Year, Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poison Ivy</td>
<td>New York (6146)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Along Came Jones</td>
<td>(6141) March 26, 1959</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Down In Mexico</td>
<td>-1 (L.A.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Shadow Knows</td>
<td>(6120) August 8, 1958</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I'm A Hog For You</td>
<td>(6146) * -edited July 17, 1959</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charlie Brown</td>
<td>(6132) December 11, 1958</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yakety Yak</td>
<td>(6116) March 17, 1958</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zing! Went The Strings Of My Heart</td>
<td>(6116)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That Is Rock &amp; Roll</td>
<td>(6141) March 26, 1959</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young Blood</td>
<td>-1 (L.A.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweet Georgia Brown</td>
<td>Los Angeles (6104)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Searchin’</td>
<td>-1 (L.A.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Tracks marked * are by The Robins (featuring Carl Gardner and Bobby Harris, recorded for Spark and bought by Atco in 1955).
THE TOP TEN VOCAL GROUPS – Encore of Photo Gallery
TOP VOCAL GROUPS – THEIR CLASSIC HITS – PART I

THE Top Ten Vocal Groups of the Golden ’50s

TOP VOCAL GROUPS – THEIR CLASSIC HITS – PART I
TOP VOCAL GROUPS – THEIR CLASSIC HITS – PART II
Eight Great Groups and their Very First Singles

**THE DOMINOS**

Formed in New York City 1950 (imaged 1951)

- **FEDERAL**
  - 1201: Do Something For Me (CMP) / Chicken Blues (BB) - 1/52
  - 1202: I Got Love (CMP) / I Love to Love (BB) - 1/52
  - 1203: Feeling It (CMP) / Next Time I'll Do It (BB) - 2/52
  - 1204: I Can't Escape From You (CMP) / I Love You (BB) - 3/52
  - 1205: I'm Lonely (JO) / Your Lover (BB) - 10/52
  - 1206: I'll Be Missing You (CMP) / I'll Be Satisfied (BB) - 10/52
  - 1207: I'll Be Satisfied (CMP) / I Want To Thank (BB) - 10/52

**THE CLOVERS**

Formed in Washington, D.C. 1950 (imaged 1952/1952)
Bill Harris, Harold Winer, Harold Lucas, Buddy Bailey, Matthew McQuater, Charlie White regt Bailey in 1953. Billy Mitchell repl White in 1954, and Bailey re-joined later that same year (the group now a sextet).

- **RAINBOW**
  - 1210: I'll Be Missing You (BB) / When You Come Back To Me (BB) - 1/52
  - 1211: I'll Never Let Her Go (HB) / When You Come Back To Me (BB) - 1/52
  - 1212: Keep On Running (BB) / I'll Never Let Her Go (HB) - 11/52
  - 1213: Keep On Running (BB) / When You Come Back To Me (BB) - 11/52

**THE "S" ROYALES**

Formed in Winston Salem, North Carolina 1953 (imaged 1952)

- **APOLLO**
  - 1201: Golly (JO) / I Like It Like That (JT) - 3/52
  - 1202: Do Something For Me (CMP) / Chicken Blues (BB) - 1/52
  - 1203: Feeling It (CMP) / Next Time I'll Do It (BB) - 2/52
  - 1204: I Can't Escape From You (CMP) / I Love You (BB) - 3/52
  - 1205: I'm Lonely (JO) / Your Lover (BB) - 10/52
  - 1206: I'll Be Missing You (CMP) / I'll Be Satisfied (BB) - 10/52
  - 1207: I'll Be Satisfied (CMP) / I Want To Thank (BB) - 10/52

**THE ROYALS / MIDNIGHTERS**

Formed in Detroit 1952 (imaged early 1954)
Alonzo Tucker (bottom left, replaced by Calvin Green late 1954), Charles Sutton (from May 1953), Sonny Woods, Lawson Smith (temp out late 52-early 54), Hank Ballard (bottom right – from May-1953; Henry Booth was in the group from the start (temp. out in 1954; not imaged above – it’s Lawson Smith).

- **FEDERAL (The Royals)**
  - 1201: Every Night Of My Life (CS) / All Night Long (Wyntone Harris-quest/SW) - 3/52
  - 1202: Starting From Tonight (CS) / I Know I Love You So (CS/Hebb) - 5/52
  - 1203: Miracle (CS) / Fifth Street Blues (Hebb) - 7/52
  - 1204: A Love In My Heart (CS/Hebb) / I'll Never Let Her Go (HB) - 9/52
  - 1205: Are You Forgetting (HB) / What Did I Do (CS) - 11/52
  - 1206: The Shrine Of St. Cecilia (CS) / I Feel So Blue (HB) - 3/53

- **FEDERAL (The Midnights)**
  - 1201: Work With Me Annie (HB) / Until I Do (HB) - 1/54
  - 1202: Work With Me Annie (HB) / Until I Do (HB) - 1/54
  - 1203: Keep On Running (BB) / I'll Never Let Her Go (HB) - 1/52
  - 1204: Keep On Running (BB) / When You Come Back To Me (BB) - 1/52

**THE ROYALS**

Formed in Detroit 1952 (imaged early 1954)
Alonzo Tucker (bottom left, replaced by Calvin Green late 1954), Charles Sutton (from May 1953), Sonny Woods, Lawson Smith (temp out late 52-early 54), Hank Ballard (bottom right – from May-1953; Henry Booth was in the group from the start (temp. out in 1954; not imaged above – it’s Lawson Smith).

- **APOLLO**
  - 1201: Keep On Running (BB) / I'll Never Let Her Go (HB) - 1/52
  - 1202: Keep On Running (BB) / When You Come Back To Me (BB) - 1/52
  - 1203: Keep On Running (BB) / I'll Never Let Her Go (HB) - 1/52
  - 1204: Keep On Running (BB) / When You Come Back To Me (BB) - 1/52
  - 1205: Keep On Running (BB) / I'll Never Let Her Go (HB) - 1/52
  - 1206: Keep On Running (BB) / When You Come Back To Me (BB) - 1/52

- **APOLLO**
  - 1201: Keep On Running (BB) / I'll Never Let Her Go (HB) - 1/52
  - 1202: Keep On Running (BB) / When You Come Back To Me (BB) - 1/52
  - 1203: Keep On Running (BB) / I'll Never Let Her Go (HB) - 1/52
  - 1204: Keep On Running (BB) / When You Come Back To Me (BB) - 1/52
  - 1205: Keep On Running (BB) / I'll Never Let Her Go (HB) - 1/52
  - 1206: Keep On Running (BB) / When You Come Back To Me (BB) - 1/52
THE DRIFTERS

Formed in New York City 1953 (imaged 1955)

ATLANTIC (issued as Clyde McPhatter & The Drifters or The Drifters featuring Clyde McPhatter) 1006 Money Honey (CMC) / The Things We Do (CMC) - 9/53
1019 Lucille (CMC) / Such A Night (CMC) - 1/54
1029 Honey Love (CMC) / Warm Your Heart (CMC) - 5/54*
1043 Someday You'll Want Me To Want You (CMC/JP) / Big Barn (CMC) - 10/54*
1046 White Christmas (BP/CMC) / Battle Of St. Mary's (CMC) - 11/54*
1055 Gone (CMC) / Whatcha Gonna Do (CMC) - 2/55

THE DRIPPERS (Clyde out and Johnny Moore in)
1078 Adorable (JM) / Steamboat (BP) - 10/55
1089 Ruby Baby (JM) / Your Promise To Be Mine (GT) - 2/56
1101 Soldier Of Fortune (JM) / Gotta Get Myself A Woman (JM/JP) - 7/56
1123 Foolin' Fall In Love (JM) / It Was A Tear (JM) - 1/57
1141 Drifting Away From You (GT) / Hypnotized (JM) - 5/57
1161 I Know (JM) / Yodel Yakee (JM) - 10/57
1187 Drop Drop (GM) / Moonlight Bay (unison) - 5/58
2025 There Goes My Baby (BKE) / Oh My Love (BKE) - 6/59

THE PLATTERS

Formed in Los Angeles 1943 (imaged mid/late 1954)
Herb Reed, Zola Taylor (replacing Gaynell Hodge from May 1954), Alex Hodge (replaced by Paul Robi in August 1954), Tony Williams, David Lynch.

FEDERAL
12153 Give Thanks (TW) / Hey Now (HR) - 10/53
12154 I'll Cry When You Go (TW) / I Need You All The Time (TW) - 1/54
12281 Roses Of Picardy (HR) / Beer Barrel Boogie (HR) - 4/54
12188 Tell The World (TW) / Love All Night (DL) - 6/54
12196 Shake It Up Mambo (TW) / Vo-Voo-Ah-Bee (DL) - 10/54
12204 Take Me Back, Take Me Back (TW) / Maggie Doesn't Work Here Anymore (DL/TH) - 12/54
12244 Only You (TW) / You Made Me Cry (DL) - 11/55 (issued after the Mercury song)
12250 I Need You All The Time (TW) / Tell The World (TW) - 12/55
12271 I Need You All The Time (TW) / Goon (TW) - 6/56

THE CADILLACS

Formed in New York City 1954 (imaged late 1955)
Earl Carnell, Bobby Phillip, Charles Brooks (top), Lavrene Drake (replaced by James R. Bailey from May, 1956); Earl Wade. On 765/769 James Clark and Gus Willingham (instead of Wade and Brooks). 820 featured a second line-up without Earl (but J.R. Bailey and Bobby Spencer, leads) - tracks lacking lead markings prob mostly Carnell. 821/829 issued as The Original Cadillacs.

JOSIE
765 I Wonder Why (EC) / Gloria (EC) - 7/54
769 Wishin' Wall / I Want To Know About Love - 11/54
773 No Chance (EC) / Sympathy - 1/55
777 Doin' The Road (EW) / Window Lady - 6/55
785 Let Me Explain (EW) / Speedo (EC) - 10/55
792 Zodiac / You Are - 3/56
798 Bobby My Love (EC) / Woe Is Me (EC) - 5/56
802 That's All I Need / The Girl I Love (EC) - 10/56
807 Shock-A-Door / Whadday Mean Raindrop - 11/56
812 About That Gal Named Lou (EC) / Sugar-Sugar - 2/57
820 My Girl Friend (JE) / Broken Heart - 5/57
821 Hurry Home / Lucy - 8/57 (featuring Earl)
829 Buzz-Buzz-Boo / I Yes Yee (baby) - 1/57 (featuring Earl)
836 Speedo Is Back (EC) / A Looka Here - 3/58

THE COASTERS

Formed in Los Angeles late 1955 (imaged midlate 1956)
- group moved to New York City in 1958
Bobby Nunn, Leon Hodge (subbed by Young Jessie, guest on 6087 and "Sweet Georgia Brown), Earl Gardner (top), Billy Guy.

Guitarist Adolph Jacobs joined in ca mid 1956.

Conrell Gunther and Will "Dub" Jones replaced Hughes and Nunn from 6113.

The Robins on SPARK 103 Kid In Cal Back 45 / Wrap It Up (CG/TH) - 6/54
107 Formed 300 / Loop De Loop Mambo (CG) - 10/54
110 If Somebody Loves You (CG) / Whatta Mark (CG) - 2/55
111 I Must Be Dreamin' (CG) / The Rachet Man (BH) - 6/55
132 Smoking Earl's O.M. (CG) / Just Like A Fool (CG) - 9/55

THE ROBBINS ON SPARK (12
1200 On Pop 4691 10/55) Richard Berry guest lead on 103A (featuring Gentry, Nunn, Grady Chapman, Terril Leardon, and Dub & A Roy Acharnt)
103 Kid In Cal Back 45 / Wrap It Up (CG/TH) - 6/54
107 Formed 300 / Loop De Loop Mambo (CG) - 10/54
110 If Somebody Loves You (CG) / Whatta Mark (CG) - 2/55
111 I Must Be Dreamin' (CG) / The Rachet Man (BH) - 6/55
132 Smoking Earl's O.M. (CG) / Just Like A Fool (CG) - 9/55

THE COASTERS on ATCO
6004 Down In Mexico (CG) / Turtle Down (CG) - 2/56
6073 One Kiss Led To Another (CG) / Brazil (CG/BG/BE) - 7/56
6087 Young Blood (CG) / Searchin' (BG) - 3/57
5009 Sad With The Golden Head (CG)* (When She Wants Good Lovin') / My Baby Comes To Me (BG) - 8/57
6104 Sweet Georgia Brown (CG/CG/CG) / What Is The Secret Of Your Success (BG) - 11/57
6111 Gee, Dolly (BG) / Dance (CG) - 1/58 (Tommy Evans, guest bass)
6116 Yakety Yak (CG/CG dual) / Zoom! Went The Strings Of My Heart (CoGu/WJ) - 4/58
6126 The Shadow Knows (CG) / Sorry But I'm Gonna Have To Pass (WJ) - 1/57
6132 Charlie Brown (CG/BG/CoGu union leads) / Three Cool Cats (CG) - 1/59

* The R&B Pioneers Series – Volume Six of twelve
THE Top Ten Vocal Groups of the Golden ‘50s

The R&B Pioneers Series – Volume Six of twelve
THE Top Ten Vocal Groups of the Golden ‘50s

Four Super-Discs (public domain)

The Definitive Falcons Collection (4CD-set) on History of Soul 2015


The Robins - Story & Discography

Compiled by Claus Röhnisch

THE STORY:
California’s first “bird” group was formed when “Ty” Terrell Leonard and the Richard brothers Billy and Roy met at Alameda High School in San Francisco in 1945, and formed the “A-Sharp Trio” (no recordings). The trio came to Hollywood a year later, and in 1949 they were joined by Bobby Nunn, who worked at Johnny Otis’ and Alu Bardi’s club “The Barrehouse” in Watts. 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 the mid ’60s, and worked with Billy Richards Jr.’s Nunn-offspring “Coasters” group and also toured with his own line-up of “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 prefers 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 are 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 has Richards registered.

Births of members:
Nunn: September 20, 1925 (born in Birmingham, Alabama, raised in Detroit; died November 5, 1986); William Gene "Billy" Richard (aka William Richard Jr.): January 31, 1928 in Crockett, Houston County, Texas – died in California December 10, 2007; Roy Benton Richard (aka Curtis Benton Richard): October 12, 1929 in Crockett, Houston County, Texas (not 1933 or 1930) - died May 1, 1983 in Los Angeles; “Ty” Terrell Leonard: born 1928 or pass December 5, 1929 in Read and Run, near Jackson, Miss and moving to California in 1939 (or 1944) - nowadays telling everyone he is an original Coaster; Grady Chapman born October 1, 1929 - Greenville, South Carolina - active with a new Robins group up to his death in Los Angeles, January 4, 2011; Robert Joseph Sheen: May 17, 1941 - died in Los Angeles November 12, 2000. Bill Richard aka Richards Jr: circa 1940.

Recording debut: Los Angeles, early 1949 as The Four Bluebirds (see below).


Original recording lineup:
Bobby Nunn (lead and bass 1949 - 1955); “Ty” Terrell Leonard, Billy and Roy Richard (up to 1960).

Later members:

Images below - The A-Sharp Trio in 1948 at the “Barrehouse” and The Robins with Billy Eckstine in 1953 at “Club Deuce”.

THE DISCOGRAPHY:
Below are listed all Robins’ studio recordings. The group is also featured on live records and screen recordings. Only 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,vclsw)

with John Anderson,tpt; George Washington, tb; Cecil "Big Jay" McNeely,tens; Lem Tally, bars; Darby Hicks (pseudonym for Devonia Williams) or poss. Lee Wesley Jones, pno; Mario de la Garde, bs; Johnny Otis,dms.

Produced by Otis René. Label owned by Otis and Margaret René.

Radio Recorders, Los Angeles, early 1949
OR 540 A My Baby Done Told Me

Excelsior 540, Essex 707, Californian 301
Note: Flip "Court Room Blues" by Johnny Otis & His Orchestra (w Lam Tally and Darby Hicks,vclsw). Record issued ca April, 1949.

The Robins
(as above) with pno, gtr, bs, dms. Prod. 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

(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 Robins (726) or The Robins with the Johnny Otis Quintette (738, 752) or Johnny Otis Quintette – Vocals by The Robins and Little Esther (731-78) - also as: Johnny Otis Quintette – The Robins and Little Esther (731-78/45)
The Robins, lead guest vcl on -1; Devonia "Lady Dee" Williams, pno; Johnny Otis, vbs; Pete "Guitar" Lewis, gtr; Mario de la Garde, 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 SLA 4453 Our Romance Is Gone Savoy 738, LP 2221 SLA 4454 If I Didn’t Love You So Savoy 726, LP 2221 SLA 4455 There’s Rain In My Eyes (aka Rain In My Eyes *) Savoy 752, Savoy LP 2230* SLA 4456 Double Crossing Blues -1 Savoy 731, LP 2221, LP 2258
Johnny Otis Orchestra – Vocal by The Robins (as above) with Johnny Otis, dir; Little Esther Mae Jones, lead guest vcl-1; John Anderson, tp-t; Floyd Turnham, als, Big Jay McNeely, guest tens; Lorenzo Holden and James Von Streeter, tens; Walter Henry, bars or als; poss. Bobby McNeely, bars; Devonia Williams, pno; Pete Lewis, gtr; Mario de la Garde, 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 SLA 5105 Lover’s Lane Boogie -1 Savoy LP 2221, Savoy LP 2230 Savao SLA 5106 I Found Out My Troubles (aka I Found Out) Savoy LP 2230 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 "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 and tpt & tens on S105; rhythm and tens on S106. Savoy 732 advertised as by Johnny Otis Orchestra and the "4" Robins.

The Robins with the Johnny Otis Quintette (as above) with Devonia Williams, pno; Johnny Otis, vbs; Pete Lewis, gtr; Mario de la Garde, bs; Leard Bell, dms. Billy Richard, lead vcl on-1.
February 13, 1950
SLA 5108 I’m Through Savoy 762, LP 2252 SLA 5109 I’m Living OK Savoy 752, LP 2230 SLA 5110 (There) Ain’t No Use Beggin’ (aka There’s No Use Begging) -1 Savoy 738, LP 2230 SLA 5111 You’re Fine But Not My Kind Savoy 762, LP 2230 Note: No reed 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, born in Texas 1935, 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 revolution leaving the door open for Mel Walker). LP 2230 also issued on Japanese Savoy CD 19266. Robins’ tracks for Savoy issued on Savoy LP SJI-1188 *The Complete Savoy Recordings with Johnny Otis*, and on Atlantic/ Savoy Jazz 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 and 2 Sharps & A Natural (112A) or Maggie Hathaway with The Robins and 2 Sharps & A Natural (112A) (112B) (Bobby Nunn and prob. as above; Billy Richard, second lead on -3) with Maggie Hathaway, lead vcl (on -1); Ted Mossner, pno; Louis Speigler, gtr; Red Callender, bs. Produced by “Big” John Dolphin. The bass on “Race Of Man” is most certainly Bobby Nunn. *Dolphinn’s Rec. Studio, Los Angeles, ca June 1950 (112A)*

112A Race Of Man RHI 112

112B Bayou Baby Blues -1 RHI 112

121A A Falling Star -1, -3 RHI 121

121B When Gabriel Blows His Horn -1 RHI 121

**The Robins**

(Bobby Nunn and prob. as above); with Mickey Champion, lead vcl (on -2); with unk. accomp. Comp. 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)*

4050B Early Morning Blues RHI 150, Earth Angel LP JD-906

4051A School Girl Blues -2 issues as above

Note: RHI is Dolphin’s Recorded In Hollywood label. RHI 112 and 121 are gospel-like recordings. The lead on 4050B sounds like a baritone. RHI 150 issued ca March, 1951.

**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. (Image above is a montage)

*Los Angeles, November 2, 1950 (1440-2)*

Gonna Have A Merry Xmas (313) *or* Have A Merry Christmas (342) RPM 313, 314, AcE LP 88

1441-3 Found Me A Sugar Daddy RPM 313, 316, 342, AcE LP CH 88, Ace CD CHD 698

1442 I’m Telling You Baby Ace LP 88, Ace CD 1174

1443-3 You Didn’t ‘t Want My Love -1 RPM 316, Ace LP 88

Note: Several alternate takes of all four songs issued on Ace CD MODSO. 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”**

(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 (reissued bootleg)

(t1) That’s What The Good Book Says Ace CDCCHD 1010

(t2) That’s What The Good Book Says issues as 1517, plus Ace CHD 698

(t3) That’s What The Good Book Says (slow version) Ace CDCCHD 1022

Well, Hello Pretty Baby unissued

All Day I’ve Been Cryin’ unissued

*Note:*

26 of the above recordings (excluding “Lover’s Lane Boogie” and the tracks of RHI 112) are featured on the German CD “Rockin’ with The Robins” on Titan TRC 6007. During 1951-52 Nunn was recording as a solo artist - as all the other Robins went to military services, discharged in late 1952/early 1953. Nunn recorded a.o. “Christmas Bells” b/w “Two Sisters” (instr.) on RHI 244 and for Doootsie Williams. 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, Chuck Landers (business partner of promoter Gene Norman). Some files say Jack Lewis was the manager at this time (and that Chuck Landers entered in 1955).
THE Top Ten Vocal Groups of the Golden '50s

The Drifters
(pro as above) with unkn acc.
Los Angeles, late 1953
JB 327 Sacroillic 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). There were more "Drifters" issues on other labels by different groups, which were recorded by vocal groups before the Clyde McPhatter 1953 Drifters group.

The Robins or The Robbins (120)
(as above) with reeds and rhythm.
Los Angeles, c. December, 1953
329 Double Crossin’ Baby Crown 106
329 Double Crossing Baby (alt. take)
Ace CD CHD 698
330 I Made A Vow Crown 106, Ace CD CHD 698
331 All I Do Is Rock Crown 120
332 Key To My Heart Crown 120
Note: Singles issued in 1954. All RPM/Modern/Crown recordings prob. produced by Joe Bihari. Joe, Jules and Ty, and Billy. The Rhino Handmade issue has the photo presented as featuring the Richard brothers - not Grady Chapman (with Ray Agee involved as arrangers and musicians on "Just Like A Fool" (well regarded by Leiber Stoller,produ. Prob. Mike Stoller, pno on LS 29, 31, 32.
Prob. Radio Recorders, Santa Monica
Los Angeles, c. February-March, 1954
59C 13 The Hatchet Man -1 Spark 116, RCD, CD 9974
59C 29 I Love Paris -2 Spark 113, Harmony LP LS-13
59C 31 Whadaya Want? -2 Spark 110, RCD, CD 9974
59C 32 I Wanna Be Loved -4 Spark 110, Spark LP 1000, CD 9974
with prob. Richard Berry,lead bass vcl-3; Mike Stoller,arr/tno; Gil Bernal,ts; Barney ,gtr; Ralph "Waldo" Hamilton,bs; John "Jessie" Sailes,dms. Abe "Bunny" Robyn,eng; Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller,prod.
Master Recorders, Los Angeles (Hollywood), early 1954
LS 15 Wrap It Up -1 (Gardner,sec lead) (57C-245, 59C-4073) Spark 103, LP 101, RCD
LS 16 Riot In Cell Block #9 -3 (57C-246, 59C-4074) Spark 103, LP 101, EP 4503, LP 143, RCD, Rhino CD 70959, CD 9974
C & August, 1954
LS 22 Loop De Loop Mambo (57C-281, 59C-4093)
Spark 107, LP 101, EP 4503, CD 9974
LS 14 One Kiss (57C-282, 59C-4094)
Spark 113, LP 101, RCD, CD 9974
LS 23 I Must Be Dreamin’ (57C-283, 59C-4095)
Spark 116, LP 101, RCD, CD 9974
LS 24 Framed -1 (57C-284, 59C-4096)
Spark 107, LP 101, EP 4503, RCD, CD 9974
LS 30 Smokey Joe’s Cafe 55C-32, S-1669
Spark 122, 6059, LP 101, LP 315, RCD, CD 9974
LS 21 Just Like A Fool 55C-33, S-1670
Spark 122, 6059, RCD, CD 9974

Notes: Grady Chapman (who was out of the Robins from March, 1954 until the end of that year) possibly featured on more than the first session. Earlier discographies have listed above recordings in three sessions (each with four recordings) in order of LS master numbers with differing dates of recordings (March 1954, August 1954, c:a January 1955). Here they are listed according to Atco-given master numbers. Mike Stoller states in the liner notes of Rhino R2 71090 that “The Hatchet Man” was the first Robins date on Spark. (If LS 29-32 were recorded at one and same session, they must have been recorded in January 1955, since Spark single 110 was released in January 1955). All twelve Spark titles issued on Sequel RSA CD 688. Billy Guy and Leiber/Stoller have stated that Berry was guest lead on LS 16, although Gardner and Atco proclaim it is actually Nunn. Both Berry and Guy have recorded “answers” to “I Wanna Be Loved” on Warner/Pioneer LP 13013 (and wrongly credited as “Drifters”). Here are the Robins titled “....Number 9” on some later issues. LS 23 titled “I Must Be Dreaming” on Warner/Pioneer LP 12013 (and wrongly credited as the 1964 recording on that LP). LS 31 titled “Whadaya Want?” on RSD 686. Several of the above titles are on Dutch Harmony LP LS-12 (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 and Richard brothers - not Grady Chapman). The Robins have transformed into the Coasters. In fact Gardner and Nunn were recruited by Leiber-Stoller-Sill and due to touring engagements
there was not enough recorded material available when Atco needed recordings for the Coasters’ first LP. During his absence in 1954 (or poss. 1955?) Chapman recorded with 12 Spark-titles issued as "Jake Porter and The Buzzards", titled "I'm Tired of You, It's Never Too Late". 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’ leader, Billy Richards Jr, also joined the group as Ty Terrell was 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.

The Robins
Just Like That -1 Arvee 5001
Whole Lotta Imagination -2 - Live Wire Suzie -1 Arvee 5013
Oh No -2
Note: In the spring of 1960 Terrell and H.B. Barnum recorded with Jimmy Scott Norman (yes the later Coasters member) as the Dyna-Sores, who made a cover of "Alley Oop" for Rudolph.

The Ding Dongs
(Bobby Sheen, lead vcl.-1; Billy and Roy Richard, Billy Richards Jr, lead-2; vcl.s) with girl vcl.s and orchestra. Produced by Johnny Otis.
Los Angeles, ca 1960
Ding Dong (aka Saw Wood Mountain) -1 Eldo 109, Ace CD CHD 759
Sweet Thing -2 Eldo 109
Lassie Come Home Todd 1043
Late Night Todd 1043
Note: Thanks, Charles Sheen, for the information on above. See "Those Hoodlum Friends" volume of The R&B Pioneers Series for memory/bio of Grady Chapman.

The Robins
(Bobby Sheen, lead; Billy Richards Jr, lead vcl-1; Billy and Roy Richard, vcl.s) with orchestra directed by Jimmy Lee.
Prob Los Angeles, ca March, 1961
6001 How Many More Times Lavender 001
6002 White Cliffs Of Dover -
6003 Mary Lou Does The Hoochie Koo - 1 (aka Mary Lou Loves To Hootchy Kootchy Coo) Lavender 002
6004 Magic Of A Dream -
Note: In 1962 Roy, Billy Jr. and Bobby Sheen joined Marvin Phillips.
THE Top Ten Vocal Groups of the Golden '50s

Note:
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.

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 Feb 12, 2015)
Jasmine JASCD 795 (tracks list right)

Read more on the Robins at: http://www.uncamarvy.com/Robins/robins.html

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. I'M THROUGH
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 REGRESSING
15. I'M LIVING ON A PRAYER
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. DON'T STOP NOW

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'M THROUGH
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 POOL IN LOVE
20. ALL OF A SUDDEN MY HEART SINGS
21. EVERY NIGHT
22. WHERE'S THE FIRE
23. MY BABY DONE TOLD ME
24. JUST LIKE THAT
25. BRIMSTONE AND IMAGINATION
26. LIVE WIRE SUSIE
27. OH SO
28. HOW MANY MORE TIMES
29. WHITE CLIFFS OF DOVER
30. MAGIC OF A DREAM
A Handful of Great “Raw” and “Inter-Related” Vocal Groups

Here are some interesting groups from the 1950s and 1960s, who really deserve credit - with their most known recordings (and original recording endurance).

The Jayhawks (Los Angeles 1956-57)
*Stranded in the Jungle* – Flash 109 (R&B #9 July 1955)
James Johnson, Carl Fisher, Dave Govan, Carver Bunkhum
The Cadets (featuring Dub Jones) hit R&B #4 with a cover of this.

The Olympics (Compton, California 1958-70)
*Western Movies* – Demon 1508 (R&B #7 May 1958)
*(Baby) Hully Gully* – Arvee 562 (Issued in late 1959)
Walter Ward, Eddie Lewis, Charles Fizer, Melvin King (Melvin King replaced Fizer in 1958 and stayed with the group when original member Walter Hammond quit and Fizer returned in 1959: Thomas Bush replaced King on Hully Gully, which also had girl background vocals)

The Vibrations (Los Angeles 1960-72)
*The Watusi* – Checker 969 (R&B #13 March 1961)
James Johnson, Carl Fisher, Ricky Owens, Dave Govan, Don Bradley
Note: Owens later sang for a short while with the Contours

The Marathons (Los Angeles 1961)
*Peanut Butter* – Arvee 5027 (R&B #5 June 1961)
Actually The Vibrations masquerading (the song is a “remake” of The Olympics’ Hully Gully)

The Lamplighters (Los Angeles 1953-56)
and The Sharps (Los Angeles 1954-58)
Willie Rockwell, Matt Nelson, Leon Hughes (subbed by Thurston Harris), Al Frazier (1953)
Al Frazier, Carl White, Sonny Harris, Rocky Wilson (ca 1954-58) - they backed Thurston Harris on his hit cover of “Little Bitty Pretty One” in 1957

The Rivingtons (Los Angeles 1962-69)
*Papa-Oom-Mow-Mow* – Liberty 55427 (Issued March 1962)
The Bird’s The Word – Liberty 55558 (R&B #27 June 1963)
Al Frazier, Carl White (lead), Sonny Harris, Rocky Wilson

The Contours (Detroit, Michigan 1959-69)
*Do You Love Me* – Gordy 7005 (R&B #1 October 1962)
Billy Gordon, Billy Higgs, Joe Billingslea, Sylvester Potts, Hubert Johnson, and Heay Davis,gtr (later Dennis Edwards - who went to the Temptations, and Joe Stubbss sang with the group, which had several member changes)
A “Random” Vocal Group Harmony Gallery

The Checkers (1952-54), featuring Bill Brown and Charlie White – both originally from the Dominoes, plus later David Baughan replacing White. The Jacks (fifth singer originally Ted Taylor, and originally Lloyd McCraw – bottom left instead of Fox), also performing and recording as The Cadets (1955-57; below a Crown album: the very first vocal group LP), see “The True R&B Pioneers” on more of this great “covers” group. The Cues (1954-57). The Crystals and Darlene Love, (1961-65), originally featuring Barbara Alston, Pat Wright, Dee Dee Kennibrew, Mera Girard - replaced by La La Brooks, and Mary Thomas – with Darlene actually singing lead on several hits, which were backed by her group The Blossoms. The Flares (of “Foot Stompin’” fame; 1961-64), who were a “take-off extension” of The Flairs and The Cadets, originally featuring Aaron Collins and Willie Davis from the Cadets, plus Thomas Miller and George Hollis from the Flairs. The Marceils (of “Blue Moon” fame; 1961-75). The Shirelles (1958-73), with Shirley Owens Alston, Addie Harris, Doris Kenner, and Beverly Lee. The Ronettes (1961-79), originally with Veronica Bennett, Estelle Bennett, and Nedra Ross.
STREET CORNER SYMPHONIES - The Complete Story of Doo Wop

Tracks on the fifteen volumes (mostly more than 30 tracks on each) – see links below at Bear Family Records with great video clips!

Volume 01: 1939 - 1949
from Ink Spots: If I Didn’t Care to Shadows: I’ve Been A Fool

Volume 02: 1950
from Ravens: Count Every Star to Jubalaires: A Dream Is A Wish Your Heart Makes

Volume 03: 1951
from Dominoes: Sixty-Minute Man to Dominoes: I Am With You

Volume 04: 1952
from Dominoes: Have Mercy Baby to Clovers: Ting-A-Ling

Volume 05: 1953
from Clyde McPhatter & the Drifters: Money Honey to Spiders: You’re The One

Volume 06: 1954
from Penguins: Earth Angel to Spaniels: Goodnite Sweetheart, Goodnite

Volume 07: 1955
from Teenagers: Why Do Fools Fall In Love to Moroccos: Red Hots And Chili Mac

Volume 08: 1956
from Five Satins: In The Still Of The Nile to James Brown with the Famous Flames: Please, Please, Please

Volume 09: 1957
from Silhouettes: Get A Job to Tornados: Four O’Clock In The Morning
THE Top Ten Vocal Groups of the Golden ‘50s

Volume 10: 1958
from Crests: 16 Candles to Kodoks: Oh Gee, Oh Gosh

Volume 11: 1959
from Flamingos: I Only Have Eyes For You to Isley Brothers: Shout

Volume 12: 1960
from Maurice Williams & the Zodiacs: Stay to Five Satins: I’ll Be Seeing You

Volume 13: 1961
from Marells: Blue Moon to Little Caesar & The Romans: Those Oldies But Goodies

Volume 14: 1962
from Earls: Remember Then to Valentinos: Looking For A Love

Volume 15: 1963
from Tymes: So Much In Love to Anthony & the Sophomores: Play Those Oldies, Mr. Dee Jay
THE Top Ten Vocal Groups of the Golden '50s

THE TOP TWO
THE Top Ten Vocal Groups of the Golden ‘50s

The R&B Pioneers Series – Volume Six of twelve