

# 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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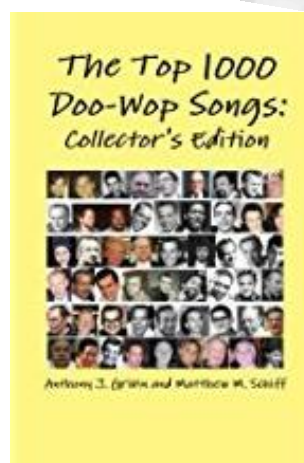
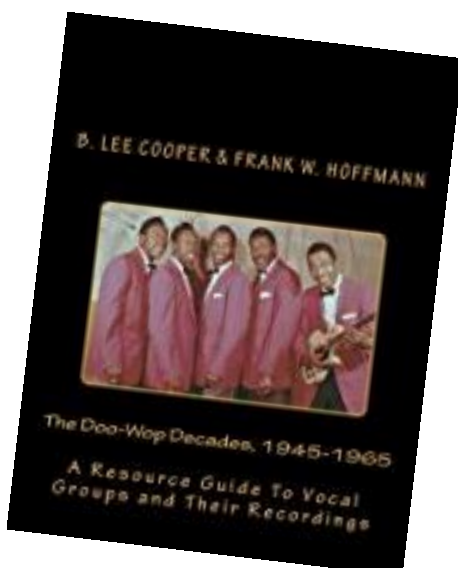
The Great R&B-files Created by Claus Röhnisch

Find them all at <http://www.rhythm-and-blues.info>

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## 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  
Ttgpress, 2014

## 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 Pearlin, 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

Rhythm and Blues Harmony

- presented by **Claus Röhnisch**

with special thanks to Marv Goldberg and Todd Baptista

		R&B Top 3	(Top 10)	PopTop10	Page	Read more
1950	<b>The Dominoes</b>	4	(12)	-	<b>4</b>	<a href="http://www.uncamarvy.com/Dominoes/dom01.html">http://www.uncamarvy.com/Dominoes/dom01.html</a>
1951	<b>The Clovers</b>	10	(19)	-	<b>6</b>	<a href="http://www.uncamarvy.com/Clovers/clovers1.html">http://www.uncamarvy.com/Clovers/clovers1.html</a>
1952	<b>The "5" Royales</b>	2	(7)	-	<b>10</b>	<a href="http://www.soul-patrol.com/soul/5royales.pdf">http://www.soul-patrol.com/soul/5royales.pdf</a>
1953	<b>The Midnighters</b>	7	(14)	2	<b>14</b>	<a href="http://www.uncamarvy.com/Royals/royals.html">http://www.uncamarvy.com/Royals/royals.html</a>
1953	<b>The Flamingos</b>	1	(2)	-	<b>18</b>	<a href="http://www.uncamarvy.com/Flamingos/flamingos.html">http://www.uncamarvy.com/Flamingos/flamingos.html</a>
1953	<b>The Moonglows</b>	1	(6)	-	<b>19</b>	<a href="http://www.uncamarvy.com/Moonglows/moonglows.html">http://www.uncamarvy.com/Moonglows/moonglows.html</a>
1953	<b>The Drifters</b> (& this)	10	(26)	5	<b>25</b>	<a href="http://www.uncamarvy.com/Drifters/drifters.html">http://www.uncamarvy.com/Drifters/drifters.html</a>
1954	<b>The Platters</b>	5	(13)	7	<b>36</b>	<a href="http://www.uncamarvy.com/Platters/platters.html">http://www.uncamarvy.com/Platters/platters.html</a>
1955	<b>The Cadillacs</b>	1	(1)	-	<b>42</b>	<a href="http://home.earthlink.net/~jaymar41/cadillacs.html">http://home.earthlink.net/~jaymar41/cadillacs.html</a>
1956	<b>The Coasters</b>	5	(7)	6	<b>46</b>	<a href="http://www.rhythm-and-blues.info/04_Clowncrines.pdf">http://www.rhythm-and-blues.info/04_Clowncrines.pdf</a>

<http://doo-wop.blogg.org/> and  
and at

Read more at  
<http://www.uncamarvy.com/marvart.html>  
<http://www.eonet.ne.jp/~pelican-studio/>

# THE DOMINOES

## COLLECTION

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

**1951-59**

**87-TRACK  
3-CD SET**



<http://acrobatmusic.net/> Acrobat ACTRCD9035 (3CD-set) issued 2014 (fr.l.: Joe Lamont, Clyde McPhatter, Charlie White, Bill Brown, and top: Billy Ward).

### 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 DOMINOES



The Dominoes 1950-51. Photo right top: Ward, Brown, bottom: Lamont, McPhatter and White.

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 labelled **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* (CMP) - Federal 12001.

## Records for:

Federal 50-55, King 53-56, Jubilee 1954, Decca 56-57, Liberty 57-59, ABC 1960, King 1960.

## Original recording lineup:

**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/pno (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 Mumford** (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 leads 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).

**Johnny Oliver** (Ward's valet) guest lead shortly late 1952.

That year both Grady Chapman (soon with the Robins), and Jesse Belvin guested the group for at least one show in Los Angeles.

## New members from 1953:

**Milton Merle** (real name Murill), bar (53-65) replacing Lamont  
**Cliff Givens**, bass (ca late 1952-59) had sung with the Ink Spots and with the Golden Gate Quartet

## 1954 lineup:

**Wilson**, Van Loan (later shortly replaced by **Prentice Moreland**, who also recorded with the group on several sessions later), and Merle, Givens, Ward.

## New member 1956-57:

**Milton Grayson**, ten (repl Van Loan/Moreland)

## Lineup from ca April, 1958:

**Powell**, **Robbie Robinson**, ten (soon replaced by **Eddie Herring**), Merle, Givens, and Ward

1960: Powell, **Bruce Cloud**, Merle and Ward



## Essential CD:

Sixty Minute Men-The Best of - Rhino R2 71509 (1993)

or: The Very Best of - Collectables COL-CD-2827 (2008)

**Best Buy:** The Dominoes Collection 1951-1959 - Acrobat 3CD ACTRCD9035 (2014)

**Collectors' Choices:** Billy Ward & His Dominoes featuring Clyde McPhatter - Varese CD 66551 (2004) (19 great tracks including alternates)

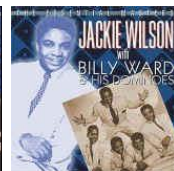
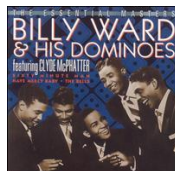
and: Jackie Wilson with Billy Ward & His Dominoes - Varese CD 66553 (2004)

(19 great tracks incl Jackie's two first solo pre-Dominoes recordings and: The Best of the 50's Masters 1957-1959 - Varese CD 66102

(2003) (19 post King/Federal tracks)

## Reading:

Clyde McPhatter - A Biographical Essay by Colin Escott with discography by Richard Weize (1987)



## R&B Top 10 Hits: (12 of 12 Top 40)

1951 *Do Something For Me* #6

1951 *Sixty-Minute Man* 14w #1 6/30 (BB) P17

1951 *I Am With You* #8

1952 *That's What You're Doing To Me* #7

1952 *Have Mercy Baby* 10w #1 6/14

**Billy Ward and his Dominoes**

1952 *I'd Be Satisfied* #8

1953 *The Bells* 2w #3

1953 *Pedal Pushin' Papa* #4 (DM)

1953 *These Foolish Things Remind*

*Me Of You* #5

1953 *You Can't Keep A Good*

*Man Down* #8 (JW)

1953 *Rags To Riches* 1w #2 (JW)

1957 *Star Dust* #5 (GM) P12



## Other Classics:

1951 *Chicken Blues* (BB)

Billy Ward & His Dominoes with Jackie Wilson.

1951 *The Deacon Moves In* with *Little Esther* (and Charlie White)

1951 *Heart To Heart* with *Little Esther* (and Clyde McPhatter)

1952 *When The Swallows Come Back To Capistrano*

1953 *I'm Gonna Move To The Outskirts Of Town* (JW)

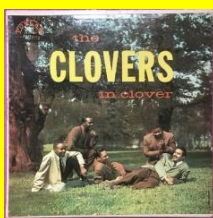
1956 *St Therese of The Roses* (JW)



## 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



Right top: Lucas, Bailey, McQuater; bottom: Harris and Winley.

"The Mighty Clovers" - 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 Clovers 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 Clovers' early hits were written by Ahmet Ertegun. 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 becoming a sextet, which toured Europe in 1958. The Clovers 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 Clovers led by Lucas and by Bailey toured the circuit. Harold Lucas was the first (with Billy Mitchell - even recording for Atlantic). Lucas and Winley were still active during the late '90s. Lately Johnny Mason led the former Harold Lucas group, and Harold Winley has recently formed a new Clovers group (The Original Clovers with their own website).



**Recording debut:** New York City 1950 *Yes Sir That's My Baby / Come Back To Me* (both MM/BB/HW) - Rainbow 122. First for Atlantic February 22, 1951 *Don't You Know I Love You / Skylark* (both BB) - Atlantic 934.

**Records for:**  
Atlantic 51-58, Poplar 1958, United Artists 59-61, Winley 61-62.

## Original recording lineup:

**John "Buddy" Bailey**, lead (50-ca Aug 52, May 54-61) born December 27, 1931 in Washington, died February 3, 1994. Drafted in 1952, shortly replaced by John Phillip (only on stage, and actually joining before Bailey left - soon Charlie White replaced Phillip)

**Matthew McQuater**, ten (50-61) died Dec 19, 2000, aged 73

**Harold Lucas**, bar (50-) founder; born August 27, 1932 - died January 6, 1994.

**Harold "Jerome" Winley**, bass (50-61) born in Washington. Later sang with a late lineup of Ink Spots for over 25 years. Only surviving original Clover, active with a late lineup

**Bill Harris**, gtr (50-57) born April 14, 1925 in North Carolina, died December 10, 1988. Was always present on records.

## Later members/leads:

**Charlie White** (ca Feb - Nov 1953) from the Dominoes and lead on the Checkers' "Flame In My Heart" in 1952; now substituting for Bailey. Led the Playboys later and turned solo

**Billy "Long-Tail" Mitchell** (Dec 53-61) sang White's lead on stage and became sixth member when Bailey returned; born 1931 in Washington, DC; died November 5, 2002



1956 with Bailey, Mitchell, McQuater, Lucas, and bottom Winley and Harris.



**Essential CDs:** The Very Best of - Rhino R2 72971 (1998)

or: Down In The Alley-The Best of - Atlantic 82312-2 (1991)

and: The Best of - Love Potion No. 9 - UA/EMI CDP7-96336-2 (1991)

**For Collectors:** The Feelin' Is Good - Jasmine 2CD JASCD 576

(2011) (featuring 60 tracks 1950-1959 including the Poplar LP)

**Editor's choice:**

The Clovers and The Clovers Dance Party

- Sequel RSA CD 857 and 858 (1997) (with bonus tracks)

## R&B Top 10 Hits: (19 of 21 Top 40)

1951 **Don't You Know I Love You** 2w #1 9/1

1951 **Fool, Fool, Fool** 6w #1 11/10

1952 **One Mint Julep** 2w #2

1952 **Middle Of The Night** 2w #3

1952 **Ting-A-Ling** 1w #1 9/6

1952 **Wonder Where My Baby's Gone** #7

1952 **Hey, Miss Fannie** 1w #2

1952 **I Played The Fool** #7

1953 **Crawlin'** 2w #3

1953 **Good Lovin'** 4w #2 (CW)

1953 **Comin' On** #9 (BB)

1954 **Lovey Dovey** 5w #2 (CW)

1954 **Little Mama** #4 (CW)

1954 **I've Got My Eyes On You** #7 (CW)

1954 **Your Cash Ain't Nothin' But Trash** #6 (BM)

1955 **Nip Sip** #10 (BB)

1956 **Devil Or Angel** 3w #3 (BB)

1956 **Hey, Doll Baby** #8 (BB)

1956 **Love, Love, Love** #4 (BB)

## The Very Best of The Rest:

1954 **I Confess** (CW)

1954 **Blue Velvet** #14 (BB)

1955 **In The Morning Time** (BM)

1956 **From The Bottom of My Heart** (BM)

1957 **Down In The Alley**

1957 **There's No Tomorrow** (BB/MMQ)

1958 **My Mother's Eyes** (BM)

1959 **Love Potion No. 9** #23 (BM)

1959 **Stay Awhile** (BB)

1960 **Easy Loving** (BB)

## THE CLOVERS, vocal group "HI-FIVE"

1. Buddy Bailey-lead, Matthew McQuater, Harold Lucas, Harold Winley and Bill Harris, gtr

(featuring Willis Jackson, sax) - New York, July 12, 1951:

A 626 **Fool, Fool, Fool** - Atlantic 944 (#1, charted 22w total)

2. - New York, December 17, 1951:

A 755 **One Mint Julep** - Atlantic 963 (#2, 18w 1952)

3. Charlie White-lead, McQuater, Lucas, Winley and Harris, gtr (featuring Sam Taylor, sax)

- New York March 4, 1953:

A 1017 **Good Lovin'** - Atlantic 1000 (#2, 18w)

4. Billy Mitchell-lead, McQuater, Lucas, Winley and Harris, gtr - New York April 16, 1954:

A 1262 **Your Cash Ain't Nothin' But Trash** - Atlantic 1035 (#6, 7w)

5. Mitchell-lead, Bailey, McQuater, Lucas, Winley and Harris, gtr

- New York, June 8, 1959 (edited in Hollywood):

2525 **Love Potion No. 9** - United Artists 180 (#23, 3w)



## The Clovers - the Original Albums

1956 **THE CLOVERS** - Atlantic LP-1248 (reissued as LP 8009)

1958 **THE CLOVERS IN CLOVER** - Poplar LP-1001 (reissued on UA UAL-3033)

1959 **THE CLOVERS' DANCE PARTY** - Atlantic LP 8034

(reissued as LOVE BUG on Atlantic 587 162)

1960 **LOVE POTION No. 9** - United Artists UAL-3099

1964 **THE ORIGINAL LOVE POTION No. 9** - Grand Prix LP K 428 (featuring bogus tracks)

1971 **THEIR GREATEST RECORDINGS - THE EARLY YEARS** - Atco LP 33-374

1984 **FIVE COOL CATS** - Edsel LP ED 126

1985 **ALL RIGHTY OH SWEETIE** - Dr. Horse LP H-807

1991 **DOWN IN THE ALLEY - THE BEST OF** - Atlantic CD 7 82312-2, reissued on Hallmark

1991 **LOVE POTION No. 9 - THE BEST OF THE CLOVERS** - UA CD CDP-7-96336-2



# THE CLOVERS & THE "5" ROYALES: One Per Year (plus) 1951-1960



## THE CLOVERS & THE "5" ROYALES



Top: Matthew McQuater, Buddy Bailey, Harold Lucas, bottom: Harold Winley, and Bill Harris



### 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.

The Rockin' 5 Royales	Apollo LP 488	(1956)
Dedicated To You	King 580	(1957)
The 5 Royales Sing For You	King 616	(1959)
The Five Royales	King 678	(1960)
24 All Time Hits	King 955	(1966)
17 Hits	King 5014	(1978)
Down Home	Apollo FR 418	(bootleg?)
The Real Thing	Dr. Horse H-802	(1984)
The Roots of Soul	Charly 1096	(1985)
Baby Don't Do It	Relic 8015	(1987)
The Laudromat Blues	Relic 8016	(1987)



Jimmy Moore, Johnny Tanner, Lowman Pauling, Gene Tanner, and Obadiah Carter

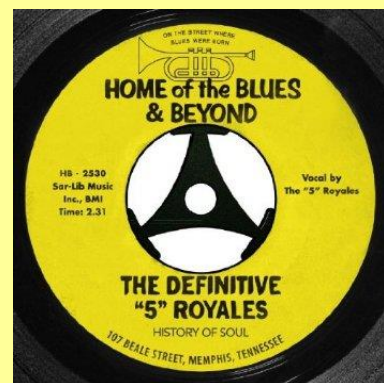
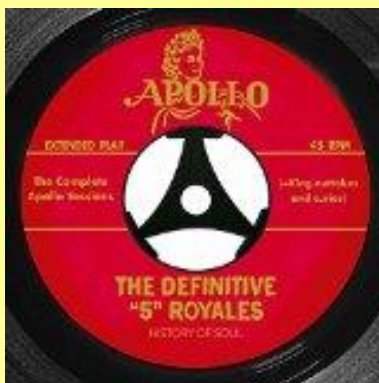
## THE "5" ROYALES



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

"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 "ales"). 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) *Beside Of A Neighbor / Journey's End* - Apollo 253; 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 266 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:

Apollo 52-54/55, King 54-60, Home of the Blues 60-61 (Memphis), VeeJay 61-62, ABC 1962, Smash 64-65.



### Secular recording lineup:

**Johnny L. Tanner**, lead (51-63) born in Forsyth, NC, Nov 28, 1926 - died in Winston-Salem, NC Nov 8, 2005

**James (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

**Eugene "Gene" Tanner**, ten (Dec 53-ca 65) first substituting for Jeffries - extra lead from late 1955. Born 1936, died Dec 29, 1994.

### New members (1960-64):

Robert "Pee Wee" Burris, gtr, subbing for Pauling (and staying) Royal Abbit, pno/org (born 1932, died 1995).

Eudell Graham, lead (born 1933; died 1995) replaced Johnny Tanner, who left in December, 1963. Pauling concentrated on duets with Royal Abbit for Federal as El Pauling and The Royalton, and as El Pauling and Royal Abbit during 1960-62, but returned to his Royales (and later recorded for Savoy with a new group – the Exciters).

### Later lineup:

Tom "T-Bone" Pruitt, gtr and Larry Robinson, lead  
Larry Taylor and Lebaron Washington, vocals

### Essential CD:

Monkey, Hips And Rice-Anthology (2CD) - Rhino R2 71546 (1995)

**Favorite CDs:** All Right! - The Apollo Recordings 1951-1955

- WestSide WESM 591 (1999) (29 great tracks)

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)

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

### Reading:

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

### 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)



### To Get You Excited:

1952 *Courage To Love* (JM)

1953 *Laundromat Blues*

1953 *I Wanna Thank You*

1954 *Let Me Come Back Home* (JM)

1954 *Put Something In It*

1955 *When I Get Like This*

1955 *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)



Top: Carter, middle: Moore, Gene and Johnny Tanner, bottom Pauling.



## Top Vocal Groups - Collectors' Favorites – part one

### BILLY WARD and his DOMINOES



**I'd Be Satisfied**  
Cincinnati Oct 17, 1952  
Federal 12105 #8, Nov 1952  
**Clyde McPhatter**, lead; Billy Ward, pno;  
James Van Loan, Joe Lamont, David McNeil

### THE CLOVERS



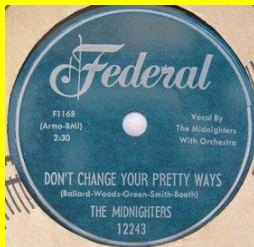
**I Confess**  
New York March 4, 1953  
Atlantic 1046 (issued Oct 1954)  
**Charlie White**, lead; Sam Taylor, tensax;  
Matthew McQuater, Harold Lucas,  
Harold Winley, Bill Harris (gtr)  
Alternate version rec in New York April 8, 1953

### "5" 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

### THE MIDNIGHTERS



**Don't Change Your Pretty Ways**  
Cincinnati March 17, 1955  
Federal 12243 (issued Dec 1955)  
**Hank Ballard**, lead; Cal Green, gtr;  
Henry Booth, Lawson Smith, Sonny Woods

### THE FLAMINGOS



**The Vow**  
Chicago July, 1956  
Checker 846 (issued August 1956)  
**Nate Nelson**, lead; Johnny Carter,  
Zeke Caret, Jake Carey, Paul Wilson

### THE MOONGLOWS



**219 Train**  
Chicago January 10, 1954  
Chance 1161 (issued Sept 1954)  
**Harvey Fuqua**, lead; Bobby Lester,  
Pete Graves, Prentice Barnes

### 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 Bip Bam (#7 Nov 1954)  
**Clyde McPhatter**, lead; Bill Pinkney, co-lead  
Gerhart Thrasher, Andrew Thrasher

### 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, Herb Reed, Zola Taylor  
The hit version was rec for Mercury April 28, 1955,  
and issued in May

### THE CADILLACS



**Gloria**  
New York c July 1954  
Josie 765 (issued July 1954)  
**Earl Carroll**, lead;  
James Clark, LaCerne Drake, Gus Willingham,  
Bobby Phillips

### THE ROBINS



**Smokey Joe's Cafe**  
(later issued on several Coasters albums)  
Los Angeles July 7, 1955  
Spark 122 (Atco 6059 #10, Dec 1955)  
**Carl Gardner**, lead; Bobby Nunn, Terrell Leonard, Billy  
and Roy Richard, poss Grady Chapman, Gil Bernal: tensax

### THE "5" ROYALES



**Think**  
New York Febr 28, 1957  
King 5052 #9 Sept 1957  
**Johnny Tanner**, lead; Lowman Pauling (vd/gtr)  
Gene Tanner, James E. Moore, Obadiah Carter

### THE COASTERS



**Zing! Went The Strings Of My Heart**  
(flip of Yakety Yak)  
New York March 17, 1958  
Atco 6114 (issued April 1958)  
**Will "Dub" Jones** and **Cornel Gunter**, leads;  
Carl Gardner, Billy Guy; King Curtis, tensax

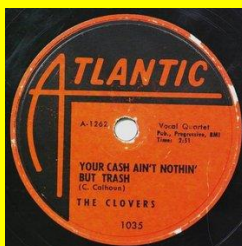
## Top Vocal Groups - Collectors' Favorites – part two

### BILLY WARD and his DOMINOES



**Star Dust**  
Los Angeles c. April/May 1957  
Liberty 55071 #5, July 1957  
**Gene Mumford**, lead: Vic Schoen, arr/dir;  
Milton Grayson, Milton Merle, Cliff Givens

### 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 Lucas,  
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;  
Lowman 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, tensax  
Rawer version rec in Los Angeles Febr 25.

### THE FLAMINGOS



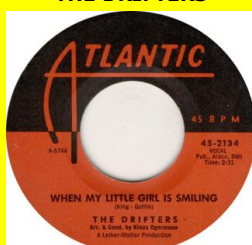
**Lovers Never Say Goodbye**  
(aka Please Wait For Me)  
New York September 26, 1958  
End 1035 #25 March, 1959  
**Terry Johnson** and **Paul Wilson**, leads;  
Nate Nelson, Tommy Hunt, Zeke Caret, Jake Carey.

### 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),  
Dock Green, Tommy Evans, Billy Davis (gtr)

### THE PLATTERS



**You'll Never Never Know**  
New York (or Chicago) mid/late 1956  
Mercury 70958 (#9 Oct 1956)  
**Tony Williams**, lead; Herb Reed, co-lead;  
David Lynch, Paul Robi, Zola Taylor;  
Rupert Branker (poss pno)

### THE CADILLACS

**Jesse Powell & Orchestra**



**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



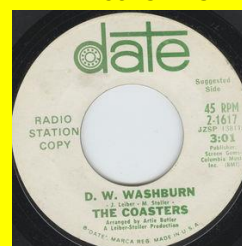
**I'm A Hog For You** (flip of Poison Ivy)  
New York, edited July 17, 1959  
Atco 6146 (issued August 1959)  
**Carl Gardner**, **Billy Guy**, **Cornel Gunter**, and **Will "Dub" Jones** (unison lead); King Curtis (tensax);  
George Barnes, Mickey Baker, Al Caiola, or Alan Hanlon (gtr)  
Original master (totally different) rec August 8, 1958)

### 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 Lucas, Harold Winley

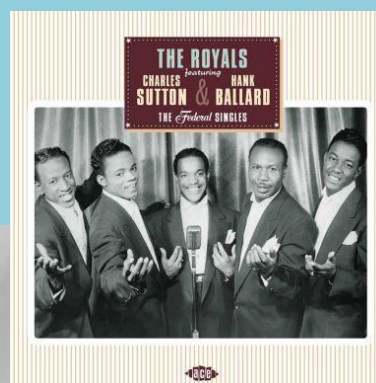
### THE COASTERS



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

## THE MIDNIGHTERS

Right: Ace CDCHD 1054 (2005) - The Royals – The Federal Recordings 1952-54 (featuring alternates)  
Bottom: Kent CDKEND 451 (2016) – Hank Ballard and the Midnighters 1964-1969  
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).



1955: From left: Sonny Woods, Lawson Smith, Cal Green (guitar), Henry Booth and Hank Ballard.

# THE MIDNIGHTERS



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

"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) hang 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 1958. 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 Wynonie 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 *Moonrise* (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 1978 (did not sing lead on "Every Beat..." although late reissues were billed with Booth).

**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

**Ardra "Sonny" Woods**, bass (52-58) became producer and disc-jockey during the 1960s. Died in 1984

**Alonzo Tucker**, gtr and extra vcl (52-55) poss born November 21, 1915. He helped Sutton to form the Tornadoes in 1955 and stayed on-and-off 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 Kendricks –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 Starlington Alabama as a small 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 1985. 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).



1955-1956 with Booth, Smith, Woods, Hank Ballard, and Green.

## 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:

Sexy Ways - The Best of - Rhino R2 71512 (1993)

or: Come On And Get It – Jasmine (2CD) JASCD 568 (2010)

**Editor's Choice:** The Very Best of the Royals and the Midnighters - Collectables COL-CD-2828 (2001)

and: The Very Best of Hank Ballard and the Midnighters - Collectables COL-CD-2823 (2001)

**For Collectors:** Nothing But Good 1952-1962 - Bear Family 5CD Box BCD 16795 EK (2009) (with great hard-cover booklet)

**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

1954 *Annie's Aunt Fannie* #10

1955 *It's Love Baby* (24 Hours A Day) #10

**Hank Ballard and the Midnighters**

1959 *Teardrops On Your Letter* #4

1960 *Finger Poppin' Time* 2w #2 P7

1960 *The Twist* (recorded 1958,

#16 in 1959) #6 in 1960

1960 *Let's Go Let's Go Let's Go* 3w #1 11/7 P6

1961 *The Hoochi Coochi Coo* 1w #3

1961 *The Float* #10

1961 *The Switch-A-Roo* 1w #3

1961 *Nothing But Good* #9

## More For Your Delight:

1952 *Every Beat Of My Heart* (*The Royals*) (CS)

1955 *Don't Change Your Pretty Ways*

1956 *Open Up The Back Door*

1956 *Tore Up Over You*

1957 *Let 'Em Roll* (two diff versions)

1961 *The Continental Walk* #12



# HANK BALLARD & THE MIDNIGHTERS: ONE (plus) PER YEAR 1953 – 1963



1953 (Hanks 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

## STREET CORNER SYMPHONIES - The Complete Story of Doo Wop



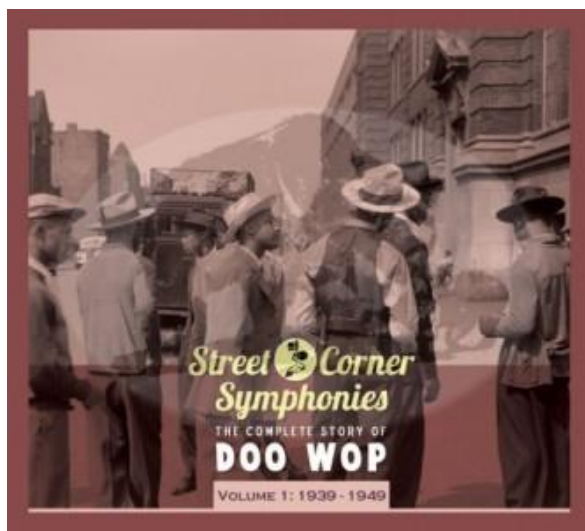
**BEAR FAMILY  
RECORDS STORE**

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!!



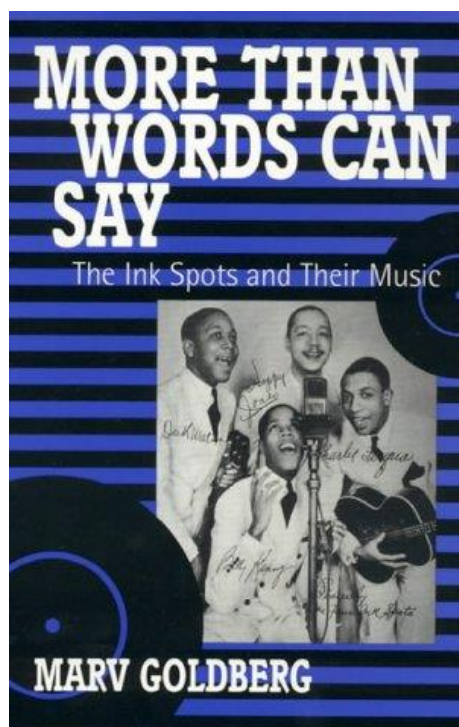
The History of Doo-Wop  
Volume One: 1930-1952 From the  
Primordial Musical  
Ooze to the Birth of Doo-wop 2CD -  
RANDB028  
(released September, 2012)

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"**

**More Than Words Can Say: The Ink Spots and Their Music**  
– published and written in October 1998 by Marv Goldberg (336 pages) .





# THE FLAMINGOS



Zeke Carey, Jake Carey, Paul Wilson, Johnny Carter, Nate Nelson.

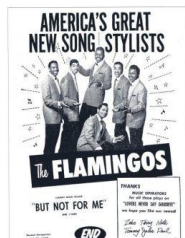
A qualitative - long-lasting doo-wop (and jump) - vocal group formed in the South Side of Chicago in late 1950 as the Swallows by Jake and Zeke Carey, Johnny Carter, and Judah Byrd (replaced by Carter's friend Paul Wilson around 1951) - all black Hebrews. They soon changed name to the Five Flamingos 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 versatile 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 lineups in the '90s. The Flamingos were inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 2001.

## Recording debut:

Chicago, January 28, 1953 *If I Can't Have You* (SM/JC) / *Someday, Someway* (SM) - Chance 1133.

## Records for:

Chance 53-54, Parrot 54-55, Checker 55-56, Decca 57-58, End September 58-63; Checker 1964.



Paul Wilson, Sollie McElroy, Zeke Carey, bottom: Jake Carey, Johnny Carter.

## Original recording lineup:

**Jake Carey**, bass (53-) born in Baltimore September 9, 1923 - died December 10, 1997

**Zeke Carey**, second tenor (53-56, 58-) born January 24, 1933 in Bluefield, Virginia - died in Washington, DC December 24, 1999

**Johnny Carter**, first tenor, and sometimes lead (53-56) born June 2, 1934 in Chicago; later sang with the Dells - died August 21, 2009

**Sollie McElroy**, lead tenor (53-54) born July 16, 1933 in Gulfport, Miss - died January 15, 1995. Replaced original non-recording member Earl Lewis

**Paul Wilson**, baritone (53-ca 77) born January 6, 1935 in Chicago - died in May, 1988. Replaced original non-recording Judah Byrd

## New member from late 1954:

**Nate Nelson**, lead (late 54-61) born April 10, 1932 in Chicago - died June 1 - some files say April 10, 1984. He joined Terry Johnson around 1962, and then the Platters in 1966

## Later lineup changes (from July, 1956):

Zeke Carey and Johnny Carter left for Army services substituted by **Tommy Hunt** (56-61) born June 18, 1933 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania - the group now a quartet

**Terry Johnson**, gtr and vcl (Jan 57-61) born November 12, 1935 in Baltimore, Maryland. The group now a quintet again. Terry started his "Modern Flamingos" in 1961, and still has a Flamingos group.

Carter did not return to the Flamingos, but joined the Dells after his services. Zeke returned in August, 1958 - the group now a sextet. Hunt later went solo and the group again became a quintet.

## 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 Julien Vaught (saxophone). In 1963 Doug McClure (tenor) joined as sixth singer; and the group hung on (although with further changes).

## Essential CD: The Best of - Rhino R2 70967 (1990) or:

Dream of a Lifetime 1953-1959 (2CD) - Jasmine JASCD 554 (2009) or:

The Flamingos Collection 1953-61 - Acrobat ACTRCD9068 (3CD 2017)

**CD for Collectors:** The Flamingos meet The Moonglows - Vee-Jay CD NVD2-706 (1993) (the complete Chance recordings)

## Reading:

Doo Wop - The Chicago Scene by Robert Pruter (1996)

## R&B Top 10 Hits: (2 of 8 Top 40)

1956 *I'll Be Home* #5 (NN)

1959 *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 (Vooit-Vooit)* (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 post-judgment interview. "I want to thank Jon Bauman of the Truth In Music Act, my attorney Wiley Horton, and his assistant, Adrienne Love, for all their hard work in securing the integrity of this great music and its original artists." The Flamingos were founded in Chicago, Illinois by Johnny Carter, Paul Wilson (1935-1988), Jacob Carey (1923-1997), and Ezekiel Carey (1933-1999) and were joined by Sollie McElroy (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 "made 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 1962. "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 Motown 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 that 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 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



Barnes, Lester, Graves, and Fuqua with Johnson, gtr.

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 *I 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 Moonglow's), Checker (as Bobby Lester & The Moonlighters) 1954, RCA 1972.

## Original lineup: (the Champagne single)

Harvey Fuqua, Bobby Lester, Danny Coggins, Prentiss Barnes

## Famous lineup:

**Harvey Fuqua**, baritone/lead (53-60) spokesman, born July 27, 1928, Louisville, Kentucky, nephew of Charlie Fuqua of the Ink Spots. Sang most leads of 1957-58. Died in Detroit July 6, 2010  
**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

**Prentiss Barnes**, bass (53-58) born April 25, 1925 in Chattawa, MS - died October 1, 2006 in Magnolia, MS

**Billy Johnson**, gtr (Jan 55-59) succeeded temporary guitarist Wayne Bennett. Billy was born in Connecticut 1922 or 1924, died April 28, 1987. Later played with Brook Benton and Jackie Wilson.



Harvey Fuqua, Bobby Lester, Prentiss Barnes, Pete Graves, and Billy Johnson, gtr.

## 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 1999:

Bruce Martin, Gene Kelly, Pete Crawford, and Gary Rodgers.

**Essential CD:** The Complete Singles As & Bs - Acrobat ADDCD3188 2CD (2017) or: Their Greatest Hits - MCA/Chess CD 9379 (1997) or: Blue Velvet - The Ultimate Collection (2CD) - MCA CHD2-9345 (1993)  
**For Collectors:** Most of All - The Singles As & Bs - Jasmine (2CD) JASCD 591 (2011) The Flamingos Meet the Moonglows on the Dusty Road of Hits - Vee-Jay CD NVD2-706 (1993) (Chance recordings)



## R&B Top 10 Hits: (6 of 7 Top 40)

- 1955 *Sincerely* 2w #1 1/22 (*The Moonglow's*) (BL) P20
- 1955 *Most Of All* #5 (BL)
- 1956 *We Go Together* #9 (BL/HF)
- 1956 *See Saw* #6 (HF) P25
- 1957 *Please Send Me Someone To Love* #5 (HF)
- 1958 *Ten Commandments Of Love* #9 (*Harvey & The Moonglows*) P22

## Some Great Amusement:

- 1954 *Baby Please* (HF)
- 1954 *Secret Love* (BL)
- 1954 *My Gal* (HF)
- 1954 *219 Train* (HF/bridgeBL)
- 1955 *Foolish Me* (f. Bobby Lester)
- 1955 *Foolish Me* (f. Harvey Fuqua)
- 1956 *Don't Say Goodbye* (BL)
- 1956 *Blue Velvet* (BL)

(issued as Bobby Lester & The Moonglows 1962)

- 1957 *Don't Be Afraid Of Love* (HF)



## PHOTO GALLERY

### Dominoes, Clovers, "5" Royales, Midnighters, Flamingos, Moonglows



The Dominoes, 1957, with Gene Mumford top right;



The Clovers of 1951, 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 Tanner at the solo mike.



Top: the early Royals/Midnighters with Alonzo Tucker, Charles Sutton, Hank Ballard, Henry Booth, and Sonny Woods.

Right clockwise: Guitarist Alonzo Tucker (prob not Porter), Charles Sutton, Sonny Woods, Lawson Smith, and Hank Ballard (1954).



Hank Ballard and The Midnighters in 1960 with Smith, Thrasher and Booth (l-r)



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



The Flamingos in 1953 with Sollie McElroy, center; and The Moonglows in 1954.



The "new" Moonglows of 1959 with Harvey in front and Marvin Gaye fourth fr.l.

## PHOTO GALLERY

## Drifters, Platters, Cadillacs



Two early Drifters lineups, 1953 and 1954.



The Drifters in 1962, 1963 and 1965



The Platters 1956 with Tony Williams, center;



MONROE POWELL (SECOND FROM RIGHT)



Herb Reed of the Original Platters and his group.

VARIOUS PLATTERS GROUPS IN 1980.

*Courtesy of Chris Beachley of the Wax Museum*



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 "originals"



**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



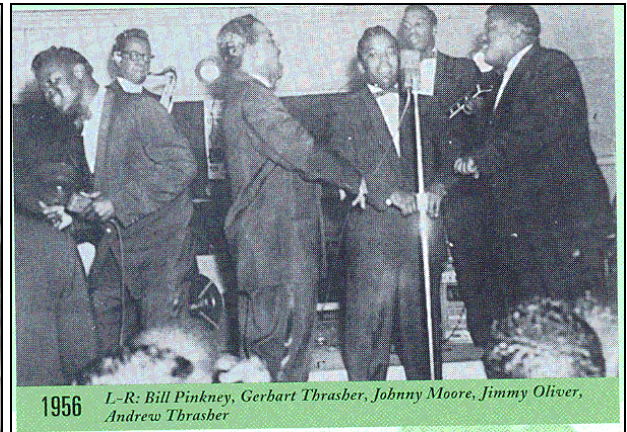
The Mount Lebanon Singers - 1949 (most of them later the first Drifters)



The Platters – (Taylor not yet there) 1954



**THE DRIFTERS** - late 1954/1955



**THE DRIFTERS** - late 1955/1956



**THE PLATTERS** - 1955/1956



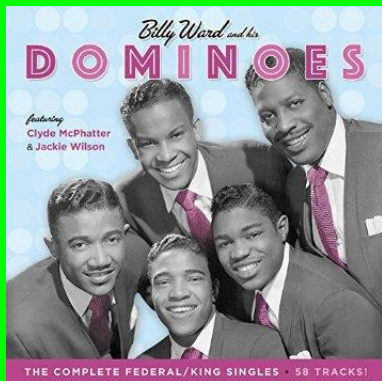
**THE CADILLACS** - (prob. Wade, Brooks, Carroll, Phillips, Drake) 1955/1956



**THE COASTERS** - (Gardner, Nunn, Hughes, Guy) late 1955/1956 - (and Guy, Jones, Gardner, Gunter) 1959/1960



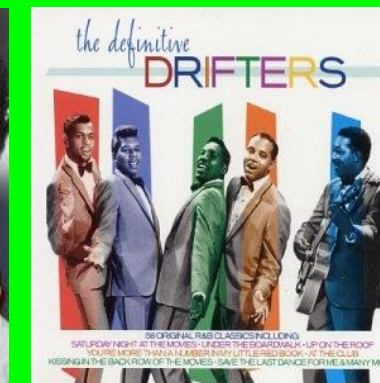
## INTERESTING CD Anthologies by the TOP GROUPS (mostly Jasmine)



The Complete Federal/King Singles (1951-56+, 38 tracks) – Real Gone 2CD RGM 0349 (2015),  
The Feelin' Is Good (1951-59, 60 tracks) – Jasmine 2CD JASCD 576 (2011),  
Monkey Hips and Rice /Anthology (1951-62, 41 tracks) – Rhino 2CD R2 71546 (1994)



Come On And Get It / (The Midnighters) Singles Collection 1954-1959 (58 tracks) – Jasmine 2CD JASCD 568 (2010),  
Dream Of A Lifetime 1953-1959 (50 tracks) – Jasmine 2CD JASCD 554 (2010),  
Most Of All / The Singles As & Bs (1953-60, 57 tracks) – Jasmine 2CD JASCD 591 (2011)



All The Singles 1953-1958 (50 tracks) – Jasmine 2CD JASCD 526 (2009),  
The Definitive Drifters 1953-1976 (58 tracks) – Atlantic 2CD WSMCD 137 (2003),  
The Magic Touch / The Classic Years 1954 - 1956 (24 tracks - Including Federal/Mercury) – Jasmine JASCD 2604 (2006)  
The Ultimate Collection (1955-62, 60 tracks) – NotNow 3CD NOT3CD 72 (2014)



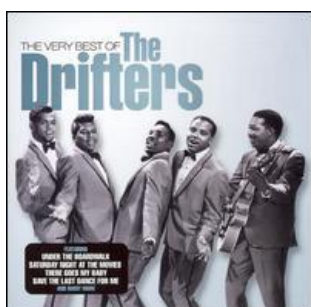
The Josie Singles As & Bs 1954-1959 (43 tracks, Note: not the best choice of cover) – Jasmine 2CD JASCD 556 (2010),  
Singles As and Bs 1955-1959 (30 tracks) – Jasmine JASCD 521 (2009),  
The Original LP Collection (1954-61) – Jasmine 2CD JASCD 791 (2015)

## THE ORIGINAL “NEW” (2<sup>ND</sup> 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,



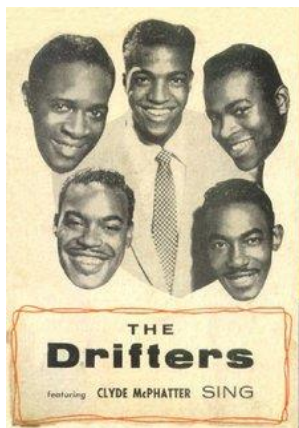


## THE DRIFTERS



The "Money Honey" Drifters: Pinkney, Ferbie, Clyde, Andrew and Gerhart Thrasher.

The hit-making, internationally famous group, who actually were formed twice - 1953 in New York City to back Clyde McPhatter on Atlantic Records, who recruited members from his old gospel partners in the Mount Lebanon Singers, including David Baughan, and then re-formed them with other gospel-experienced singers (the Thrasher Wonders from Alabama and Bill Pinkney) - and in 1958, when a whole new group emerged (featuring Ben E. King), recruited by The Drifters' manager George Treadwell, who hired **The (Five) Crowns** and re-named them (still on Atlantic). The group was billed on records as **Clyde McPhatter and The Drifters** and as **The Drifters featuring Clyde McPhatter** 1953-54. Clyde owned the name of The Drifters together with manager George Treadwell - but sold his share to George when he started his solo career. Produced by Jerry Wexler and Ahmet Ertegun during Clyde's years; and many hits of 1959-1963 were produced by Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller. The Drifters were inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1988.



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 Clyde's 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 awoke 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.

### Recording debut:

NYC June 28, 1953 (with Clyde, Baughan and former members of the Mount Lebanon Singers) *Lucille* (issued on Atlantic in 1954); August 9, 1953 (famous lineup plus Willie Ferbee, bass - Pinkney sang baritone on this session and changed to bass since Ferbee only attended one session) *Money Honey / The Way I Feel* - Atlantic 1006. First re-formed session NYC March 6, 1959 *There Goes My Baby / Oh My Love* (both BEK) - Atlantic 2025.

**Records for:** Atlantic 53-71, Bell/Arista (Europe) 72-75. Charlie Thomas' Drifters: Musicor 1974, Trip, Gusto, EMI International.

### Original lineup: (June, 1953 - Lucille)

**Clyde McPhatter**, lead, who came from the Dominoes; born November 15, 1932 in Durham, North Carolina - died of heart attack in New York City June 13, 1972

**David Baughan**, ten; William Anderson, ten; David Baldwin, baritone; James Johnson, bass.

### Second session lineup: (August, 1953 - Money Honey)

**Clyde McPhatter**, lead; Andrew Thrasher, bar; Bill Pinkney, bar (sometimes also spelled Pinckney); Gerhart Thrasher, ten; **Willie Ferbie (Ferbee)**, bass; Walter Adams, gtr.

### Famous McPhatter lineup:

**Clyde McPhatter**, lead (53-July 54) Clyde's first solo recording, "Everyone's Laughing" (waxed October 24, 1954 - prior to his military service) issued on Atlantic 1070 in August, 1955 as Clyde McPhatter and Vocal Quartet, has most probably not the Drifters backing - rather the Cues

**Andrew "Bubba" Thrasher**, baritone (53-8/56)

**Gerhart "Gay" Thrasher**, tenor (53-5/58) lead on some 1955-56 tracks, died in 1977

**Bill Pinkney**, bass (53-8/56) spokesman, who sporadically returned to the group in 1957/58. Born August 15, 1925 in Dalzell (near Sumter), NC. Died in Daytona Beach July 4, 2007

**Jimmy Oliver**, gtr (54-57) wrote several of the recordings and later joined Clyde McPhatter to help his solo career.



August 1955 - Johnny Moore joining (second from right). 1956-57: Tommy Evans, Gerhart Thrasher, Johnny Moore, Charlie Hughes; and Jimmy Oliver at the piano.

### Later 1950s leads:

**David Baughan** (6/54-8/55) had sung lead on The Checker's "House With No Windows" in 1954 (died in 1970, aged 32). David sang lead on the Drifters' "Honey Bee" (recorded April 21, 1955, but relegated to a flip side in 1961). Sang lead with the Harps later **Johnny Moore** (8/55-ca 8/57\*) born December 14 or 15, 1934 in Selma, Alabama - moving to Cleveland, Ohio, where he sang with The Hornets and was spotted by Pinkney. Johnny went to the Army in 1957. Returned to the group in 1963, and moved to England to start a revival career with Treadwell's Drifters in 1972. He died in London, England on December 30, 1998

**Bobby Hendricks** (ca 8/57-5/58) Born February 22, 1938.

Some information given states Bobby already sang with the Drifters in 1955. Bobby had a solo hit in 1958, "Itchy Twitchy Feeling", helped by guitarist Oliver, with a backing probably by the Coasters. Bobby masqueraded with the fired remnants of the Drifters that same year as "The Coasters". Rumour has it: Bobby was actually backed by the Coasters on the Drifters' recording of "Drip Drop" on April 28, 1958

### Later members:

**Charlie "Carnation" Hughes**, tenor (8/56-6/57) replacing Andrew **Tommy Evans**, bass (8/56-5/58\*) had led the Carols, and often subbed for Jimmy Ricks of The Ravens, and replaced him later **Jimmy Millinder**, baritone (6/57-5/58)

\*Moore and Evans both returned to the second version of the group.

## THE Top Ten Vocal Groups of the Golden '50s

### Re-formed lineup from June, 1958:

The Crowns became The Drifters. Ben E. King's manager Lover Patterson and James "Poppa" Clark were associated with the Crowns, but Clark did not join, when the new Drifters were formed by the Drifters' manager Treadwell.

**Ben E. King**, lead/baritone (6/58-6/59 on stage, 5/60 on recordings, and 82-85) born Benjamin Earl Nelson September 28, 1938 in Henderson, NC – died in Hackensack, New Jersey April 30, 1915. Managed by Lover Patterson in the early years.

**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

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

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



Left: Ben E. King's Drifters in 1959.  
Right: Johnny Moore's Drifters in 1965 with Gene Pearson, Charlie Thomas, Johnny Terry, and Moore.



### Leads 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:

**Rudy Lewis** (late 60-5/64) replacing Williams/King. He came from the Clara Ward Singers. Born August 23, 1936, in Philadelphia as Charles Harrell. He died May 20, 1964.

**Johnny Moore** (4/63- ) back again - with short leavings in 79, 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 Midnighter's guitarist or Billy "Roquel" Davis

**Tommy Evans**, bass (late 60-late 62) Born September 1, 1927 – died 1984. Back again repl. Hobbs. In 1960 William Van Dyke, James Poindexter, and George Grant all tried their luck in the group for short whiles

**Gene Pearson**, baritone (ca 1/63-9/66) from the Rivileers and Cleftones, 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

**William Brent**, bass (6/67-11/67), **Rick Sheppard** (10/66-ca 3/70) replacing Pearson. Has his own Drifters-group today.

**Bill Fredericks**, bass/baritone (12/67-74, 81-83) replaced Brent. Dan Danbridge (66) and Charles Baskerville (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 trio).

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

**The 1990s: Johnny Moore**, Rohan Turner, Roy Hemmings, Joe Cofie

**Early 2000s:** Peter Lamarr (90,91 and from 96), Patrick Alan,

Rohan Turney, Victor Bynoe. **UK Drifters today:**

Maurice Cannon, Damion Charles, Michael Williams, Ryan King

**Essential CDs:** The Definitive Drifters (2CD) - WEA WSMCD137 (2003) (58 tracks, whole career) or:

The Definitive Soul Collection (2CD) (2007) - Rhino 77662 or:

The Very Best of - WEA (UK) 029 (1994) (24 tracks)

### The Best CDs:

Rockin' & Driftin' (3CD) - Rhino R2 72417 (1996) or:

Let The Boogie Woogie Roll 1953-1958 (2CD) - Atlantic 81927-2 (1988) and All-Time Greatest Hits And More 1958-1965 (2CD) - Atlantic 81931-2 (1988)

**Editor's choice:** The 7CD series: The Drifters Anthology - Sequel RSACD 803, 815, 817, 833, 834, 835, 836 (1997)

**For Collectors:** The Drifters: All the Singles 1953 - 1958 plus Bonus Tracks - Jasmine 2CD JASCD 526 (2009) (50 tracks incl alternates of Gone, and Let The Boogie Woogie Roll; here from the first Drifters Lucille-session).

### Reading:

Save the Last Dance for Me - The Musical Legacy of The Drifters by Tony Allan with Faye Treadwell (Popular Culture Ink, 1993 - updated 2005 in softback);

The Drifters by Bill Millar (UK 1971);

Drifters 1 by Bill Pinkney - 50 years 1953-2003 (US 2003)



1961-62: Charlie Thomas, Doc Green, Rudy Lewis, and Tommy Evans.

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

#### Clyde McPhatter and The Drifters

#### or The Drifters featuring Clyde

#### McPhatter (f.):

1953 **Money Honey** 11w #1 11/21

1954 **Such A Night** 3w #2

1954 **Lucille** #7

1954 **Honey Love** (f.) 8w #1 7/10 P21

1954 **Bip Bam** (f.) #7

1954 **White Christmas** (f. & Bill Pinckney) 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)

1956 **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 (JLW)

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)

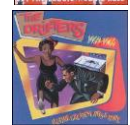
1964 **Under The Boardwalk**

3w #1 7/25 (JM) P4

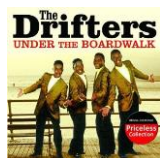
1964 **Saturday Night At The Movies**

#8 (JM) P18

1965 **At The Club** #10 (JM)



## THE Top Ten Vocal Groups of the Golden '50s



The Drifters with Ben E. King, Thomas, Green, and Hobbs.

### Essential Bonus Songs:

- 1955 Someday (You'll Want Me To Want You) (f.) (CMP/BP)
- 1956 Your Promise To Be Mine (GT)
- 1957 Driftin' Away From You (GT)
- 1957 I Know (JM)
- 1958 Drip Drop (BH)
- 1958 Suddenly There's A Valley (BH/TE)
- 1961 Please Stay #13 (RL) P14
- 1961 Room Full Of Years (CT)
- 1962 When My Little Girl Is Smiling (CT) P28
- 1962 Jackpot (RL)
- 1962 What To Do (RL)
- 1963 Only In America (RL)
- 1963 If You Don't Come Back (JM)
- 1974 Kissing In The Back Row Of The Movies (JM)
- 1982 You Better Move On (featuring Ben E. King)



Five singing Drifters plus guitarist Davis, the lineup of April, 1963 – May, 1964. Photo from Moore's re-debut in 1963 (still with Lewis as head lead). Charlie Thomas is holding the mike.

### THE DRIFTERS, vocal group "BIG-SIX"

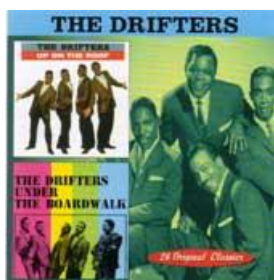
1. McPhatter-lead, Gerhart and Andrew Thrasher, Bill Pinkney, Willie Ferbee and Walter Adams, gtr (featuring Sam Taylor, sax) - New York, August 9, 1953: A 1105 **Money Honey** - Atlantic 1006 (#1, charted 21w)
2. Johnny Moore-lead, Gerhart, Andrew, Pinkney and Jimmy Oliver, gtr - Hollywood, September 19, 1955: A 1664 **Adorable** - Atlantic 1078 (#2, 10w)
3. Ben E. King-lead, Charlie Thomas, Dock Green, Elsbeary Hobbs, Reggie Kimber, gtr - New York, March 6, 1959: A 3397 **There Goes My Baby** - Atlantic 2025 (#1, 19w, Pop #14)
4. Charlie Thomas-lead, Rudy Lewis-introlead, Dock Green, Tommy Evans, Billy Davis, gtr (with female backup-vcls) - New York, October 26, 1961: A 5744 **When My Little Girl Is Smiling** - Atlantic 2134 (Pop #28)
5. Rudy Lewis-lead, Thomas, Green, Evans, Davis, gtr (with female backup-vcls) - New York, June 28, 1962: A 6357 **Up On The Roof** - Atlantic 2162 (#4, 15w in 1962/63, Pop #5)
6. Johnny Moore-lead, Charlie Thomas, Gene Pearson, Johnny Terry, Billy Davis, gtr - New York, May 21, 1964: A 7922 **Under The Boardwalk** - Atlantic 2237 (#4, 14w, Pop #4)

### The Drifters' original Atlantic LPs:

- 1956 Clyde McPhatter & the Drifters - Atlantic 8003
- 1958 Rockin' & Driftin' - Atlantic 8022
- 1960 The Drifters' Greatest Hits - Atlantic 8041
- 1962 Save The Last Dance For Me - Atlantic SD8059
- 1963 Up On The Roof - The Best of - Atlantic SD8073
- 1964 Our Biggest Hits (On Broadway) - Atlantic SD8093 (soon rejected)
- 1964 Under The Boardwalk - Atlantic SD8099 (reissue of above plus Under The Boardwalk minus Drip Drop)
- 1964 The Drifters - Clarion LP 608
- 1965 The Good Life with the Drifters - Atlantic SD8103
- 1965 I'll Take Your Where The Music's Playing - Atlantic SD8113
- 1968 The Drifters' Golden Hits - Atlantic SD8153
- 1971 Their Greatest Recordings - The Early Years - Atco SD33-375



May 1964 – mid 1966: Pearson, Terry, Thomas, Moore, Davis.



EP right contains four Ben E. King-led songs – all four recorded from March, 1959 to May, 1960 – but the image shows the very first Drifters lineup featuring new lead singer Rudy Lewis – and the last featuring Hobbs (Hobbs, Lewis, Thomas and Green).

**Note: The Drifters Albums Gallery – see page 31.**

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

NEWARK, N.J. Aug. 6, 1999--

(Photo below – Johnny Moore's Drifters of later years)

The following is an announcement by the law firm of Epstein Becker & Green: U.S. district court judge overturns jury verdict stating Drifters' had abandoned trademark; judge upholds fraud verdict in registration of name by subsequent promoter. The widow of the Drifters' long-time manager won't have to sing "There Goes My Baby" after all, thanks to a district court decision overturning a jury verdict that found she had abandoned the name of the classic 1950's rock-n-roll vocal group. In a July 30, 1999 decision with far reaching implications for the entertainment industry, Judge Nicholas H. Politan of the U.S. District Court in Newark, N.J. overturned a jury verdict that found that Faye Treadwell abandoned



the Drifters after the group ceased performing regularly in the United States in the mid-1970's. Different groups managed by the plaintiff in the case, promoter Larry Marshak, have been staging performances using the Drifters' name since that time. Ms. Treadwell was represented by James P. Flynn of the law firm Epstein Becker & Green, P.C. In the same decision - Larry Marshak v. Faye Treadwell, et al. (Civ. No.

95-3794, July 30, 1999) -- Judge Politan emphatically upheld a jury finding that, in 1976, Marshak and three former Drifters group members filed a fraudulent trademark application with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, despite knowing that rights to the Drifters' name belonged 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 1967. 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, costumes, appearance bookings, musical content, . . . 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's decision reverses an August 1998 jury verdict, which found that although promoter Marshak filed his application for federal trademark protection fraudulently, he still held common law rights to the Drifters' trademark. The jury held that Marshak was able to obtain common law trademark protection because Ms. Treadwell had not actively used the Drifters' name in conjunction with

performances in the United States for close to a decade. In overturning the jury's verdict, Judge Politan ruled that uninterrupted and continuing royalties from ongoing recording sales and airplay of original Drifters' songs -- including There Goes My Baby, Under the Boardwalk and Up On The Roof -- constituted continued commercial use of the Drifters' name in the United States, and therefore no abandonment had occurred. The decision has widespread ramifications for the entertainment industry, which is fighting the promotion of music groups that perform under famous names, but with no relation to the original music pioneers behind the hit songs for which the groups are known. A bill introduced in Congress by Rep. Dennis Kucinich (D-Ohio) and Rep. Charlie Norwood (R-Ga), entitled the "Truth in Rock Act," would help old chart-toppers defend their names and hit songs from being involuntarily "franchised" by unscrupulous promoters -- some of whom might be too young to even remember when the original

songs were hits. Ms. Treadwell's attorney, James P. Flynn, of Epstein Becker & Green's Newark N.J. office said: "The oldies market has seen a boom over the past few years, but many of the industry's pioneers like Faye Treadwell have been left singing the blues. There's been a scramble to buy, or sometimes just take, the names of popular groups from the golden era of rock and roll. We see this ruling as a victory not only for our client, but for the many music pioneers who have become dispossessed through certain persons' clever use of lawsuits and loopholes in the existing laws governing trademarks."

A copy of the complete decision is available upon request. About Epstein Becker & Green Epstein Becker & Green is a full-service law firm with more than 280 attorneys in 11 cities across the United States. The firm practices in the areas of commercial litigation, intellectual property, employment law, healthcare, corporate and securities law, government contracts and elder law. The firm is a founding member of the International Lawyers Network (ILN), a confederation of full-service law firms located in 67 countries on six continents.



Images above: Charlie Thomas' Drifters of 1972, promoted by Larry Marshak; Bobby Hendrick's Drifters (who actually toured with Billy Richards' Coasters and Sonny Turner's Platters in 2008); with image right Bill Pinkney and Charlie Thomas meeting in late 1999.

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

Born **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 1982, 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 masquaraded as "The Drifters" early on.



## The Drifters (Atlantic, New York)

<b>6 March 1959</b>	
Ben E. Nelson (King), lead; Charlie Thomas, lead-1, Dock Green, Elsbeary Hobbs.	
3396 Hey Senorita	2062, LP 8041
3397 There Goes My Baby	2025, LP 8041
3398 Baltimore -1	2050, LP 8041
3399 Oh My Love	2025, LP 8041
<b>9 July 1959</b>	
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
<b>23 December 1959</b>	
3987 This Magic Moment	2050, LP 8041
3988 Lonely Winds	2062, LP 8041
3989 Temptation	unissued
<b>19 May 1960</b>	
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)

<b>Ben E. King</b>	
3965 Brace Yourself	
3966 Show Me The Way	
3967 I Promise Love	
3968 Hearts Of Stone	
<b>LaVern Baker &amp; Ben E. King</b>	
4585 How Often	
4586 A Help-Each-Other Romance	

## 17 December 1959

6156, LP 142
6156, LP 142
LP 142
unissued

## 7 June 1960

Atlantic 2067
Atlantic 2067



Left: Atlantic LP 8041 (9/60). Top: Ben E. King sings for Soulful Lovers - Atco SD33-137 (1962, featuring recordings Ben did in sessions December 1961, with no song issued on single). Above: Atco LPs 33-133 (8/61), and SD33-142 (1962).

## Ben E. King

5161 Spanish Harlem
5162 First Taste Of Love
5163 Young Boy Blues
5164 Stand By Me

5441 Here Comes The Night
5442 On The Horizon

5451 Amor
5453 Souvenir Of Mexico

Note: 28-29 March, 1961 more recordings, only issued on LP 133, were recorded - and later more songs/singles for LP 142.

## 27 October 1960

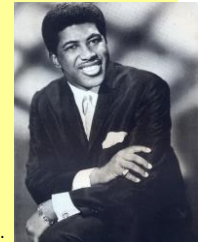
6185, LP 133
6185, LP 142
6207, LP 142
6194, LP 142

## 27 March 1961

6207, LP 142
6194, LP 142

## 29 March 1961

6203, LP 133
6203, alt on LP 133



Atlantic LP 8059 (2/1962) and Atco LP SD33-165 (1964 - King's fourth album)  
Note that neither of the new Drifters' LPs had Ben E. King featured on the sleeves.

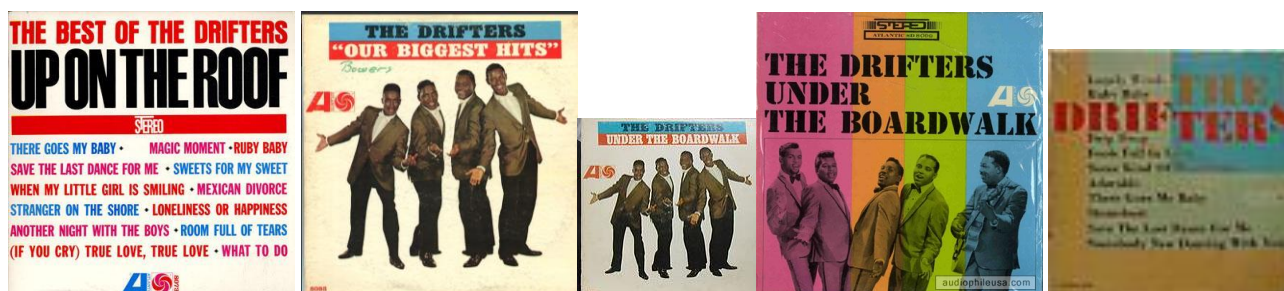
THE DRIFTERS: ONE (plus) PER YEAR 1953 – 1966



## THE DRIFTERS – Atlantic Albums Gallery *(selective after 1971)*



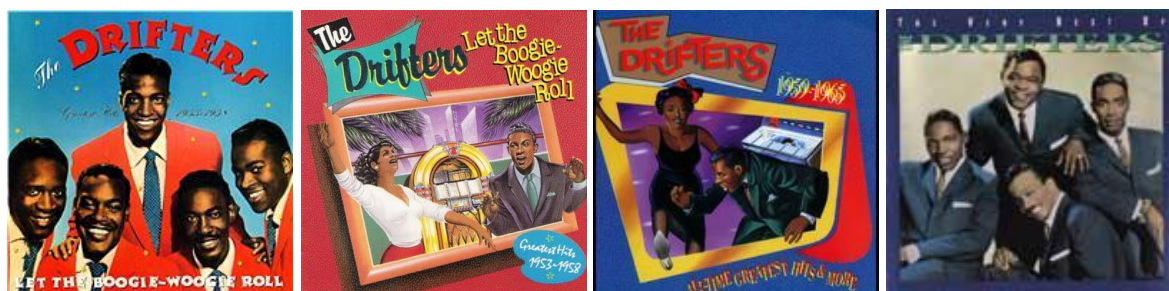
Clyde McPhatter & the Drifters: Rock & Roll – 8003 (1956 or 3/57), The Drifters: Rockin' & Drifftin' – 8022 (1958), The Drifters' Greatest Hits – 8041 (September 1960), The Drifters: Save The Last Dance For Me – 8059 (February 1962)



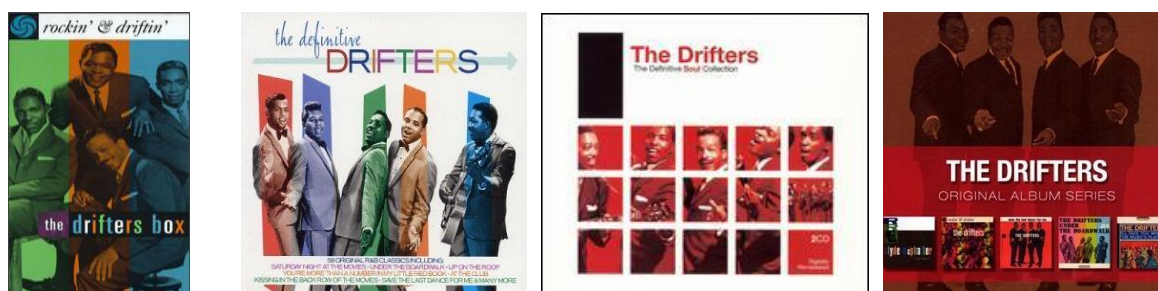
Up On The Roof: The Best Of The Drifters – 8073 (July 1963), Our Biggest Hits – 8093 (June 1964 – soon withdrawn – aka On Broadway), Under The Boardwalk – 8099 (almost identical to Our Biggest Hits with Under The Boardwalk added and Drip Drop stereo alternate excluded; 1964 – two different covers, reissued 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 Drifters' 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)

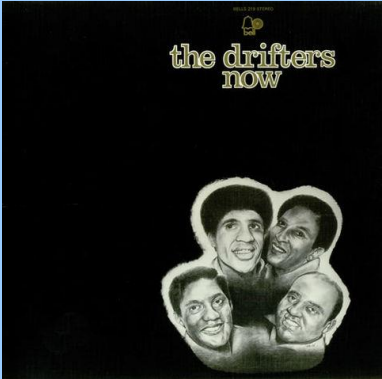
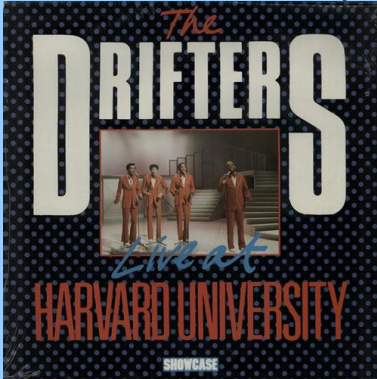



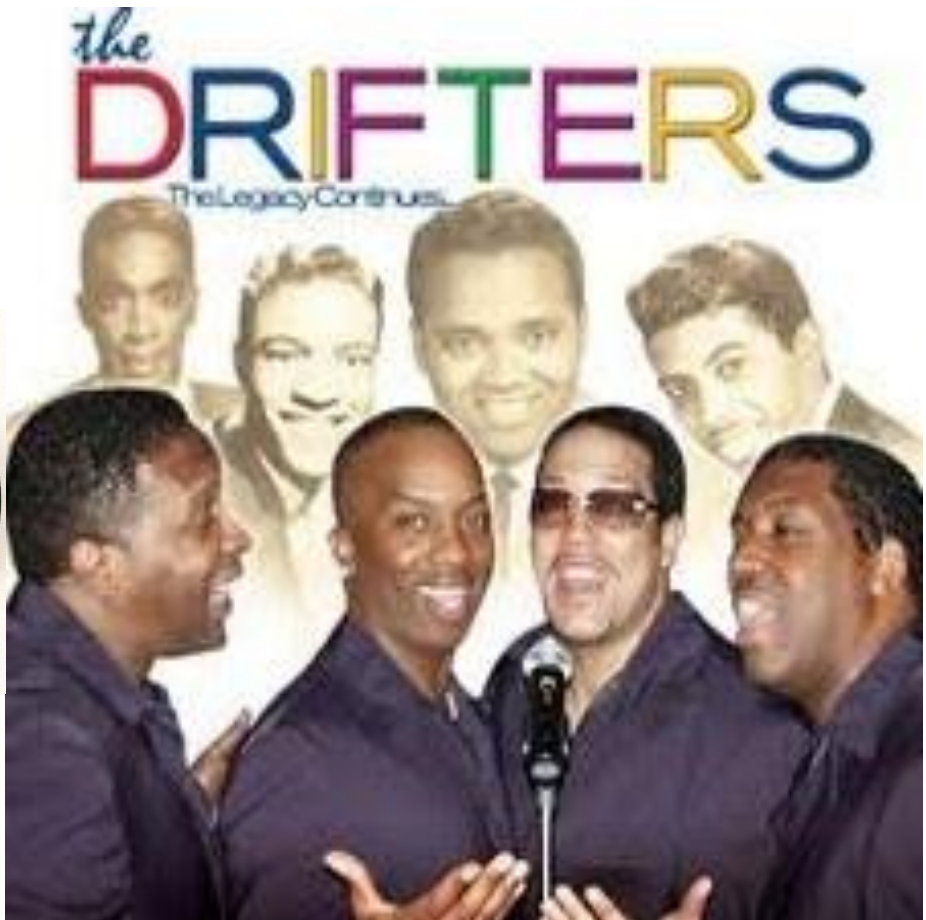
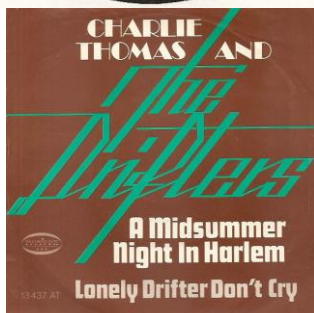
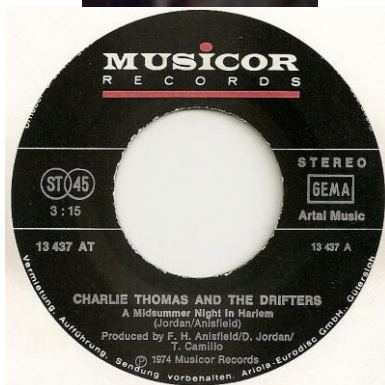
The Drifters Box: Rockin' & Drifftin' (3CD box) - Rhino R2 72417 (1996), The Definitive Drifters (2CD) – Warner (Atlantic) 66150 (2003), The Definitive Soul Collection (2CD) – Rhino/Atlantic 77662 (2006), Original Album Series: The Drifters (5CD-set) – Atlantic/Rhino 81227983734 (2009)

## THE DRIFTERS: the Lead Singers – their first lead with the group

<p><b>Lucille (R&amp;B #7); Money Honey (R&amp;B #1)</b></p>  <p><b>Lead: Clyde McPhatter</b>          "Lucille" rec in New York City 28 June 1953          Atlantic 1019 (issued January 1954)          w. David Baughan, William Anderson, David Baldwin, and James Johnson          "Money Honey" rec in New York City 9 August 1953          Atlantic 1006 (issued September 1953)          w. Gerhart Thrasher, Andrew Thrasher, Bill Pinkney,          Willie Ferbie, and Walter Adams (gtr)  <b>1953</b></p>	<p><b>Honey Bee</b></p>  <p><b>Lead: David Baughan</b>          Rec in New York City 21 April 1955          Atlantic 2096 (issued March 1961)          w. Gerhart Thrasher, Andrew Thrasher,          Bill Pinkney, and Jimmy Oliver (gtr)  <b>1955</b></p>	<p><b>Adorable (R&amp;B #1)</b></p>  <p><b>Lead: Johnny Moore</b>          Rec in Los Angeles 19 September 1955          Atlantic 1078 (issued October 1955)          w. Gerhart Thrasher, Andrew Thrasher,          Bill Pinkney, and Jimmy Oliver (gtr)  <b>1955</b></p>
<p><b>Steamboat (R&amp;B #5)</b></p>  <p><b>Lead: Bill Pinkney</b>          Rec in Los Angeles 19 September 1955          Atlantic 1078 (issued October 1955)          w. Gerhart Thrasher, Andrew Thrasher,          Johnny Moore, and Jimmy Oliver (gtr)  <b>1955</b></p>	<p><b>Your Promise To Be Mine</b></p>  <p><b>Lead: Gerhart Thrasher</b>          Rec in Los Angeles 19 September 1955          Atlantic 1088 (issued February 1956)          w. Johnny Moore, Andrew Thrasher,          Bill Pinkney, and Jimmy Oliver (gtr)  <b>1955</b></p>	<p><b>Drip Drop</b></p>  <p><b>Lead: Bobby Hendricks</b>          Rec in New York City 28 April 1958          Atlantic 1187 (issued May 1958)          w. Gerhart Thrasher, Jimmy Millinder (Milner),          Tommy Evans, Jimmy Oliver (gtr)          or: back-up by the Coasters  <b>1958</b></p>
<p><b>Suddenly There's A Valley</b></p>  <p><b>Lead: Tommy Evans</b>          Rec in New York City 28 April 1958          Atlantic 2087 (issued December 1960)          w. Bobby Hendricks (co-lead) and          back-up as on "Drip Drop"  <b>1958</b></p>	<p><b>There Goes My Baby (R&amp;B #1)</b></p>  <p><b>Lead: Ben E. King (Nelson)</b>          Rec in New York City 6 March 1959          Atlantic 2025 (issued May 1959)          w. Charlie Thomas, Dock Green,          Elsbeary Hobbs, and Reggie Kimber (gtr)  <b>1959</b></p>	<p><b>Baltimore</b></p>  <p><b>Lead: Charlie Thomas</b>          Rec in New York City 6 March 1959          Atlantic 2050 (issued January 1960)          w. Elsbeary Hobbs (sec-lead), Ben E. King,          Dock Green, and Reggie Kimber (gtr)  <b>1959</b></p>
<p><b>(If You Cry) True Love, True Love (R&amp;B #5)</b></p>  <p><b>Lead: Johnny Lee Williams</b>          Rec in New York City 9 July 1959          Atlantic 2040 (issued September 1959)          w. Ben E. King, Charlie Thomas, Dock Green,          Elsbeary Hobbs, and Bill Davis (Abdul Samad, gtr)  <b>1959</b></p>	<p><b>Some Kind Of Wonderful (R&amp;B #5)</b></p>  <p><b>Lead: Rudy Lewis</b>          Rec in New York City 1 February 1961          Atlantic 2096 (issued March 1961)          w. Charlie Thomas, Dock Green, Tommy          Evans, and Bill Davis, gtr  <b>1961</b></p>	<p><b>If You Don't Come Back</b></p>  <p><b>Lead: Johnny Moore (returning)</b>          Rec in New York City 12 April 1963          Atlantic 2191 (issued May 1963)          w. Rudy Lewis, Charlie Thomas, Eugene          Pearson, Johnny Terry, and Bill Davis, gtr  <b>1963</b></p>

## THE LATER "LEGAL" DRIFTERS

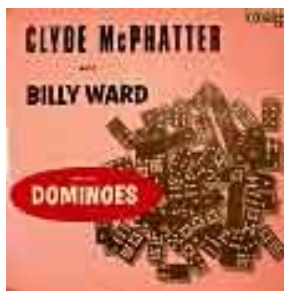
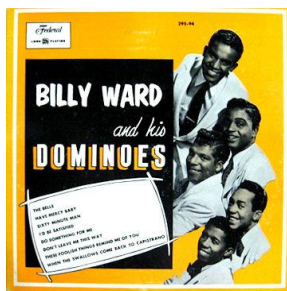
<p><b>The Drifters Now</b></p>  <p>Lead: <b>Johnny Moore</b> Johnny's group moved to England in 1972.</p> <p>Rec in New York City 1972 Bell LP-219 (UK) (issued 1973) w. Butch Leake, Grant Kitchings, Bill Fredericks, and Butch Mann, gtr <b>1972</b></p>	<p><b>Live at Harvard University</b></p>  <p>Lead: <b>Charlie Thomas</b> Charlie left the 1958 Drifters in 1967 and started his own new "legal" group in 1971.</p> <p>Rec in Cambridge, Massachusetts 1976 A&amp;D LP 8001 (issued 1976) w. Bobby Ruffin, Dock Green, Elsbeary Hobbs, and Bill Davis (Abdul Samad), gtr <b>1976</b></p>	<p><b>You Better Move On</b></p>  <p>Lead: <b>Ben E. King</b> King "guested" 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.</p> <p>Rec (prob in New York) in 1982 Atlantic K 17743 (UK) (issued 1982) w. Bill Fredericks, Ray Lewis, Louis Price <b>1982</b></p>
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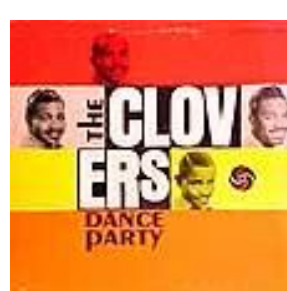
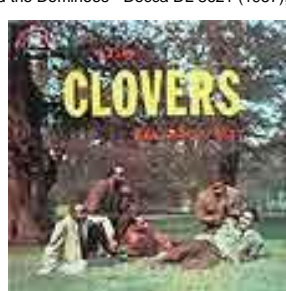
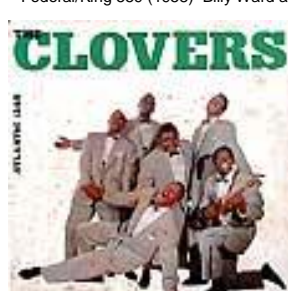
Images left: The Musicor single 1498 "A Midsummer Night in Harlem" with Charlie Thomas and The Drifters, recorded in New York 1974, possibly featuring Dock Green, Elsbeary Hobbs, and Al Banks. **Left:** The British based Drifters of the early 2000s (Peter Lamarr, Vic Bynoe, Rohan Turney & Patrick Allan) here with a 2006 CD on Studio T.

# TOP TEN VOCAL GROUPS' LPs 1954-1960

part one



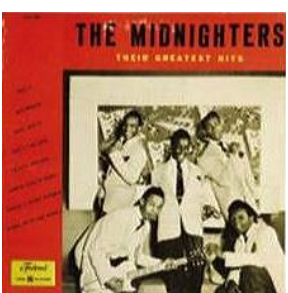
Billy Ward and his Dominoes - Federal 295-94 (1955), Billy Ward and his Dominoes - Federal 548 (1957), Clyde McPhatter with Billy Ward and his Dominoes - Federal/King 559 (1958) Billy Ward and the Dominoes - Decca DL 8621 (1957),



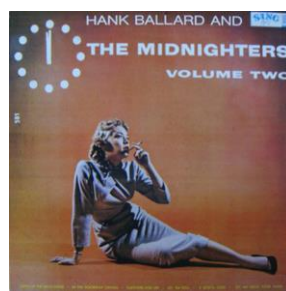
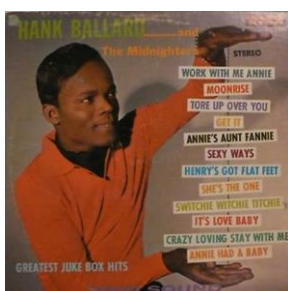
Billy Ward and his Dominoes: Sea Of Glass - Liberty LRP 3056 (1957) Billy Ward and his Dominoes: Yours Forever - Liberty LRP 3083 (1958), The Clovers - Atlantic 1248 (1955, reissued on Atlantic 8009 in 1956 with same cover), The Clovers In Clover - Poplar 1001 (1958, reissued on United Artists UAL 3033 in 1959), The Clovers: Dance Party - Atlantic 8034 (1959),



The Clovers: Love Potion Number 9 - United Artists UAL 3099 (1959), The Rockin' 5 Royales - Apollo 488 (1956), The "5" Royales: Dedicated To You - King 580 (1957), The 5 Royales Sing For You - King 616 (1959)



The Five Royales - King 678 (1959), The Midnighters: Their Greatest Hits - Federal 195-90 (1954), the extended reissue on Federal 541 (1957 - two versions), and with a new cover as Hank Ballard and the Midnighters: Their Greatest Jukebox Hits - King 541 (1958)



Hank Ballard and The Midnighters: Greatest Jukebox Hits - King 541 (ca 1962 stereo reissue with new cover again), The Midnighters Volume Two - King 581 (ca 1956), reissued as Hank Ballard and The Midnighters Volume Two in ca 1958, Hank Ballard and The Midnighters: Singin' and Swingin' (The Twist) - King 618 (1959)

## TOP TEN VOCAL GROUPS' LPs 1954-1960

## part two



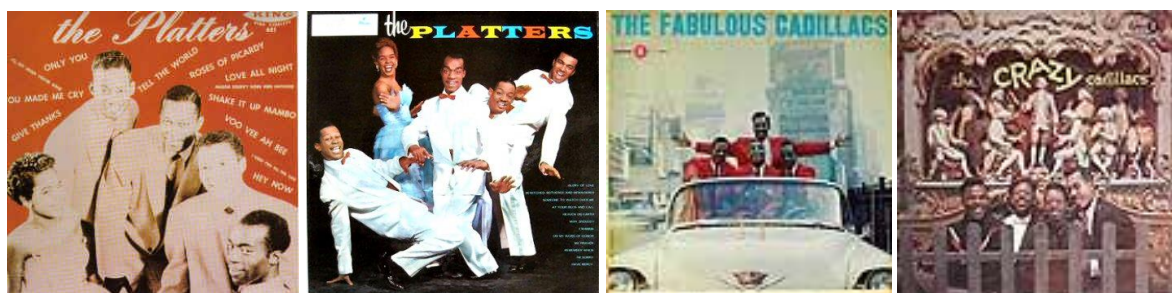
The One And Only Hank Ballard and his Midnighters - King 674 (1960), Hank Ballard and the Midnighters - Mr. Rhythm & Blues: Finger Poppin' Time - King 700 (1960), Hank Ballard and the Midnighters. Spotlight On Hank Ballard - King 740 (1960 and 1961), The Flamingos - Checker 1433 (1958)



The Flamingos: Flamingo Serenade - End 304 (1959), The Flamingos. Flamingo Favorites - End 307 (1960), The Flamingos: Requestfully Yours - End 308 (1960), Look! It's The Moonglows - Chess 1430 (1958)



Clyde McPhatter & the Drifters: Rock & Roll - Atlantic 8003 (1956 or 3/57), The Drifters: Rockin' & Driftin' - Atlantic 8022 (1958), The Drifters' Greatest Hits - Atlantic 8041 (9/1960), The Drifters: Save The Last Dance For Me - Atlantic 8059 (NOTE: issued February 1962)



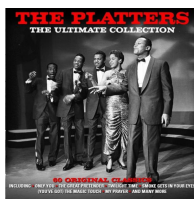
The Platters - Federal 549 (1956, reissued on King 651 in 1959 - it's the King LP imaged - Federal, see page 35), The Platters - Mercury MG-20146 (1956)  
Note: A total of nine LPs on Mercury (MG20000-series) were issued with The Platters during 1956-1960 - shown on page 24.  
The Fabulous Cadillacs - Jubilee JGM-1045 (1957), The Crazy Cadillacs - Jubilee JGM-1089 (1959)



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



Clockwise: Williams, Lynch, Reed, Paul Robi, and Zola Taylor.

"The Flying Platters" - Manager and song-writer Buck Ram's (died 1991) internationally famous balladeers and the world's best known vocal group. Originated from a Los Angeles lineup of late 1952 comprising Cornell Gunter, Gaynell and Alex Hodge, and Joe Jefferson, who were called the Flamingoes - of Los Angeles (no recordings). Curtis Williams (later of The Hollywood Flames and The Penguins) was also a some-time member. In January 1953 bass singer Herb Reed entered (replacing Curtis) and the group changed its name to The Platters. Reed and Gunter sang lead and soon David Lynch replaced Joe. Tony Williams joined as lead in June, 1953. Soon after Gunter left (although he joined them for a short tour in 1957). Gunter's new group the Flairs was managed by Buck Ram. Around January, 1954 Buck Ram became the Platters' manager (succeeding Ralph Bass) and soon decided that the group needed a female singer and they found Zola Taylor (16 years of age at that time) rehearsing at Alex Hodge's house with Gunter's sister Shirley (who led her group, the Queens - featuring Zola). The Platters had already done some recordings with female guest lead by Linda Hayes (Tony's sister). Zola entered in March, 1954 (replacing by her then fiancée Gaynell). In August, 1954 Paul Robi (who later changed his name to Roby) replaced Alex Hodge. The group was contracted to Mercury when Buck Ram made a deal moving the Penguins to that label. They re-recorded a (by then unused Federal recording of May 20, 1954), "Only You" (which Ram had composed several years earlier) on April 26, 1955 in Los Angeles. The Platters were inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1990.



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-succession 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 joining. 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 aid). 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.

## 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.

**Records for:** Federal 53-55, Mercury 55-64, Musicor 66-71.

**Original recording lineup** (on Federal - 20 songs plus alternates) (Sept 15, 1953 and March 16, 1954 sessions):

**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 records 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)

**Zola Taylor**, sopr (March 54-64) born in L.A. March 17, 1938, died April 30, 2007. Replaced Gaynell Hodge in the original Platters.

In 1956 **Rupert Branker** (from The Chords) joined the Platters as pianist. He was murdered in 1961.

## 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 Metrotones/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



## Essential CD:

The Ultimate Collection - NotNow (3CD) NOT3CD 72 (2014) 60 tracks or: Enchanted - The Best of - Rhino RHCD 75326 (1993) or: All-Time Greatest Hits - Mercury CD 175502 (18 tracks) (2004) or: The Magic Touch - Anthology (2CD) - Mercury 510 314-2 (1991)

## For the Collector:

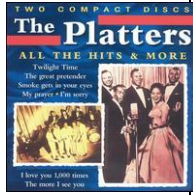
The Complete Federal Recordings - Ace CDCHD 974 (2004) or: The Complete King Recordings - Collectables CD COL 2889 (2004) (incl a whistle version of "Only You"), both albums feature the original 1953-1955 recordings and: Four Platters and One Lovely Dish - Bear Family (9CD) (1994) BCD 15741 II (with all Mercury recordings 1955-64 and 56-page booklet)

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



## THE Top Ten Vocal Groups of the Golden '50s

**R&B Top 10 Hits: (13 of 21 Top 40) & Pop Top 5 hits of 15 Top 20**  
**1955 Only You (And You Alone) 7w #1 10/22 rec L.A. April 26 P5**  
**1956 The Great Pretender 11w #1 1/7 rec Chicago 9/29/55 P1**  
**1956 (You've Got) The Magic Touch #4 rec in NYC 2/19 P4**  
**1956 My Prayer 2w #1 8/18 rec in NYC 4/17 P1**  
**1956 You'll Never Never Know #9**  
**1956 It Isn't Right #10**  
**1957 On My Word Of Honor #7**  
**1957 He's Mine #5 (ZT)**  
**1957 My Dream #7**  
**1958 Twilight Time 3w #1 4/28 P1**  
**1958 Smoke Gets In Your Eyes 1w #3 P1**  
**1959 Enchanted #9**  
**1966 I Love You 1000 Times #6 (ST)**



The Platters of 1962 with Sonny Turner.

### Favorite Smooth and Rhythmic Ones:

**1954 Tell The World**  
**1957 I'm Sorry #15**  
**1959 Remember When**  
**1960 Harbor Lights P8**  
**1961 I'll Never Smile Again (TW)**  
**1962 It's Magic (ST)**



**THE ORIGINAL FEDERAL/KING SINGLES (rec in L.A.)**  
**12153 Give Thanks (TW)/Hey Now (HR) - 10/53**  
**12164 I'll Cry When You're Gone (TW)**  
**/I Need You All The Time (TW) - 1/54**  
**12181 Roses Of Picardy (HR)/Beer Barrel Boogie (HR) - 4/54**  
**12188 Tell The World (TW)/Love All Night (DL) - 6/54**  
**12198 Shake It Up Mambo (TW)/Voo-Vee-Ah-Bee (DL) - 10/54**  
**King 4752 My Name Ain't Annie (LH)**  
**/Let's Babalu - Linda Hayes] - 10/54**  
**12204 Take Me Back, Take Me Back (TV)**  
**/Maggie Doesn't Work Here Anymore (DL/ZT) - 12/54**  
**King 4773 Please Have Mercy (LH)/Oochi Pachi (LH/TW) - 2/55**  
**12244 Only You (TW)/You Made Me Cry (DL) - 11/55**  
**12250 I Need You All The Time (TW)/Tell The World (TW) - 12/55**  
**12271 Give Thanks (TW)/I Need You All The Time (TW) - 1956**  
*(Note: "Only You" on Mercury issued 5/55)*

### THE PLATTERS by Cord G. Coslor (continued) (published in Gary King's Oldies Newsletter # 38., 2000) PLATTERS PERSONALITIES:

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 song-writer, and is considered the mastermind behind The Platters hits. Ram, who has been credited with writing nearly 1,000 songs, not only penned such hits as "Only You," "Smoke Gets In Your Eyes," and "Twilight Time," for The Platters, but also wrote the hit "I'll Be Home For Christmas" for Bing Crosby. With over 200 personnel changes in the Platters group over the years, it is evident that what draws people to The Platters is their music, much of it written by Ram, not necessarily the members of the group. In 1983, Ram told the Atlanta Journal newspaper, "We've had 200 personnel changes, and people do ask about Tony (Williams) sometimes, but they never mention any of the other guys except Monroe Powell, who's been with us for 14 years." Born in Chicago, IL, in 1909, Ram began his professional career as a lawyer, but was a saxophone player at heart. He played with the legendary Benny Goodman and Gene Krupa after he passed Illinois' State Bar Exam, and soon began writing music for many in the industry. He also is credited with discovering Ella Fitzgerald. The story says that Ram practically dragged Chick Webb, a drummer he was working with, into going to Harlem's Apollo Theater where the 15 year old Fitzgerald was performing. Eventually, the world would come to know her as the First Lady of Jazz. He then was invited to Hollywood where he began writing music for motion pictures, but found the industry to be very challenging.... so much so he was forced to stop writing music altogether for 2 years. He chose to return to the industry, a move that blessed the public with a sensational sound, and a move that not only discovered, but in some ways, created The Three Suns in the 1940s, The Platters in the 1950s, and The Union Gap in the 1960s. Along the way, he garnered 16 Gold Records, and countless achievement awards. Jean Bennett is considered by many to have been Buck Ram's "right hand woman." Originally entering the industry as an aspiring performer herself, Bennett soon became an employee of Ram. With Ram and The Platters virtually from the beginning, Bennett 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 1964, Bennett had moved to Las Vegas from 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 says, "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 Buck Ram Platters, based out of Las Vegas. Current members of this group include Tyrone Sweet, Julie Harris, Paul Allen, III, Joel Gaines, 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 feel it is right for people to take money out of her mouth, or anybody else's mouth," says Hackett. At the same time, Bennett has licensed two other groups to perform. A group located in Branson, MO using the name of The World Famous Platters (members include Lawrence Randall, Eddie Stoval, Walter White, and Dee Dee Hamilton) and a group managed by Larry Marshack of New York, which often performs at Las Vegas' Sahara Hotel & Casino, both perform with the approval of Bennett. "As a last resort, I finally did license 2 or 3 different groups... they were so popular and well liked." She also says that an agreement has been reached with original member Herb Reed which allows him to continue performing under the name, although Reed denied any agreement between the two in a recent interview.



"We get along fine... but now he's trying to go back on the agreement he gave with me, because I settled with him out of court by giving him a license to perform as long as he was able," Bennett said. In 1990, Martha Robi (wife of Paul Robi), sued Bennett and 5 Platters, Inc., and won a total of \$3,510,000. This court case also declared that 3 registered trademarks of "The Platters," which Five Platters, Inc. owned, be cancelled. Since that time, Bennett has continued to put on 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 won a judgement against, Monroe Powell, who was performing with the name The Platters Featuring The Legendary Monroe Powell. She says that Powell refused to sign a contract extension in the mid-1990s and left to perform with his own group. "I put in a lot of years with him and it really breaks my heart to have it turn into something like this." Monroe maintains that after the 1990 lawsuit between Robi and Bennett, Bennett sold the management company to Mary Fanning, where he contained 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. "Jean was there almost from the conception of them, but she 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 Platters?", said Sonny 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 maintained a 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 simply a secretary, but the facts show she indeed purchased the management company in the mid-1960s from Buck Ram. Sue Hackett says she, "Pioneered, really, for me and other people a positive business world for women.... we are where we are because of people like Jean Bennett." Hackett said, "No, its 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.



Herb Reed's Platters - the only group with an original member;  
 and the group receiving most honors these days - Monroe Powell's group.



Posted on Mon, Jul. 6, 2009

### Court rules in favor of former Drifters manager

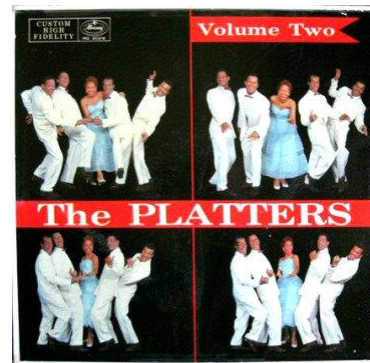
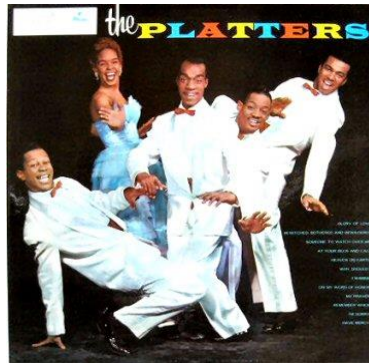
The Associated Press NEWARK, N.J. - A federal court says a former manager of The Drifters could be entitled to millions of dollars from concert promoters who have infringed on the famed singing group's trademark. The 3rd Circuit Court of Appeals in Philadelphia ruled last week in favor of Faye Treadwell, who has fought a lengthy legal battle over the name of the group that sang such classics as "Up On The Roof" and "Under The Boardwalk." The ruling allows Treadwell to seek damages from promoter Larry Marshak and his associates, who have promoted the group since 2001. Marshak promoted concerts of The Drifters as well as singing groups The Platters and The Coasters. None feature original members of the groups, which had their heyday in the 1950s and '60s.

## THE FLYING PLATTERS

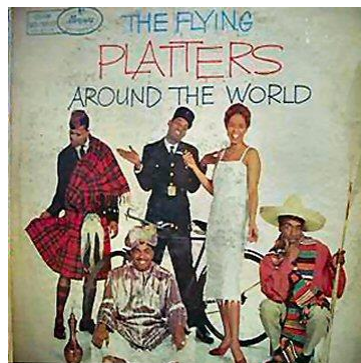


David Lynch, Paul Robi (top), Tony Williams, Herb Reed, and Zola Taylor (ca 1956) - with Bear Family CD "The Ballads of..." BCD 17326 (2013) and "Rock" BCD 17558 (2017)

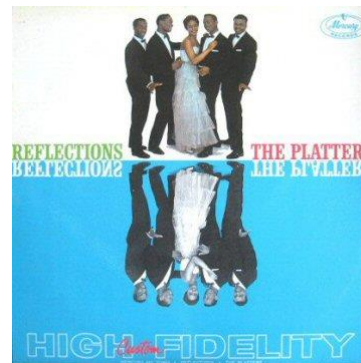
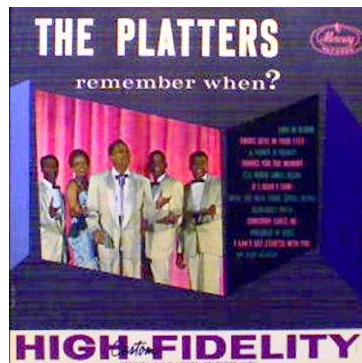
## THE PLATTERS – The Early LPs (1956-1961)



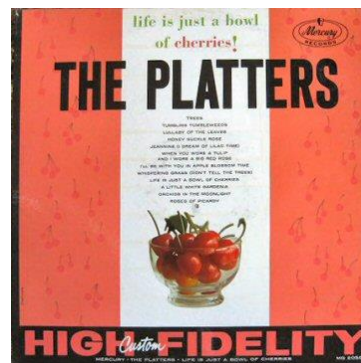
The Platters – Federal 549 (1956, reissued on King 651 in 1959 – red cover, see page 31), The Platters – Mercury MG 20146 (April 1956), The Platters Volume Two – MG 20216 (August 1956)



The Flying Platters – MG 20298 (May 1957), The Flying Platters Around The World – MG 20366 (February 1958), Remember When? – MG 20410 (January 1959)



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

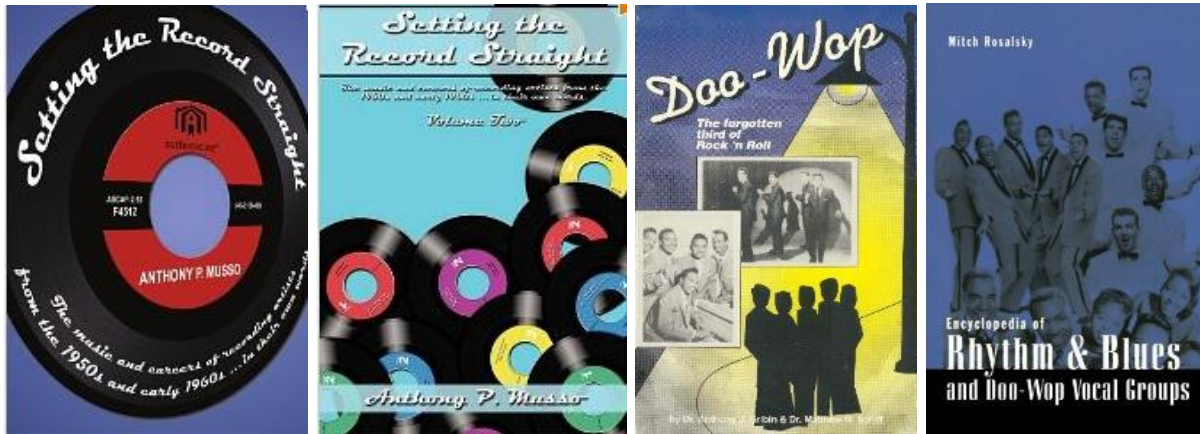


More Encore Of Golden Hits - MG 20591 (June 1960), Life Is Just A Bowl Of Cherries! - MG 20589 (October 1960), Encores! – Mercury/Wing MGW 12112 (November 1961)

The R&B Pioneers Series – Volume Six of twelve

## THE Top Ten Vocal Groups of the Golden '50s

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

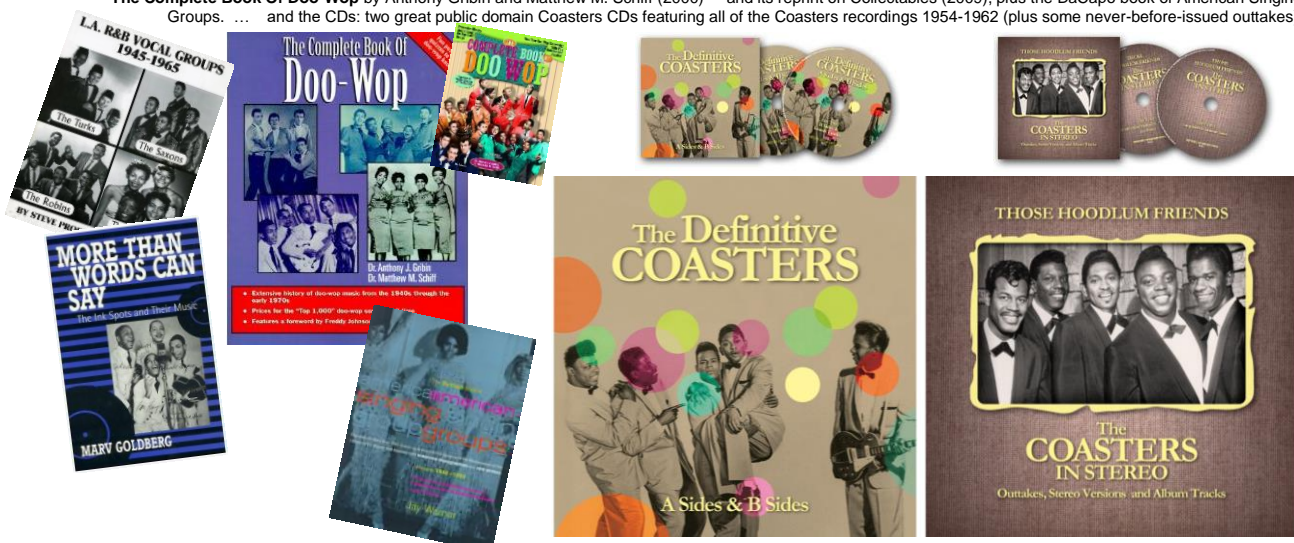


**Setting the Record Straight** - The music and careers of recording artists – in their own words by Anthony P. Musso - Vol 1 (2007) and Vol 2 (2009).  
**Doo-Wop** - The Forgotten third of Rock 'n Roll by Anthony J. Gribin, Matthew M. Schiff (1992).  
**Encyclopedia of Rhythm & Blues and Doo-Wop Vocal Groups** by Mitch Rosalsky (2002)



**The Billboard Book of American Singing Groups** - A History 1940 – 1990 by Jay Warner (1992) – *simply the best of them all!* -  
 - 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).

Below:  
**L.A. R&B Vocal Groups 1945-1965** by Steve Propes and Galen Gart (2001). **More Than Words Can Say/The Inl Spots and their Music** by Marv Goldberg (1998).  
**The Complete Book Of Doo-Wop** by Anthony Gribin and Matthew M. Schiff (2000) – and its reprint on Collectables (2009), plus the DaCapo book of American Singing Groups. ... and the CDs: two great public domain Coasters CDs featuring all of the Coasters recordings 1954-1962 (plus some never-before-issued outtakes).





## THE CADILLACS



Earl Wade, Bobby Phillips, Earl Carroll (top), Charles Brooks, LaVerne Drake.

"The True Street Corners" - Cult group of New York's Sugar Hill - formed 1953 in Harlem called the Carnations (no recordings). Discovered by Lover Patterson, who brought them to Jubilee's subsidiary Josie, where they were managed by Esther Navarro and coached by saxophonist Jesse Powell. The group were the first to choose a car name (breaking the tradition of birds giving names to vocal groups). The Cadillacs were also the first to extensively use professional choreography (Cholly Atkins and Honi Coles). They soon turned into two different groups for the same label. Today they have fans all over the world - 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.

### Recording debut:

New York July, 1954 *Gloria / I Wonder Why* (both EC) - Josie 765.

### Records for:

Josie 54-60, Smash 1961, Capitol 62-63.



Carroll, Phillips, Brooks, and bottom: probably Drake and Wade. From the LP "The Crazy Cadillacs", showing Bobby Phillips, Earl Carroll, and bottom: prob. Bobby Spencer and J.R. Bailey.

### Original lineup July, 1954 (Gloria):

**Earl Carroll**, lead (54-61, 80-) spokesman, born November 2, 1937. Earl was partly absent in 1957 and in 1959, returned, but left for The Coasters in the summer of 1961. Died in N.Y. November 25, 2012.

**Laverne Drake**, ten (54-55) born 1938

**James "Poppa" Clark**, ten, born 1937. Hired for this session by Lover Patterson

**Johnny "Gus" Willingham**, bar, born 1937. Replacing original Carnation-member Cub Gaining. His only stint with the group

**Bobby Phillips**, bass (54-), second spokesman, born January 28, 1935, died March 6, 2011 (image below: circa 2000)



**Lineup second session 1954, and 1955:** (No Chance - Speedoo) **Earl Wade**, second lead (54-ca 64). was still around and worked with Carroll, Phillips, and John Brown in 1979 as The Earls **Charles Brooks**, bar (54-57) with Carroll, Phillips, and Drake

### Lineup 1956:

Carroll, Phillips, Wade, Brooks, plus

**James J.R. Bailey** (May 56-72) third lead, died in 1980



THE CADILLACS - MAY 1957  
BOBBY SPENCER, BILL LINDSAY, CHAMP ROLLOW (WALDO CHAMPEN), J.R. BAILEY  
Earl Carroll in 1955 and the second Cadillacs group

### Second group 1957:

**James J.R. Bailey**, lead; **Robert "Bobby" Spencer**, ten (57-72); **Bill Lindsay**, bar; **Champ Rollow**, bass (real name Waldo Champen)

### "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 lineup 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.o 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 5LPBox M61285 (1983)

### Essential CD: The Best of - Rhino R2 70955 (1990) or:

Rock - Bear Family BCD 16281 AB (2008) (34 tracks, 44-page booklet)

### For Collectors:

The Complete Josie Sessions (4CD) - Bear Family BCD 15648 DI (1995)

or: For Collectors Only (3CD) - Collectables COL-CD-8800 (1992)

or: Zoom (2CD) - Jasmine JASCD 556 (2009) (43 Josie single tracks)

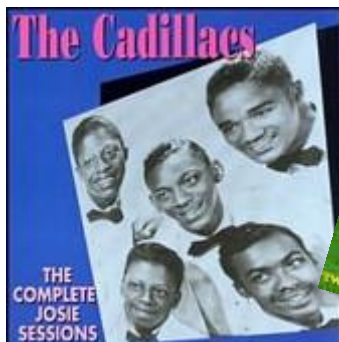
### Reading:

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



Some of the Best Reading on Vocal Groups:

The Billboard Book of American Singing Groups - A History 1940 - 1990 by Jay Warner (1992); reprinted as The DaCapo Book of American Singing Groups (2000); updated in 2006 as American Singing Groups: A History from 1940 to Today  
 Disco-File by Fernando L. Gonzales (1974, 1977, 2008)  
 Group Harmony - Echoes of the Rhythm and Blues Era by Todd R. Baptista (2007)  
 Group Harmony - Behind the Rhythm and the Blues by Todd R. Baptista (1998)  
 They All Sang On The Corner by Philip Groia (1973)  
 Setting the Record Straight by Anthony P. Musso - Vol 1 (2007) and Vol 2 (2009)  
 L.A. R&B Vocal Groups 1945-1965 by Steve Propes and Galen Gart (2001)  
 Those Oldies But Goodies - A Guide to 50's Record Collecting by Steve Propes (1973)  
 A Discography of Rhythm & Blues and Rock 'N Roll Vocal Groups  
 1945 to 1965 by Robert D. Ferlingere (1976, 2002)  
 Encyclopedia of Rhythm & Blues and Doo-Wop Vocal Groups by Mitch Rosalsky (2002)  
 Doo-Wop - The Forgotten third of Rock 'n Roll by Anthony J. Gribin, Matthew M. Schiff (1992)  
 The Ultimate Vocal Group Harmony Reference Guide (Vol 1 and 2) by Dennis Holran (2008)  
 Rhythm And Blues by Lynn Ellis McCutcheon (1971)  
 Goldmine Standard Catalog of Rhythm & Blues Records by Tim Neely (2002)  
 Temptations by Otis Williams with Patricia Romanowski (1988, 2002)

### 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, Artie, Mercury and Polydor.

#### 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



- 798 Betty My Love\* - Woe Is Me\*
- 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 - Yea Yea Baby
- Jesse Powell and The Caddy's** (with Bailey and Spencer)
- 834 Turnpike (instr) - Ain't You Gonna

#### 1958-1959

**The Cadillacs**

(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 Pearls** (feat Carroll)

- 865 Who Ya Gonna Kiss - Naggity Nag

**The Cadillacs** (featuring Spencer, Wade, Bailey and Phillips)

- 866 Romeo - Always My Darling
- 870 Bad Dan McGoon - 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**

(featuring 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).

Earl Carroll and his Cadillacs in later years...



## 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 fr bottom left) (c. 1965)

## THE CLASSIC COASTERS



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

# THE COASTERS



The original Coasters: Carl Gardner, Bobby Nunn, Billy Guy, and kneeling Leon Hughes.

"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 fore-most 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 the 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 play-lets and the group worked with them 1954 - 1963, 1966-1968 and 1971-1972.



Two recent "public-domain" releases; and the classic Coasters in 1958: Billy Guy, Will "Dub" Jones, Carl Gardner, Cornell Gunter, and guitarist Adolph Jacobs.

**Carl Gardner's debut with the Robins:**  
Los Angeles, Febr-March, 1954 *If Teardrops Were Kisses* (CG)  
- Spark 110, released in February, 1955.

**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.

## 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 originals) is still acting 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 Marshak'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 of 1954-55, the original Coasters of 1955-56, and today.

## 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:

**Carl Gardner**, lead (Oct 1955-November 2005) spokesman for 50 years, and coach up to his death. Born in Tyler, Texas April 29, 1928 - died in Port St. Lucie, Florida June 12, 2011

**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.



The Coasters of 1956-57 and of 1958-59.



## 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 Coffeyville, Kansas. He died from an unknown gun shot in Las Vegas in his car February 26, 1990

**Will "Dub" Jones**, bass (up to 1968) former lead with the Cadets, born in Shreveport, Louisiana May 14, 1928; died in Long Beach, California on January 16, 2000.

## Later recording members:

**Earl "Speedo" Carroll**, tenor (mid 61-1979) born in New York November 2, 1937; leaving from and to the Cadillacs. Died in N.Y. November 25, 2012.

**Ronnie Bright**, bass (68-2009) born in New York October 18, 1938; formerly with the Valentines. Died November 26, 2015.

**Jimmy Norman**, baritone (73-97 - absent 79-ca 80) first substituting for Guy, then replacing him from 1973. Born in Nashville August 12, 1937, formerly with Jesse Belvin and later solo artist in New York Died in N.Y. November 8, 2011.

**Thomas "Curly" Palmer**, guitar (1962 - 2011) born in Texas August 15, 1929. Moved to Detroit and later New York.

## 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:

**Carl Gardner Jr.**, tenor, born April 29, 1955 - absent July 2001 - November 2004. In November, 2005 Gardner Jr officially took over from his father as lead singer of the Coasters. In June 2011 **Dennis Andersson** replaced Jr.  
**Bright** (up to Nov, 2009) replaced by "Fast" **Eddie Whitfield**, subbed by **Robert Fowler** from early 2015.  
**Alvin Morse**, baritone (up to September 2008) 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  
**Palmer**, gtr (a true veteran up to June 2011). Joined Carl Jr in July 2011.

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

or: The Ultimate Coasters - Warner SP 9-27604-2 (1986)

### The best collections:

50 Coastin' Classics - Rhino (2CD) R2 71090 (1992) (51 tracks)

or: There's A Riot Goin' On - The Coasters On Atco - Rhino (4CD) RHM2 7740 (2007) (113 tracks) and:

Down Home - Varèse Sarabande 66844 (2007) (12 Date/King tracks)

**For the connoisseur:** The 4CD series on Sequel RSACD 868, 869, 870 and 871 (1997) and: Charlie Brown - MR. R&B CD-102 (2000)

**And Don't Miss** the super great History of RnB sets (see special feature page 54)

**Reading:** "Yakety Yak I Fought Back: My Life With The Coasters" by Carl Gardner with Veta Gardner (AuthorHouse 2007)  
 and: "The Coasters" by Bill Millar (Star Books, UK 1975).



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

### THE COASTERS, vocal group "HI-FIVE"

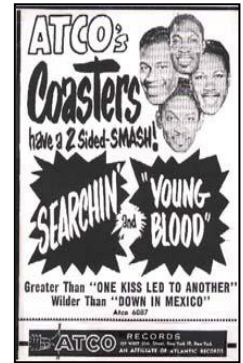
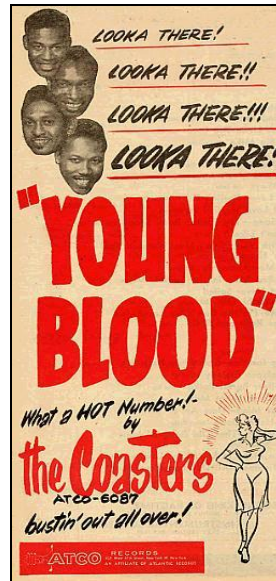
1. Carl Gardner-lead, Billy Guy, Young Jessie, Bobby Nunn and Adolph Jacobs, gtr (featuring Gil Bernal or poss. Plas Johnson, sax) - Hollywood, February 11/15, 1957:  
 57C-107 **Young Blood** - Atco 6087 (#1, charted 17w total)
2. as above with Guy-lead (featuring Mike Stoller, pno) - same session:  
 57C-108 **Searchin'** - Atco 6087 (#1, 21w)
3. Carl Gardner and Billy Guy-dual lead, Cornell Gunter, Will "Dub" Jones, Jacobs (featuring King Curtis, sax) - New York, March 17, 1958:  
 58C-365 **Yakety Yak** - Atco 6116 (#1, 14w)
4. as above with Gardner and Guy-joint leads, Sonny Forriest, gtr (featuring George Barnes and Mickey Baker, gtrs) - New York, July 16, 1959:  
 59C-3607 **Poison Ivy** - Atco 6146 (#1, 16w)
5. 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 (CG)
- 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**

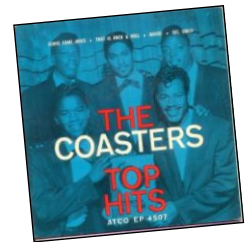


Late 1958: Lester Sill, Jerry Wexler, Ahmet Ertegun, and Leiber-Stoller with the Coasters. Photo right: On TV in 1959 doing "Charlie Brown" with Gunter, Gardner, Guy, and Jones.



### 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)

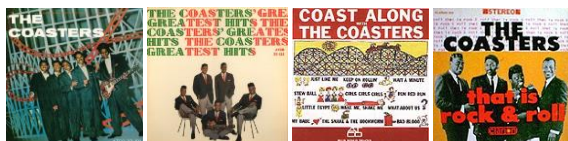


Rhino Handmade 4CD-box; and the longest lasting lineup: Bright, Norman, Palmer, Gardner.

## THE Top Ten Vocal Groups of the Golden '50s



The Coasters in Arizona prob late 1958, Gunter, Jones, Jacobs, Guy, Gardner, and a DJ.



### THE COASTERS – the original US LPs



Atco	The Coasters	
33-101	(featuring 7 Robins Spark tracks and 7 early Coasters; reissued in "simulated stereo" 1960)	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)
(note: the stereo version of this album has several complete different masters than on the mono LP, which also is the case of the Clarion LP next, and for some tracks on 33-371)		
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)
(featuring 10 Gardner- and Norman-led revivals, plus 6 Billy Guy recordings from 1962)		
Atlantic DeLuxe (2-LP compilation)		
AD 2-4003	Young Blood	07/82 (24tr)



The Coasters in 1965 with Gardner, Jones, Carroll, and Guy.



### THE ROBINS' SPARK RECORDS

(the only Robins' recordings featuring Carl Gardner are on Spark)

	Spark (later all on Coasters Atco/Rhino albums)
103 6/54	Riot In Cell Block #9 / Wrap It Up
107 10/54	Loop De Loop Mambo / Framed
110 2/55	If Teardrops Were Kisses / Whadaya Want?
113 4/55	One Kiss / I Love Paris
116 6/55	I Must Be Dreamin' / The Hatchet Man
122 9/55	Smokey Joe's Cafe / Just Like A Fool
6059 10/55	Atco Smokey Joe's Cafe / Just Like A Fool

### THE COASTERS' ORIGINAL SINGLES



	Atco
6064 2/56	Down In Mexico / Turtle Dovin'
6073 7/56	One Kiss Led To Another / Brazil
6087 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 Stoned / Money Honey
6379 9/65	Crazy Baby / Bell Bottom Slacks And A Chinese Kimono (She's My Little Spodee-O)
6407 3/66	She's A Yum Yum / Saturday Night Fish Fry
	Date
1552 3/67	Soul Pad / Down Home Girl
1607 5/68	She Can / Everybody's Woman
1617 7/68	D.W. Washburn / Everybody's Woman
	Turntable
504 1969	Act Right / The World Is Changing
	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 in 1974; and in 2011 - Whitfield, Lance, front Dennis Andersen, and Candelaria.

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

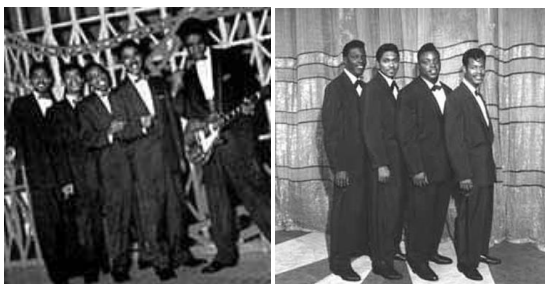
<p><b>1954</b></p> 	<p><b>Riot In Cell Block #9 – The Robins</b> Spark 103 (6/54) Rec in Los Angeles ca March 1954 <i>prob Richard Berry, lead;</i> <i>Gardner, Nunn, Leonard, Billy and</i> <i>Roy Richard, plus poss Chapman.</i> feat Gil Bernal, tenorsax</p> <p><b>Smokey Joe's Cafe – The Robins</b> Spark 122 (9/55) - Atco 6059 (10/55) R&amp;B #10 (1/56) Rec in Los Angeles July 7, 1955 (or 1/55) <i>Carl Gardner, lead;</i> <i>Nunn, Leonard, Billy and</i> <i>Roy Richard, and prob. Chapman.</i> feat Bernal, and Barney , gtr</p>	<p><b>1955</b></p> 
<p><b>1956</b></p> 	<p><b>Down In Mexico</b> Atco 6064 (2/56) R&amp;B #8 (4/56) Rec in Los Angeles January 11, 1956 <i>Carl Gardner, lead</i> <i>Bobby Nunn, Billy Guy, Leon Hughes.</i> feat Gil Bernal, tenorsax; Chico Guererro, congas</p> <p><b>Searchin'</b> Atco 6087 (3/57) R&amp;B #1 (6/57) Rec in Los Angeles February 15, 1957 <i>Billy Guy, lead;</i> <i>Gardner, Nunn, and Young Jessie.</i> feat Mike Stoller, pno</p>	<p><b>1957</b></p> 
<p><b>1958</b></p> 	<p><b>Yakety Yak</b> Atco 6116 (4/58) R&amp;B #1 (6/58) Rec in New York March 17, 1958 <i>Carl Gardner and Billy Guy, dual lead;</i> <i>Cornell Gunter, Will "Dub" Jones.</i> feat King Curtis, tenorsax; Clifton Best, banjo; Alan Hanlon, gtr; Chino Pozo, congas</p> <p><b>Poison Ivy</b> Atco 6146 (8/59) R&amp;B #1 (10/59) Rec in New York July 16, 1959 <i>Carl Gardner and Billy Guy, joint leads;</i> <i>Gunter and Jones.</i> feat George Barnes, Mickey Baker, gtrs; Willie Rodriguez, bongo</p>	<p><b>1959</b></p> 
<p><b>1960</b></p> 	<p><b>Shoppin' For Clothes</b> Atco 6178 (9/60) <i>Cash Box Pop #57 (10/60)</i> Rec in New York July 29, 1960 <i>Billy Guy and Will "Dub" Jones, leads;</i> <i>Gardner and Gunter.</i> feat King Curtis, tensax; Gary Chester, dms</p> <p><b>Little Egypt (Ying-Yang)</b> Atco 6192 (4/61) R&amp;B #16 (6/61) Rec in New York February 8, 1961 <i>Billy Guy, lead;</i> <i>Gardner (intro lead); Gunter and Jones.</i> feat King Curtis, tensax; Barnes and Hanlon gtrs; Stoller, pno</p>	<p><b>1961</b></p> 

# The Coasters – One Record Per Year – Part 2: 1962 - 1969

<p><b>1962</b></p>  <p><b>45-6234</b> Pub., Progressive Trio, BMI Time: 2:40</p> <p><b>THE CLIMB</b> (Leiber-Stoller) <b>THE COASTERS</b> A Leiber-Stoller Production Division of ATLANTIC RECORDS, New York, N.Y.</p>	<p><b>The Climb</b> Atco 6234 (9/62) Rec in New York July 31, 1962 <i>Will "Dub" Jones, lead;</i> <i>Gardner, Guy, Earl Carroll.</i> feat Alan Lorber, dir; Mike Stoller, elpno Billy Butler, Bucky Pizzarelli, and Thomas "Curly" Palmer, gtrs</p> <p><b>The P.T.A.</b> Atco 6251 (1/63) Rec in New York January 11, 1963 <i>Billy Guy, lead; Gardner, Jones, Carroll.</i> feat Teacho Wiltshire, dir; Artie Butler, pno; Buddy Lucas, tensax; Panama Francis, dms Written by Tobias-Evans, prod by Leiber-Stoller</p>	<p><b>1963</b></p>  <p><b>45-6251</b> Pub. Allied, Jazz Time: 2:34</p> <p><b>THE P.T.A.</b> (Tobias - Evans) <b>THE COASTERS</b> Art. &amp; Cond. by TEACHO WILTSHIRE A Leiber-Stoller Production Division of ATLANTIC RECORDS, New York, N.Y.</p>
<p><b>1964</b></p>  <p><b>45-6287</b> Pub., Gregmark, BMI Time: 3:35</p> <p><b>T'AIN'T NOTHIN' TO ME</b> (Potterson) <b>THE COASTERS</b> From "Apollo Saturday Night" Atco LP-23-159 Division of ATLANTIC RECORDS, New York, N.Y.</p>	<p><b>T'Ain't Nothin' To Me</b> Atco 6287 (2/64) Cash Box R&amp;B #20 (3/64) Rec live New York November 16, 1963 from Atco LP "Apollo Saturday Night" (33-159) <i>Billy Guy, lead; Gardner, Jones, Carroll.</i> feat King Curtis, bandleader and dir; Thomas "Curly" Palmer, gtr</p> <p><b>What Is The Secret Of Your Success?</b> Rec live at "Shindig" TV-show - New York February 10, 1965 <i>Billy Guy, lead; Jones, Gardner,</i> <i>Carroll with Thomas Palmer, gtr.</i> Originally recorded in Chicago July 24, 1957 and issued on Atco 6104 (11/57)</p>	<p><b>1965</b></p> 
<p><b>1966</b></p>  <p><b>2-1552</b> ZSP 117951 3:05</p> <p><b>DOWN HOME GIRL</b> J. Leiber - A. Butler <b>THE COASTERS</b> Arranged by Mike Stoller Leiber &amp; Stoller Productions ©DATE- MARCA REG. MADE IN U.S.A.</p>	<p><b>Down Home Girl</b> Date 1552 (3/67) Rec in New York November 18, 1966 <i>Billy Guy, lead; Gardner, Jones, Carroll.</i> feat James Booker and Mike Stoller (arr/dir), keyboards George Devens, vbs</p> <p><b>She Can</b> Date 1607 (5/68) - reissued on King 6389 (4/72) as <b>Talkin' 'Bout A Woman</b> Rec in New York October 30, 1967 <i>Carl Gardner, Billy Guy, Earl Carroll,</i> <i>joint leads, and Will "Dub" Jones.</i> feat Artie Butler, arr/dir/prob keyboard; Pretty Purdie, dms</p>	<p><b>1967</b></p>  <p><b>45 RPM</b> 2-1607 JZSP 132278 2:48</p> <p><b>SHE CAN</b> (Based on "I Am A Woman") J. Leiber - M. Stoller <b>THE COASTERS</b> Arranged by Artie Butler Leiber-Stoller Production</p>
<p><b>1968</b></p>  <p><b>45 RPM</b> 2-1617 JZSP 138113 3:01</p> <p><b>D. W. WASHBURN</b> J. Leiber - M. Stoller <b>THE COASTERS</b> Arranged by Artie Butler A Leiber-Stoller Production ©DATE- MARCA REG. MADE IN U.S.A.</p>	<p><b>D. W. Washburn</b> Date 1617 (7/68) - reissued on King 6385 (1971) and 6404 (1973) Rec in New York October 31, 1967 (edited January 4, 1968) <i>Billy Guy, lead;</i> <i>Gardner (sec lead), Jones, Carroll.</i> feat Mike Stoller, tackpiano; Eric Gale, gtr; Artie Ryerson, banjo</p> <p><b>Love Potion Number Nine</b> King 6385 (11/71) Pop #76 (12/71) Rec in New York February 13-14, 1968 (edited in late 1971) <i>Carl Gardner, lead;</i> <i>Billy Guy and Earl Carroll.</i> feat Taco Meza, flute (dubbed in 1971) - Ronnie Bright, bassvcl(poss dubbed in 1971)</p>	<p><b>(1969)</b></p>  <p><b>45-6385</b> K-13963 Quintet Music, Inc. (BMI) Time: 2:24 A Leiber - Stoller Production</p> <p><b>LOVE POTION NUMBER NINE</b> (Leiber - Stoller) <b>COASTERS</b> Vocal</p>

## PHOTO GALLERY

## The Coasters



The Coasters in 1957, 1958, 1959, and 1960.



1965 (Speedo Carroll second from left); and in 1974 with Carroll, Norman, Palmer, Bright, and Carl Gardner (center front).



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



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



The longest lasting lineup of The Coasters (1980-1997), here in 1988 with Ronnie Bright, Carl Gardner, and Jimmy Norman.



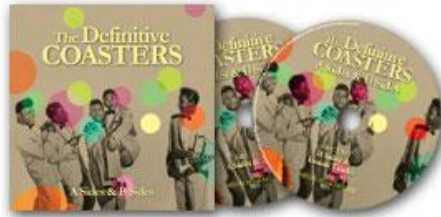
The Coasters in Detroit December, 2001: Bright, Gardner, J.W. Lance, Thomas "Curly" Palmer, and Alvin Morse.



## THE COASTERS

Personal Management  
James Evans  
200 West 57th St. Suite 1404  
New York, N.Y. 10019

## The Definitive COASTERS A Sides & B Sides



### 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



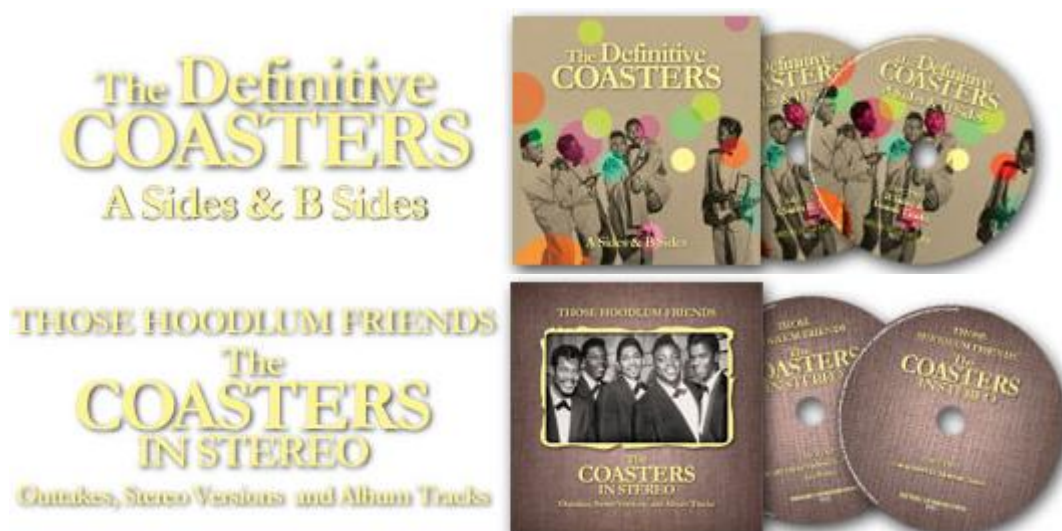
### Those Hoodlum Friends – The Coasters In Stereo Outtakes, Stereo Versions and Album Tracks



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 Röhnisch. 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

2 CD-paks with a total of 4 CDs - History of RnB R001 and R002,

featuring 110 Atco tracks 1954-1962. Released February 5, 2013.

**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 – MrR&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.

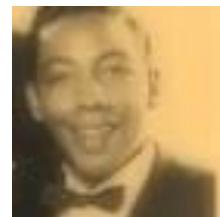
**Singles Discography:** Single 6126 issued 8/58. **Ackn:** James Ritz (not Fritz).



## 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)	Lester, Bobby	Moongloes (lead)
Bailey, James J. R.	Cadillacs (lead/ten)	Lewis, Rudy	Drifters (lead)
Bailey, John "Buddy"	Clovers (lead)	Lucas, Harold	Clovers (bar)
Baldwin, David	Drifters (bar)	Lynch, David	Platters (ten)
Ballard, Hank	Midnighters (lead)	Martinez, Roland	Cadillacs (ten)
Barnes, Prentice	Moongloes (bass)	McElroy, Sollie	Flamingos (lead)
Baughan, David	Drifters (ten/lead)	McNeil, David	Dominoes (bass)
Booth, Henry	Midnighters (ten)	McPhatter, Clyde	Dominoes (lead)
Branker, Rupert	Platters (pno)	"	Drifters (lead)
Brewster, "Bobby" Ray	Cadillacs (lead)	McQuater, Matthew	Clovers (ten)
Bright, Ronnie	Cadillacs (bass)	Merle, Milton	Dominoes (bar)
"	Coasters (bass)	Millinder, Jimmy	Drifters (bar)
Brooks, Charles	Cadillacs (bar)	Mitchell, Billy	Clovers (lead)
Brown, Bill	Dominoes (bass)	Moore, Jimmy	"5" Royales (ten/lead)
Carey, Jake	Flamingos (bass)	Moore, Johnny	Drifters (lead)
Carey, Zeke	Flamingos (ten)	Mumford, Gene	Dominoes (lead)
Carter, Johnny	Flamingos (lead/ten)	Nelson, Nate	Flamingos (lead)
Carroll, Earl	Cadillacs (lead)	"	Platters (ten)
"	Coasters (ten)	Norman, Jimmy	Coasters (bar)
Carter, Obediah	"5" Royales (bar)	Nunn, Bobby	Coasters (bass)
Clark, James "Poppa"	Cadillacs (ten)	Oliver, Jimmy	Drifters (gtr)
Coggins, Danny	Moongloes (ten)	Palmer, Thomas "Curly"	Coasters (gtr)
Davis, Billy "Abdul Samad"	Drifters (gtr)	Pauling, Lowman	"5" Royales (gtr/vcl)
Davis, J. C. Billy	Midnighters (gtr)	Pearson, Gene	Drifters (bar)
Davis, Kirk	Cadillacs (bar)	Phillips, Bobby	Cadillacs (bass)
Dawn, Sandra	Platters (sopr)	Pinkney, Bill	Drifters (bass)
Drake, Laverne	Cadillacs (ten)	Porter, Arthur	Midnighters (gtr)
Evans, Tommy	Drifters (bass)	Powell, Monroe	Dominoes (lead)
Ferbie, Willie	Drifters (bass)	"	Platters (lead)
Fuqua, Harvey	Moongloes (lead/bar)	Reed, Herb	Platters (bass)
Gardner, Carl	Coasters (lead)	Robi, Paul	Platters (bar)
Givens, Cliff	Dominoes (bass)	Smith, Lawson	Midnighters (bar)
Graves, Alexander "Pete"	Moongloes (ten)	Spencer, Bobby	Cadillacs (lead/ten)
Grayson, Milton	Dominoes (ten)	Sutton, Charles	Midnighters (ten/lead)
Green, Cal	Midnighters (gtr)	Tanner, Gene	"5" Royales (lead/ten)
Green, Dock	Drifters (ten)	Tanner, Johnny	"5" Royales (lead)
Gunter, Cornell	Coasters (ten)	Taylor, Zola	Platters (sopr)
Guy, Billy	Coasters (lead/bar)	Terry, Johnny	Drifters (bass)
Harris, Bill	Clovers (gtr)	Thomas, Charlie	Drifters (lead/ten)
Hendricks, Bobby	Drifters (lead)	Thrasher, Andrew	Drifters (bar)
Hobbs, Elsbeary	Drifters (bass)	Thrasher, Gerhart	Drifters (ten)
Hodge, Alex	Platters (bar)	Thrasher, Norman	Midnighters (bass)
Hodge, Gaynell	Platters (ten)	Tucker, Alonzo	Midnighters (gtr)
Hughes, Charlie	Drifters (ten)	Turner, Sonny	Platters (lead)
Hughes, Leon	Coasters (ten)	Van Loan, James	Dominoes (ten)
Hunt, Tommy	Flamingos (ten)	Wade, Earl	Cadillacs (ten/lead)
Jacobs, Adolph	Coasters (gtr)	Ward, Billy	Dominoes (pno)
Jeffries, Otto	"5" Royales (bass)	White, Charlie	Dominoes (bar)
Johnson, Billy	Moongloes (gtr)	"	Clovers (lead)
Johnson, James	Drifters (bass)	Williams, Johnny Lee	Drifters (lead)
Johnson, Terry	Flamingos (gtr/ten)	Wilson, Paul	Flamingos (bar)
Jones, Will "Dub"	Coasters (bass)	Williams, Tony	Platters (lead)
Kimber, Reggie	Drifters (gtr)	Willingham, Gus	Cadillacs (bar)
King, Ben E.	Drifters (lead)	Wilson, Jackie	Dominoes (lead)
Lamont, Joe	Dominoes (bar)	Winley, Harold "Jerome"	Clovers (bass)



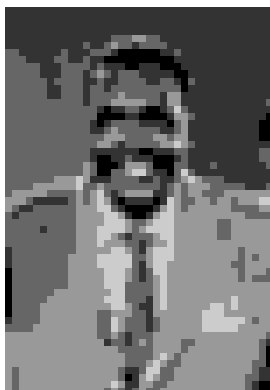
Clyde McPhatter (Dominoes and Drifters), John "Buddy" Bailey (Clovers), Johnny Tanner ("5" Royales), Hank Ballard (Midnighters). Top right: Gene Mumford (Dominoes), Lowman Pauling, and Gene Tanner ("5" Royales), Johnny Carter (Flamingos, later joined the Dells). Top next page: Charlie White (Dominoes and Clovers), and Sonny Turner (Platters).



## THE Top Ten Vocal Groups of the Golden '50s



### 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

Picked from Bar Family's "Street Corner Symphonies" - CD-series compiled by Bill Dahl 2012.

1953



**Baby It's You – The Spaniels**



Vee-Jay 101/Chance 1141 R&B #10 9/53  
Rec in Chicago May 4, 1953  
James "Pookie" Hudson, lead;  
Gerald Gregory, bass

**Boot 'Em Up – The Du Droppers**

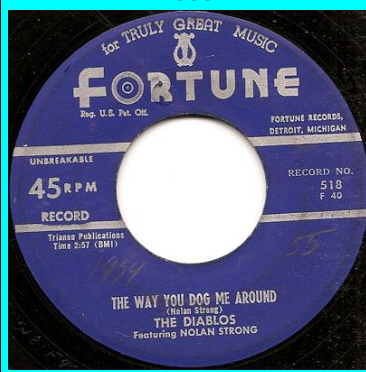
Groove 0046 (9/54)  
Rec in New York August 11, 1954  
Caleb Ginyard, lead; Bob Kornegay, bass



1954



1955



**The Way You Dog Me Around – The Diablos featuring Nolan Strong**



Fortune 518 (10/55) R&B #12 1/56  
Rec in Detroit 1955  
Nolan Strong, lead; George Scott, bass

**Bacon Fat – Andre Williams (Mr. Rhythm) and His New Group**  
Fortune 831 (11/56), Epic 9196 (12/56)  
R&B #9 2/57 Rec in Detroit 1956  
Andre Williams, lead



1956



1956



**Rubber Biscuit – The Chips**

Josie 803 (1956)  
Rec in New York August 3, 1956  
Charles Johnson, lead; Paul Fulton, bass

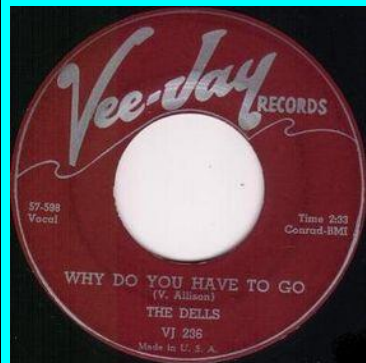
**Baby Oh Baby – The Shells**

Johnson 104 (summer 1957)  
Rec in New York  
Little Nate Bouknight, lead

1957



1957



**Why Do You Have To Go – The Dells**

Vee-Jay 236 (2/57)  
Rec in Chicago January 11, 1957  
Johnny Funchess, lead; with Verne Allison and Mickey McGill, tenors; Marvin Junior, baritone; and Chuck Barksdale, bass

**Deserie – The Charts**

Everlast 5001 (5/57)  
Billboard's Pop Charts in July and October  
Rec in New York 1957  
Joe Grier, lead

1957



## 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.



**Could This Be Magic – The Dubs**  
Gone 5011 (9/57) Billboard Pop #23 in Nov  
Rec in New York August 1957  
Richard Blandon, 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 Cortez" Clowney, ten and pno; Mickey  
Francis, bar; Ronnie Bright, bass

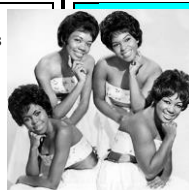


**Four O'Clock In The Morning  
– Stanley Mitchell and The Tornadoes**



Chess 1649 (early 1957)  
Recorded in Chicago 1956  
Stanley Mitchell, lead; William Weatherspoon,  
ten; Charles Sutton, bar; Ben Knight, bass  
Alonzo Tucker, road manager

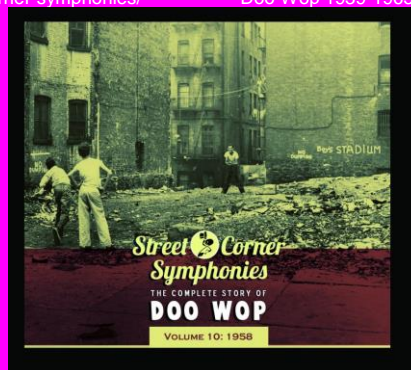
**I Met Him On A Sunday- The Shirelles**  
Tiara 6112 (2/58) / Decca 30688 (Pop #49)  
Rec in New York early 1958  
Shirley Owens (Alston-Reeves, lead; Addie  
Harris (McPherson), Doris Coley (Kenner-  
Jackson), Beverly Lee



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



Doo-Wop 1939-1963



Oldies but goodies DooWop El Sillon De Nene: [Great DooWop Show \(1 Hour Live\)](#)

## 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 "King, 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 "Hoppy" Jones (later replaced by Cliff Givens and soon Herb Kenny-Bill's twin brother), and Deek 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 Riddick), **Willie Johnson** (substituted by Cliff Givens), **Orlandus 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)



**Cats and Fiddle** formed 1937. Recording from 1939. Famous Hit: I Miss You So (1940). Hi Profiles: **Austin Powell**, Jimmy Henderson (later Tiny Grimes).

**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 Willie Wright and guitarist Bill Johnson (sixth member)

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

## Group Harmony - THE REAL ROOTS 1945-1950

### THE BROWN DOTS (New York) and THE FOUR TUNES (New York)



**Brown Dots** formed 1944 by Ivory "Deek" Watson (who'd left The Ink Spots to rival with his old employers); Recording from 1945: Famous Hit: Sentimental Reasons (1945). Hi Profiles: Joe King (soon replaced by Jimmie Nabbie), Jimmy Gordon, and Pat Best.

**Four Tunes** formed 1946; Recording from 1947: Famous Hits: I Want To Be Loved with Savanna Churchill as The Sentimentalists (1947), Careless Love (1947), Marie (1953); Hi Profiles: **Jimmie Nabbie**, Jimmy Gordon, Pat Best (all leaving Deek Watson's Brown Dots), and later Danny Owens.

### THE SOUL STIRRERS (Trinity, Texas) and THE PILGRIM TRAVELERS (Houston, Texas)



**Soul Stirrers** originally formed in 1929 as New Pleasant Green Gospel Singers by Walter Lee La Beaux; Became The Soul Stirrers in 1936: First commercial recording in 1948. Famous Hit: By And By (1950); Hi Profiles: Robinson R. H. Harris (lead, replaced by Hall Foster in 1948 and by Sam Cook(e) in 1950, who was replaced by Johnnie Taylor in 1957), R.B. Robinson (from the Highway QCs).

**Pilgrim Travelers** formed in 1936, were joined by J.W. Alexander (later Cooke's business partner) in Los Angeles in 1947. Famous Hit: Jesus Met The Woman At The Well (1950). Hi Profiles: Kyo Turner, Keith Barnes, later Jessie Whitaker and Lou Rawls.

### THE RAVENS (New York)



Formed 1946 and recording from that year. Famous Hits: Write Me A Letter (1948), Ol' Man River (1948), Ricky's Blues (1949), Rock Me All Night Long (1952); Hi Profiles: **Jimmy Ricks** (bass lead, substituted by Tommy Evans in 1954 and replacing him in 1956), Ollie Jones - who later formed The Blenders and The Cues (he was soon replaced by **Maithe 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).

### THE ORIOLES (Baltimore, Maryland)



Formed as The Vibra-Naires 1947; Recording from 1948: Famous Hits: It's Too Soon To Know (1948), Forgive And Forget (1949), Tell Me So (1949); Baby Please Don't Go (1952), Crying In The Chapel (1953); Hi Profiles: **Sonny Til** (tenor lead), Alexander Sharp, George Nelson (replaced by Gregory Carroll), Johnny Reed, Tommy Gaither (replaced by Ralph Williams, gtr/vcl). The group's early pianist (and vcl) was Charlie Harris.

### THE ROBINS (Los Angeles)



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 Nunn** (bass lead), later Grady Chapman (tenor lead) and in 1954-55 **Carl Gardner** (lead).

### THE (5) LARKS (Durham, North Carolina) and THE SWALLOWS (Baltimore, Maryland)



**Larks** formed as The Jubilators in the late 1940s (a sextet) and recorded under several "jubilee" names. First record as The 5 Larks in 1950: Famous Hits: My Heart Cries For You (1950), as **The Larks**: My Reverie (1951), Eyesight To The Blind (Apollo in 1951). Hi Profiles: **Therman Ruth** bottom right, **Eugene Mumford** top center, Raymond "Pee Wee" Barnes, and **David McNeil** (bass-bottom left).

**Swallows** formed as The Oakateers in Baltimore, Maryland in 1946. Became The Swallows when turning a quintet in 1948. Famous Hits: Will You Be Mine (1951), It Ain't The Meat (1951), Beside You (1952). Hi Profiles: Earl Hurley, Herman "Junior" Denby, lead; and Eddie Rich.

## THE TOP TEN VOCAL GROUPS

## Sources



**Some great collector's gems:**  
 Varèse Sarabande: The Coasters - Down Home (2007), Varèse Sarabande - The Essential Masters: Billy Ward & His Dominoes, and Jackie Wilson with... (2004), Sequel (with bonus tracks): The Clovers, and The Clovers Dance Party (1997), Ace: The "5" Royales - It's Hard But It's Fair (2005), and Jasmine 2CD: The Drifters - All The Singles 1953-1958 plus bonus tracks (2009).

## Essential CDs



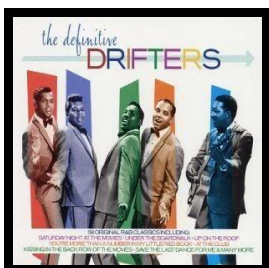
Rhino: Sixty Minute Men - The Best of Billy Ward & his Dominoes (1993)  
 Rhino: The Very Best of The Clovers (1998)



Rhino 2CD: Monkey Hips and Rice - The "5" Royales Anthology (1995)  
 Rhino: Sexy Ways - The Best of Hank Ballard & The Midnighters (1993)



Rhino: The Best of The Flamingos (1990)  
 Chess/MCA: The Moonglows - Their Greatest Hits (1997)



Warner 2CD: The Definitive Drifters (2003)  
 Rhino: Enchanted - The Best of The Platters (1993)



Rhino: The Best of The Cadillacs (1990)  
 Rhino: The Very Best of The Coasters (1994)



The list of **sources** is by no means a full one. Several other books, magazines, and album covers and inlays have been studied since 1960, but the below is a list of the main sources used for this work.

**Books**

The Billboard Book of American Singing Groups - A History 1940 - 1990 by Jay Warner (1992)  
 by far the **best** - reprinted as The DaCapo Book of American Singing Groups (2000);

- updated in 2006 as American Singing Groups: A History from 1940 to Today

Disco-File by Fernando L. Gonzales (1974, 1977, 2008)

Group Harmony - Echoes of the Rhythm and Blues Era by Todd R. Baptista (2007)

Group Harmony - Behind the Rhythm and the Blues by Todd R. Baptista (1998)

They All Sang On The Corner by Philip Groia (1973)

Setting the Record Straight by Anthony P. Musso - Vol 1 (2007) and Vol 2 (2009)

First Pressings - The History of Rhythm & Blues, ten volumes 1950-1959 by Galen Gart (1991-2002)

The R&B Book - A Disco-History of Rhythm & Blues by Big Al Pavlow (1983, 2009)

L.A. Vocal Groups 1945-1965 by Steve Propes and Galen Gart (2001)

Doo Wop - The Chicago Scene by Robert Pruter (1996)

Those Oldies But Goodies - A Guide to 50's Record Collecting by Steve Propes (1973)

A Discography of Rhythm & Blues and Rock 'N Roll Vocal Groups 1945 to 1965

by Robert D. Ferlingere (1976, 2002)

Encyclopedia of Rhythm & Blues and Doo-Wop Vocal Groups by Mitch Rosalsky (2002)

Doo-Wop - The Forgotten third of Rock 'n Roll by Anthony J. Gribin, Matthew M. Schiff (1992)

The Ultimate Vocal Group Harmony Reference Guide (Vol 1 and 2) by Dennis Holran (2008)

Goldmine Standard Catalog of Rhythm & Blues Records by Tim Neely (2002)

The Real Rhythm and Blues by Hugh Gregory (1998)

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

Save the Last Dance for Me - The Musical Legacy of The Drifters by Tony Allen with Faye Treadwell (1993, 2005)

The Drifters by Bill Millar (1971)

Yakety Yak I Fought Back - My Life with The Coasters by Veta Gardner with Carl Gardner (2007)

The Coasters by Bill Millar (1975)

All Music Guide to Soul, editor Stephen Thomas Erlewin with Bruce Eder et al. (2003)

The Billboard Book of Top 40 R&B and Hip-Hop Hits by Joel Whitburn (2006)

Top R&B Singles 1942-1988 by Joel Whitburn (1988)

The Rolling Stone Illustrated History of Rock & Roll, editor Jim Miller with articles by Barry Hansen et al. (1976, 1980)

The R&B Indies, volumes 1-4 (2005-2007) by Bob McGrath

The Soul Discography, Volumes 1-3 by Bob McGrath (2010-2013)

The Complete Book of Doo-Wop by Anthony J. Gribin and Matthew M. Schiff (2000)

Old School - 77 years of Southern California R&B & Vocal Group Harmony Records by Stephen Propes (2012)

**Web sites**

Unca Marv's R&B Page by Marvin Goldberg at <http://www.uncamarvy.com/>

Pelican Studio presents 50's to 60's Vocal Groups at <http://www.eonet.net.jp/~pelican-studio/>

The Vocal Group Harmony Web Site by Tony at <http://www.vocalgroupharmony.com/index.htm>

Doo-Wop Biography, Groups & Discography at <http://doo-wop.blogspot.org/>

Doo Wop Nation at <http://home.earthlink.net/~jaymar41/doo-wopTP.html>

The Doo Wop Café with articles by Billy Vera at <http://www.doo-wopcafe.com/HarlemGroups.html>

Harmony Haven - Harmony Train by Nikki Gustafson & Jim Dunn at <http://www.harmonytrain.com/main.htm>

**Periodicals**

Articles in various editions of the diseased magazines Record Exchanger, Bim Bam Boom, Whiskey

Women And, and Yesterday's Memories plus all editions of Blues & Rhythm (alive and well).

**Album notes**

Gary Kramer on Atco The Coasters (1957)

Bill Dahl in Varèse Sarabande: Billy Ward & His Dominoes featuring Clyde McPhatter (2004)

Peter A. Grendysa in Rhino: Sixty Minute Men - The Best of Billy Ward & his Dominoes (1993)

Nick Tosches in Rhino: Down In The Alley - The Best of The Clovers (1991)

Steve Kolanjian in United Artists: Love Potion No 9 - The Best of The Clovers (1991)

Billy Vera in Rhino: The Very Best of The Clovers (1998)

Ed Ward in Rhino: Monkey Hips and Rice - The "5" Royales Anthology (1995)

John Ridley, Nick Duckett, Stuart Tiogett, and Bob McGrath in HistoryofSoul: The Definitive "5" Royales (6CD box 2014)

Tony Rounce in Ace: The "5" Royales - It's Hard But It's Fair (2005) and Catch That Teardrop (2007)

Gordon Skadberg in Ace: The Royals - The Federal Years (2005)

Greg Druist in Rhino: Sexy Ways - The Best of Hank Ballard & The Midnighters (1993)

Donn Fileti in Rhino: The Best of The Flamingos (1990)

Billy Vera in Vee-Jay: The Flamingos Meet The Moonglows On the Dusty Road of Hits (1993)

Bob Fisher in Jasmine: Most Of All - The Moonglows (2010)

Steve Propes in Rhino: The Very Best of The Drifters (1993)

Peter Doggett in Warner: The Definitive Drifters (2003)

Billy Vera in Rhino: The Drifters - The Definitive Soul Collection (2006)

Peter Grendysa in Atlantic: Let The Boogie Woogie Roll - The Drifters Greatest Hits 1953-1958 (1988)

Colin Escott in Atlantic: All Time Greatest Hits & More - The Drifters 1959-1965 (1988)

Peter Burns in Jasmine: The Drifters All The Singles 1953-1958 (2009)

James Austin in Rhino: Enchanted - The Best of The Platters (1993)

Victor Pearl in Collectables: The Platters - The Complete King Recordings (2004)

Bill Dahl in Bear Family: The Platters Rock (2017)

John Neilson in Rhino: The Best of The Cadillacs (1990)

Claus Röhnisch in Varèse Sarabande: The Coasters Down Home (2007)

Bob Hyde, Billy Vera, et al. in Rhino: The Doo Wop Box (1993), II (1996), and III (2000)

Bill Dahl in Street Corner Symphonies - The Complete Story of Doo Wop Volumes 1-15 (2012-2013)

**CD Album Covers backpage - The Best for Collectors**

Collectables: The Very Best of Billy Ward & The Dominoes (2002) - Victor Pearl

Acrobat 3CD: The Dominoes Collection 1951-59 (2013) - Marv Goldberg

Jasmine 2CD: The Feelin' Is Good - The Clovers (2011) - Bob Fisher

West Side: All Right! - The "5" Royales, The Apollo Recordings (1999)

- J. Taylor Doggett, Bob Fisher, Tony Rounce

Rockbeat 5CD: Soul and Swagger - The Complete "5" Royales (2014)

- James Austin, Bill Dahl

Bear Family 5CD: Nothing But Good - Hank Ballard and The Midnighters (2009) - Bill Dahl

Jasmine 2CD: Come On And Get It - Hank Ballard and The Midnighters (2010) - Bob Fisher

Chess/MCA 2CD: Blue Velvet - The Moonglows, The Ultimate Collection (1993)

- Peter Grendysa

Acrobat 2CD: The Moonglows - The Complete Singles As & Bs (2017) - Paul Watts

Jasmine 2CD: Dream of a Lifetime 1953-1959 - The Flamingos (2010) - Bob Fisher

Acrobat 3CD: The Flamingos Collection 1953-61 (2017) - Paul Watts

Rhino 3CD: Rockin' & Driftin' - The Drifters Box (1996) - Billy Vera, Peter Grendysa

Acrobat 3CD: The Complete Releases 1953-62 - The Drifters (2015) - Paul Watts

Bear Family 4CD: The Complete Josie Sessions - The Cadillacs (1995)

- Pete Grendysa, Bob Hyde

Bear Family 9CD: Four Platters and One Lovely Dish (1994) - Pete Grendysa, Richard Weize

Mercury 2CD: The Magic Touch - The Platters Anthology (1991) - Harry Weinger

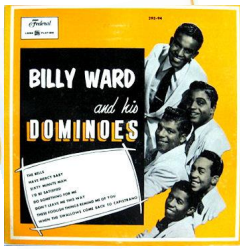
Rhino 4CD: There's A Riot Goin' On - The Coasters On Atco (2007) - James Ritz

Rhino 2CD: 50 Coastin' Classics - The Coasters (1992) - Randy Poe

Acrobat 2CD: The Coasters The Complete Singles (2016) - Paul Watts

## THE TOP TEN VOCAL GROUPS

## Their Very First LPs



### THE DOMINOES

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



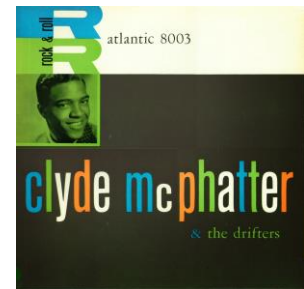
### THE MOONGLOWS

Look! It's The Moonglows - Chess 1430 (1958)



### THE CLOVERS

The Clovers (Rock and Roll) - Atlantic 1248 (1956)  
reissued as The Clovers - Atlantic 8009 (1957) 2<sup>nd</sup> pressing



### THE DRIFTERS

Rock & Roll: Clyde McPhatter & the Drifters  
- Atlantic 8003 (1956)



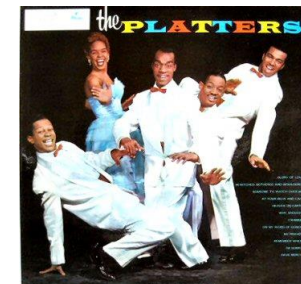
### THE "5" ROYALES

The Rockin' 5 Royales - Apollo 488 (1956)  
Dedicated To You - King 580 (1957)



### THE PLATTERS

The Platters - Federal 549 (1956)  
The Platters - Mercury 20146 (1956)



### THE MIDNIGHTERS

Sing Their Hits - Federal 295-90 (10inch) (1954)  
reissued as Their Greatest Hits Federal 541 (1957)



### THE CADILLACS

The Fabulous Cadillacs - Jubilee 1045 (1957)



### THE FLAMINGOS

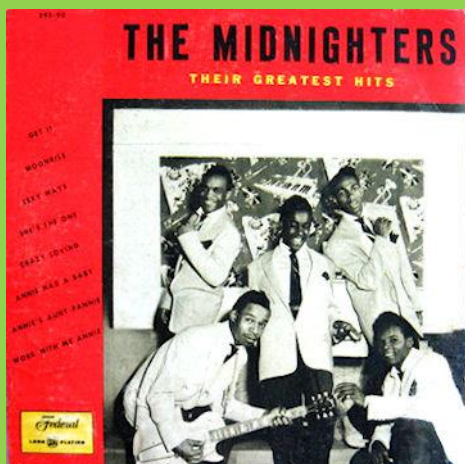
The Flamingos - Chess 1433 (1959)



### THE COASTERS

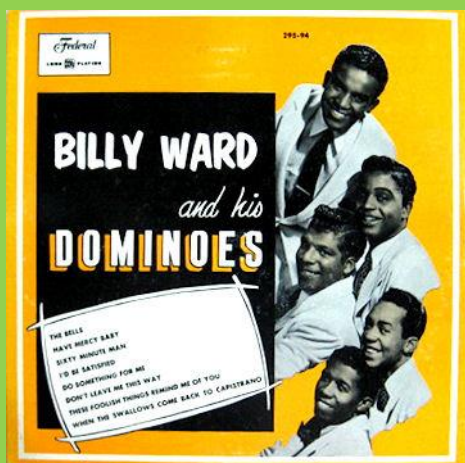
The Coasters - Atco 101 (1957)

# The Top Ten Vocal Groups — the tracks (and singles) on their very first LPs - pt. 1



**Federal 295-90 - The Midnighters: 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	"		
Annie's Aunt Fannie	(12200)	Sept 23, 1954	Hollywood
Crazy Loving (Stay With Me)	"		



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

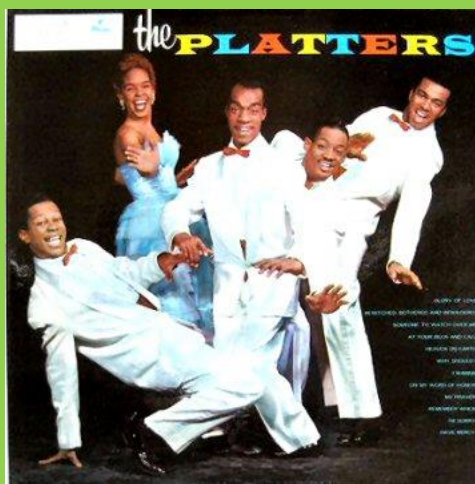
Sixty Minute Man	(12022)	Dec 30, 1950	New York
Do Something For Me	(12001)	Nov 14, 1950	
Have Mercy Baby	(12068)	Jan 28, 1952	Cincinnati
Don't Leave Me This Way	(12129)	May 14, 1951	New York
//			
The Bells	(12114)	Sep 17, 1952	Cincinnati
I'd Be Satisfied	(12105)	"	
These Foolish Things Remind Me Of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



**Atlantic 1248 - The Clovers (Rock 'n' Roll) [1956]**

LP reissued as 8009 (1957 - same cover)

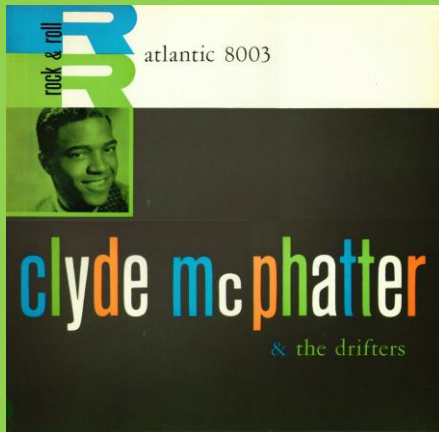
Love Love Love	(1094)	March 29, 1956	New York
Lovely Dovey	(1022)	Sept 24, 1953	
Yes It's You	(989)	Aug 7, 1952	
Ting-A- Ling	(969)	March 18, 1952	
I Played the Fool	(977)	"	
Hey Miss Fanny	(977)	Aug 7, 1952	
Don't You Know I Love You	(934)	Febr 22, 1951	
//			
Middle of the Night	(963)	Dec 19, 1951	
Blue Velvet	(1052)	Dec 16, 1954	
Little Mama	(1022)	Sept 24, 1953	
Crawl in	(989)	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	(70893)	April 17, 1956	New York
Why Should I?	April 26, 1955	Hollywood	
Remember When (first version)	"		
Bewitched, Bothered And Bewildered	April 18, 1956	New York	
I Wanna	(71093)	April 26, 1955	Hollywood
I'm Sorry	(71032)	April 17, 1956	New York
//			
Someone To Watch Over Me	April 17, 1956		
Have Mercy	April 18, 1956		
At Your Beck And Call	April 17, 1956		
On My Word Of Honor	(71011)	April 28, 1956	
Heaven On Earth	April 28, 1956		
Glory Of Love	"		

# The Top Ten Vocal Groups — the tracks (and singles) on their very first LPs - pt. 2



**Atlantic 8003 – Rock & Roll [1956 or 3/1957]**  
Clyde McPhatter & The Drifters (CMP = Clyde solo)

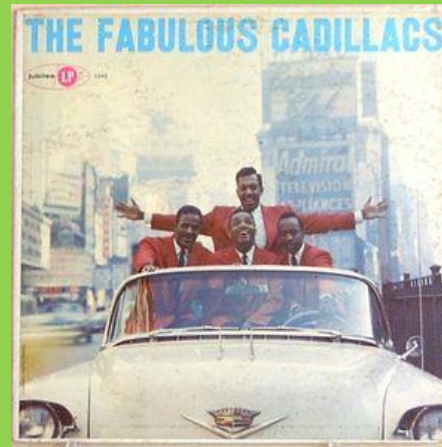
Without Love			
(There Is Nothing) CMP	(1117)	Oct 10, 1956	New York
Someday You'll Want Me To Want You	(1043)	March 14, 1954	
Treasure Of Love CMP	(1082)	March 4, 1956	
I'm Not Worthy Of You CMP	(1081)	Aug 25, 1955	
Bells Of St. Mary's	(1048)	Febr 4, 1954	
White Christmas			
I Make Believe CMP	(1117)	March 4, 1956	
//			
Seven Days CMP	(1081)	August 25, 1955	
Warm Your Heart	(1029)	Nov 12, 1953	
Money Honey	(1008)	Aug 9, 1953	
What'cha Gonna Do	(1055)	Febr 4, 1954	
Such A Night	(1019)	Nov 12, 1953	
Honey Love	(1029)	Febr 4, 1954	
Thirty Days CMP	(1106)	July 26, 1956	



**Atlantic 8022 - Rockin' and Driftin' [10/58]**  
(not featuring Clyde)

\* = originally recorded in New York April 21, 1955 with "dubs" in L.A.

Moonlight Bay	(1187)	April 28, 1958	New York
Ruby Baby	(1089)	Sep 19, 1955	Los Angeles
Drip Drop	(1187)	April 28, 1958	New York
I Gotta Get Myself a Woman	(1101)	June 21, 1956	
Fools Fall in Love	(1123)	Nov 8, 1956	
Hypnotized	(1141)	April 16, 1957	
Yodee Yakee	(1161)	"	
//			
I Know	(1161)	"	
Soldier of Fortune	(1101)	June 21, 1956	
Drifting Away From You *	(1141)	Sep 19, 1955	Los Angeles
Your Promise to Be Mine	(1089)	"	
It Was A Tear	(1123)	Nov 8, 1956	
Adorable	(1078)	Sep 19, 1955	Los Angeles
Steamboat *	(1078)	"	



**Jubilee JLP-1045 - The Fabulous Cadillacs [1957]**  
(The Cadillacs' singles were issued on the sub-label Josie)  
All tracks feature Earl Carroll (although he is not shown on the sleeve).

Zoom	(792)	March 22, 1956	New York
(also rec Sept 28, 1955 and ca Febr 1956)			
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	

//			
Speedoo	(785)	Sept 28, 1955	
Down The Road	(778)	spring 1955	
You Are (also rec March 22, 1956)	(792)	Sept 28, 1955	
The Girl I Love	(805)	May 16, 1956	
No Chance	(773)	autumn 1954	
Sugar - Sugar	(812)	Jan 8, 1957	



**Apollo LP-488 - The Rockin' 5 Royales:**  
Real Rhythm and Blues [prob late 1956]

(Johnny Tanner, Jimmy Moore, Otto Jefferies, Obadiah Carter, and Lowman Pauling – from Dec 16, 1953 Gene Tanner replaces Jefferies)

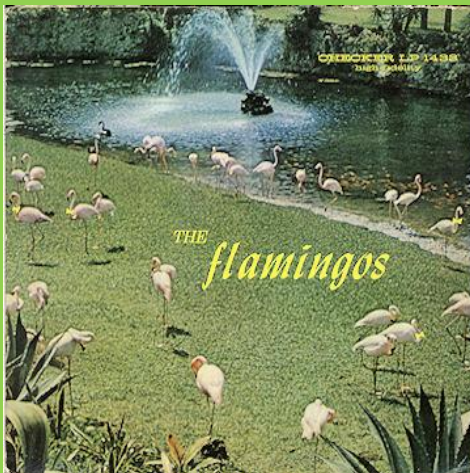
Baby Don't Do It	(443)	Oct 30, 1952	New York
Too Much Lovin'	(448)	Nov 3, 1952	
Baby Take All Of Me	(443)	Oct 30, 1952	
Courage To Love	(441)	Aug 5, 1952	
You Know I Know	(441)	"	
Help Me Somebody	(448)	Nov 3, 1952	
//			
What's That	(458)	July 24, 1953	
Laundermat Blues	(448)	Oct 30, 1952	
All Righty	(449)	July 24, 1953	
I Want To Thank You	(449)	"	
Put Something In It (With All Your Heart)	(467)	April 1, 1954	
I Like It Like That	(454)	Dec 16, 1953	

# 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]**  
 "The Ten Commandments Of Love" was overdubbed and mastered in August 1958.

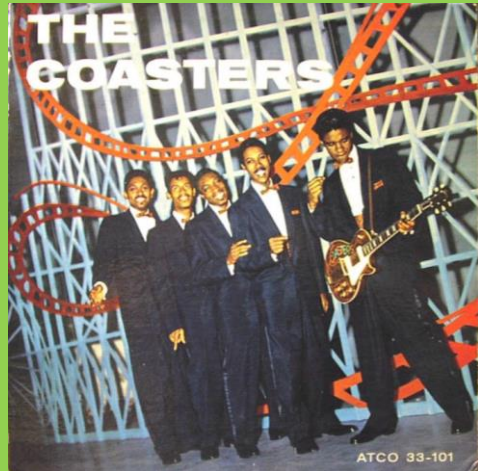
Love Is A River	(1717) Dec 5 or 16, 1956	Chicago
Blue Velvet	(EP 5122)	"
This Love	(1701 – in ca 1960)	ca June 1958
When I'm With You	(1629)	July 1956
I'll (Never- sic) Stop Wanting You	(1717) Dec 5 or 16, 1956	
Don't Say Goodbye	(1651)	"
//		
The Ten Commandments Of Love	(1705) Dec 2, 1957	
Kiss Me Baby	July 1956	
Penny Arcade	(EP 5123)	"
Mean Old Blues	(1705) Dec 2, 1957	
Sweeter Than Words	(1701 – in ca 1960)	ca June 1958
Cold Feet ( <i>Fuqua lead</i> )	unknown (prob 1956/58)	



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

The LP has catalogue number in Chess' sequence, but was re-released as Checker LPS-3005 in "electronic stereo" in 1967. Checker bought the Parrot masters in 1956 and 1959.

Dream Of A Lifetime	(915) July 1956	Chicago
(also recorded in July 1954 for Parrot)		
Ko Ko Mo (recorded for Parrot)	(Parrot 812)	November 1954
Whispering Stars	(915) June 15, 1955	
On My Merry Way (recorded for Parrot)	(Parrot 808)	July 1954
The Vow	(846) July 1956	
Would I Be Crying	(853) August 1956	
//		
A Kiss From Your Lips	(837) ca February 1956	
Shilly Dilly	(846) August 1956	
Stolen Love	July 1956	
Chickie Um Bah	ca October 1955	
Nobody's Love	July 1956	
Chick-A-Boom (That's My Baby)	(815) March 21, 1955	



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

Tracks marked \* are by The Robins (featuring Carl Gardner and Bobby Nunn, recorded for Spark and bought by Atco in 1955).

Searchin'	Los Angeles	(6087) Febr 15, 1957
One Kiss Led To Another	(6073) Jan 11, 1956	
Brazil	(6073)	"
Turtle Dovin'	(6064)	"
Smokey Joe's Café *	(S 122/A 6059) July 7, 1955	
Wrap It Up *	(S 103) ca March/April 1954	
Riot in Cell Block Number Nine *	(S 103)	"
//		
Young Blood	(6087) Febr 15, 1957	
Loop De Loop Mambo	(S 107) ca August 1954	
One Kiss *	(S 113)	"
I Must Be Dreamin' *	(S 116)	"
Lola	Febr 12, 1957	
Framed *	(S 107) ca August 1954	
Down in Mexico	(6064) Jan 11, 1956	



**Atco 33-111 – The Coasters' Greatest Hits [October 1959]**

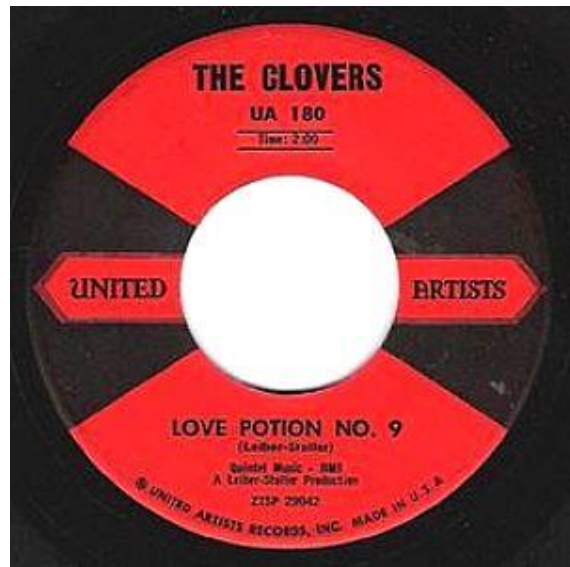
Tracks marked -1 (L.A.) also on 33-101.

Poison Ivy	New York	(6146) July 16, 1959
Along Came Jones	(6141) March 26, 1959	
Down In Mexico	-1 (L.A.)	
The Shadow Knows	(6126) August 8, 1958	
I'm A Hog For You	(6146) " -edited July 17, 1959	
Charlie Brown	(6132) December 11, 1958	
//		
Yakety Yak	(6116) March 17, 1958	
Zing! Went The Strings Of My Heart	(6116)	"
That Is Rock & Roll	(6141) March 26, 1959	
Young Blood	-1 (L.A.)	
Sweet Georgia Brown	Los Angeles (6104) Febr 12, 1957	
Searchin'	-1 (L.A.)	

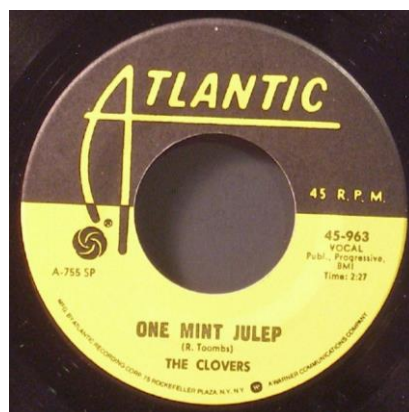
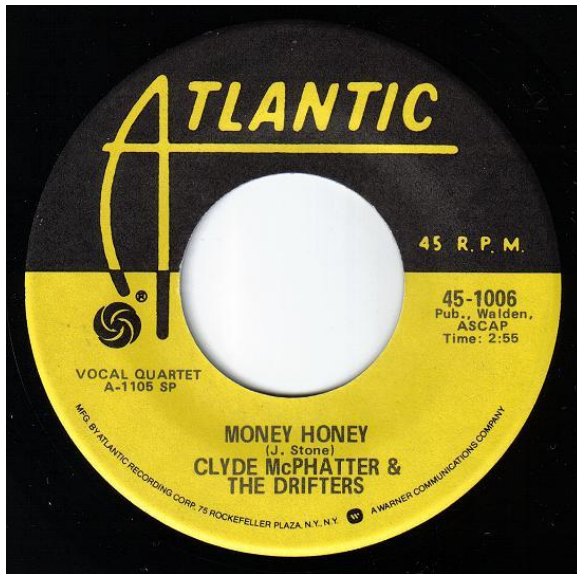
## THE TOP TEN VOCAL GROUPS – Encore of Photo Gallery



## TOP VOCAL GROUPS – THEIR CLASSIC HITS – PART I



## TOP VOCAL GROUPS – THEIR CLASSIC HITS – PART II



## Eight Great Groups and their Very First Singles

For The Flamingos and The Moonglows – see "The True R&B Pioneers".

### THE DOMINOES



Formed in New York City 1950 (imaged 1951)

Billy Ward, Bill Brown, Clyde McPhatter, Charlie White, Joe Lamont.  
James Van Loan and David McNeil replaced White and Brown from early 1952.  
Johnny Oliver (their valet) joined shortly in 1952.  
From October 1952 the group was billed Billy Ward and His Dominoes.  
Jackie Wilson joined and soon succeeded Clyde in 1953  
(with Milton Merle replacing Lamont, and Cliff Givens replacing McNeil).

#### FEDERAL

- 12001 Do Something For Me (CMP) / Chicken Blues (BB) - 12/50
- 12010 Harbor Lights (CMP) / Nol Says My Heart (CMP) - 1/51
- 12016 The Deacon Moves In (LE/CW) / [Other Lips, Other Arms - Little Esther] - 2/51
- 12022 I Can't Escape From You (CMP) / Sixty-Minute Man (BB) - 3/51
- 12036 Heart To Heart (LE/CMP) / [Lookin' For A Man - Little Esther] - 7/51
- 12039 Weeping Willow Blues (CMP) / I Am With You (CMP/BB) - 7/51
- 12059 That's What You're Doing To Me (CMP)  
/When The Swallows Come Back To Capistrano (CMP) - 2/52
- 12068 Deep Sea Blues (CMP) / Have Mercy Baby (CMP) - 4/52
- 12072 Love, Love, Love (BB) / That's What You're Doing To Me (2<sup>nd</sup> version, CMP) - 5/52
- 12105 No Room (JO) / I'd Be Satisfied (CMP) - 10/52
- 12106 I'm Lonely (JO) / Yours Forever (CMP) - 10/52
- 12114 The Bells (CMP) / Pedal Pushin Papa (DMN) - 12/52
- 12129 Don't Leave Me This Way (CMP) / These Foolish Things (CMP) - 4/53
- 12139 You Can't Keep A Good Man Down (JW) / Where Now Little Heart (prob BW) - 6/53

### THE CLOVERS



Formed in Washington, D.C. 1950 (imaged 1951/1952)

Bill Harris, Harold Winley, Harold Lucas, Buddy Bailey, Matthew McQuater.  
Charlie White repl Bailey in 1953. Billy Mitchell repl White in 1954, and Bailey  
re-joined later that same year (the group now a sextet).

#### RAINBOW

- 11-122 Yes Sir, That's My Baby (BB/HW) / When You Come Back To Me (BB/HW) - 11/50

#### ATLANTIC

- 934 Don't You Know I Love You (BB) / Skylark (BB/HW) - 3/51
- 944 Needless (BB/HW) / Fool, Fool, Fool (BB) - 8/51
- 963 One Mint Julep (BB) / Middle Of The Night (BB) - 3/52
- 969 Ting-A-Ling (BB) / Wonder Where My Baby's Gone (BB) - 6/52
- 977 I Played The Fool (BB) / Hey Miss Fannie (BB) - 10/52
- 989 Yes, It's You (BB) / Crawl'n' (BB) - 2/53
- 1000 Here Goes A Fool (BB) / Good Lovin' (CW) - 6/53
- 1010 Comin' On (BB) / The Feeling Is So Good (BB) - 11/53
- 1022 Lovey Dovey (CW) / Little Mama (CW) - 2/54
- 1036 I've Got My Eyes On You (CW) / Your Cash Ain't Nothin' But Trash (BM) - 6/54
- 1046 I Confess (CW) / Alrighty Oh Sweetie (BB) - 10/54
- 1052 Blue Velvet (BB) / If You Love Me (BB) - 12/54
- 1060 Love Bug (BB) / In The Morning Time (BM) - 4/55
- 1073 Nip Sip (BB) / If I Could Be Loved By You (BB) - 8/55
- 1083 Devil Or Angel (BB) / Hey Doll Baby (BB or BM?) - 1/56
- 1094 Love, Love, Love (BB) / Your Tender Lips (unison BB & MM) - 5/56
- 1107 From The Bottom Of My Heart (BM) / Bring Me Love (BB) - 8/56
- 1118 Baby Baby, Oh My Darling (BB) / A Lonely Fool (BB & BM) - 11/56

### THE "5" ROYALES



Formed in Winston Salem, North Carolina 1951 (imaged 1952)

Lowman Pauling, Johnny Tanner, Obadiah Carter, Jimmy Moore, Otto Jeffries (top).  
(William Samuels featured on 253, Carter not yet in). Royal Abbit, pno (on first three  
singles). Johnny Holmes featured on 266 and poss 434 – a sextet; and Gene Tanner  
from December 1953 – sextet again (soon Jeffries became road manager).

#### APOLLO (gospel recordings as The Royal Sons Quintet)

- 253 Bedside of a Neighbour (?WS/OJ/JT) / Journey's End (JT?) - ca 8/51
- 266 Come Over Here (JH/JT) / Let Nothing Separate Me (JT) - ca 11/51

#### APOLLO (secular recordings; 434 issued as by The Royals)

- 434 Too Much Of A Little Bit (OJ) / Give Me One More Chance (JT/OJ) - ca 12/51
- 441 Courage To Love (JM) / You Know I Know (JM) - 9/52
- 443 Baby Don't Do It (JT) / Take All Of Me (JT) - 11/52
- 446 Help Me, Somebody (JT) / Crazy, Crazy, Crazy (JT) - 4/53
- 448 Too Much Lovin' (Much Too Much) (JT) / Laundromat Blues (JT) - 8/53
- 449 I Want To Thank You (JT) / All Righty (JT) - 10/53
- 452 I Do (JT/GT?) / Good Things (JT) - 1/54
- 454 I Like It Like That (JT) / Cry Some More - 4/54
- 458 Let Me Come Back Home (JM) - What's That - 7/54
- 467 Six O'Clock In The Morning / With All Your Heart - 1/55

#### KING

- 4740 I'm Gonna Run It Down (JT) / Behave Yourself (JT) - 7/54
- 4744 Monkey Hips And Rice (JT) / Devil With The Rest - 10/54
- 4762 One Mistake (JT) / School Girl - 12/54
- 4770 You Don't Learn It Home / Every Dog Has His Day - 1/55
- 4775 How I Wonder (JT) / Mohawk Squaw - 3/55

### THE ROYALS / MIDNIGHTERS



Formed in Detroit 1952 (imaged early 1954)

Alonzo Tucker (bottom left, replaced by Cal Green late 1954), Charles Sutton  
(up to 1955), Sonny Woods, Lawson Smith (temp out late 52-early 54), Hank Ballard  
(bottom right – from May 1952). Henry Booth was in the group from the start  
(temp. out in 1954; not imaged above – it's Lawson Smith).

#### FEDERAL (The Royals)

- 12064 Every Beat Of My Heart (CS) / All Night Long (Wynonie Harris-guest/SW) - 3/52
- 12077 Starting From Tonight (CS) / I Know I Love You So (CS/HeBo) - 5/52
- 12088 Moonrise (CS) / Fifth Street Blues (HeBo) - 7/52
- 12098 A Love In My Heart (CS/HeBo) / I'll Never Let Her Go (HB) - 9/52
- 12113 Are You Forgetting (HB) / What Did I Do (CS) - 11/52
- 12121 The Shrine Of St. Cecilia (CS) / I Feel So Blue (HB) - 3/53
- 12133 Get It (HB/SW) / No It Ain't (HB) - 6/53
- 12150 Hey Miss Fine (HB) / I Feel That-A-Way (HB) - 9/53
- 12160 That's It (CS) / Someone Like You (HB) - 12/53
- 12169 Work With Me Annie (HB) / Until I Die (HB) - 2/54

#### FEDERAL (The Midnighters)

- 12169 Work With Me Annie (HB) / Until I Die (HB) - 4/54
- 12177 Give It Up (HB) / That Woman (HB) - 4/54
- 12185 Sexy Ways (HB) / Don't Say Your Last Goodbye (HB) - 5/54
- 12195 Annie Had A Baby (HB) / She's The One (HB) - 8/54
- 12200 Annie's Aunt Fannie (HB) / Crazy Loving (HB) - 10/54
- 12202 Stingy Little Thing (HB) / Tell Them (HB) - 11/54
- 12205 She's The One (HB) / Moonrise (CS reissue) - 12/54
- 12210 Ashamed of Myself / Ring A-Ling-A-Ling - 2/55

## THE DRIFTERS



Formed in New York City 1953 (imaged 1953)

Bill Pinkney, Gerhart Thrasher, Clyde McPhatter, Willie Ferbie (1006 only), Andrew Thrasher. Guitarist Jimmy Oliver joined in 1954. Johnny Moore replaced David Baughan (McPhatter's first sub in 1955). "Lucille" had a different line-up (actually Clyde's original Drifters w Baughan). From 1123 Charlie Hughes and Tommy Evans replaced Andrew and Bill, and on 1187 Bobby Hendricks replaced Moore (with Jimmy Millinder repl Gerhart). In late 1958 a whole new set of Drifters emerged, featuring Benjamin Nelson (Ben E. King), Charlie Thomas, Dock Green, and Elshea Hobbs.

**ATLANTIC** (issued as **Clyde McPhatter & The Drifters** or **The Drifters featuring Clyde McPhatter\***)

- 1006 Money Honey (CMP) / The Way I Feel (CMP) - 9/53
- 1019 Lucille (CMP) / Such A Night (CMP) - 1/54
- 1029 Honey Love (CMP) / Warm Your Heart (CMP) - 5/54\*
- 1043 Someday You'll Want Me To Want You (CMP/BP) / Bip Bam (CMP) - 10/54\*
- 1048 White Christmas (BP/CMP) / Bells Of St. Mary's (CMP) - 11/54\*
- 1055 Gone (CMP) / What'cha Gonna Do (CMP) - 2/55
- The Drifters** (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/BP) - 7/56
- 1123 Fools 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) / Yodee Yakee (JM) - 10/57
- 1187 Drip Drop (BH) / Moonlight Bay (unison) - 5/58
- 2025 There Goes My Baby (BEK) / Oh My love (BEK) - 6/59

## THE PLATTERS



Formed in Los Angeles 1953 (imaged mid 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
- 12164 I'll Cry When You're Gone (TW) / I Need You All The Time (TW) - 1/54
- 12181 Roses Of Picardy (HR) / Beer Barrel Boogie (HR) - 4/54
- 12188 Tell The World (TW) / Love All Night (DL) - 6/54
- 12198 Shake It Up Mambo (TW) / Voo-Vee-Ah-Bee (DL) - 10/54
- 12204 Take Me Back, Take Me Back (TW) / Maggie Doesn't Work Here Anymore (DL/ZT) - 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 reissue) / Give Thanks (TW) - 6/56

**KING** (featuring Linda Hayes, guest - Tony Williams' sister)

- 4752 My Name Ain't Annie (LH) / [Let's Babalu - Linda Hayes] - 10/54
- 4773 Please Have Mercy (LH) / Oochi Pachi (LH/TW) - 2/55

### MERCURY

- 70633 Only You (And You Alone) (TW) / Bark, Battle And Ball (ZT) - 5/55
- 70753 The Great Pretender (TW) / I'm Just A Dancing Partner (TW) - 11/55
- 70819 (You've Got) The Magic Touch (TW) / Winner Take All (TW) - 2/56
- 70893 My Prayer (TW) Heaven On Earth (TW) - 6/56
- 70948 You'll Never Know (TW & HR) / It Isn't Right (TW) - 8/56
- 71011 One In A Million (TW) / On My Work Of Honor (TW) - 11/56
- 71032 I'm Sorry (TW) / He's Mine (ZT) - 1/57
- 71093 My Dream (TW) / I Wanna (DL) - 4/57

## THE CADILLACS



Formed in New York City 1954 (imaged late 1955)

Earl Carroll, Bobby Phillips, Charles Brooks (top), LaVerne Drake (replaced by James J.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 Carroll. 821/829 issued as *The Original Cadillacs*.

### JOSIE

- 765 I Wonder Why (EC) / Gloria (EC) - 7/54
- 769 Wishing Well / I Want To Know About Love - 11/54
- 773 No Chance (EC) / Sympathy 1/55
- 778 Down The Road (EW) / Window Lady - 6/55
- 785 Let Me Explain (EW) / Speedoo (EC) - 10/55
- 792 Zoom / You Are - 3/56
- 798 Betty My Love (EC) / Woe Is Me (EC) - 5/56
- 805 That's All I Need / The Girl I Love (EC) - 10/56
- 807 Shock-A-Doo / Rudolph The Red Noised Reindeer - 11/56
- 812 About That Gal Named Lou (EC) / Sugar-Sugar - 2/57
- 820 My Girl Friend (JB) / Broken Heart - 5/57
- 821 Hurry Home / Lucy - 8/57 (featuring Earl)
- 829 Buzz-Buzz-Buzz / Yea Yea baby - 11/57 (featuring Earl)
- 836 Speedo Is Back (EC) / A Looka Here - 3/58

## THE COASTERS



Formed in Los Angeles late 1955 (imaged mid/late 1956)

- group moved to New York City in 1958

Bobby Nunn, Leon Hughes (subbed by Young Jessie, guest on 6087 and "Sweet Georgia Brown"), Carl Gardner (top), Billy Guy. Guitarist Adolph Jacobs joined in ca mid 1956.

Cornell Gunter and Will "Dub" Jones replaced Hughes and Nunn from 6116.

**The Robins on SPARK** (122 reissued on Atco 6059 10/55) Richard Berry, guest lead on 103A (featuring Gardner, Nunn, Grady Chapman, Terrell Leonard, and Billy & Roy Richard)

- 103 Riot In Cell Block #9 / Wrap It Up (CG/WJ) - 6/54
- 107 Framed (BN) / Loop De Loop Mambo (CG) - 10/54
- 110 If Teardrops Were Kisses (CG) / Whadaya Want? (GC) - 2/55
- 113 One Kiss (CG) / I Love Paris (GC) - 4/55
- 116 I Must Be Dreamin' (CG) / The Hatchet Man (BN) - 6/55
- 122 Smokey Joe's Cafe (CG) / Just Like A Fool (CG) - 9/55

### THE COASTERS ON ATCO

- 6064 Down In Mexico (CG) / Turtle Dovin' (CG) - 2/56
- 6073 One Kiss Led To Another (CG) / Brazil (CG/BN/BG) - 7/56
- 6087 Young Blood (CG) / Searchin' (BG) - 3/57
- 6098 Idol With The Golden Head (CG) / (When She Wants Good Lovin') My Baby Comes To Me (BG) - 8/57
- 6104 Sweet Georgia Brown (CG/BG/BN) / What Is The Secret Of Your Success? (BG) - 11/57
- 6111 Gee, Golly (BG) / Dance! (CG) - 1/58 (Tommy Evans, guest bass; Nunn and Hughes not present)
- 6116 Yakety Yak (CG/BG dual) / Zing! Went The Strings Of My Heart (CoGu/WJ) - 4/58
- 6126 The Shadow Knows (BG) / Sorry But I'm Gonna Have To Pass (WJ) - 8/58
- 6132 Charlie Brown (CG/BG/CoGu unison leads) / Three Cool Cats (CG) - 1/59

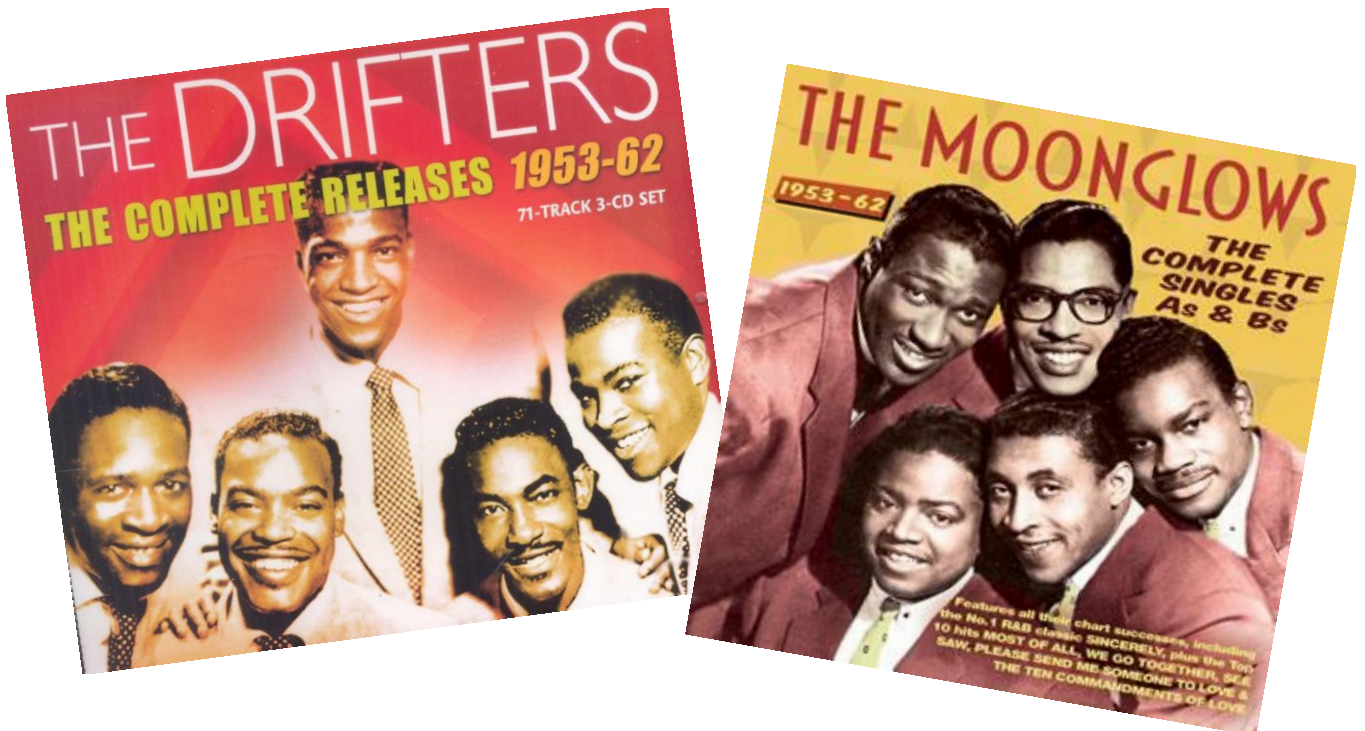
THE Top Ten Vocal Groups of the Golden '50s



## Four Super-Discs (public domain)



The Definitive Falcons Collection (4CD-set) on History of Soul 2015  
and The Platters – The Ultimate Collection (3CD-set) on Not Now Music (2015)  
The Drifters – The Complete Releases 1953-62 3CD-set on Acrobat ACTRCD9055 (2015) – 71 tracks,  
and The Moonglows – The Complete Singles As & Bs (2CD) Acrobat ADDCD3188 (2017).



## The Robins - Story & Discography



### Compiled by Claus Röhnisch

with thanks to Michel Ruppli, Fernando L. Gonzales, Kurt Mohr, Galen Gart, Robert Ferlingere, Jim Pewter, Bob Porter, Ray Topping, Anthony Rotante, Jim Dawson, Leslie Fancourt, Per Anderö, Bill Millar, Eric LeBlanc, Steve Propes, Charles Sheen, Marv Goldberg, Todd Baptista, Tony Rounce of Ace Records, Billy Vera, Dave Penny, and "Blues Records". Photo above (1955)

– top: Leonard; center: Billy and Roy Richard, Nunn, and Chapman; bottom: Carl Gardner.

### THE 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 Barrelhouse" 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 10, 1929 in Crockett, Houston County, Texas (not 1933 or 1930) - died May 1, 1983 in Los Angeles; "**Ty**" Terrell Leonard: born 1928 or poss 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).

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

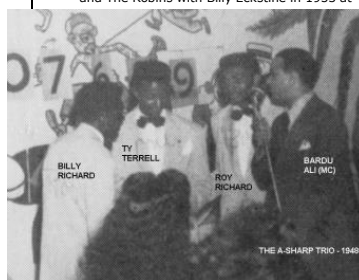
### Original recording lineup:

Bobby Nunn (lead and bass 1949 - 1955); "Ty" Terrell Leonard, Billy and Roy Richard (up to 1960).

### Later members:

Grady Chapman (lead tenor & fifth singer from 1953 - early 1954 and late 1954-mid 1958); Carl Gardner (lead & sixth singer 1954-1955); H.B. Barnum (fifth singer & utility voice 1956-1957); Bobby Sheen (late 1958-1961); "Little" Billy Richards Jr aka Bill Richard (from circa late 1959)

(Images below - The A-Sharp Trio in 1948 at the "Barrelhouse" and The Robins with Billy Eckstine in 1953 at "Club Oasis").



### 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, vcls) with John Anderson, tpt; George Washington, tbn; Cecil "Big Jay" McNeely, tens; Lem Tally, bars; Darby Hicks (pseudonym for Devonika 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 (with Lem Tally and Darby Hicks, vcls). Record issued ca April, 1949.

### The Robins

(as above) with pno, gtr, bs, dms. Prob. prod. by Sammy Lane, purchased by Aladdin. Possibly the Otis band.

*Prob. Radio Recorders, Los Angeles, May 27, 1949*

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

Aladdin 3031

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

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

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

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

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



**The 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)  
Esther Mae Jones, lead guest vcl on -1; Devonia "Lady Dee" Williams, pno; Johnny Otis, vbs; Pete "Guitar" Lewis, gtr; Mario de la Garde, bs; Leard 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, tpt; Floyd Turnham, alts; Big Jay McNeely, guest tens; Lorenzo Holden and James Von Streeter, tens; Walter Henry, bars or alts; poss. Bobby McNeely, bars; Devonia Williams, pno; Pete Lewis, gtr; Mario 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 2258

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 by "The Robins"; and on LP as by "Johnny Otis with Little Esther & The Blue Notes" (Bobby Nunn featured as on "Double Crossing.." plus the other Robins). SLA 5105, 5106 credited "Johnny Otis Septet" on

Atlantic/Savoy 3 CD. Only rhythm and tpt & tens on 5105; rhythm and tens on 5106. 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



Note: Savoy 731 reissued several times with differing credits. It had two different flips, neither by the Robins. 4453-54 on LP credited "Johnny Otis, vocal by The Robins". Poster of "Little Esther with The Robins & Johnny Otis and his Orchestra" on Savoy LP 2221 (with a five-headed Robins-group incl. H.B. Barnum) is from an ad of 1956. All other LP titles credited "Johnny Otis, vocal by The Robins", except 4456 credited "Johnny Otis, vocal by Little Esther & The Robins". Savoy 726 and 738 advertised as by **"The 4 Robins with Johnny Otis' Orchestra"**. SLA 4451 "I'm Not Falling In Love With You", vocals by Devonia Williams (issued on Regal 1016 and Savoy 749 as flip of Mel Walker's "Cry Baby" - which not has the Robins as backup). All Robins' Savoy tracks are included on the Atlantic/Savoy Jazz 3CD Johnny Otis compilation "Rhythm & Blues Caravan" 92859-2.

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 revue (leaving the door open for Mel Walker). LP 2230 also issued on Japanese Savoy CD SV 0266. All Robins' tracks for Savoy issued on Savoy LP SJL-1188 **"The Complete Savoy Recordings with Johnny Otis"**, and on Atlantic/ 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** (121 and 112B) (Bobby Nunn and prob. as above; Billy Richard, second lead on -3) with Maggie Hathaway, lead vcl (on -1); Ted Mossner, pno; Louis Speigener, gtr; Red Callender, bs. Produced by "Big" John Dolphin. The bass on "Race Of Man" is most certainly Bobby Nunn. *Dolphin's Rec. Studio, Los Angeles, ca June 1950*  
 112A **Race Of Man** RIH 112  
 112B **Bayou Baby Blues** -1 RIH 112  
 121A **A Falling Star** -1, -3 RIH 121  
 121B **When Gabriel Blows His Horn** -1 RIH 121

**The Robins**  
 (Bobby Nunn and prob. as above); with Mickey Champion, lead vcl (on -2); with unkn. accomp. Prob. Eddie Beal, pno; Chuck Norris, gtr; Red Callender, bs; Lee Young, dms. Produced by "Big" John Dolphin. *Dolphin's Rec. Studio, Los Angeles, prob late 1950*  
 4050B **Early Morning Blues** RIH 150, Earth Angel LP JD-906  
 4051A **School Girl Blues** -2 issues as above  
 Note: RIH is Dolphin's Recorded In Hollywood label. RIH 112 and 121 are gospel-like recordings. The lead on 4050B sounds like a baritone. RIH 150 issued ca March, 1951.



**The 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 **Gonna Have A Merry Christmas** (342) RPM 313, 342, AceLP 88  
 1441-3 **Found Me A Sugar Daddy** RPM 313, 316, 342, Ace(E) LP CH 88, Ace CD CHD 698  
 1442 **I'm Telling You Baby** Ace LP 88, Ace CD 1174  
 1443-3 **You Didn't Want My Love** -1 RPM 316, Ace LP 88  
 Note: Several alternate takes of all four songs issued on Ace CD MOD50. Original single 313 issued for Christmas 1950; 316 in early 1951 and 342 issued for Christmas 1951. Mickey Champion was a familiar thrush on the San Francisco black music scene, often substituting for the under-aged Little Esther on stage.

**Bobby Nunn with the "Robbins"**  
 (as above) with vbs, pno; bs, dms.  
*Los Angeles, prob, March 2, 1951*  
 1517 **Rockin'** Modern 20-807, Ace(E) LP CH 88, Spark LP 1000 (reissue bootleg)  
 (tk 1) **That's What The Good Book Says** Ace CDCHD 1010  
 1518 **That's What The Good Book Says** issues as 1517, plus Ace CHD 698  
 (tk 3) **That's What The Good Book Says** (slow version) Ace CDCHD 1022  
**Well, Hello Pretty Baby** unissued  
**All Day I've Been Cryin'** unissued  
 Note: "Rockin'" is an "answer" to the Mel Walker/Johnny Otis "Rockin' Blues" hit and "That's What The Good Book Says" was the first studio-recorded Jerry Leiber-Mike Stoller composition. The alternate is issued on the 2004 Ace CD "The Leiber & Stoller Story Vol 1 - Hard Times" and the slow version is issued on v.a. CD titled "Mellow Cats 'N' Kittens". Johnny Otis probably not involved in these recordings. LP credits "Bobby Nunn & The Robins". The unissued tracks are unconfirmed, but filed as recorded March 2, 1951.

**Note:**  
 26 of the above recordings (excluding "Lover's Lane Boogie" and the tracks of RIH 112) are featured on the German CD **"Rockin' with the Robins"** on Titanic TRC 6007. During 1951-52 Nunn was recording as a solo artist - as all the other Robins went to military services, discharged in late 1952/early 1953. Nunn recorded a.o. "Christmas Bells" b/w "Two Sisters" (instr.) on RIH 244 and for Dootsie 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 Robins**  
 (Bobby Nunn, Grady Chapman, Ty Terrell, Leonard, Billy and Roy Richard, vcls) with Shorty Rogers, dir; tens, bars, pno, gtr, bs, dms. Jack Lewis, prod; Jerry Leiber & Mike Stoller, co-prods on -1. Second session arranged by Maxwell Davis; and third session produced by Danny Kessler.

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

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

*September 15, 1953*  
 E3VB-0198 **Don't Stop Now** RCA 5564, CLP 1000  
 E3VB-0199 **Get It Off Your Mind** RCA 5564, CLP 1000  
 E3VB-0200 **Empty Bottles** RCA 5489, CLP 1000  
 E3VB-0201 **Ten Days In Jail** -1 RCA 5489, CLP 1000  
 Note: Mario de la Garde (aka Delagarde) - Otis's old bassguitarist - was co-writer on some RCA recordings, suggesting he was still a "Robins man". He had co-written several of Robins' Savoy recordings. "Ten Days In Jail" written by Leiber-Stoller. Crown LP (CLP) is a bootleg titled "The Best of .. Vol 2". Vol. 3 covers the Spark tracks and the first volume features Savoy tracks. All tracks on El Toro (Spain) CD R&B 111 "I Must Be Dreamin'" (2007), also including the four Crown tracks below plus the 12 Spark recordings. The CD is compiled and has great liner notes by Dave Penny, who insists the Spark recordings were done in order of the LS master numbers.

## THE Top Ten Vocal Groups of the Golden '50s



Not 1954, but 1953

### The Drifters

(prob. as above) with unkn acc.

Los Angeles, late 1953

JB 327 **Sacroiliac Swing** Crown 108

JB 328 **The World Is Changing** Crown 108

Note: According to Steve Proppes 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 Saul Bihari involved with their usual pseudonyms as composers on labels. Singles tracks reissued on LPs Ace 88 and CLP 1000.



### The Robins

or **The Coasters** (LP 101, EP 4503, LP 371, RSACD 868)  
Carl Gardner, lead/tenor; Bobby Nunn, bass/lead-1; Grady Chapman (first session and poss. the last), tenor/lead-2; "Ty" Terrell Leonard, tenor; Billy Richard and Roy Richard, baritones

with

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

Prob. *Radio Recorders, Santa Monica*  
*Los Angeles, c:a February-March, 1954*

LS 13 **The Hatchet Man** -1 Spark 116, RCD, CD 9974

LS 29 **I Love Paris** -2 Spark 113, Harmony LP LS-13

LS 31 **Whadaya Want?** -2 Spark 110, RCD, CD 9974

LS 32 **If Teardrops Were Kisses** -4 Spark 110, Spark LP 1000, CD 9974

with

prob. Richard Berry,lead bass vcl-3; Mike Stoller,arr/pno; 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 70593, CD 9974

*c:a 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

*prob. July 7, 1955 (or poss. January, 1955)*

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



Photos above: The sextet with the returned Chapman in 1955 (both photos Grady far left) Below left: At the Hollywood Trocadero in 1955 with Bobby, Carl, Grady Ty, and Billy. The Rhino Handmade issue has the photo presented as featuring the Richard brothers - Marv Goldberg lists Grady (with Roy not present).

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 868. 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 "Riot...". Atco purchased and reallocated Spark masters on September 28, 1955 and reissued one Robins single (Atco 6059 with S-master numbers used). Most of the Spark recordings issued as by the Coasters on several later LP issues. Spark was owned by A.L. Stoller, Mike Stoller, Jerry Leiber and Lester Sill. Quintet Music was owned by Leiber, the Stollers, Sill, and Jack Levy.

Some Ernie Freeman-fans state Freeman and René Hall were involved as arrangers and musicians on "Just Like A Fool" (well Freeman certainly backed the Robins - and the Coasters on tour several times in the mid '50s). Master series 57C- allocated for LP 101 in 1957. All twelve recordings released on a bootleg Robins LP (Spark 1000 "The Best Of The Robins Volume 3", 1974, reissued in 1991 with two extra tracks, "Rockin'" and "That's What The Good Book Says" from Modern). LS 16 titled "Riot In Cell Block Number Nine" and ".....Number 9" on some later issues. LS 23 titled "I Must Be Dreaming" on Warner/Pioneer LP 13013 (and wrongly credited as the 1964 recording on that LP). LS 31 titled "Whadaya Want" on RSACD 868. Several of the above titles are on Dutch Harmony LP LS-13 (bootleg with very bad sound), which also features Robins recordings for Crown and RCA (1953). "Wobble Loo" on that album is neither by the Robins or the Coasters (actually by Ray Agee - Spark 119 - matrix LS 50) and the album is issued as by the Robins on label and the Coasters on sleeve. Rhino CD R2 71090 "50 Coastin' Classics" noted as RCD (for general overview). LS 30 sometimes spelt "Smokey Joe's Café". Collectables CD 9974, titled "Smokey Joe's Cafe" has ten of the 12 Spark recordings with "One Kiss" titled "One Kiss Led To Another".

The Coasters were formed in October, 1955. In 1957 and 1958 several of the Robins' Spark recordings were reissued on LP and EP as by the Coasters, leading to the common misconception that the Robins had transformed into the Coasters. In fact Gardner and Nunn were recruited by Leiber-Stoller-Sill and due to touring engagements

## THE Top Ten Vocal Groups of the Golden '50s

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

Around June, 1955 Jake Porter of Combo records issued a single, Combo 91 as "Jake Porter and The Buzzards", titled **"Wine Women and Gold"**. Porter says this was the 1955 Robins (the flip "The Bop" is an instrumental). It sure does not sound like the Robins!

### The Robins

(Grady Chapman, Ty Terrell Leonard, Billy and Roy Richard, and Hildre Brown "H.B." Barnum, vcls/lead -1; plus poss. Johnnie "Twovoice" Morissette and/or Ted Rambo, vcls) (image below Terrell, Grady, H.B., and the Richard brothers).

with

Jewell Grant, bars; Plas Johnson, tens; Ernie Freeman, pno; Rene Hall, gtr; Curtis Counce, bs; Ed Hall, dms. Freeman and Rene Hall, arrs. Produced by Gene Norman.

MGM Studio, Fairfax Avenue and

Gene Norman Studio, Hollywood Boulevard

Los Angeles, ca January 1956

V-5489-175 **Cherry Lips** Whippet 200, WLP 703

V-5489-176 **Out Of The Picture** W 200, WLP 703

From 1956 to early 1957 (during four sessions)



B-5000 **Merry-Go-Rock** W 201, WLP 703

B-5001 **Hurt Me** W 201, WLP 703

**Since I First Met You** W 203, WLP 703

**That Old Black Magic** W 203, WLP 703

**A Fool In Love** W 206, WLP 703

**All Of A Sudden My Heart Sings** W 206, WLP 703

**Every Night** W 208, WLP 703

**Where's The Fire** W 208, WLP 703

**In My Dreams** Whippet 211

**Keep Your Mind On Me** W 211

**You Wanted Fun** W 212

**Snowball** W 212, WLP 703

**Blues In The Night** GNP Crescendo LP 9034

**How Long** -1 Whippet LP 703



Note: Carl Gardner has stated that Leiber-Stoller called him off the "Cherry Lips" recording session to do the first Coasters session. "Cherry Lips" was supposed to be led by Gardner, but by then he and Nunn had left to form the Coasters. H.B. Barnum, born in Texas July 15, 1936 (who was a childhood Hollywood stage piano concerts favorite and had made his first solo record on Imperial as Pee Wee Barnum in 1950 and sang with the Dootones in L.A. in 1955), acted as pianist and utility

voice with the Robins during 1956-57. He sang and played piano for RCA in the early 1960s and later became a famous manager /arranger /producer for several acts. Whippet singles subsequently issued between March, 1956 and January, 1958 - Whippet was owned by GNP (Gene Norman). **"Rock & Roll"** Whippet LP 703 reissued on GNP-Crescendo 9034 (excluding "How Long") and re-titled "The Best of The Robins", and on CD GNPD 9034 (with all 16

tracks). The GNP issue has a cover featuring a photo from 1957 of Leonard, Chapman, Barnum and the Richard brothers and presents the brothers as Richard (no s). All Whippet titles issued on **"Cherry Lips"** CD. Chapman recorded several solo songs for Whippet. Johnnie Morissette said he sang with the Robins during this period. From Steve Prokes in Blues & Rhythm: "I was in the Robins too, we came behind Grady Chapman. Gene Norman split up the lead singers who was getting a big head, they were nowhere alone. I sang lead on "You Wanted Fun". We played the Crescendo with Herb Jeffries. At that point there were two competing Robins groups. They were taking away from each other - one lead by Grady Chapman, they left Crescendo on their own with H.B. Barnum." Morissette was born in Brazil on July 1, 1935 (or Montu Osland in the South Pacific). He succeeded Vernon Green as lead with the Medallions before his stint with the Robins - later worked with Sam Cooke. Rick? Lamont seems to have been The Robins' manager around this time.

### The Robins

(Grady Chapman lead? -1, Ty Terrell Leonard, Billy and Roy Richard, vcls); with unknown accomp and girl chorus. Probably Chapman solo without the group.

Produced by Imperial Records and H.B. Barnum.

Radio Recorders, Los Angeles, August 7, 1958

IM-1708 **A Quarter To Twelve** -1 Knight 2001

IM-1709 **Pretty Little Dolly** -

(Same but Chapman out and Bobby Sheen in, lead-2) November 11, 1958

IM-1831 **A Little Bird Told Me** -2 Knight 2008

IM-1832 **It's Never Too Late** -

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

### The Robins

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

Los Angeles, 1960

**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 Rendezvous.

### The Ding Dongs

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

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 Last 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, vcls) 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



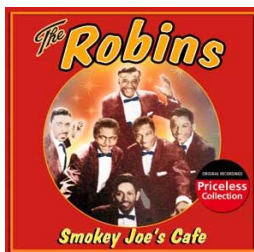
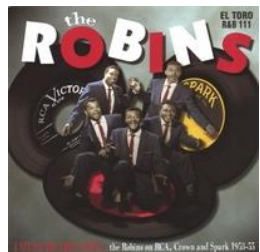
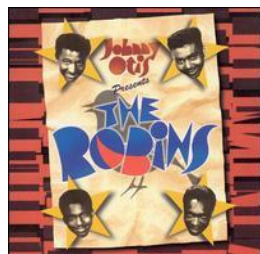
### Note:

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

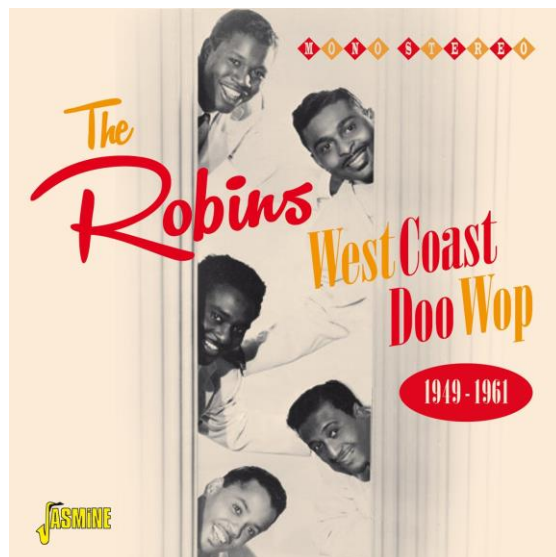
(featuring all 16 Whippet recordings)

**Cherry Lips** - Famous Grooves (Germany) CD 31672

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

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

Jasmine JASCD 795 (tracks list right)



Read more on the Robins at: <http://www.uncamary.com/Robins/robins.html>

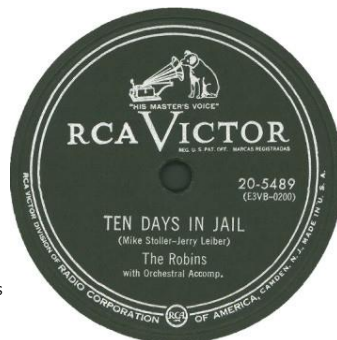
### Disc 1

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



### Disc 2

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

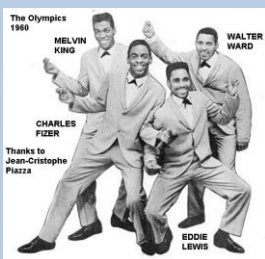


## A Handful of Great "Raw" and "Inter-Related" Vocal Groups

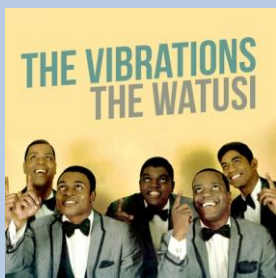
Here are some interesting groups from the 1950s and 1960s, who really deserve credit  
- with their most known recordings (and original recording endurance).



**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.



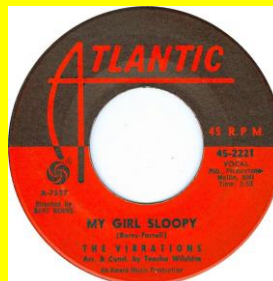
**The Olympics** (Compton, California 1958-70)  
*Western Movies* – Demon 1508 (R&B #7 May 1958)  
*(Baby) Hully Gully* – Arvee 562 (Issued in late 1959)  
Walter Ward, Eddie Lewis, Charles Fizer, Melvin King  
(Melvin King replaced Fizer in 1958 and stayed with the group when original member Walter 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



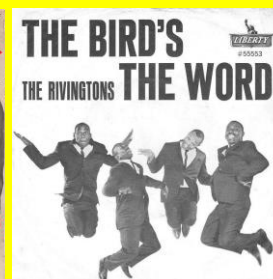
**The Marathons** (Los Angeles 1961)  
*Peanut Butter* – Arvee 5027 (R&B #25 June 1961)  
re-issued on Checker 1790  
Actually The Vibrations masquerading  
(the song is a "remake" of The Olympics' *Hully Gully*)



**The Vibrations**  
*My Girl Sloopy* – Atlantic 2221 (R&B #10 March 1964)  
Same lineup as The Marathons  
Later a pop hit by the McCoy's as *Hang On Sloopy*



**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 Hoggs, Joe Billingslea, Sylvester Potts,  
Hubert Johnson, and Heay Davis,gtr (later Dennis Edwards -  
who went to the Temptations, and Joe Stubbs sang with the  
group, which had several member changes)

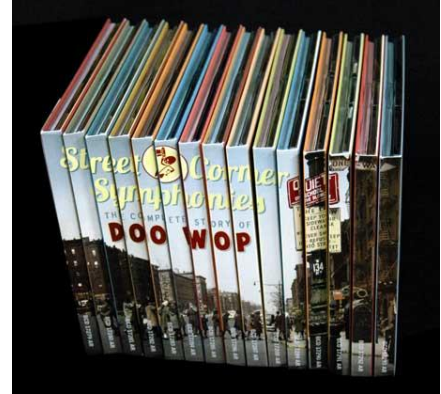
## A "Random" Vocal Group Harmony Gallery

**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 Marcells** (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 Jubalaire: 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



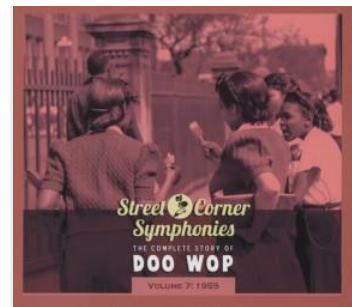
### [Volume 05: 1953](#)

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 Nite  
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

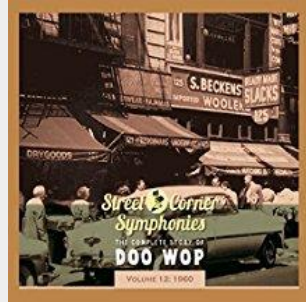
## THE Top Ten Vocal Groups of the Golden '50s



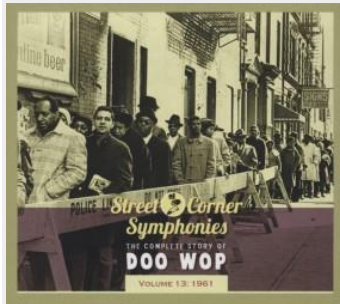
**Volume 10: 1958**  
from Crests: 16 Candles  
to Kodoks: Oh Gee, Oh Gosh



**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 Marcels: 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 TWO

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## THE Top Ten Vocal Groups of the Golden '50s

### ON THE WEB (as of September 25, 2011)



<http://www.uncamarvy.com/Dominoes/dom01.html>  
<http://www.eonet.ne.jp/~pelican-studio/groups/data/dominoes01.html>  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Billy\\_Ward\\_&\\_the\\_Dominoes](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Billy_Ward_&_the_Dominoes)  
<http://www.allmusic.com/artist/billy-ward-p135923>  
[http://www.blogg.org/blog-65325-themes-dominoes\\_1\\_billy\\_ward\\_the\\_-172873.html](http://www.blogg.org/blog-65325-themes-dominoes_1_billy_ward_the_-172873.html)  
[http://www.vocalgroup.org/inductees/billy\\_ward\\_&\\_the\\_dominoes.html](http://www.vocalgroup.org/inductees/billy_ward_&_the_dominoes.html)  
<http://home.earthlink.net/~jaymar41/dominoes.html>  
<http://www.uncamarvy.com/Moonglows/moonglows.html>  
<http://www.eonet.ne.jp/~pelican-studio/groups/data/moonglows.html>  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Moonglows](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Moonglows)  
<http://www.allmusic.com/artist/the-moonglows-p24616>  
<http://www.blogg.org/blog-65325-themes-moonglows-172844.html>  
[http://www.vocalgroup.org/inductees/the\\_moonglows.html](http://www.vocalgroup.org/inductees/the_moonglows.html)  
<http://www.soulfulkindamusic.net/hfuqua.htm>  
<http://home.earthlink.net/~v1tiger/moonglows.html>  
<http://www.rockabilly.nl/references/messages/moonglows.htm>  
[http://www.classicurbanharmony.net/moonglows\\_harvey\\_fuqua\\_tribute.htm](http://www.classicurbanharmony.net/moonglows_harvey_fuqua_tribute.htm)



<http://www.uncamarvy.com/Clovers/clovers1.html>  
<http://www.eonet.ne.jp/~pelican-studio/groups/data/clovers.html>  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Clovers](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Clovers)  
<http://www.allmusic.com/artist/the-clovers-p3925>  
<http://www.blogg.org/blog-65325-themes-clovers-170614.html>  
[http://www.vocalgroup.org/inductees/the\\_clovers.html](http://www.vocalgroup.org/inductees/the_clovers.html)  
<http://www.soulfulkindamusic.net/clovers.htm>  
<http://www.doowopcaferadio.com/Clovers.html>  
[http://home.earthlink.net/~jaymar41/Clovers\\_part\\_one.html](http://home.earthlink.net/~jaymar41/Clovers_part_one.html)  
<http://www.theoriginalclovers.com/>  
<http://www.theofficialdrifters.com/> or <http://www.thedrifters.co.uk/>  
<http://www.ctdrifters.com/>  
<http://www.originaldrifters.com/>  
<http://www.uncamarvy.com/Drifters/drifters.html>  
<http://www.eonet.ne.jp/~pelican-studio/groups/data/drifters.html>  
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THE Top Ten Vocal Groups of the Golden '50s

