

SEPTEMBER 25, 2012

VOLUME 1

ISSUE 1

SECRET STASH

DEDICATED TO UNCOVERING MUSIC HISTORY



twin cities

funk & soul

WILLIE & THE
BUMBLEBEES

PROPHETS
OF PEACE

BAND OF
THIEVES

KUXL
RADIO

JACKIE
HARRIS

AND MUCH MORE



Maurice McKinnies circa 1972 courtesy Minnesota Historical Society. Photo by Charles Chamblis.



The Philadelphia Story (AKA Valdons) mid 70s courtesy Minnesota Historical Society. Photo by Charles Chamblis. Left to right: Maurice Young, Clifton Curtis, Monroe Wright, Bill Clark



Dance contest at The Taste Show Lounge, Minneapolis late 70s courtesy Minnesota Historical Society. Photo by Charles Chamblis.

INTRODUCTION

It was three years ago that we launched Secret Stash Records. About a year and a half later, we started working on what would eventually become our biggest release, **Twin Cities Funk & Soul: Lost R&B Grooves From Minneapolis/St. Paul 1964-1979**. What follows is our attempt to share with you some of the amazing stories, history, and photos that have been so graciously shared with us during the course of producing a compilation of soulful tunes from our hometown.

.....

R&B, soul, and funk music in the Twin Cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota went through dramatic changes during the 1960s and 1970s. Predating these changes, a vibrant jazz scene beginning in the 1920s laid the groundwork with several players being instrumental in helping teach young local R&B musicians how to play. However, many of the early R&B pioneers, including Mojo Buford, Maurice McKinnies, and Willie Walker, came to Minnesota from other states and brought the music with them. They were born in the south and moved to the Twin Cities already full of experience in the worlds of blues and gospel.

This local music scene largely did not extend beyond the black community, with only a few curious whites venturing into clubs in black neighborhoods to experience it first hand. In the mid-1960s, a night on the town starting in North Minneapolis and heading south would mirror the progression of musical styles. If you started at the Blue Note, you would likely catch Bobby Lyle playing jazz with Gene and Jerry Hubbard. A short walk south to Jimmy Fuller's Regal Tavern could entail a performance by Mojo Buford and his "Chi 4" playing Chicago-based blues. Heading further south into downtown to King Solomon's Mines might include a performance by a soul group with gospel roots such as the Amazers. Leaving downtown on Nicollet Ave to South Minneapolis would take you to Mr. Lucky's and the adjacent Magoo's where Dave Brady and the Stars would be playing the latest R&B hits from the Temptations, The Impressions and others.

St. Paul may not have had as many prominent clubs in the 1960s, but several groups from St. Paul played regularly in Minneapolis. The sound of these groups from St. Paul, exemplified by the recordings of Maurice McKinnies and The Champions, Jackie Harris and The Exciters, and Wanda Davis, was grittier, and more like what we call funk today. While many of these musicians took lessons from jazz players, they were studying James Brown on the side. The Western Lounge in St. Paul was a testing ground. If you were a player in St. Paul, you earned your stripes there and then graduated to playing at the Ebony, Dirty Girty's, and the clubs in Minneapolis. With any luck, you would eventually work your way into the biggest venues: The Prom Ballroom and Stem Hall in St. Paul, and in Minneapolis the Marigold Ballroom, the Minneapolis Armory and the Minneapolis Auditorium.

Beginning in the late 1960s, show bands became big draws in the Twin Cities. Notably, Maurice McKinnies & The Blazers added other singers to emphasize the show aspect during performances and later the Valdons became wildly popular with a front of four singers backed by the nine piece Navajo Train. Up to that point, a definitive Minnesota R&B style had not yet developed, but the foundation for a new sound was being laid. The players in the scene were flexible, as it was the only way to be a full-time musician in the Twin Cities. If you weren't getting gigs playing R&B, you sat in playing jazz or sometimes rock. In addition, the music community was tight, as groups were established but lineups were rarely set in stone. The closeness of the overall scene allowed a musician the opportunity to sit in with a variety of groups and learn multiple styles. By the mid-1970s, Willie and The Bumblebees, Band of Thieves, and Prophets of Peace were playing a fusion of R&B, funk, jazz and rock. By the late 1970s, the Lewis Connection took this fusion and added synthesizers and a disco-influenced feel.

Our aim with this project is to pay tribute to the Twin Cities' R&B, funk, and soul scene of the 1960s and 1970s. We are entirely indebted to the many performers, club owners, family members, DJs, writers and photographers who shared their memories, photographs, stories, and time with us. Often when people think of R&B from the Twin Cities, they are not aware of much before the 1980s. We hope putting this music and these stories out there again will in some way help shine a little more light on these overlooked and incredibly talented musicians.

Will Gilbert, Eric Foss, and Danny Sigelman
Secret Stash Records

CONTENTS

Mojo Buford	04
Willie Walker	05
Dave Brady	06
Black and Proud Records	08
Jack Harris	09
The Exciters	10
Maurice McKinnies, The Champions	11
Wanda Davis	13
The Valdons	14
Photo feature	15
Prophets of Peace	20
Band of Thieves	22
Willie and The Bumblebees	24
Morris Wilson	25
The Lewis Connection	26
Map of Minneapolis key places, KUXL radio	27
KMOJ, Connie's Insider, Spokesman, Insight News	28
King Solomon's Mines, The Cozy	29
Kay Bank Studios, Sound 80, David Z/ASI, Phyllis Wheatley	30
Credits, thank yous, legal	31

Cover photo: The Valdons on the cover of the April 1972 issue of *The Insider* courtesy Hennepin County Public Library, Special Collections with permission from Mike Barich and the editors of *The Insider*. Photo by Mike Barich. From left to right: Bill Clark, Monroe Wright, Napoleon Crayton, Clifton Curtis

MOJO BUFORD

Mojo and His "Chi 4" Add a Beat to the Blues

George "Mojo" Buford was born in Hernando, Mississippi, but grew up in Memphis, Tennessee. In 1952, at 23 years of age, he headed north to become part of the Chicago blues circuit. Working a day job as a janitor at a local college, Buford quickly immersed himself in the local blues scene at night. He became friends with Little Walter, who would hook him up with Muddy Waters' band in 1959 to replace harp legend James Cotton.

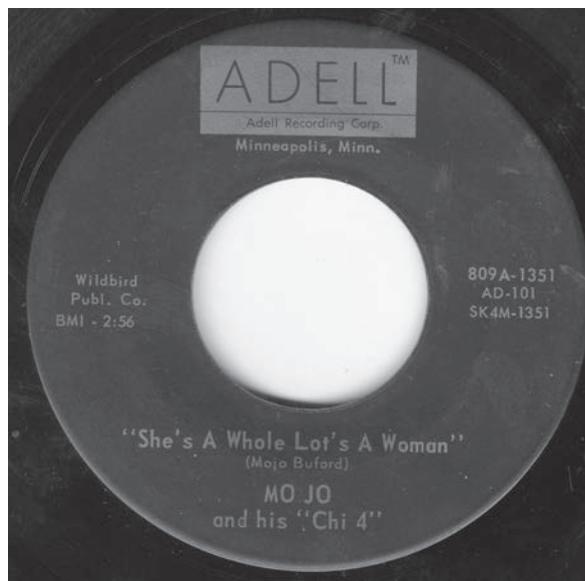
It was after a gig at the Loon nightclub in Minneapolis in 1963 with Waters that Buford decided to make Minneapolis his home. As local legend has it, after the gig, Muddy couldn't afford to get the band to the next town. He split without his band-mates and Buford laid down roots.

He earned the nickname "Mojo" because concert goers at Mattie's Barbecue on Nicollet Ave in Minneapolis constantly requested that his new band play the Muddy Waters standard, "Got My Mojo Workin'." In a 1979 Insider interview Mojo tells how his name and reputation evolved, "When I left Chicago and went to Minneapolis people say, 'Play 'Mojo Workin' two, three times a night. The peoples started it 'cause I was goin' under the name Little Junior B., 'cause see I'm a junior, George Jr. and I made it Little Junior B. I went down one day and the lady had the sign up there sayin' Mojo. I put the Buford to it. I said, 'I'll be dogged.' That's the way I got it. That was in Minneapolis, 29th and Nicollet. So I went for it."



Mojo Buford performing live in The Twin Cities circa 1972 courtesy Jeff DeBevec. Photo by Jeff DeBevec

Forming Mojo and his "Chi 4" with Oliver Lee "Sonny Boy" Rodgers on guitar, Jo Jo Williams on bass, and Francis Clay on drums, the single "My Mojo's Working" with "She's A Whole Lot's A Woman" on the flip-side was recorded in 1964 and released on the Adell (private press) imprint in 1965. Throughout the remainder of the decade Mojo would release 45s on Adell, Bangar, Twin Town,



and Garrett, though most wouldn't possess the R&B feel present on "She's A Whole Lot's A Woman."

While known as a straight-ahead blues man, Mojo clearly understood the power of R&B, specifically in the Twin Cities. In a 1972 interview with *The Insider*, when asked how the blues scene is in Minneapolis he responded, "Not too much going on here. Well, the people they all seem to like that Soul beat thing, stuff like that." He went on to say, "But for blues to hang around [here] all the time... I don't think that would last. Unless you could come out with some, some heck of a beat, you know?"

Eventually he rejoined Muddy Waters' band in the early 70's, recording and touring around the world with him. He later returned to the Twin Cities despite having reservations about the racial boundaries and social climate of the times, "I don't like what the club owners are doing to black musicians. Think about how I've been kicked around, dogged by musicians, club owners and booking agents. It's hell on a black man here trying to make it. I just can't figure it out. If you got over two blacks in your band, you can't get a gig. That's pitiful."

Mojo Buford's comments illustrate an underlying theme for many groups from the Twin Cities' R&B scene. There may not have been overt racist laws, but for decades the Twin Cities were difficult places for black groups to make a living. It is sad to say that despite the diminished role race plays in getting gigs today, Mojo would find better paying shows outside of Minnesota than in it, even up until he passed away in the fall of 2011.

POTPOURRI AND STUFF.....

"Soul of a City, 1970" had an unpleasant aftermath for at least three local groups and performers. Apparently because of a misunderstanding between festival director Lonnie Morgan and a booker, "The Marauders" "Cottonwood" and bluesman Mojo Buford did not get paid for their performances. Mojo's sidemen, however, were paid but it was unfortunate the others weren't since they were among the best talent of the entire festival. Morgan, by the way, has exited F&M Bank and is considering several offers. He said he hoped to be able to stage another festival next year.

Snippet from a 1970 issue of *The Insider* courtesy Hennepin County Library, Special Collections with permission from Tom Murtha. Written by Tom Murtha

NAACP CONVENTION SPECIAL

JOLLY TEN SOCIAL CLUB

Big 4th of July Picnic

FOR ALL MEMBERS AND FRIENDS AND DELEGATES

—FEATURING—

BARBECUE DINNER \$1.25

Picnic Tables, Games, Horseshoe Pitching, Swings

WITH RHYTHM AND BLUES KING

MOJO BUFORD

At Picnic Grounds Behind Mike's Bar--1428 SOUTH 6TH STREET

EVERYONE WELCOME!

Ad from *The Minneapolis Spokesman* courtesy Hennepin County Library, Special Collections with permission from *The Spokesman-Recorder*

USED LPs

NEW LOCATION:
419 W. Lake
WAX MUSEUM

LARGE STOCK OF:

- ROCK ● POP
- SOUL ● BLUES
- FOLK ● CLASSICAL
- JAZZ ● OLD ROCK

USED LP'S BOUGHT AND SOLD

Record store ad from *The Insider* January 1971 courtesy Hennepin County Library, Special Collections

WILLIE WALKER

A Twin Cities Legend with Southern Gospel Roots

Willie Walker was born in Mississippi and grew up in Memphis, TN. He began singing at a young age, at first just a capella with a group of friends in the park. Soon a gospel group from a nearby church approached them with an invitation to join. That was Willie's introduction to gospel. Beginning in the mid-1950s, he toured with a gospel group called the Redemption Harmonizers, and in 1959 he came up to Minnesota. It's been his home ever since.

It was in Minnesota that Willie joined his first secular group, the original "Val-Dons." He remembers he was recruited at the laundromat when Timothy Eason from the group came up to him and said, "You look like you can sing," and asked him to try out. Even though he began singing secular music, the world of gospel continued to play an important role in his life. Through singing and touring with gospel groups, Willie made a lot of friends. He knew people who had success writing secular music in Memphis, and occasionally he would go down and visit them. It was through these connections that he was signed to the legendary Goldwax Record label by Quinton Claunch and Rudolph "Doc" Russell.

Willie continued to live in Minnesota, so Goldwax would fly him down and back for recording sessions. Because Goldwax didn't pay for lodging, Willie usually stayed with friends like songwriters Roosevelt Jamison and George Jackson. Jamison wrote "There Goes My Used To Be," which Willie sang, as well as the soul classic "That's How Strong My Love Is," and many others. Jackson was a ridiculously prolific writer. Some of his song writing credits include Wilson Pickett's "Man And a Half," Clarence

Carter's "Too Weak To Fight," and Bob Seger's "Old Time Rock and Roll."

Despite the lack of lodging accommodations, and the artist royalties that never came, Goldwax did book Willie in some of the best studios, including American Sound Studio in Memphis and Fame Studios in Alabama. The first 45 he recorded came out in 1967 as Goldwax catalog #329, "Ticket to Ride" b/w "There Goes My Used to Be." Willie's cover of the Beatles' "Ticket to Ride" was the track DJs chose as the single. The 45 is credited to "Wee Willie Walker," though his other releases refer to him simply as Willie Walker. He remembers when "Ticket to Ride" came out, "Ray Moss from KUXL locked himself in the studio and played 'Ticket to Ride' all day." From that day he became known locally as "Wee Willie Walker." Walker remembers, "I'd walk out my door and people were like, 'You were on the radio all day! We loved it!'"

The second and third 45s came out in 1968, and were licensed to Checker. The second was Checker catalog #1198, "You Name It, I've Had It," b/w "You're Running Too Fast," and the third was Checker catalog #1211, "A Lucky Loser," b/w "Warm To Cool To Cold." The song "I Ain't Gonna Cheat On You No More" was recorded during the late 1960s while Willie was signed to Goldwax, but was not released at the time. Goldwax was on its last legs when Willie was with the label. Due to financial strain they did not have money to put together any touring to support Willie. As a result, they licensed the latter two 45s to Checker (Chess Records). It wasn't long before the deal ended and the label folded.

Back in Minnesota, another connection from the gospel world, James Martin, brought Willie Walker to a local R&B group called The Exciters. He sang with The Exciters off and on for close to five years. According to Herman Jones, drummer for the Exciters, "Willie Walker was a small guy with a huge afro, but when he walked on stage women would just faint! He had this golden voice like Sam Cooke and he was charismatic. It was like he was made out of pure, liquid gold!" There were plans for The Exciters to back him on his Goldwax recordings, and even for them to record original numbers, but Goldwax relied on their tried and true session musicians and staff writers so it never panned out.

After singing with The Exciters, Walker reconnected with former Val-Dons bandmate Willie Murphy in Willie and The Bumblebees. He was not with the group long before departing for bands like Salt, Pepper, and Spice and Solid on Down. In the Mid-1970s, Willie recorded some more tracks with George Jackson,



Willie Walker early 1970s courtesy Willie Walker

including "Run Around," and "You're Gonna Miss Me." Willie remembers, "He was the only collaborator that I had back then. George Jackson had written 'One Bad Apple' for the Jackson 5 and he couldn't get it to them, but somehow he had gotten it to the Osmonds. He was a hell of an entertainer, really should have been a real superstar. I was no longer affiliated with Goldwax when those recordings happened." Many years later Willie's mid-70s work with Jackson was released on a compilation from Ace Records (and is certainly worth checking out if you haven't yet).

Willie Walker was one of the few Twin Cities soul artists to come close to making it big on the national stage in the 60s. His recordings had all the necessary elements. Years of singing gospel helped him craft a pure voice, capable of transmitting emotion at a deep, concentrated level. He recorded on one of the most respected southern soul labels alongside greats such as James Carr and O.V. Wright. His songs were written by luminaries in the field. His backing tracks were performed by the top studio musicians at the most respected studios in Memphis and Alabama. But it wasn't to be. In the 1970s, Willie was tired of being on the edge of commercial success and the music business in general, so he retired. But he couldn't stay away long! He returned to singing with The Bound Band in the late 1970s, then went on to the Butanes, and is still singing regularly to this day. He remains relentlessly positive and is a joy to be around.



DAVE BRADY AND THE STARS

Minnesota's Sweet Soul Pioneers



Dave Brady and the Stars from In-Beat Magazine March 1967 courtesy Ben Mena with permission from Steve Kaplan. Photo by Daniel Seymour. Sitting (L-R): Dave Brady (vox), Wally Lockhart (vox), Jimmy Lawrence (vox), Carl Bradley (vox, sax, keys). Standing (L-R): Bill Brisley (bass), Mark Skok (tumpet), Tom Hoth (drums), Bill Lubov (guitar)

South Minneapolis based Dave Brady and the Stars formed in 1965. The group was one of the most popular local R&B bands and lasted in one form or another through the end of the decade. The 1967 personnel featured on the recordings “Baby, Baby I Need You” and “Ridin’ High” included singers Dave Brady, Wally Lockhart, and Jimmy Lawrence. The rhythm section included Bill Lubov on guitar, Bill Brisley on bass, and Tom Hoth on drums. Mark Skok played trumpet and Carl Bradley split his time between sax and organ. It wasn’t until the winter of 1966 that the lineup appearing on these recordings became finalized. Leading up to then, there were a series of changes, most notably vocalist Rockie Robbins, a founding member left for college and was replaced by Jimmy Lawrence. In addition, Willie Murphy recalls playing bass alongside guitarist Russ Hagen in the group during the early stages. Dave, Wally, Carl, Jimmy, and Willie all went to Central High School, though Jimmy and Willie were a few years older. Bill Lubov attended Washburn, Bill Brisley went to Southwest, and Tom Hoth was a student at Robbinsdale. Jimmy Hill, a fellow Central High grad known locally for putting together elaborate show groups like King James and The Disciples, was instrumental in helping assemble this pioneering racially mixed R&B group from Minnesota.

Wally Lockhart first heard about the band when he was walking home from school with Dave Brady. Dave was the type who would spontaneously burst into song. On one occasion, Wally joined him and they began to harmonize. It was then that Dave told Wally about a group that was starting and invited him to join. When the group first got together, they spent three months in Dave Brady’s basement, with neighbors and friends setting up folding chairs to listen. The first time they introduced the group to the public, Bill Lubov recalls, “We chose a Wednesday evening at Magoo’s with no advance notice. Less than 10 people were in attendance to begin with, and after three or four songs the place was empty. The audience must have run out and told their friends, because a half hour later the place was packed!”

The time and effort put in at the beginning helped them emerge as more than just a band that could play, but one that was polished in both sound and appearance. In-Beat, a 1960s Minnesota-based music magazine edited by Steve Kaplan, caught up with the band for a feature article in their March 1967 issue. The vast majority of the piece focused on how important showmanship, choreography, and dress were for the group, as well as the great lengths the members took to achieve their goals. The performers changed outfits each set and one time they even spent \$900 on clothing for a single show.

Looking back today, Steve Kaplan remembers, “Rhythm and blues bands in Minnesota at that time were very, very rare. To give you a sense of what Minnesota was like, I went to see James Brown with a friend and I’m not kidding you, we were the ONLY white guys there.” One highlight from the feature is a great shot of the band taken by In-Beat photographer Daniel Seymour.

Dave Brady and the Stars were one of the first R&B groups in the Twin Cities to find crossover success with white audiences. Carl Bradley recalls, “White Minnesotans would see The Temptations on television or buy their records but they would never see R&B around town until Dave Brady and the Stars.” Being a band with both black and white members, they had more opportunities than all-black bands to play R&B for white audiences. They were represented by one of the premier booking agencies of the time, Central Booking, who booked most of the big teen groups in town, including Danny’s Reasons, The Mystics, The Castaways, The Underbeats, and others. It was run by Dick Shapiro, who got his start booking bands alongside Ira Heilicher



Dave Brady And The Stars at Mr. Lucky's in Minneapolis courtesy Carl Bradley. Left to right: Bill Brisley, Bill Lubov, Tom Hoth, Wally Lockhart, Dave Brady, Jimmy Lawrence, Carl Bradley, Mark Skok

at Path Musical Productions, and Bill Diehl, one of the better known DJs at top 40 station WDGY. While groups like the Amazers, the Exciters, and Maurice McKinnies and The Blazers were mostly confined to bars and clubs on the outskirts of Minneapolis and St. Paul, Dave Brady and the Stars were playing all ages shows at many of the most popular teen venues in both cities. In the fall of 1966, they were even chosen to open for the Mamas and Papas' concert at the Minneapolis Auditorium sponsored by top 40 station, KDWB.

In addition to booking shows in Minneapolis, the band played in cities and small towns throughout the Upper-Midwest. Carl Bradley recalls, "We were the first people of color that many of these places had seen outside of television. They would come up to us and shake our hands and they wouldn't know how to say it, 'You're the first black guys we've ever met!' That was pretty common to hear around Minnesota back then."

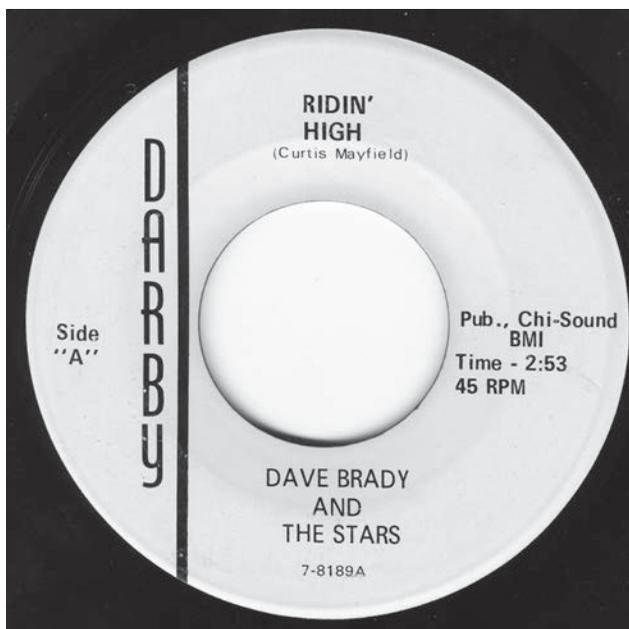
Wally Lockhart remembers that they broke down barriers and opened a lot of clubs that didn't deal with black people at the time, "It was because we were a mixed band that it was possible." Though there were many good

experiences, Bill Lubov recalls a number of instances when police were required to intervene when racial incidents posed a danger to the members of the band, "Police literally had to escort us out of some small towns to protect us."

They were a fixture at one of the premier teen clubs, Mr. Lucky's, and were a house band of sorts at Magoo's. Each had a large dance floor and they were adjacent to each other on Nicollet Ave and 29th St in Minneapolis. Just down the street at the corner was Nic 'O' Lake Records, and in its basement was a recording studio. The record store was run by George Garrett - known for the record labels Garrett, Twin Town, and Bangar. Bill Roslansky, a Nic 'O' Lake employee, managed the Stars, making the basement studio a convenient place for the youngsters to record. The band recorded "The Stars" in 1966 and "Baby, Baby I Need You" and "Ridin' High" in 1967. The recordings were put out on the Darby label. Wally Lockhart recalls, "The Darby name was really a play on Dave Brady's name."

Many changes happened within the band between 1967 and the end of 1968. Carl Bradley moved from keyboards and sax to vocals and keyboards. Rick O'Dell replaced Carl on sax for a brief stint and eventually Charlie Finney replaced Rick. Trumpeter Mark Skok left and was replaced by Voyle Harris and later Dexter Clark. Bass player Bill Brisley left for Vietnam and Guitarist Bill Lubov left to form another R&B show group, The Sound of Soul. Drummer Tom Hoth joined the Delcounts and was replaced by Donald Thomas. Floyd Crawford came in on trombone to thicken up the sound, and by 1969 Carl Bradley and Jimmy Lawrence had moved on to Danny's Reasons. Of the original members, Wally Lockhart and Dave Brady stayed around until the breakup of the band.

Wally remembers, "1971 was when it finally limped to an end." Precious few recordings were done by Dave Brady and the Stars, but there is hope that another recording may surface at some point in the future. After all, the In-Beat article from 1967 mentions the existence of an original song called "Darling, I Still Love You." Dave Brady and the Stars were inducted into the Minnesota Rock Hall of Fame in 2007.



New Luxurious Setting at the COZY Bar & Lounge

For an evening of real enjoyment, stop in at the COZY BAR & LOUNGE. There's always a congenial crowd and the service is prompt.

YOU WILL HAVE YOUR SHARE OF FUN
WHILE DRINKING EXOTIC COCKTAILS
"LIVE MUSIC"

COZY BAR & LOUNGE

522 PLYMOUTH AVE.

Jimmie and Margaret Fuller, Props.



announcing AFRO AM PIONEERS

a new Black
Culture Series on
KUXL-Radio 1570
1:45 P.M. Saturdays

Produced by
CONNIE L. BOWMAN

Sponsored as a Public Service by
Northern States Power Company



Live it up

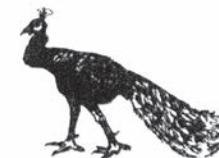
With Jerry (Motormouth) Mack, Popular
M.C., At Popular Bar and Cafe,
PEACOCK ALLEY

Avoid Rush Hour Driving
Stop off for your favorite cocktail
at PEACOCK ALLEY Bar & Cafe
before going home.

- Tuesday Night Dance Contest \$15 1st Prize
- FREE SMORGASBORD, FRIDAY AND SATURDAY 2 TO 6
- FREE PARKING ALL DAY AND NIGHT TILL CLOSING

PEACOCK ALLEY
Bar & Cafe

220 NORTH 5TH STREET

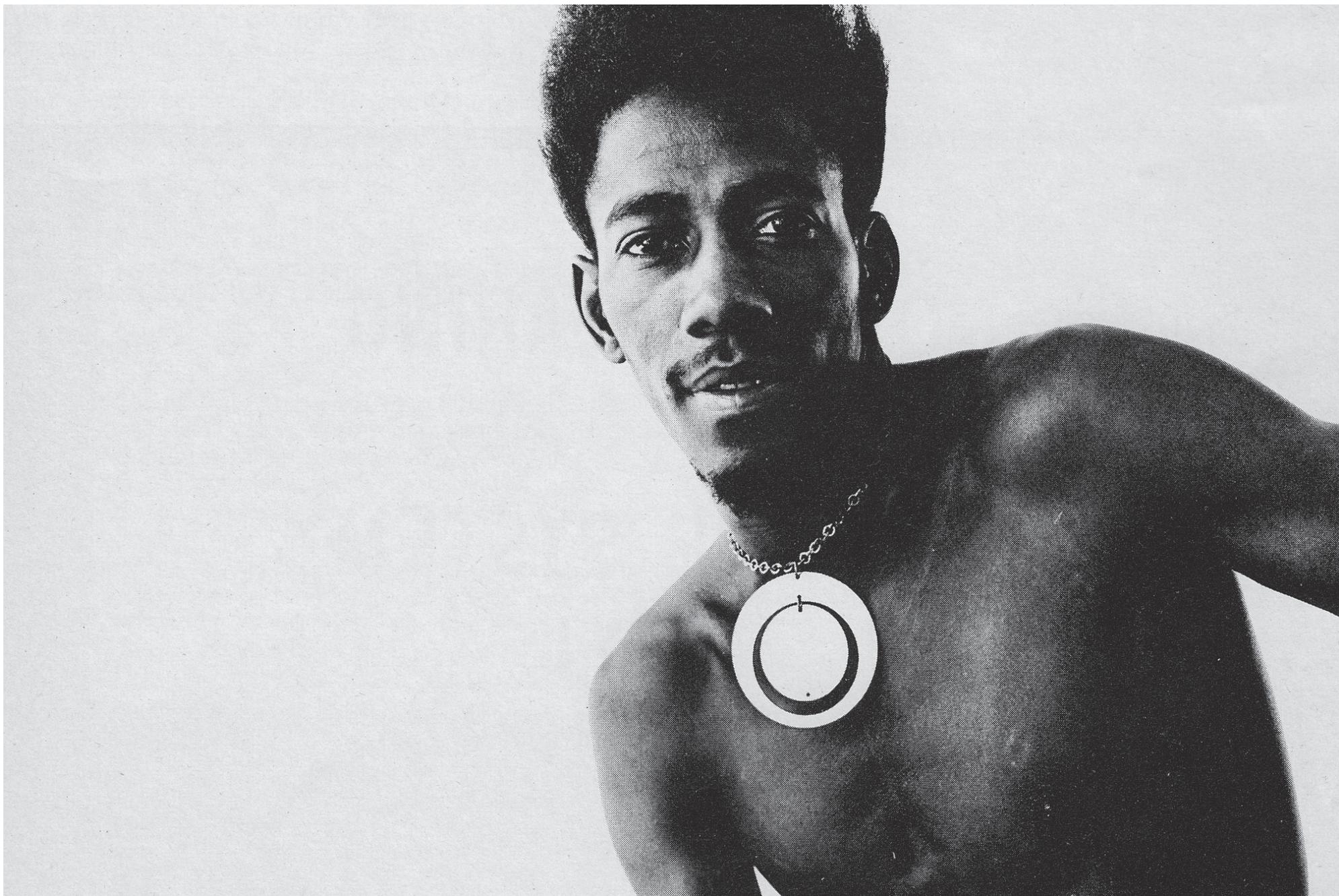


LIVE ENTERTAINMENT SUNDAY
MEMBERS AND THEIR GUESTS

NACIREMA CLUB

3949 Fourth Ave. So.

Above: advertisements from various back issues of the Minneapolis Spokesman courtesy Hennepin County Library, Special Collections with permission from Minneapolis Spokesman-Recorder.



Black and Proud recording artist Maurice McKinnies in *The Insider Magazine*, November 1972. courtesy Hennepin Country Library, Special Collections with permission from Judy Olausen. Photo by Judy Olausen

BLACK AND PROUD RECORDS

The Twin Cities' First Black Owned Record Label

Black & Proud Records was the first African-American run record label in Minnesota. It was spearheaded by Jack Harris, then Program Director at Golden Valley, MN based radio station KUXL. The label had a brief tenure, but was responsible for some of the funkiest recordings in Minnesota history. In total, five 45s were recorded from 1968 to 1969. However, commercial success was elusive, with all but one of the singles selling fewer than 1,000 copies.

The Black & Proud 45s sound rough and urgent. That's because they had limited financial resources and the finished products often came from first or second takes. Donnell Woodson, who played bass with The Exciters on "Do It, To It," recalls spending the three days prior to the recording session practicing the material non-stop, all day long to reduce the number of studio takes. Edgar Murphy, the drummer for the Champions, confirms that they knew the music so well, "We just went off the cuff and played it without charts." These recordings were done primarily at the studio located on Nicollet Ave and 26th St in Minneapolis. "Kay Bank is what it was called. We would all meet over there. My portion of

it was we'd lay down the tracks first and we're done... and then they would do backgrounds and leads," remembers Edgar Murphy.

The first recording put out by Black & Proud Records, "Sock-A-Poo-Poo '69," was recorded in the winter of 1968 by Maurice McKinnies & The Champions. It was written by Jack Harris and Maurice McKinnies, arranged by Jack Harris and Ronnie Scott, and produced by Jack Harris and James B. Hebel. Though Jack had a recording career as an artist, he brought in James Hebel to help produce because "he wanted somebody with some background involved. By this time I had produced for Chess, Checker... and a lot of other companies," remembers James Hebel, adding that one thing about the sessions for "Sock-A-Poo-Poo '69" that stood out was they "cut the A-side [part II] in a studio, and the other side [was] cut in KUXL's production room." Part II was the side pushed as the single, but Part I with it's rawer, grittier feel presents a badder slice of funk.

"Sock-A-Poo-Poo '69" was the only single to reach beyond the borders of Minnesota. Through a relationship at Atlantic Records, Jack Harris was able to get the 45

BLACK AND PROUD RECORDS DISCOGRAPHY

Catalog #	Artist	Title
7111	Maurice McKinnies & The Champions	Sock-A-Poo-Poo '69 (Parts I & II)
7712	Jackie Harris And The Exciters	Do It, To It / Get Funky, Sweat A Little Bit
7713	The Midnight Stompers	King Lover / A New Dance, Solid Cow
7714	Maurice McKinnies & The Champions	Sweet Smell of Perfume/Pouring Water on a Drowning Man
7715	Jackie Harris & The Champions	Work Your Flapper (Parts I & II)



picked up for national distribution. It got regular radio airplay on KUXL in Minnesota during the early months of 1969, in addition to, as James Hebel remembers, “Detroit, and...also Memphis.”

There were at least three pressings of Sock-A-Poo-Poo. The first was with Black and Proud label catalog # 7111 and matrix number 8-9420, one on a white promotional label and the other standard orange label. These were pressed by Kay Bank/Universal Audio with the first digit of the matrix number standing for the last digit of the year, 1968. The second pressing, once again one version exists with an orange label and one with a white promo label, came out when the recording was licensed to Atlantic for distribution. These 45s are on the Black & Proud label, but “DIST. BY ATCO, DIV. OF ATLANTIC RECORDING CORPS” was added along the bottom of the label and the catalog number was changed to 45-1000. The Atlantic pressings changed the matrix number to BP-16107 SP. The BP stands for Black & Proud, 16107 stands for the master number, and SP stands for where it was pressed - Specialty Products, Olyphant, Pennsylvania. At least one other pressing was done by Atlantic. This pressing uses a different font and has the matrix number BP-16107-PL, meaning it was pressed by Plastic Products Inc, Memphis, Tennessee. Like the others, there is a promo version with a white label and a standard orange version. Comparing the master number 16107 with others from the Atlantic catalog, it appears Atlantic assigned the BP prefix to Black and Proud in early 1969.

The second record, “Get Funky, Sweat A Little Bit” b/w “Do It, To It” by Jack Harris, under the stage name “Jackie Harris and The Exciters,” was released in 1969, shortly after the label’s first 45. This record was not picked up for distribution by Atlantic and was not pressed in one of their plants. It was pressed by Kay Bank/Universal Audio and the 9-240 matrix number indicates it was pressed in

early 1969. One highlight from “Get Funky, Sweat A Little Bit” features the band breaking it down and a call and response happening between Jack Harris and a young Herman Jones.

Jack Harris performed as a musician before moving to Minnesota, but once he started working at KUXL his focus changed to being a DJ and promoting groups and shows. KUXL radio personalities had a tradition of promoting black music events, but “Jack Harris came in and took it to another level. He was always at the clubs to talk with the bands and club owners and promote shows,” recalls Herman Jones, the drummer for the Exciters. It was through these events that Jack got to know Maurice McKinnies and The Champions and Jackie Harris. Though Jack did not perform live in Minnesota, he was the emcee for many concerts and was behind the recordings for the Champions and Exciters. “All that stuff [was] Jack. I couldn’t even come up with a name like that! ‘Sock-A-Poo-Poo,’ ‘Work Your Flapper.’ He was coming up with these things to catch people by surprise,” recalls a chuckling Ronnie Scott, the organ player for the Champions.

Record # 7713, The Midnight Stompers’ “King Lover” b/w “A New Dance, Solid Cow” was a one-off sandwiched between the two Jackie Harris and Maurice McKinnies records. It is a blues shuffle featuring vocals, electric guitar, and what sounds like an early drum machine. Both songs featured on the 45 were written by Roger Lewis. Though it was released on Black and Proud records, it shares no musical similarity with the other releases. The UA-415-41859 matrix number likely signifies it too was recorded and pressed by Kay Bank/Universal Audio Recording.

A second 45 from Maurice McKinnies and The Champions and another by Jackie Harris, this time with The Champions, were recorded later in 1969. Black & Proud record # 7714, Maurice McKinnies and The Champions’ “Sweet Smell of Perfume” b/w “Pouring Water on a Drowning Man,” features an original penned by Jack Harris and Al Perkins on the A-side and a cover of the James Carr classic on the flip. Black & Proud record # 7715, Jackie Harris & The Champions’ “Work Your Flapper” Parts I & II, also credits Jack Harris and Al Perkins as writers. All four of these sides list the producers as Al Perkins, S. Johnson, and J. Harris. S. Johnson stands for Syl Johnson, and as Ronnie Scott from the Champions remembers, “Jack and Syl Johnson were good friends...they were producing. Syl would be sitting down and telling us what to do. ‘Here’s what I want to hear on this. Here’s what I want to hear on that.’ He was right there in the studio.” As a radio personality and concert promoter, Jack got to know Syl well as he emceed and promoted several of his shows in the Twin Cities between 1968 and 1970. The record pressing plant inscribed the matrix numbers bp-16108-pl for the Maurice McKinnies 45 and bp-1609-pl (an apparent typo of bp-16109-pl) for the Jackie Harris 45. These matrix numbers fit with the Atlantic pressings of Sock-A-Poo-Poo ‘69 – indi

JAMES HEBEL

Chicago native James Hebel started writing songs at an early age. Before long he formed a band and eventually recorded a demo. As an 18 year old, James shopped the demo around and got a recording contract from Chess Records. Chess was more interested in his producing abilities than putting out records from his group, so from 1964 to 1966 James was the low guy on staff, but he was involved, saw, and worked with all of the guys that came through. In particular, he worked with Jackie Ross, Little Milton Campbell, and Billy Stewart. Before and after his time at Chess, James produced records independently and got to know people in various markets. His best friend Ed was a regional promotional man for several major labels. At that time, Ed worked the midwest and knew Jack Harris. It was this connection that led to James being at the sessions. James says he knew Jack Harris for all of a couple days. He flew up there, and got to know him and the band a little in November or December and stayed with Maurice and his family for a couple nights. When the sessions were done he flew back home. James eventually switched to broadcasting and his path crossed with Jack years later in Flint, Michigan.

cating they were pressed by Plastic Products Inc, Memphis, Tennessee, the same plant that pressed records for Sun, Hi, and Stax.

In late 1970, Jack Harris was hired to become Program Director at KOWH in Omaha, Nebraska. Jack recalls Hall of Fame pitcher Bob Gibson buying a country station, wanting someone to run it as a soul station, and offering Jack the position. This move marked the end of Black & Proud Records.

JACK HARRIS

Jack Harris was born in Chicago, Illinois in 1936. He began playing piano at age five and picked up singing and drums by the time he was in college. Jack’s first experience with recording came with his group Jack Harris and The Arabians, a band put together while Jack attended Lincoln University in Missouri. They performed regionally in Missouri and Illinois, and recorded their only 45, “Dog Wild,” on Bill Erman’s Cortland/Witch Record label in 1962. Jack played drums and also sang on the recording. When Jack left Lincoln University he returned to Chicago and he met Al Perkins in 1963. Al was a producer at USA Records, a recording artist, and a promoter. He encouraged Jack to get further into recording and helped set up some of his first recording sessions, including “Roll Your Wheels” on Charles Colbert’s Tip Top Records, and Jack’s most successful recording, “No Kind of Man.” Jack wrote the song and it was recorded by Al Perkins at USA Recording Studios on 48th and State St, but it was put out by Chess,



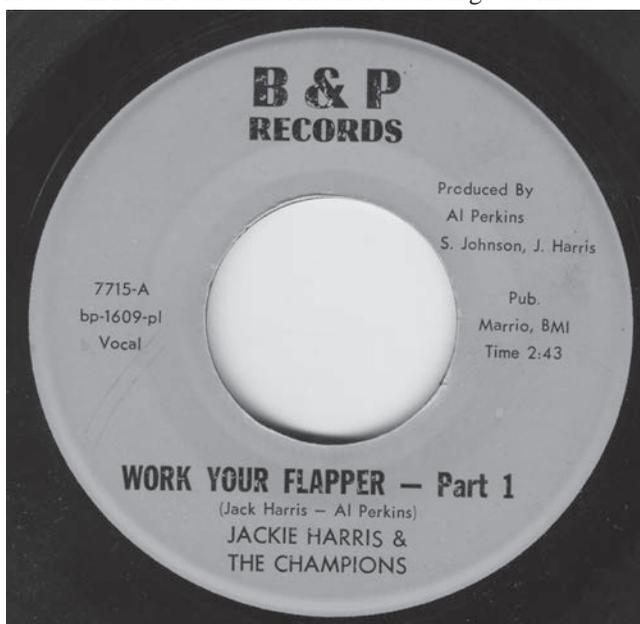
Jack Harris at KUXL, January 1969. Photo from the Minneapolis Star courtesy Minnesota Historical Society

rather than USA Records. Jack recalls that Al, “who was a real go getter, went right in the door past Billy Davis, who was A&R, and went straight to Phil and Leonard Chess and said ‘I want you to hear this,’ and they took it right there. They had his name on the record as a writer but I actually wrote the record.” Chess signed Jack Harris and “No Kind of Man,” released in 1965, had a good amount of success getting a lot of airplay on WVON in Chicago and by John R. at WLAC in Nashville. Another recording was made

with Chess, this time at their studio, but never released. More might have come from this recording contract, but Jack remembers, “Billy Davis was the A&R man and when he left it was not so good for me.”

Over the years, Al Perkins and Jack Harris became close friends, collaborating off and on for over a decade. In 1968, Jack Harris moved to Minneapolis. Within a few days of moving, he had a night time job at Honeywell, but was immediately interested in KUXL, the only radio station in the Twin Cities that gave significant airtime to black music. After spending many days hanging around the KUXL building in Golden Valley, Jack got a chance to host a show in the spring of 1968, taking on the moniker “Daddy Soul.” It wasn’t long before Jack became program director of KUXL, and by the end of the year the first Black & Proud recording had been made. In late 1970, Hall of Famer Bob Gibson started a radio station in Omaha, Nebraska and asked Jack to help run it. His departure marked the end of Black & Proud records, though he went on to produce other records while living in Detroit. During his career in radio, Jack spent time at WNOV in Milwaukee, WBOP in Florida, and WHAT in Philadelphia. His career has included living in Flint, Michigan and working to fight poverty, owning radio stations in Nebraska and Ohio, owning clubs, and publishing newspapers. At one time, Jack “had 7 businesses - Nightclubs, radio stations, newspaper, Papa Jack’s Limousine Service, One Stop Music Store, etc...”

Jack Harris also brought in and promoted concerts



AL PERKINS

Al Perkins was born in Brookhaven, Mississippi in 1930. He was heavily involved in music throughout his life. He spent time in Chicago as a band leader and producer, as well as Radio DJ personality and promoter. Over a dozen 45s feature Al as a recording artist, and dozens more were produced or written by him. Though he was also a DJ in Memphis, Al was most famous as a radio personality on WJLB in Detroit. Though Jack Harris and Al Perkins collaborated many times, his involvement in Black & Proud was more akin to a silent partner, never visiting Minnesota during the recordings. It was the relationship that Jack and Al formed prior to Black & Proud that led to Al Perkins receiving credit on several 45s. Evidence of this is that all of the original songs on Black & Proud were published by Jack Harris’ Marrio publishing company, rather than Al Perkins’ Perks Music. Sadly, Al Perkins died in Detroit in 1983.

in Minnesota by national acts like Al Green, the Impressions, Mary Wells, and Syl Johnson. He often worked with Dean Constantine at King Solomon’s Mines, on the bottom level of the Foshay tower in downtown Minneapolis. He also worked closely with The Cozy Bar in North Minneapolis. Jack remembers, “I learned a lot about clubs from Jimmy Fuller... we were really good friends... but more than anything we had a lot of respect for each other and I learned so much from him.” Because there weren’t a lot of clubs to work with, Jack had to get creative with venues. They really had to make their own places to play. One venue that saw a lot of shows was the Honeywell Union Hall on Portland Ave. The first gig The Blazers played with their new keyboard player, Ronnie Scott, was at the Honeywell Union Hall. “Jack Harris had a lot of dances up there. We played behind Garland Green there and he had his music awards, the Jackie Awards there in 1969,” remembers Ronnie Scott.

The Connie Awards were the precursor to the Minnesota Music Awards. Connie Hechter who was behind Connie’s Insider, a regional periodical that was a cross between Billboard magazine and Rolling Stone, started the annual awards ceremony to highlight achievements in the Minnesota music industry. Feeling that black musicians were mostly left out of the Connie Awards, Jack Harris put on the Jackie Awards in 1969 as a battle of the bands combined with award ceremony.

THE EXCITERS

In 1963, Leroy Hawkins, Wilbert Dugas, and cousins Jimmy and Arthur Williams were playing basement parties and church festivals as The Gladiators. They started picking up momentum and gaining popularity with young crowds. Soon they came to the attention of James Martin, who was looking for a group to back other singers. Impressed with the young group, he became their manager. An illness forced Wilbert Dugas to leave the band and the search for a replacement began.

Leroy Hawkins was born in Alabama and moved

to the Rondo neighborhood of St. Paul at the age of 12. He lived across the street from Herman Jones, born in Mississippi but a Minnesotan since the age of 4. Herman and Leroy were one year apart in school and became close friends. Factor in that manager James Martin was friends with Herman Jones' father, and it was logical for Herman to be recruited. The solidified lineup of the newly christened Exciters consisted entirely of St. Paul Mechanic Arts High School students: Herman Jones (Drums), Leroy Hawkins (Guitar), Jimmy "D" Williams (Bass), and Arthur "Dude" Williams (Guitar). The Gladiators, and later the Exciters, were a backing band in a similar sense as the MGs or the Bar-Kays; for years there was a revolving door of singers, including Keno "Little K" Gibson, Professor McKinney, Charles Johnson, Willie Morris, Tony and Eileen Van, Carol Williams, and Jimmy Hughes.

It was by way of James Martin and the world of gospel that Willie Walker began singing with the Exciters in 1965. James Martin was born in South Carolina, started singing gospel at a young age, and moved to Minnesota with his family in 1955, when he was 17. In Minnesota, James sang with the gospel group the Friendly Five. In the late 1950s, The Mighty Golden Voices from Dallas, TX came up to Minnesota and busted up. The remaining members asked James to join their group. By the early sixties The Mighty Golden Voices made a change from gospel music to secular music and became The Amazers. It was at this point that James Martin transitioned from a singing member of the group to the role of manager. During the time the Exciters were managed by Martin, they opened for The Amazers as well as some of the biggest names in R&B as they came through the Twin Cities. The Amazers were an enormously popular local group - drawing the admiration of Curtis Mayfield, who signed them to a recording contract that sadly only yielded one 45 via his Thomas label - and as they grew, James had less and less time to dedicate to managing the Exciters, eventually giving managerial duties to Herman's dad.

From 1963 to 1967, the Exciters had a consistent lineup, but the rhythm section did experience one change. Inspired by bands with bigger, fuller sounds, Leroy Hawkins switched from guitar to the Hammond organ. In 1967, Leroy joined the Air Force and was replaced on organ by Wilbur Cole. Jimmy Williams joined the Amazers on bass in 1967, creating room for Donnell Woodson. Donnell was a native of Missouri but moved to Minneapolis and went to high school at Vocational in Minneapolis. He originally played piano but picked up bass and was taught by Donald Breedlove and Jerry Hubbard. This lineup remained the same until the break up in 1970.

The Exciters traveled to Memphis and Muscle Shoals, Alabama with Willie Walker with the aim of recording original material while he was under contract with Goldwax. Herman Jones said that, "Originally we were supposed to be on the recording for 'Ticket to Ride.' That's why we traveled down and were there for the session." But Goldwax opted for their regular studio musicians to maintain the label's sound, and as Wilbur Cole remembers, "We went in there and played what Willie needed and turned the session players loose." Donnell recalls that they had a second opportunity to record original material down in Muscle Shoals which vanished after their manager (Herman's dad) passed away. The sole recording for the Exciters is Black & Proud Records catalog # 7712 - Jackie Harris & The

Exciters "Do It, To It" b/w "Get Funky, Sweat A Little Bit."

Though their recording career was very limited, The Exciters opened for some of the biggest names in Soul as their tours came through the Twin Cities: Ike & Tina Turner, The Temptations, and The Impressions, and backed Jimmy Reed, Al Green, and others. The Champions and the Exciters were unique in that they had enough work to support playing music full-time. While they were in high school they practiced from 5 pm to 9 pm five days a week at James Martin's house. During that time, the Western Lounge in St. Paul was a sort of home base. "We played over there on Mondays, Wednesdays, whenever. Because that's where we honed our craft," remembers Leroy Hawkins. "On weekends James had us booked at high schools, hotels... but we'd always go back there," inserts Herman Jones. In conversation with Wilbur Cole, Herman Jones recalls "I never had to have a job. That's all we did. Playing five to six nights a week we got pretty deep. We learned records note for note, beat for beat." And Wilbur Cole adds, "We were trying to hold up a standard, because some artists didn't want to come to Minnesota to play at all, and others would call us corn fed. And we had to put an end to that. So you come in here, and we open the show, you weren't going to go back home clowning on us."

In 1970, the Exciters went up to Canada and separated. Herman Jones went on the road with Gene Williams and the Sweetback Band playing drums, then joined Steve Crowe in Zulu, and eventually took on lead vocal duties in a reformed version of the Exciters in the middle 1970s. Herman Jones continues to play today with his group, My Funk Brother. Arthur Williams lives in California, Wilbur Cole played with Maurice McKinnies and Free System, Navajo Train, Band of Thieves, and continues to play today. Donnell Woodson played with Maurice McKinnies in the early 1970s, and continues to play bass in various groups. Leroy Hawkins, upon returning from the Air Force, played in the church and has continued for the last 40 years.

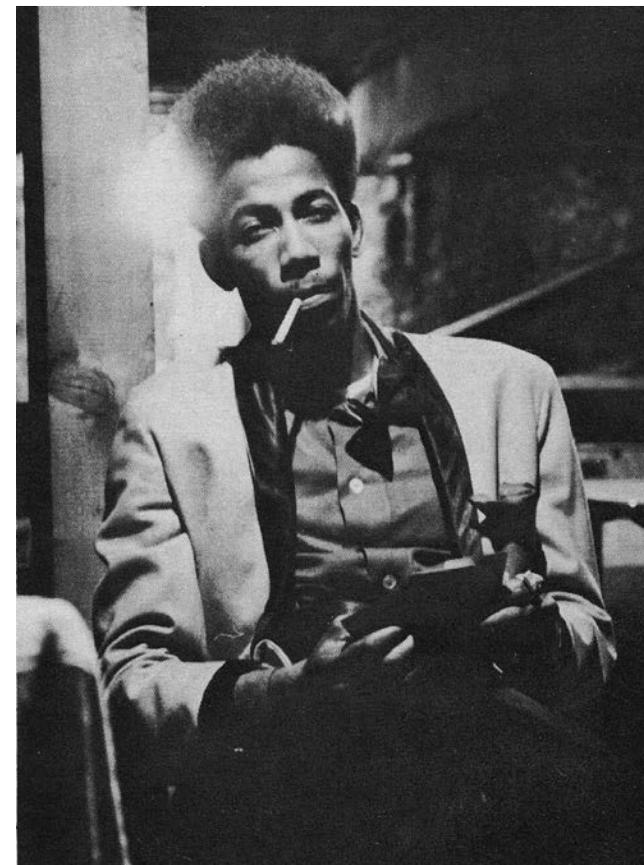
MAURICE MCKINNIES

Maurice McKinnies was born in Pensacola, Florida in 1944. He started on drums, but by high school he was playing guitar. At 16 he was picked up by touring act Big Maybelle and stayed with the tour for six months, finally stopping in Chicago. When he was 17, after touring with Eugene Church, he moved up to the Twin Cities to join the rest of his family. The first group he was in locally was the Big M's with Buddy and Walker Munson. In 1961, Maurice formed the earliest version of the Blazers with their first show being at the Prom Ballroom.

From 1963 to 1966, Maurice was in the army. When he returned, he restarted the Blazers, this time with Steve Crowe on bass and Edgar Murphy on drums. Ronnie Scott joined later and Donald Breedlove joined after him. It was this version of the Blazers that became the Champions and recorded on Black & Proud records. The Champions lasted until the end of 1969. After the Exciters and Champions broke up, former Exciters Donnell Woodson and Wilbur Cole played with Maurice McKinnies. Finally, Maurice McKinnies put together his last group while in Minnesota: Free System. The band included Wilbur Cole on organ, James "Creeper" Vasquez on drums, Jimmy Hughes on bass, and Bob Hughes on sax.

In the mid-1970s, Maurice left Minnesota, tired of limited opportunities that black bands faced in the Twin

Cities. He gradually moved out west and settled in the Bay Area. Ted Wysinger remembers playing at the Shalimar in Berkeley in 1975. "When Maurice walked in, nobody knew him, and he asked to sit in with the band and tore the house up... and that started a 15 year [collaboration] with him." Maurice played with Ted Wysinger (bass), Maurice



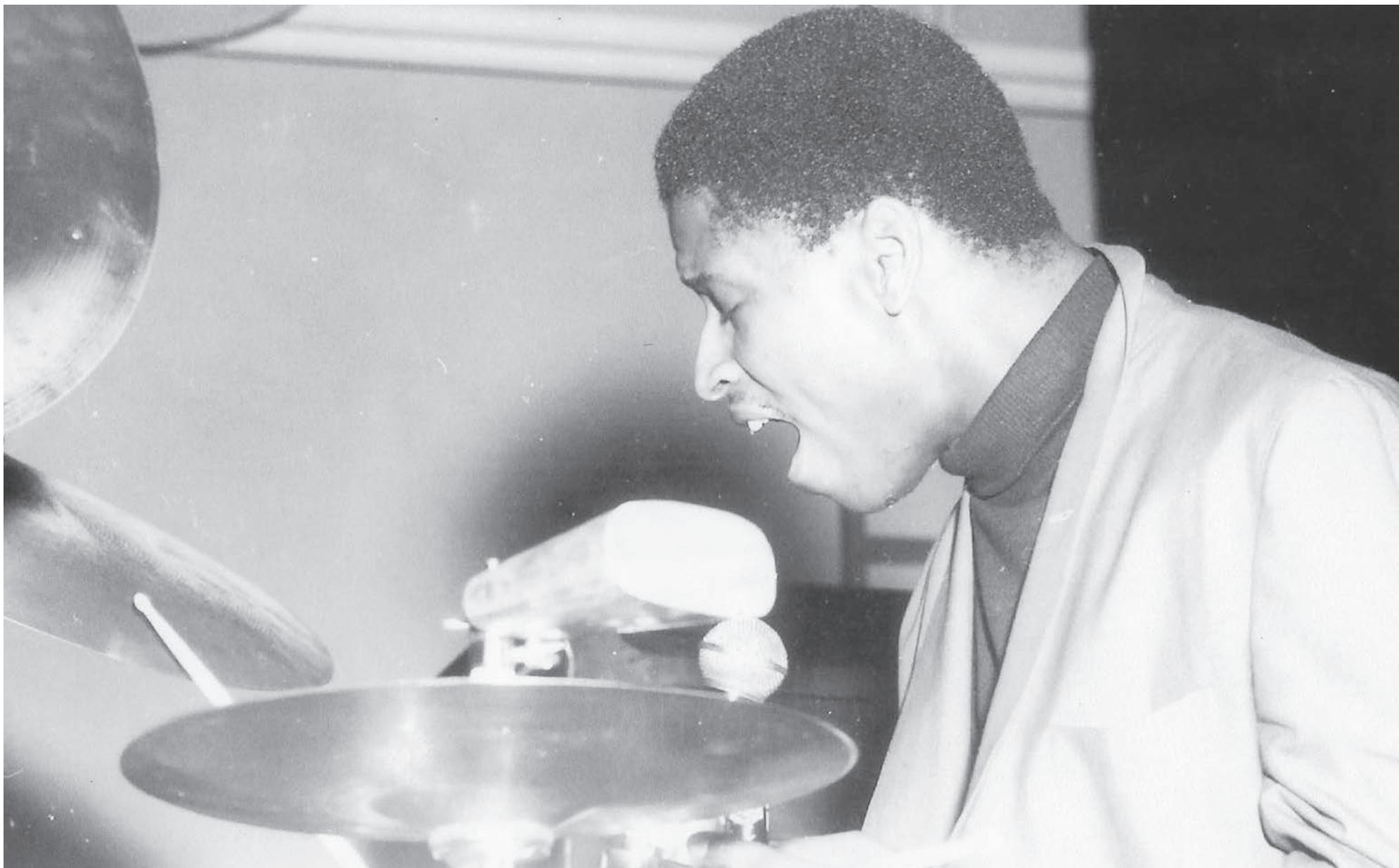
Maurice McKinnies, November 1972 issue of *The Insider Magazine* courtesy Hennepin County Library, Special Collections with permission from Judy Olausen. Photo by Judy Olausen.

Kemp(drums), and Mark Naftalin (keyboard) throughout the 1970s and 1980s. Maurice still lives in California today but is no longer active musically.

THE CHAMPIONS

The Blazers was the name Maurice McKinnies gave his back up bands starting in 1961. The Champions were originally called the Blazers, but Jack Harris "changed the name because we were Maurice McKinnies and The Blazers," remembers Ronnie Scott, and Dyke and The Blazers had already achieved commercial success. Like the Exciters, they were a backing band from St. Paul. Steve Crowe and Edgar Murphy, also graduates from St. Paul Mechanic Arts High School, were chosen by Maurice McKinnies in 1966, upon his return from military service, to be his new rhythm section for the Blazers. They played together for about a year before adding Ronnie Scott on keyboards.

Ronnie reflects that, "When Harvey [Scales and The Seven Sounds] came in town with horns, moving, dancing like the temptations, and him putting on that show, and the type of clothing they had on, everybody said 'hey, we've got to bump it up and get horns and everything'... it changed the whole concept." Soon they brought in Voyle Harris on trumpet, Bob Hughes on sax, Aldean Adams on lead guitar, and put Maurice out front. Aldean wasn't with the band long and Edgar Murphy adds, "Once we hired Donald Breedlove on guitar it was show time all the way.



Blazers drummer Edgar Murphy circa 1968 courtesy Edgar Murphy

Maurice didn't play guitar anymore and Gwen Matthews would come up and do three or four songs and bring up Maurice and he would be the front man." Maurice came up as a blues singer and they "always wanted to be a band that could cover a lot of things," remembers Steve Crowe, so they brought in other singers to be able to perform more material.

"We brought Gene Williams into the group. His band broke up. He had Gene Williams and The Backsliders. Because... the original band, the bass player, the drummer, and the guitar player all their dads were ministers, so they called themselves Gene Williams and The Backsliders," says Ronnie Scott and Steve Crowe adds, "They were trying to do a Sam & Dave and they were really good at it!" Gene Williams sang with the group briefly. On occasion The Champions backed a girl group that featured Wilma Carter (Maurice's future wife), Charlesetta Irvin (Steve Crowe's girlfriend), and Wanda Davis. In late 1969, The Champions broke up, but not before recording three 45s for Black & Proud Records – two with Maurice McKinnies and one backing Jackie Harris. Ricky Washington sometimes filled in for Edgar Murphy when he couldn't make a gig. And the same went for recording. Edgar Murphy played on "Sock-A-Poo-Poo '69," "Sweet Smell of Perfume," and

"Pouring Water on A Drowning Man," but Ricky Washington played on "Work Your Flapper."

The Champions were one of the few black bands in the Twin Cities that could book enough gigs to be a full-time band. "That's all we did was play, more so than a lot of the groups. We were working five to six nights a week," Ronnie Scott recalls. They traveled a lot to Rock Island, Illinois, Waterloo and Des Moines, Iowa and other places. In addition to backing Maurice McKinnies, being a rhythm section of drums, bass, and keyboards, the Blazers/Champions found a lot of work backing regional and national acts that came through town.

These singers would often come alone or with minimal backing and need a rhythm section. They played behind Al Green when *Backup Train* came out, and several times after that. They also were in demand by organizations like the city of Minneapolis. Ronnie Scott and Steve Crowe remember, "Martin Luther King Jr. had been assassinated and we were playing at King Solomon's Mines... that night we finished playing and the whole city shut down, and to keep the tension down we played over at the University of Minnesota quite a few times. Sometimes two to three times a day." They played all kinds of dances to keep the tensions down. They got to the point where they were complaining

about working too much!

Image for the Blazers was very important. "Our manager, Willie Scott, believed in certain things – we had to have this. We had to look like that. Back then with the Temptations and all that everyone was wearing uniforms, so Willie always wanted us to look like a million dollars... We went to the tuxedo shop, we'd get the red jacket, white jacket, black jacket, the pants, and you could interchange all this stuff. We could play a club five nights a week and never wear the same thing," remembers Ronnie Scott. This dress code stayed until the end of the group. By 1970, the Blazers went their separate ways. Voyle Harris went on to play with Willie and The Bees, while Donald Breedlove went to Navajo Train, then Band of Thieves and many other groups before passing in 2012. Edgar Murphy joined the Mystics and Steve Crowe joined the group Zulu. Ricky Washington went on to Navajo Train as did Ronnie Scott before continuing on to Our Father's Children, and Joe Savage. Scott retired from music for a time in the seventies and eighties. Edgar, Steve, Ricky, and Ronnie still play today in various groups.



WANDA DAVIS

Minnesota's Queen of Soul

Wanda Davis was born and raised in Shreveport, Louisiana. She grew up singing in church choirs and harmonizing with her sisters and brother. After graduating from high school in 1967, Wanda moved up to Minneapolis to live with her cousins. She spent her days working at Honeywell, but at night her and her cousins began going to clubs like Dirty Girty's, The Cozy, the Blue Note, and King Solomon's Mines to listen to live music. It wasn't long before she was sitting in on sets as a singer. Eventually she became part of a singing group that included Charlesetta Irvin, who was dating bassist Steve Crowe (The Blazers), and Wilma Carter, who later married Maurice McKinnies.

During the late 1960s and early 1970s, Wanda performed with the Soul Sensations, The Project Soul Band, and Maurice McKinnies and The Blazers. The organ player for the Blazers, Ronnie Scott, remembers when his band first heard Wanda. A pair of concert promoters, brothers Frank and Joe Jackson, brought her to sing in front of them. The band was extremely impressed and as a result invited her to collaborate with them many times. It was through her work with The Blazers that Wanda would perform frequently with Gwen Matthews, a regularly featured vocalist for the group.

Ricky Washington (Navajo Train/Valdons drummer) started playing with Wanda Davis under unusual circumstances. He would sometimes fill in when Edgar Murphy couldn't make a show with the Blazers. Eventually he got to know Gwen and Wanda through these gigs, and played with Wanda's band alongside bassist Larry Weldon for a couple months. Ricky Washington recalls that Gwen got him on the recording sessions with Wanda when Edgar Murphy couldn't make it. Little did he or anyone else know, but those sessions would produce one of the most collectible soul 45s to ever come out of the region.

In the summer of 1969, local R&B band Project Soul put on a concert at the Honeywell Union Hall on Portland Ave and 26th St in Minneapolis. The show featured Wanda Davis performing songs made famous by Aretha Franklin. Soon after, the short lived Project Soul Records released the one and only 45 credited to Wanda Davis, "Save Me" b/w "Take Care". Both songs were originally released in 1967, the former by Aretha Franklin, and the latter by June Conquest.

The record did not have the kind of commercial success that they hoped. After the recording was made, Wanda continued to sing at birthday parties, celebrations, and with church choirs, but she gradually went away from booking shows with bands. After about 10 years of living in Minnesota, Wanda moved back south. First she returned to Louisiana, working for AT&T. She then moved to Texas in the mid-1980s. Today Wanda is enjoying retired life, singing in church, and thinking about writing a book and possibly recording some more music.

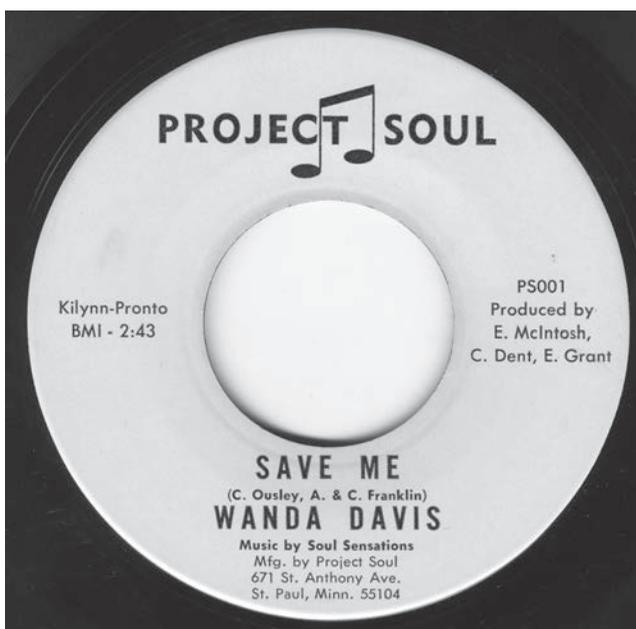
**Wanda Davis Does
Aretha Franklin**
Project Soul will present Miss
Wanda Davis singing selections



WANDA DAVIS
which the recording artist Aretha
Franklin has made popular.

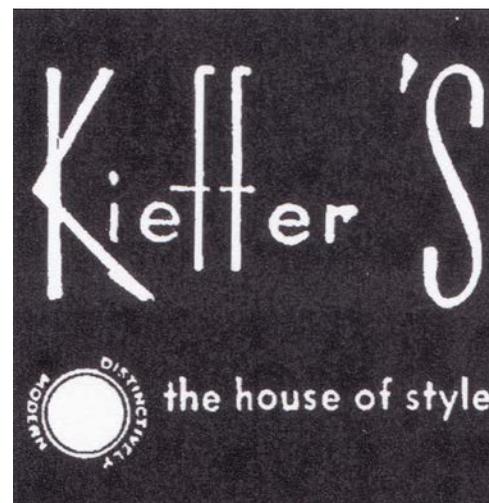
This big show and dance will be held Saturday, August 9th from 8:30 p.m. to 1 a.m. at the Honeywell Union Hall, 2636 Portland, Minneapolis. Free cocktails will be from 9 p.m. to 10 p.m. Admission \$1.50. Music will be furnished by the Project Soul Band.

—Advt.
Spokesman ad July 31, 1969 with permission
from Spokesman-Recorder



Top: Wanda Performing live in 1970 courtesy Wanda Davis

Bottom: Wilma Carter, Wanda Davis, Charlesetta Irvin, Steve Crowe courtesy Edgar Murphy



Spokesman ad for clothing store in Minneapolis that was popular with R&B bands



The Valdons press kit photo circa 1971 courtesy Ricky Washington. Left to right: Napoleon Crayton, Monroe Wright, Bill Clark, Clifton Curtis

THE VALDONS

Bringing The Funk To The Twin Cities And Beyond

The Valdons have an incredible backstory, involving some of the most prominent R&B musicians from the Twin Cities. The recordings featured on this compilation come from the second incarnation of the Valdons, featuring Monroe Wright, William Clark, Clifton Curtis, and Napoleon Crayton. The original “Val-Dons” go back to the early 1960s, and have only a small connection to the latter.

Around 1962, there was a group called the Val-Dons, which at various points included vocalists Joe Dibiaso, Timothy Eason, John Booker Arradondo, Jimmy Crittenden, Jerry Owens, and Willie Walker, guitarist Willie Murphy, piano player Walter Smith, and drummer Bill Lordan. One fantastic similarity between the early Val-Dons and the latter

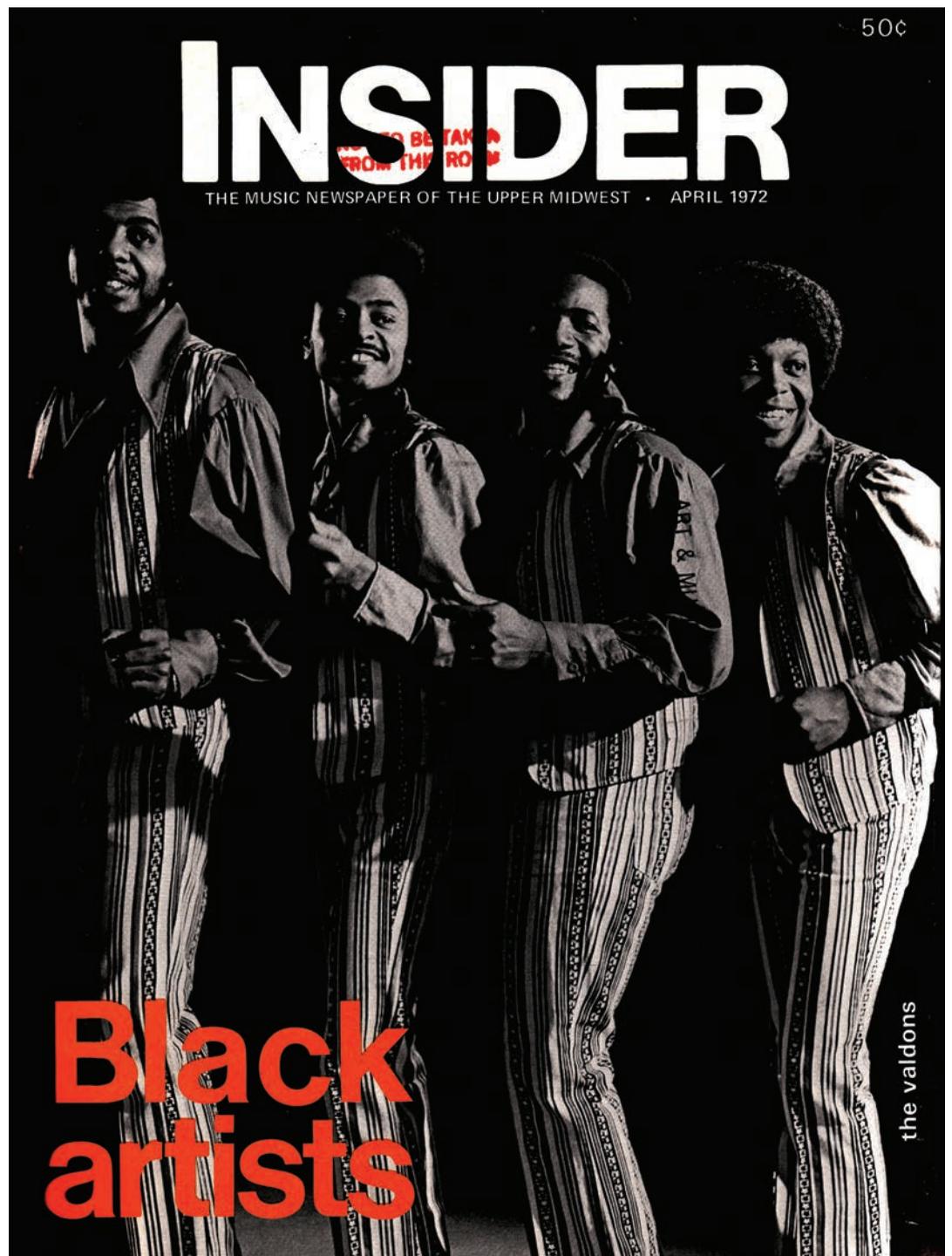
Valdons is that the foundation for both groups began years apart in the military. Timothy Eason was born in Minnesota and served in the Navy, returning in the early 1960s. He met Joe Dibiaso, a native New Yorker, in the service and together they moved to Minnesota to start the group. At the same time, Willie Murphy was graduating from high school and playing with Bill Lordan and John Booker Arradondo semi-regularly at Mattie’s Barbecue as the Versatiles. Soon they connected with Joe and Timothy in the Val-Dons. Later, Timothy Eason and Jimmy Crittenden saw Willie Walker in a laundromat and asked him to join. The group played R&B in the popular Doo-Wop and Soul styles and were pretty popular around town, but Joe Dibiaso left the group and returned to **(continued on pg. 19)**



The Cozy Bar late 60s courtesy Jimmy Fuller, Jr.



The Cozy Bar late 60s courtesy Jimmy Fuller, Jr.



April 1972 cover of The Insider courtesy Hennepin County Library, Special Collections with permission from Mike Barich and the editors of The Insider. Photo by Mike Barich. From left to right: Bill Clark, Monroe Wright, Napoleon Crayton, Clifton Curtis



Edgar Murphy (drums) and Maurice McKinnies (guitar) live in Centerville, Iowa May 1967 courtesy Edgar Murphy



The Blazers live at The Cozy Bar August 1968. Left to right: Donald Breedlove, Maurice McKinnies, Edgar Murphy courtesy Edgar Murphy



Maurice McKinnies November 1967 courtesy Edgar Murphy



The Blazers 1969 Left to right: Ronnie Scott, Aldean Adams, Steve Crowe, Bob Hughes, Voyle Harris, Edgar Murphy courtesy Edgar Murphy



The Riverview Supper Club, North Minneapolis, late 70s courtesy Minnesota Historical Society. Photo by Charles Chamblis.



The Riverview Supper Club, North Minneapolis, late 70s courtesy Minnesota Historical Society. Photo by Charles Chamblis.



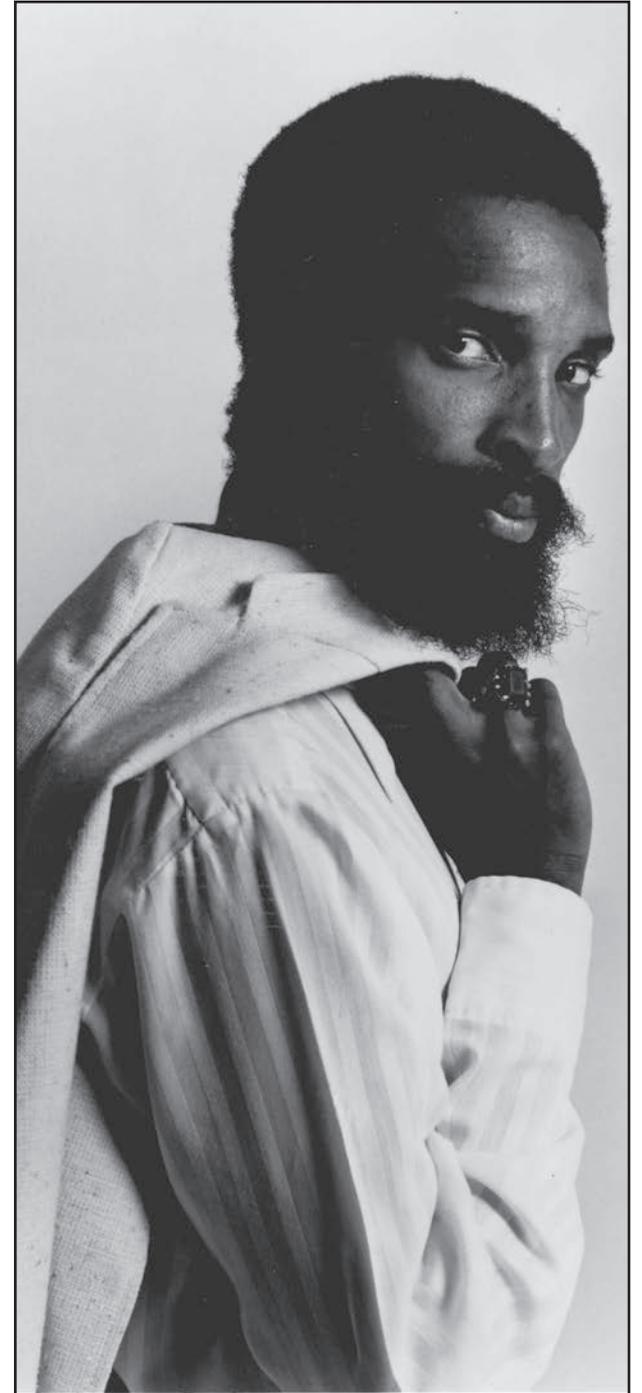
Dance contest at The Riverview Supper Club, North Minneapolis, late 70s courtesy Minnesota Historical Society. Photo by Charles Chamblis.



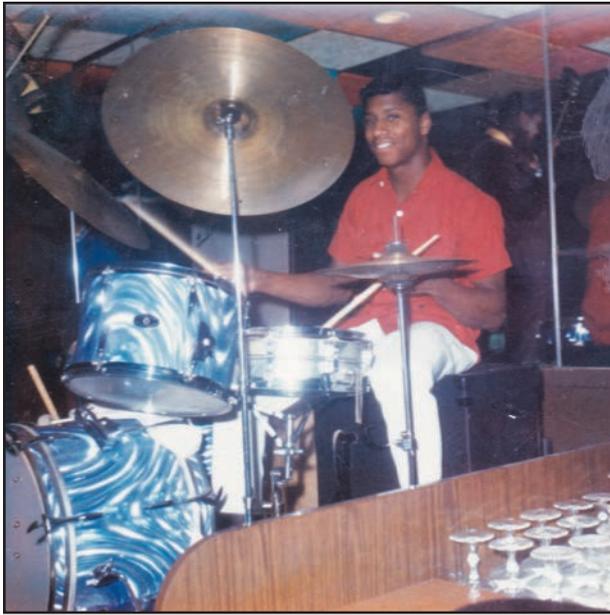
Gwen Matthews and Donald Breedlove at The Cozy Bar late 60s courtesy Edgar Murphy



Steve Crowe playing bass with the Blazers at The Cozy Bar circa 1968 courtesy Minnesota Historical Society. Photo by Mike Zerby



Herman Jones publicity photo after reforming the Exciters in the mid 1970s courtesy Herman Jones



Edgar Murphy (The Blazers) at the Cozy Bar circa 1968
courtesy Edgar Murphy



Ricky Washington (Navajo Train) circa 1972 courtesy Ricky Washington



Pierre Lewis late 1970s courtesy Minnesota Historical Society. Photo by Charles Chamblis



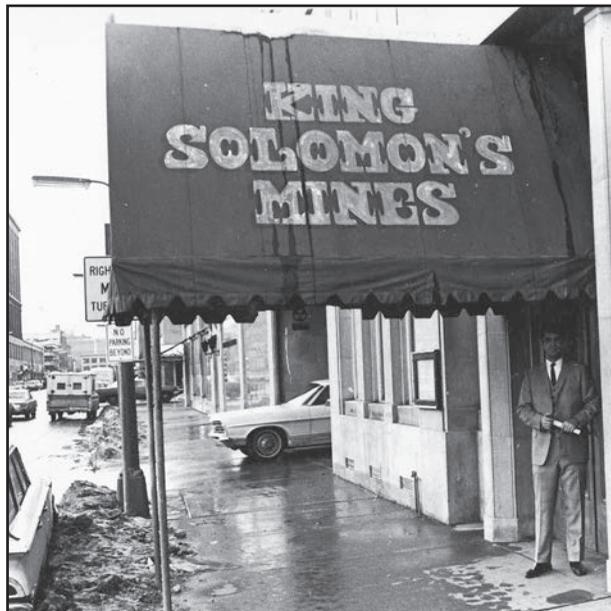
Maurice McKinnies November 1972 courtesy Judy Olausen.
Photo by Judy Olausen



Edgar Murphy (left) and Maurice McKinnies (right) April 1967 courtesy Edgar Murphy



Maurice McKinnies November 1972 courtesy Judy Olausen.
Photo by Judy Olausen

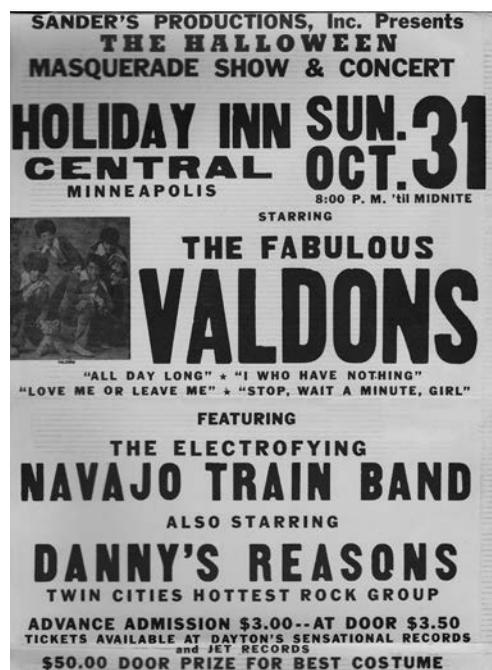


Club owner Dean Constantine at his downtown venue, King Solomon's Mines circa 1968 courtesy Dean Constantine

(continued from pg. 14) New York to be with his family and soon they broke up. Though they only stayed together for a handful of years, the Val-Dons' name didn't die!

When the Val-Dons would rehearse at the Waite House, a young Clifton Curtis could be seen watching and listening intently. Clifton wanted to sing with The Val-Dons, but was too young to be a member. At the beginning of the next decade, Clifton Curtis would ask Booker Arradondo to use this name for a vocal group he had in the works. Clifton was born in Iowa and moved to Minneapolis when he was eight, eventually graduating from South High School. He sang in a few local groups before joining the Air Force in 1966. At a military talent show, Clifton, Monroe Wright, and Maurice Young came together for the first time to sing. The thing about military bands is that unexpected transfers happen frequently. By 1970, Clifton was singing with Monroe, Maurice, William H. Clark, and Charles Brown. At that point they had an eight piece backing group called the Total Sounds. The four piece rhythm section was made up of military personnel, and the four piece horn section consisted of music majors from the University of Southern Alabama. Clifton was discharged before the other singers and returned to Minnesota. Meanwhile, Monroe and William were in Mobile, Alabama performing locally and continued living there when their military service ended.

The Valdons was the name of the singing group, but an equally important part of the sound was the backing group, Navajo Train. During the 1960s there was a strong connection between musical groups in Milwaukee, Wisconsin and the Twin Cities. Harvey Scales & The Seven Sounds and The Esquires from Milwaukee were big draws in the Twin Cities, and The Amazers from Minneapolis were a big draw in Milwaukee. The proximity of these cities made collaborations relatively easy. Navajo Train was formed in Milwaukee by horn players Charles and Perry Moorer as a backing band for The Esquires. By 1970, Donald Breedlove and Ricky Washington, each former Blazers, and Toby Zeno, previously from the Amazers, had played gigs as Navajo Train in support of the Esquires.



1971 concert poster courtesy Ricky Washington

When Clifton Curtis returned to Minnesota, along with trumpet player Leonard Stratford from the

Total Sounds, former Val-Dons Booker Arradondo and Jerry Owens were putting together a group called "Funk & Soul." Clifton, organist Ronnie Scott, drummer Maurice Kemp, guitarist Beaver Shelby, and bassist Toby Zeno all started rehearsing under this new name. The band kept expanding. Toby Zeno had become good friends with the Moorer brothers and they brought the horn section up from Milwaukee. The group became too big to support via locals gigs and Ronnie Scott recalls, "The band 'Funk & Soul' stayed together for about six months before it separated. Maurice Kemp went to San Francisco, and Ricky Washington became the new drummer. Beaver and Toby moved on (though Toby later returned) and Donald Breedlove and Edward Brown took their places, and Leonard Stratford



returned to Mobile." This core group joined with the horns from Milwaukee, calling themselves Navajo Train. Around the same time, the Amazers busted up and Napoleon Crayton started rehearsing with the new group. Still, they weren't booking many gigs.

Ronnie Scott, the organ player, remembers how Navajo Train and The Valdons first came together. Leonard Stratford called him from Mobile, Alabama and said, "Why don't you come down. I'm trying to put a band together to play behind these singers." Ronnie quickly points out, "You don't carry a B3 cross-country to find out there's nothing going on," so Ronnie talked with the rhythm section from Navajo Train about the offer. Donald Breedlove, Ricky Washington, Ed Brown, and him recruited Napoleon Crayton to come, too. They got in a van and went down to Mobile, Alabama confident knowing, in Ronnie's words, "We had a rhythm section and a monster singer (Napoleon). If things didn't work out down there...we'd find different places to play and get back home."

A short time later, Clifton came down and rejoined the group. Show bands in the south at that time had stiff competition and it was hard to stand out. They were not getting as much work as they wanted, so Navajo Train and The Valdons relocated to Minnesota. Maurice was still in the service, so when the Valdons first came to Minneapolis on January 24, 1971 the singers were Clifton, Napoleon, William, and Monroe. Their first gigs back in Minneapolis were at the Cozy Bar, and then they moved to the New City Opera House, formally known as Mr. Lucky's, and their

popularity took off because people in Minnesota were not used to seeing those types of choreographed moves and outfits, with big powerful rhythm and horn sections.

Navajo Train had a lot of personnel changes in the horn section. Between 1970 and 1971, Leonard Stratford (trumpet), Morris Wilson (sax), and native Milwaukeeans George Dickerson (trumpet), Charles Moorer (trumpet), and Perry Moorer (Sax) played with the group. After Leonard Stratford, the Moorer brothers, and George Dickerson left, Navajo Train needed a new horn section. They found it one day at a music store while looking for a new PA system. They came across trombone player Bob Hagglund, trumpet player Doug "Dag" Dupree, and their friend from school, John Dolan, and asked them to play alongside Morris Wilson. By this point, they had also added percussionist Frankie McMillan.

In 1971, Bill Sanders became their manager. He spent a lot of money to keep the band looking sharp with matching suits, and he also funded the recording of their only 45. It was recorded at Sound 80 in 1971 with Monroe Wright, William Clark, Clifton Curtis, and Napoleon Crayton on vocals, the newly recruited horn section, and a rhythm section of Donald Breedlove, Ronnie Scott, Ricky Washington, Toby Zeno, and Frankie McMillan. The A-side, "All Day Long," was written by Napoleon, with him singing lead. "Love Me, Leave Me" was written by Donald and William Clark, with William singing lead. Both songs were arranged by Morris Wilson. Another song from the same session, "I Who Have Nothing," was a Ben E. King cover that was never released.

Maurice Young rejoined the Valdons in 1973, and replaced Napoleon Crayton. The vocal group separated from Navajo Train and went to New York to look for other opportunities. There, they got set up with a new manager and recorded at Sigma Sound in Philadelphia, taking the name Philadelphia Story during the sessions. They released "You Are The Song" b/w "If You Lived Here" on the Scepter/Wand label and the record had enough success for them to tour nationally. Peter Dwyer, editor of a 1977 Insider article on the group, adds that shortly thereafter they "teamed up with a back-up band called the Sweet Taste of Sin. The result was a nightclub act that they billed as Sweet Story... Between 1973 and 1976 Sweet Story did a lot of nightclub work, criss crossing the country... [and later] expanded their interests by promoting shows... [In 1976] they invested money in Central Park, a club in the basement of the downtown dinner theater" on 4th Ave between 10th and 11th streets in Minneapolis. During the time they were the Philadelphia Story, they were a mainstay at the Flame. It was with the help of the Percanskys, owners of the Flame, that they became involved with the Central Park club mentioned above. In 1976, they released "People Users" b/w "Gotta Get Back" on H&L records, and they moved to LA in 1977 doing background vocals for Edwin Starr, O.C. Smith, and others. By 1986, all but Clifton Curtis had returned to Minnesota.

By the time the Valdons and Navajo Train separated, Ronnie Scott and Toby Zeno were in Our Father's Children, Ricky Washington was in Michael's Mystics, and Napoleon Crayton and Donald Breedlove carried on with Navajo Train, adding Wilbur Cole on organ, and James "Creeper" Vasquez on drums. This new formation of Navajo Train eventually shortened their name to Train, and then became Band of Thieves.



POP press kit photo 1976 courtesy Anthony Scott. Left to right: Moribik Abdul (perc, vox), Bruce Palaggi (sax), Earl "Sonny" Williams (keys, vox), John Curlee (trumpet), Dave Dahlgren (guitar), Anthony Scott (bass), Ronald Atkinson (trombone), Stephen "Brother" Bradley (drums), John Gregersen (sax)



POP live at The Nacirema Club, Minneapolis, 1974 courtesy Anthony Scott. Left to right: Jimmy Wallace, Anthony Scott, John Curlee, Stephen "Brother" Bradley, Dave Dahlgren, Earl "Sonny" Williams, Moribik Abdul

PROPHETS OF PEACE

Standing at the Intersection of Two Generations of Music

In 1972, a young bass player from Minneapolis studying music at Mankato State University teamed up with his cousin and some friends to start playing gigs around the small college town in Southern Minnesota. Over the next couple of years the band would solidify its lineup, write its own material, and eventually record one of the most collectible 45s to come out of Minnesota's R&B scene.

Throughout junior high school, Anthony Scott and his cousin Sonny Williams played music together regularly. By the time they hit high school, they had formed their own band, The Majestics. Playing mostly covers of popular R&B tunes, they kept busy entertaining Minneapolis' youth at house parties. The band never recorded and rarely appeared in public for proper concerts. After graduating from Washburn High School in 1968, Scott, who had just switched from keyboards to bass guitar, moved an hour and a half southwest to enroll in the music program at Mankato State University. Shortly after, Williams would move there as well.

While playing in the school's jazz ensemble, Anthony dove head first into the genre. The professor who ran the group, Gary Willison, often invited the students to his house for dinner and to listen to his collection of jazz LPs. There, the youngsters would dissect every note of each song and soak up as many ideas and concepts as they could. In late 1971, when Scott and Williams began playing out with a loose group of musicians in town, Willison often joined in on trumpet. Other regulars included Steve "Brother" Bradley (drums), Terry Ferguson (drums), Bob Cobb (guitar) and Charlie Finney (sax).

While Prophets of Peace were not a jazz ensemble, some of its members were certainly well versed in the syncopated rhythms and melodic theory found in jazz. Take one listen to the first eight bars of "The Max" and you'll hear it. Scott and Williams' time spent with Willison clearly played a powerful role in the creation of the band's sound.

By the time Scott graduated from Mankato in 1973, he and his friends had done about as much as they could in such a small town. They packed up and moved back to Minneapolis. It was collectively decided that they would put forth an effort to solidify the band and seek out more gigs. At this point they decided to name their band Prophets of Peace, a name that would be reflected over and over in the positive messages found in the

lyrics of their original songs.

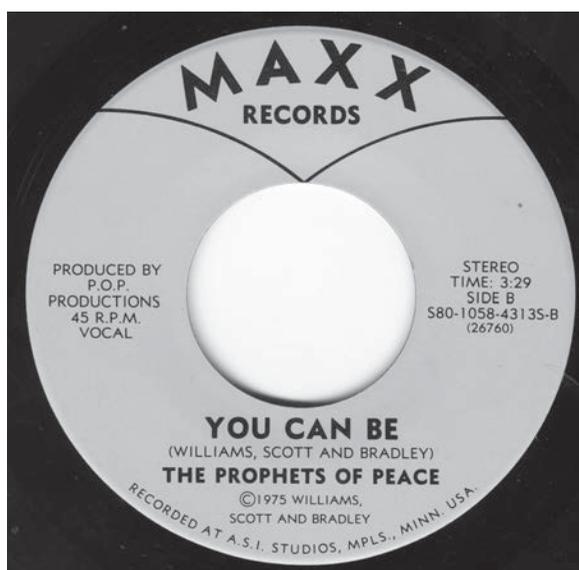
For the next year, the Prophets cut their teeth playing three and four night engagements at clubs such as St. Paul's Jockey Lounge and Minneapolis' Flame on Nicollet Ave. Over time, their lineup grew until they had nine members. Getting nine different players with nine different ideas to agree on things wasn't easy, but they managed to put together some tunes and brought them to the studio.

In 1974, The Prophets of Peace entered ASI studios in North Minneapolis with engineer David Rivkin (AKA David Z), who would eventually join the band as a guitarist. There they recorded four songs, "P.O.P.," "46th Street Bump," "Get On It," and "You Can Be." Featuring a four part horn section led by Minneapolis' hardest working saxophonist, Morris Wilson, these tracks were all intended to be used as part of a full length LP. The plan was to do a few songs at a time in the studio until they had enough for an album.

For the next year, the Prophets continued to hone their craft playing as many gigs as they could at places such as The Marriott and The Thunderbird, as well as opening for larger touring acts at the University of Minnesota. In 1975, they hit Sound 80 studios in Minneapolis to record "The Max." At the time, Sound 80 was the most state-of-the-art studio in town. Engineered by studio co-founder Tom Jung, all the instrumental tracks were done live without a click track in one large room. The vocals were overdubbed later. The result is one of the hardest hitting, massive sounding recordings to come out of the area at the time.

While at Sound 80, the band also hired Jung to mix down "You Can Be," the strongest tune to come out of the ASI sessions a year earlier. Rather than wait to record five or six more songs, they decided to press a 45 with "The Max" on the A-side and "You Can Be" on the flip. They pressed up and distributed 500 copies in an effort to build a buzz and raise more money to record enough songs to finish their full length LP.

The new single was well received. It was put in rotation at KUXL, which led to better gigs and put them on the radar of mainstream outlets. In June of 1976, The Prophets of Peace performed live in front of 25,000 people for the KQRS FM "Concert For Sharing," though the station never played the single. The show was broadcast live and reached



an additional estimated audience of 50,000 listeners. Soon after, they were booked to open for K.C. & The Sunshine Band at The University of Minnesota.

No doubt, the K.C. gig was to be their biggest yet. In a strange twist of fate, after much preparation and excitement, The Prophets of Peace never got to open for K.C. They showed up, did their sound check and readied themselves to perform for a packed room. But, K.C. was a no show. The story the promoter told The Prophets is that he went to the airport to pick up K.C., but when the pop mega-star saw the car he arrived with, he refused to get in it. Apparently, it had been agreed that K.C. would travel from the airport to the show in a limousine, not the sedan that the promoter was driving. The entire show was canceled.

Though the Prophets of Peace were disheartened by the Sunshine Band debacle, they didn't let it keep them down. They continued to gig and work towards getting back in the studio. That was easier said than done, though. Scott recalls, "Having enough work and making enough money to make it all worthwhile was always a challenge with a nine piece band." This was typically the case, but seemed to be magnified by the spread of disco. Club owners quickly switched



from booking bands to draw in customers, to booking DJs. Why pay nine musicians to entertain for a night when you can just pay one DJ to spin records? When discussing the slow disbanding of the Prophets of Peace, saxophonist Bruce Palaggi recalls, "We had a little help getting pushed out the door by disco."

As one might hope by listening to their message, the Prophets of Peace didn't end in a big blow out. No one stole the other's girlfriend and there was no power struggle over who would run the band. None of the gear was ripped off, and there were no creative differences that couldn't be reconciled. The sad fact of the matter was they got to a point in late 1976 where the band couldn't get enough good paying work to keep at it. Slowly Prophets of Peace ceased to exist. They never finished their full length album, though they had written enough original material to do so. The only material they ever released is included on *Twin Cities Funk & Soul: Lost R&B Grooves From Minneapolis/St. Paul 1964-1979*.

The jazz and rock infused funky grooves on those tracks are an important part of music history. P.O.P. stood at the crossroads of two distinctly unique generations of music in the Twin Cities. To many, they were the link between the early days of Maurice McKinnies and the fully realized "Minneapolis Sound" of the late 1970s and the 1980s. In fact, one of the group's guitarists, David Z (who also engineered the ASI sessions), would go on to engineer and produce Prince's demos. He collaborated with Prince countless times and eventually wound up producing many recordings for Prince's Paisley Park label.



Perhaps more significant than their musical influence, was their social impact. To the members of Prophets of Peace, the mixed race lineup of the band was no big deal, "If we liked the way someone played, then we asked them to play with us. Race never had any part in it," says Anthony Scott about the makeup of the Prophets.

In reality, they tore down one more brick in the wall that divides us. The inclusion of white band members gave the group the ability to play certain places that may not have been too welcoming otherwise. The real impact, however, is not found in the makeup of the band, but rather the audience. A mixed band brought in a mixed crowd; blacks and whites hanging out together at the same club, enjoying the same music...something that forever changed the Twin Cities.



Left: Prophets of Peace press kit photo circa 1975. From left to right: Earl "Sonny" Williams (keys, vox), Doug James (drums), Bruce Palaggi (sax), Anthony Scott (bass), Moribik Abdul (percussion), Dolores Warren (vox, not on record), Dave Dahlgren (guitar), John Curlee (trumpet)

Above: Prophets press kit photo circa 1975. From left to right: Dave Dahlgren (guitar), Bruce Palaggi (sax), Ronald Atkinson (trombone), Anthony Scott (bass), Earl "Sonny" Williams (keys, vox), Morabik Abdul (perc, vox), John Curlee (trumpet), Stephen "Brother" Bradley (drums), John Gregersen (sax)



Band of Thieves publicity photo circa 1976 courtesy Wilbur Cole. Back row left to right: Wilbur Cole (organ), Bill Gaskill (sax), Mark Maxwell (trombone), Jeffrey McRaven (bass), Orville Shannon (guitar), Gary McKeen (trumpet). Front row left to right: Napoleon Crayton (voc), James "Creep" Vasquez (drums), Donald Breedlove (guitar)

BAND OF THIEVES

Tales From The Funkhouse

In late 1973, Maurice Young came up to Minnesota and rejoined fellow servicemen Monroe Wright, William Clark, and Clifton Curtis in the Valdons. These reunited singers became the Philadelphia Story, parting ways with former Valdons member Napoleon Crayton and their backing band, Navajo Train. Donald Breedlove continued on with Navajo Train, but by that point many of the original musicians had moved on to various groups. These events prompted longtime collaborators Napoleon Crayton and Donald Breedlove to lay the ground work for a new group called Band of Thieves. Napoleon was a local star since singing with the Amazers in the early 1960s. Donald moved to Minnesota in 1966 from Oklahoma and played guitar with the Amazers, the Blazers, and Navajo Train. In addition, he knew just about every other musician in town through playing and mentoring.

Band of Thieves slowly came together over the course of a few years. Wilbur Cole met Donald Breedlove when he was first getting into the local music scene in the mid-1960s, and remembers Donald got him into music theory. In the early 1970s, Wilbur studied music at the University of Minnesota and played with Maurice McKinnies while in school. This band also included another future member of the Thieves.

James "Creep" Vasquez remembers, "I was still in high school when Wilbur recruited me to play drums with Maurice McKinnies and Free System." James graduated from high school in 1972. When Maurice McKinnies left Minnesota around 1973, he and Wilbur started playing with Napoleon and Donald. Their band went through a few bass players before finding Jeffrey McRaven. The rhythm section was finalized when a guitar student of Donald Breedlove's, Orville Shannon, joined the band.

The horn section came together next. Saxophone player Bill Gaskill grew up in Edina and eventually studied at Berklee College of Music. He returned to Minnesota in 1976, and during the summer he went to the musician's union to find work. They told him about a project to preserve African-American nursery rhymes and traditional songs being funded by The Way. One of the other musicians working on the project was alto sax player André Broadnax. André was from Milwaukee and was a protégé of Perry Moorer. After the project, André told Bill about a group he was playing with and invited him to join. Little did Bill know, but André brought him in to be his replacement with the Band of Thieves. At that time, the Band of Thieves' horn section also had Mark Maxwell on trombone, and Gary McKeen on trumpet.

Bill Gaskill joined the group in the fall of 1976, just in time for the photo shoot for the band's 1976 self-titled debut on Ovation. Within a few weeks of that shoot, Mark Maxwell had left and Terry Halvorson came in as a second trumpet. Bill remembers being with the band was quite an experience, "There would be crowds watching us practice. Maybe 25-30 people every day would sit down in Napoleon's basement." Members were from both Minneapolis and St. Paul, but Bill recalls they would meet at 36th St and Portland Ave in South Minneapolis and would practice eight to nine hours a day, six days a week. They took after Napoleon Crayton's days in the Amazers and Valdons, becoming a polished show band with custom uniforms. Choreographers came in and taught them steps, and they had an emcee who would help them run a high energy show.

The debut record was recorded at Sound 80 in Minneapolis, before Bill Gaskill and Terry Halvorson joined the band. Curiously, the album did not feature any of the



Event outside The Way Community Center late 70s courtesy Minnestoa Historical Society. Photo by Charles Chamblis

Band of Thieves' original horn players. Leading up to the record, the band made several demos and took them to Herb Pilhofer at Sound 80 studios. He was a very active arranger and asked the band not to bring in their horn section for the recording sessions. The Thieves re-recorded their music with Tom Jung engineering and Herb added in strings and horns, aligning with the then popular "Philadelphia Sound," as opposed to the band's rougher funk and R&B edge. Needless to say, the finished product had a gleam of added sweetening and polish that did not thrill the band.

THE WAY

The Way Community Center in North Minneapolis came about in response to a wave of violence during the summer of 1966. Its mission was to connect with youth in the area and strengthen the community. The Way facilitated education, youth activities, and helped people find housing and employment. There were several leaders of the Way, including Syl Davis during the 1960s, Bert Davis from 1970 to 1974, and Harry "Spike" Moss from 1974 to 1986. The Way lost funding in 1986 and shut down. Eventually, a new youth center called City-Northside began serving a similar mission. In the 1960s and 1970s The Way played an important part in the music scene, as it provided a place for bands to practice and play. Terry Lewis, Jimmy Jam, Prince Nelson, and many others either practiced or played there.

"Thieves in The Funkhouse," along with an entire second album, was recorded around 1977, and engineered by David Rivkin. Like their debut, they used the Sound 80 studios. The band was steered to Ovation Records for their first record because Herb Pilhofer had a connection to the label. Not being happy with the direction Herb took, they recorded their second without him. When they finished, the deal with Ovation no longer stood and the album was never

released. Though Napoleon was the lead singer, Wilbur Cole wrote and sang lead on "Thieves in The Funkhouse." It acted as a theme song for the band, and Wilbur remembers he wrote it because he wanted to tell the audience, "We didn't have the name because we were thieves. We had the name because we would steal your heart."

Despite having a record deal, it was hard for the band to find consistent work due to their size and still lingering elements of racism in the downtown club scene. There were only a couple clubs in town that they played consistently and the rest of the time they played throughout the Upper Midwest, Canada, or were putting on their own shows. Bill Gaskill remembers, "The only way you could make any money was to sponsor your own event. There was one 'black station' in town called KUXL with DJ Pharaoh Black, and everyone would listen to that. So we would buy an ad saying, 'Party at the Dykeman Hotel with Band of Thieves.'" They set up similar gigs at Hopkins House along Highway 7 in the Western Suburbs, and at Twins Motor Inn on University Ave in St. Paul.

Bill remembers the show at Twins Motor Inn was Napoleon Crayton's last with the group. He had been performing in bands locally since the early 1960s, and by 1978, he was ready to go out on his own. When Napoleon left, the band started playing covers. They continued on as the Thieves for about a year, and then called themselves Breedlove for a while, before breaking up. Napoleon passed on not too many years after the group split, and Donald Breedlove passed in the spring of 2012. Remembering these musicians, Bill reflects, "As far as how to lead a band and how to get them tight, Donald was a genius. Napoleon was the artist. He sang, played keyboards, and wrote, and Donald Breedlove was the leader of the band." Jeffrey McRaven and Orville Shannon have also passed on. In 1978, Bill Gaskill left and started recording at Chris Moon's Moonsound Studio, played with Cohesion band, became Bill Blow, and continues to play with Terry Halvorson regularly. Gary McKeen lives and plays in Pennsylvania, Wilbur Cole continues to play regularly in the Twin Cities, and James Vasquez went away from music for a while, but has recently started to play out again.



Wilbur Cole during his time in the service in the mid-50s courtesy Wilbur Cole.

WILBUR COLE

Born in 1937 in Silver Creek, Mississippi, Wilbur Cole learned to sing in church, and was introduced to piano at a young age.

He joined the army airborne in 1955. He left the service and moved to New Orleans in the late 1950s, and began to play music in clubs. Eventually, Wilbur needed a change of scenery and moved to St. Paul, MN in the mid-1960s to live with family.

After buying a piano, Wilbur and a friend dragged it to Jimmy Fuller's Regal Tavern in Minneapolis, also known as the "Bucket of Blood." That night he met Donald Breedlove, Mojo Buford, Jo Jo Williams, Willie Taylor, and Maynard Walker. Wilbur joined Maynard Walker and soon was playing six nights a week at the Regal and when that club shut down, started playing at Jimmy Fuller's next club, The Cozy. In 1967, Wilbur replaced Leroy Hawkins in the Exciters on keyboards, and backed Willie Walker, Jackie Harris, and many others. After the Exciters broke up in 1970, Wilbur played with Maurice McKinnies and Free System. During that time he studied music at the University of Minnesota. Afterward, he connected again with Donald Breedlove and joined what eventually became Band of Thieves. After Band of Thieves broke up, Wilbur and Willie Walker reconnected during the 1980s, with The Bound Band, and later Wilbur joined the Soulmates. To this day, Wilbur still hosts a weekly blues jam.

WILLIE AND THE BUMBLEBEES

A Minnesota Music Icon's Exploration of his R&B Roots

Willie Murphy is a singer, multi-instrumentalist, band leader, and producer. Fresh out of Central High School in the early sixties, Willie started out in R&B groups like the Versatiles, the Val-Dons, the Nobles, and Dave Brady and the Stars, and with jazz guitarist Jerry Hubbard. In 1965, Murphy started playing with "Spider" John Koerner as a blues and folk duo, while continuing to play R&B. Koerner and Murphy eventually started touring together and recorded their classic, *Running, Jumping, Standing Still* on Elektra Records in 1969. This gave them some prominence on the national stage. As Koerner chose to move on to focus more on making films, Willie decided to start the big R&B band he always wanted to have, playing original music.

He formed Willie and The Bumblebees in 1970, and by March of 1971 their members included Willie Murphy (bass), Stephen Bradley (drums), Russ Hagen (guitar), Gene Hoffman (saxophone), Voyle Harris (trumpet), Maurice Jacox (flute, baritone sax), and John Beach (keyboards). All of the Bees were deeply rooted in R&B. Willie recalls Russ as "one of the snakiest guitar players I ever played with." Voyle Harris was from Memphis and brought some southern soul to his horn playing. He had previously played with Maurice McKinnies and The Blazers, as well as with Willie, Stephen, and Russ in Dave Brady and The Stars. John Beach and Willie played together in various groups, and Willie remembers when he first met Maurice, "He was a flautist and I asked him to be in the band, but on the condition he play sax and sing," Willie adds, "We were a mixed band. I always grew up being the only white guy in a black band. We were one of the first mixed bands to play clubs Downtown." After several months of gigging, Willie Walker briefly joined the group because Willie Murphy, tired of doing all the singing, thought the band needed an additional singer.

In a December 1971 *Insider* feature on Willie and The Bumblebees, editor Tom Murtha explored the beginning of the band:

"Their musical association is for the most part born of long time personal friendships, with identifiable roots in the early sixties, when Murphy played with a number of them in a back-up band for Dave Brady and the Stars... Murphy is also an excellent pianist and guitarist who has been into rhythm and blues ever since he formed a Little Richard fan club with his fifth grade classmates... As the leader of the Bumblebees, he produced Bonnie Raitt's [first] album and played with the other band members on most of the cuts."

In the interview, the group discusses the resilience of R&B in the Twin Cities, despite national trends. Willie Murphy puts it best when he says, "There's what you read

about in *ROLLING STONE*, and then there's what's going on at the Cozy Bar, and the Blue Note, and places like that, and it's always been that way." Willie also compares the Bees with the previous generation of Twin Cities R&B groups, analyzing that their band is a "way different thing from the local bands that were trying to cop everything (off records)... everybody try to listen as hard as you can, try to cop the part. It's a way different thing when we have a rehearsal. We try to play it one way, and we try to extend it



Willie and the Bumblebees performing live circa 1979 courtesy Minnesota Historical Society. Photo by Elizabeth M. Hall. Left to right: Willie Murphy (guitar), Joe Demko (bass), Howard Merriweather (drums), Donald "Hye Pockets" Robinson (drums), Maurice Jacox (vox), Jose James (timbales /alto sax), Mark Bryn (keyboards), Voyle Harris (trumpet), Dave Sletten (sax)

in some places and everybody puts in his two cents worth." Asked about the group's overall direction, Maurice Jacox replies simply, "Badass."

In 1973, the band released "Highway 66, parts 1, 2, and 3" b/w "Too Many Drivers" on Dave Ray's Sweet Jane, Limited label. A few years later, Willie and the Bumblebees holed up in Dave Ray's studio in Cushing, Minnesota to record *Honey from the Bee*, released in 1976. At that point, the personnel was the same as 1971, except for the departures of Stephen Bradley, who left to start Prophets of Peace, and Russ Hagen. The additions of Jerome Broughton on guitar and bass, and Howard Merriweather on drums and vocals rounded out the new lineup. Singer, saxophonist, and flautist from the Bumblebees, Maurice Jacox paints a picture of the time, "All of Murphy's songs were slices of his life. We had no money. We were a bunch of extremely talented drunks. Our first PA was a board and two suitcases with a speaker inside the suitcase. While in the studio for *Honey from the Bee*... the clean sound didn't sound like us at all."

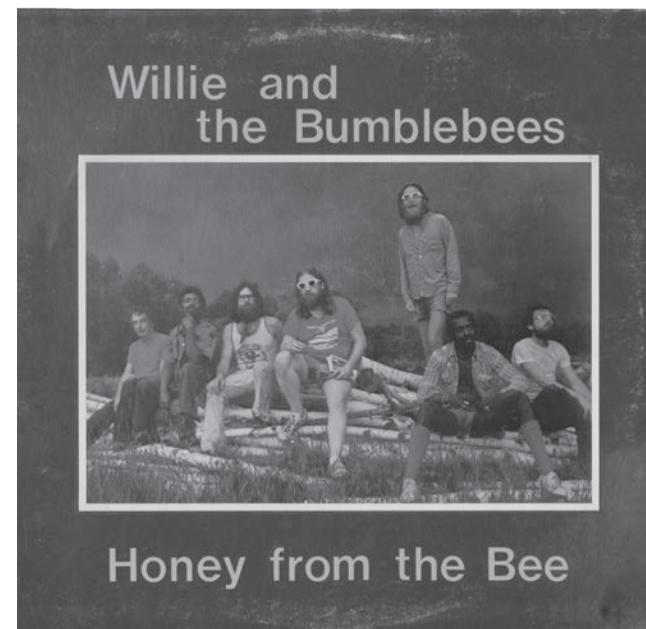
Honey from the Bee comes across as a real party record. Murphy explains his approach, "My style was always wide ranging. With the Bees it was always a lot of horns, a synthesis of jazz and R&B, vocal harmony, and an element of politics, but it was always a party. I was really inspired by Mingus, as well as the Impressions, Little Richard, Wilson Pickett, and everybody else. All the songs on the record were stuff we'd been playing for quite some

time. When we played there was never much money, but we really worked hard."

Looking at the photographs on the record jacket of *Honey from the Bee*, Murphy points out the band's sunglasses, "Driving up to the studio through Little Falls, they were having 'Crazy Daze'. On the sidewalk in front of the drugstore there was a whole table full of old sunglasses, so I bought everyone a pair to wear for the photo. Maurice wouldn't come outside for the picture because he was inside

watching the Miss America pageant, so we had to paste his photo on the bus." He laughs. Both "Dipstick" and "Honey from the Bee," featured on the *Twin Cities Funk & Soul* compilation, come from the *Honey from The Bee* LP. Maurice has fond memories of these recordings, "Willie and the Bees was going to make us all rich and famous. We really believed in that. The music that the band was making was truly American music. It was all over the place. We'd record until dawn and pass out since we were drinking while recording, or was it recording while drinking? It's amazing it even got done, but the quality of the music was astounding."

It is fitting that "Dipstick" by the group is the first track on disc two of the comp because the band stands at a real crossroads for the Twin Cities' R&B scene. During the 1960s, the vast majority of R&B groups played cover songs. Whereas, the groups in the 1970s, for the most part, focused on doing original tunes. In many ways, *Honey from the Bee* was just the beginning. The Bees continued to rock the joint all the way until 1994. They went through many personnel changes, but many of the original members were there until the end.



MORRIS WILSON

Musician, Activist, Teacher



Morris Wilson at The Flame in the late 70s courtesy Minnesota Historical Society. Photo by Charles Chamblis

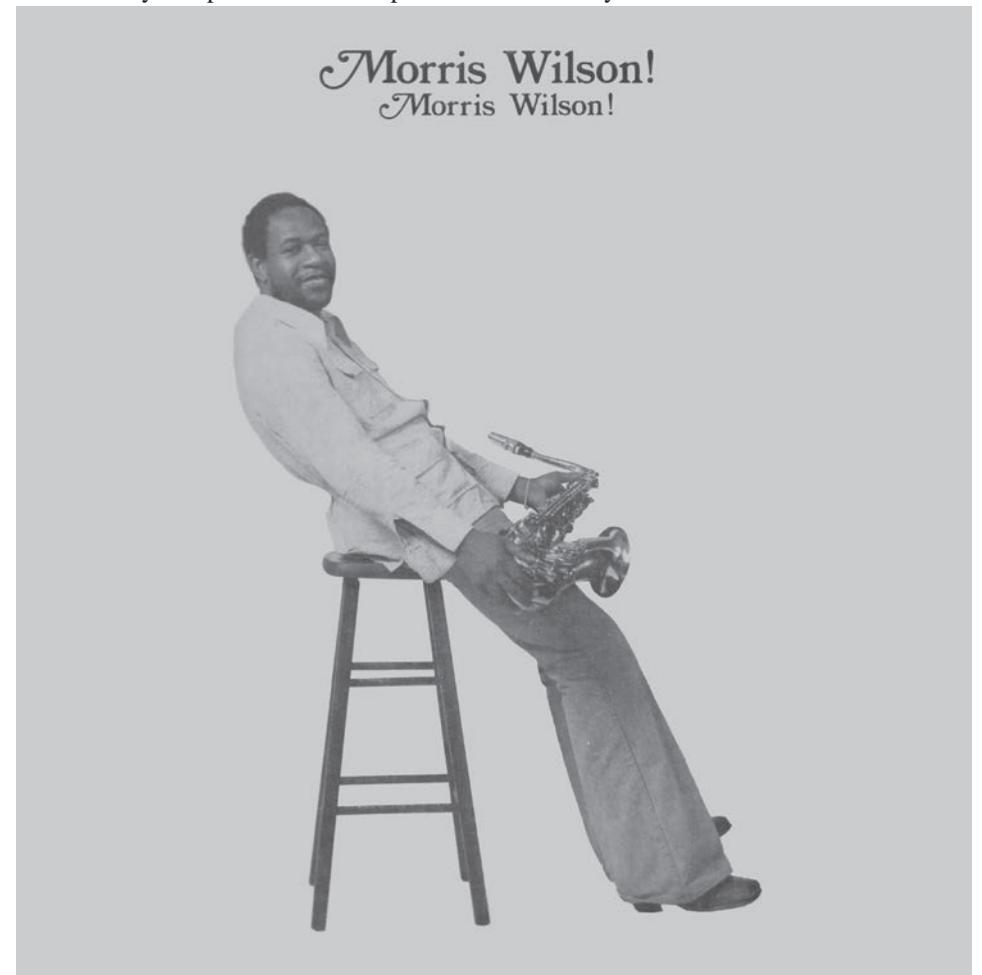
Morris Wilson is one of the greatest saxophone players to have ever lived in the Twin Cities. Ask anyone around town who has been playing for more than a decade and they'll corroborate that claim. While known around the Twin Cities as a legendary jazz player, he also has serious credentials in the world of R&B and blues. He's worked as a hired gun for The Temptations, Ike and Tina Turner, and even Muddy Waters. What separates Morris from most R&B musicians is his intense knowledge of music theory. Bill Gaskill (saxophonist from Band of Thieves) likes to tell a story about playing with Morris, "I was on a jazz gig with Morris and he just kept pushing me creatively. On one solo I kept going further and further outside until I realized I had no clue how to get back to the actual song. I was just hanging out there, lost! Then Morris stepped up and literally took everything I did and just walked it right back into the song. He's amazing!"

Morris' incredible talent did not appear out of nowhere. He recalls, "I played as a kid, but was never very good. Then, in 1957 Miles Davis rolled into town with his sextet. In those days bands like that would come to a town and stay put for a while. They were here for two months. That's when I met Coltrane." As it turns out, John Coltrane was holed up in a seedy motel near Loring Park. According to Morris, it was hard for blacks to get rooms at most hotels in town, but he insisted upon staying in the city and not on the outskirts with the rest of the band, leaving him with few lodging options. Just 20 years old, Morris took the bus down to Trane's hotel almost every single day while the iconic musician was in town. They would play music, but mostly they discussed music theory as well as more broad reaching concepts. "He taught me that music is all around us. One time we were walking through Loring Park and he just stopped dead in his tracks and said, 'Do you hear the music those birds are making?'" It is clear that the time Wilson spent with John Coltrane had a profound impact on the rest of his career as a musician.

Aside from being a brilliant saxophonist, Wilson was also a teacher. He was known for fostering young talent and helping kids put together bands and write songs. His fingerprints are all over *Twin Cities Funk & Soul*. He arranged the horns for the Valdons, played and arranged for The Prophets of Peace, and played with The Lewis Connection. Anthony Scott (Prophets of Peace) remembers fondly practicing every day in Morris' basement in South Minneapolis. According to Anthony, "Morris was sort of like the godfather of all this stuff."

In addition to teaching, at 40 years of age Wilson sought to impact the community in a positive way by founding the Minnesota Minority Musicians Association in 1977. A large part of the group's focus was on the profoundly negative impact that disco was having on black bands. Their charter stated that they wanted to address club owners that "do not hire musicians, but engage in the practice of using musical devices (e.g. records, tapes, etc.), and who charge admission at the door for the enjoyment of these devices." Though the organization had 100 members by 1978, their impact was disappointingly small. On Nov 17, 1978 Wilson organized the Minnesota Musicians and Performers Rally. Only 8 people including himself showed up. The small group marched through the snow down Nicollet mall with the resolve of a group 100 times their own. Stopping to try and gather a crowd he led the group in the chant, "Disco is jive, bring back live." Needless to say, the event inspired little meaningful change.

By the 80s, Wilson grew tired of the fight. He hung up his horn and focused on making a social impact on the community by dedicating his time to teaching troubled youth how to read. Eventually he got back into playing, but remained active in social work for many years. Today, Wilson lives in the very same house where people like Anthony Scott grew up practicing. He doesn't play much anymore, but is happy to reminisce about old times and try and pass down a few pearls of wisdom if you're interested.



THE LEWIS CONNECTION

Standing at the Door of the Minneapolis Sound



Album cover image courtesy Hymie's Records, Minneapolis.

The Lewis Connection's self-titled LP was released in 1979. All but one of the songs were recorded over a series of months spanning 1978 and 1979. They made use of several studios along the way including ASI, Sound 80 and Moonsound. The record was the brainchild of brothers Pierre and André Lewis. They are credited as producers and arrangers for all six songs on the album and have either sole or co-writing credits for five of the six. David Rivkin engineered sessions for the Lewis Connection and remembers, "Pierre was great. Just a really, really good player and there were a lot of other good players in

the group, too." According to Pierre Lewis, the one song on the album they did not write, "Got To Be Something Here," has quite a story.

Unlike the other songs, it was recorded around 1976 by The Family. The personnel for this recording session included Sonny Thompson on bass and lead vocals, Pierre Lewis on keyboards and flute, Joe Lewis on drums, Bill Perry on tenor sax, Jeffrey Tresvant on trumpet, Randy Barber on background vocals, and a very young Prince Rogers Nelson on background vocals and guitar.

Pierre and André Lewis along with Sonny

Thompson were friends with Prince growing up. In fact, Pierre recalls that Prince borrowed his keyboard for some of his early recordings. Though Prince was not a regular member of the group, he was invited to play on the session because a label was paying The Family to record and the band knew he was looking for a paying gig.

"Got To Be Something Here" combines a slow groove with Sonny Thompson's Donny Hathaway-esque vocals. It was never released by The Family. However, the group did release a 45 called "Stone Lover." In 1985 a group put together by Prince, also called The Family, released a self-titled debut containing the Prince-penned "Nothing Compares 2 U." There were no common members between the two groups, though it is clear where the inspiration for the name came from.

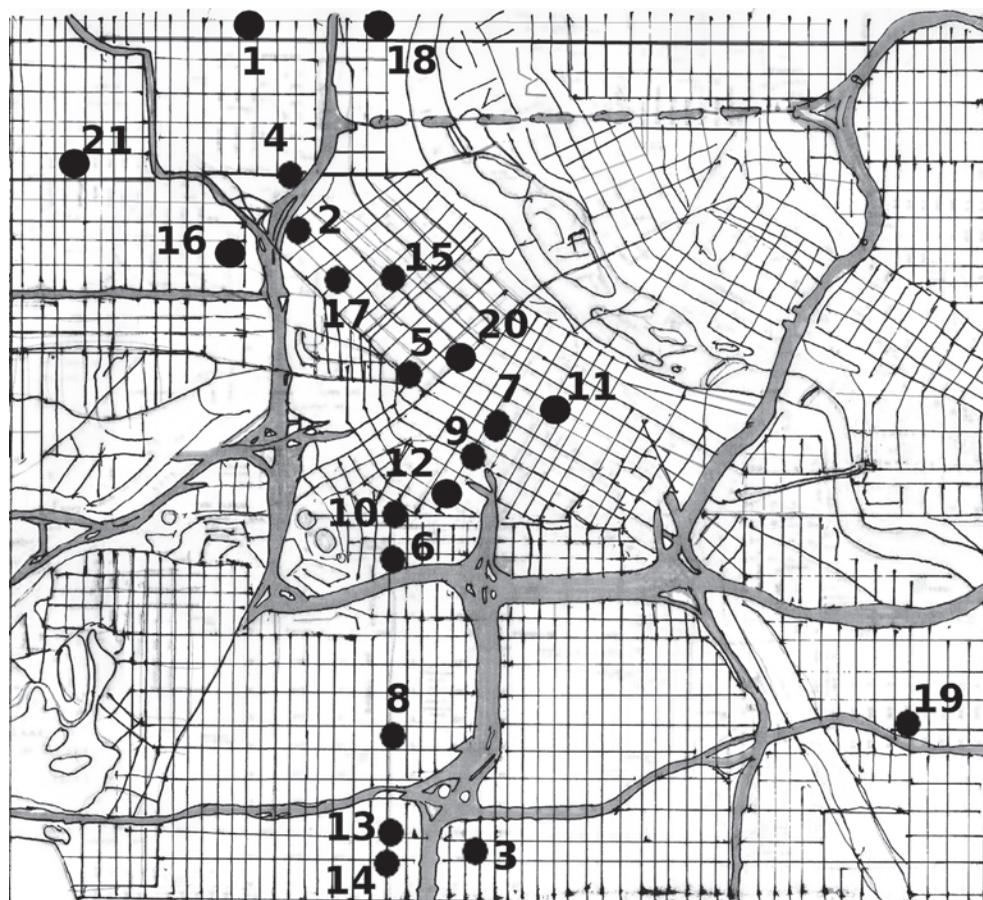
Moving forward a few years, when Pierre and André were ready to put out The Lewis Connection record they were one track short. Remembering "Got To Be Something Here" was still sitting on the shelf, they included it on their record.

The sole Lewis Connection track featured on the Twin Cities Funk & Soul compilation is "Get Up." As the first track on the Lewis Connection album, it's an upbeat jam with Pierre Lewis playing bass and lead parts on synthesizers. André plays guitar and Richard Lowe plays drums, with all three adding background vocals and hand claps. Barbara Bolar sings lead vocals and adds handclaps, as well. The groove of this song becomes contagious from the opening bars. The call and response between Barbara and the three background singers relentlessly propels the music. The three songs on the A-side, "Get Up," "Higher," and "Feel Good To Ya," are tried and true dance-floor fillers. On the B-side, "Got To Be Something Here" slows things down, and "Dynamic Duo" and "Mr. G" stretch out into spaced-out instrumental fusions of jazz and funk. These last two tracks illustrate the influence of saxophone player Morris Wilson. In the 1970s and 1980s the Lewis brothers and Richard Lowe often played with Morris Wilson, including recording tracks on his Fantasy Island record. Morris has mentored numerous musicians over the years and is one of the Twin Cities' biggest jazz proponents.

The record was privately pressed in limited quantities with the name of the group spelled with a typo on the cover as "Lewis Conection." The raw funk, instrumental jams, and early appearance of Prince have made this a record digger's dream. Rarely are copies for sale, but when they show up for auction they typically command somewhere in the neighborhood of \$500. "Get Up" is the only track on *Twin Cities Funk & Soul* with prominent use of synthesizers. That plus its fusion of jazz, funk, dance music, and overall energy make it fitting as the last song on the compilation. It takes the listener right to the doorstep of the "Minneapolis Sound."

MINNEAPOLIS VENUES, STUDIOS, AND MORE

Below is a map of key places that helped support R&B in Minneapolis during the 60s and 70s. Some of these places catered specifically to black clientele, others did not. Regardless, these are the establishments that made it all possible.



01. ASI - 711 West Broadway Avenue
02. Blue Note - 622 11th Avenue North
03. Club Malibu - 334 East Lake Street
04. Cozy Bar - 522 Plymouth Avenue North
05. The Depot/Uncle Sam's/First Avenue - 701 1st Avenue
06. The Flame - 16th Street and Nicollet Avenue
07. Jet-A-Way - 654 Second Avenue South
08. Kay Bank - 26th Street and Nicollet Avenue
09. King Solomon's Mines - 114 South 9th Street
10. Marigold Ballroom - 1336 Nicollet Avenue
11. Minneapolis Armory - 5th Avenue and 6th Street
12. Minneapolis Auditorium - 1301 2nd Avenue South
13. Mr. Lucky's, Magoo's, and Mattie's BBQ - West 29th Street and Nicollet Avenue
14. Nic 'O' Lake Records - Lake Street and Nicollet Avenue
15. Peacock Alley - 220 North 5th Street
16. Phyllis Wheatley - 809 Aldrich Avenue North
17. Regal Tavern - 7th Street and Olson Memorial Highway
18. Riverview Supper Club - 2314 West River Road
19. Sound 80 - 2709 East 25th Street
20. The Taste Show Lounge - 14 North Fifth Street
21. The Way - 1913 Plymouth Avenue North

KUXL RADIO

KUXL was THE R&B radio station in the Twin Cities during the sixties and seventies. A July 10, 1965 issue of Billboard leaves no doubt about it, as it reported KUXL had a 100% share of the R&B Radio Response Rate in Minneapolis and Saint Paul. KUXL went on the air in 1961, and had been purchased by Universal Broadcasting Corp by the end of 1964. Marvin Kosofsky was the chairman and his brother-in-law Howard Warshaw was the president. At that point, they already owned multiple stations and Marvin recalls, "I stayed in Minnesota to get the station started. I lived in Golden Valley at the Golden Valley

Inn. The station was originally in the Inn...on Olson Memorial Highway." Billboard issues from this time confirm the station was at 4820 Olson Hwy, Minneapolis, MN 55422. Once the station got on its feet, Marvin moved on to another station.

KUXL was a 1,000 watt, daytime-only station. The morning hours were filled with religious and ethnic programming, but during the afternoons it was the sole radio station with dedicated programming for the black community. Jeffrey Diamond, A.K.A. "Lord Jeffrey," remembers that the preachers "always paid their bills on time. So that's why the station ran those programs in the mornings."

This being the case, during the summer listeners could hear seven or eight hours a day of disc jockeys like Preacher Paul Anthony, Ray Moss, Daddy Soul, or Pharaoh Black. But in the winter, R&B only filled the airwaves for a handful of hours a day.

Of all the employees at KUXL, the most famous voice belonged to someone whose program did not air locally. Marvin Kosofsky states, "Robert W. Smith, A.K.A. 'Wolfman Jack,' was the manager and the rhythm and blues program was conducted by a disc jockey called 'Preacher Paul.'" Though he was the station manager in the beginning years, Ralph Hull, A.K.A. "Preacher Paul Anthony," only knows of one instance where Robert Smith appeared on air.

"Smith did a commercial on KUXL once in his normal voice, not 'Wolfman.' A blind friend of mine named Gary, who I had been bringing in on off-hours to learn how to run the board, played it for me years later as one of his rare treasures of unique radio." Other than that commercial, "Wolfman Jack" only appeared on air via the shows he would tape and mail down to border buster stations. Ralph explains how the system worked. "We had XEG in Monterrey, Mexico, a pure 100,000 watt AM station covering the Eastern US. XERF covered all of Mexico, Central US, and Canada and had a rating of 250,000 watts, but only operated at 80,000 at night and 1,000 during the day. Plus, XERB, rated at 50,000 watts, in Rancho Del Mar, 15 miles south of Tijuana, covered all of the Western US and Canada. With those three stations we had the entire North American continent covered. I say "we" because Smith got Art Hoehn and myself to invest 20% each in B&L Advertising, B for Bob and L for his wife Lou, which conducted the programming on the Mexican stations. XERB really took off so I encouraged Smith and Hoehn to move to Los Angeles to operate XERB up close and personal." Robert Smith lived in Golden Valley from January 1965 to July 1966, before him, Ralph "Preacher Paul Anthony" Hull, and Art "Fat Daddy Washington" Hoehn left for XERB in California. Later, a bartender turned DJ

PREACHER PAUL

Ralph Hull was born in Portland, Oregon and worked at 23 stations over a 17 year career in radio. Ralph proudly states, "I was fired nine times, seven times for playing the blues and R&B. But I finally got to do it at KUXL." He came to Minnesota midway into his career, starting at KDWB. After being fired by KDWB for playing the blues, Ralph Hull got an interview with KUXL. "Marvin Kosofsky heard about me because I was a white guy playing the blues and I was out of work in Minnesota in the winter time. He came up in December 1964, and said 'bring some records to the station and let me hear what you do,' so I had a one man audience... he was just sitting back in his chair listening to me... I brought my favorite records in to really lay it on him and I had him in the palm of my hands. I even brought tears to his eyes. He let me [audition] for two and a half hours!" Needless to say, Ralph was offered the job and became "Preacher Paul Anthony," a name he got because he was "preaching the blues!" Before Ralph came to KUXL, he believes the station played religious music in the morning and jazz in the afternoons, a fact confirmed by a July 4, 1964 Billboard issue listing it as a jazz formatted station. Ralph recalls Robert Smith coming up from Shreveport, Louisiana to the station in January 1965 as general manager. He also remembers that in July of 1966, Smith, Hoehn, and him moved out to Los Angeles to run XERB full-time. Before leaving, Ralph helped KUXL establish deeper roots in the black community by bringing in some of the station's earliest African-American disc jockeys, Ron "The Rajah of Rhythm & Blues" Samuels and Billy G. "The Prime Minister of R&B." These days, Ralph lives in Sooke, British Columbia, operating a sushi restaurant, B&B, and a two acre vacation rental facility. He is ALMOST retired.

named Ray Moss from KUXL made the trek to XERB, too.

Ray Moss's trip to California didn't last long, though. According to an April 13, 1968 Billboard issue, "Ray Moss is back in Minneapolis with KUXL after a stint on XERB on the West Coast. In addition, Chess Records artist Jack Harris is now doing a show on the R&B station..." Jack Harris, the proprietor of Black & Proud records, remembers that Ray Moss's brief separation from KUXL opened the door for him to come in and become "Daddy Soul," and program director from 1968-1970. By this time, Jeffrey Diamond recalls the station had moved to the Southside Lumber Building on Highway 12 and was using a transmitter on Lilac Drive in Golden Valley, near Highway 100. "Lord Jeffrey," a native of St. Paul, worked at KUXL between 1967-1970, alongside Jack, Ray Moss, and Dan Pothier. He started when he was about 15 years old and can vividly remember his father had to drive him, as he only had his learner's permit. Ironically, the

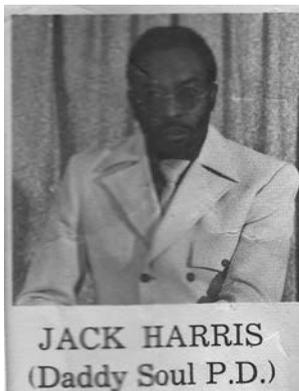


Photo of KUXL's Jack Harris from an airplay report. Courtesy Jack Harris

programs that inspired him to get into radio were "Wolfman Jack" on XERF out of Del Rio, TX, and Admiral Richard E. on KUXL.

For much of its history, disc jockeys at KUXL promoted R&B shows. In the late 1960s, they were responsible for bringing in some of the biggest acts to perform in Minneapolis and St. Paul, including Ike & Tina Turner, The Four Tops, Syl Johnson, Al Green, and others. Ralph Hull had a lot of fun presenting shows, and a good amount of success. "I only lost money once, \$20.00 in presenting Marv Johnson." In addition, Jeffrey

FAT DADDY WASHINGTON

Art Hoehn, A.K.A. "Fat Daddy Washington," went to Saint John's University in Collegeville, MN and got his start in radio at the school's station. After going on to KUXL and a short stint at XERB, he returned to Collegeville and worked alongside Bill Kling, Gary Eichten, and Garrison Keillor, among others, helping get Minnesota Public Radio off the ground. He passed away in 2011.

Diamond remembers he emceed a Wilson Pickett concert, and Jack Harris emceed a James Brown show at the Minneapolis Auditorium. Besides being disc jockeys, Jack and Jeffrey were involved as musicians in the local music scene. Jeffrey remembers playing some gigs on guitar with Dave Brady and The Stars and also working several shows with Jack Harris, Herman Jones, and The Exciters. One show in particular stands out for Jeffrey:

I'll never forget playing with Herman Jones and The Exciters backing Jack Harris. All of a sudden some guy came into the club and started shooting a gun, but we all kind of kept the thing going and we got down on the floor and continued playing. This guy was looking for his old lady... and then after a while he walked out of the club. It was the funniest thing because we kept playing. We just got on the ground and kept playing."

Thankfully, Jack and Jeffrey escaped the show without a scratch and continued broadcasting until 1970. Once Jack left to run a station in Omaha, Ray Moss became program director again during the early 1970s.

Starting on May 1, 1975, Thornton Jones, A.K.A. "Pharaoh Black," working as a maverick broker, bought time on KUXL and began producing a show called "Pharaoh Black's Soul 'Til Sundown." Pharaoh was a very popular DJ and his run at KUXL lasted until around 1979. He reflects, "I was spinning in different clubs almost every night. On Saturday nights I would rent a ballroom or gymnasium, whatever I could get. I had a thing called 'Pharaoh Black's Soul on the Roll Disco Rendezvous.'" Despite his popularity, by the end of the 1970s, the station expanded its religious programming to cover all hours of operation. As this change occurred, some familiar voices switched to KMOJ and helped keep the R&B grooves alive in the Twin Cities. In 1988, KUXL's call letters changed to KYCR and now all that remains of the old KUXL are memories.

KMOJ RADIO

In 1976 WMOJ started as a very low watt AM radio station serving North Minneapolis. "It was really designed to serve the public housing community between Glenwood Ave and Olson Highway," remembers Thornton Jones A.K.A. "Pharaoh Black." In 1978, WMOJ changed its frequency to 89.7 on the FM dial, expanded its power to about 10 Watts, and changed its name to KMOJ. It is still on the air today as "The People's Station, changing its frequency once again to FM 89.9 and increasing its power to 1,000 Watts – the

same as what KUXL was back in the day. The real contribution KMOJ makes to the Twin Cities R&B scene is that it picked up where KUXL left off.

CONNIE'S INSIDER MAGAZINE

During the sixties and seventies, Connie Hechter was a force on the Twin Cities' music scene. He began as a percussionist in the 1950s, playing exotic Afro-Cuban music and Calypso in Dinkytown, Minneapolis. After finishing his studies at the University of Minnesota, he traveled throughout the country as a record promoter. Returning to Minnesota, Connie saw a void in the local music scene and was inspired to start a publication that served both fans AND musicians.

Initially, the publication went under the name T.M.C "Insider," with T.M.C. standing for Trestman Music Center. Starting in the fall of 1966, Connie acted as publisher, editor, and reporter, with Trestman Music Center acting as a sponsor. In the summer of 1967, the magazine became independent and changed its name to Connie's Insider. By the end of 1971, it was simply titled The Insider. As both distribution and per-issue content grew, Connie brought in a growing staff to tackle the added responsibilities. Connie's roots at the University of Minnesota played an important role in this search as future editors like Tom Murtha and Peter Dwyer, photographers like Judy Olausen, Mike Barich, Jeff DeBevec, and others were all alums. One of the changes Tom Murtha remembers making as the first editor after Connie, was dropping Connie from the title and making The Insider more editorialized.

It started as a 4 page sheet distributed locally and kept growing with distribution eventually covering much of the Upper Midwest. The magazine was rather unique. It covered the same ground as other music magazines, doing features on artists and album reviews. But it was also a trade magazine for musicians. There were reviews of new equipment, musician want ads, profiles of studios and booking agencies, ads by instrument manufacturers and booking agents, and directories of local bands, clubs, A&R men, and more. One of Connie's longstanding achievements was establishing the Connie Awards, a celebration of industry leaders and bands from Minnesota's music scene. Years later it became The Minnesota Music Awards. Sadly, in 1978 Connie Hechter passed away and the publication briefly became the Musician's Insider. By 1980, the Insider came to an end.

MINNEAPOLIS SPOKESMAN-RECORDER



Minneapolis Spokesman header from the Jan 29, 1970 issue courtesy Dean Constantine with permission from the Minneapolis Spokesman-Recorder

The Minneapolis Spokesman is one of the oldest African-American owned newspapers in the United States. It was started in August 1934 by Cecil E. Newman and has remained in the family, with Tracey Williams-Dillard, granddaughter to Mr. Newman, still running the paper. During the early years of R&B, Soul, and Funk music in the Twin Cities, the Spokesman, and its sister newspaper the St. Paul Recorder, were the major printed voices dedicated to serving the black community. The newspaper combines coverage of national events as well as local stories and achievements in the black community. The Spokesman ran stories on the first Black & Proud 45, Wanda Davis, The Valdons' televised performance on WCCO's Moore on Tuesday, and many other musicians featured on the compilation. They also regularly ran ads for R&B concerts at King Solomon's Mines, The Cozy, Peacock Alley, and other prominent venues in the black community. The Spokesman-Recorder is still available in both print and web formats.

INSIGHT NEWS

Al McFarlane started Insight News in 1974 to serve North Minneapolis' Black Community. It started life as a magazine and became a community newspaper in 1976. Being free to the reader, and supported by advertising revenue, its goal from the beginning has been to reach communities without easy access to daily newspapers. The newspaper did numerous profiles of local R&B musicians and Al McFarlane remembers, "The Twin Cities were a hotbed for jazz, R&B, soul and funk... The music scene was so rich we were

able to launch and sustain for several years an innovative tabloid call Al McFarlane's Jazz Magazine, which celebrated the genius of Twin Cities artists and that of their colleagues and contemporaries from around the world who visited and performed for our community's music aficionados. Prediction: The best is yet to come!" Insight News continues today in both print and web formats.

KING SOLOMON'S MINES

Located on the first floor of the Foshay Tower, on the 9th Street side, King Solomon's Mines had a short but enormous impact on the local R&B scene. Manny Desilva's Five O'Clock club changed to King Solomon's Mines in the fall of 1966. Desilva's booked the type of jazz that went well with a dinner date. Originally, Dean Constantine was one of a few investors that took over the club in 1966, but the others dropped out and he started to make some changes. He brought in the Coleman Hector Afro-Cuban Sextet (Connie Hechter's group) before the end of 1966 and worked to promote dancing at the club. By January 1967, Constantine was trying out local rock groups on the weekends, and in February he booked Dave Brady & The Stars for the first time. The club began booking the Infinites in April, the Amazers in May, Maurice McKinnies and The Blazers in August, and the Exciters played there in June and July of 1968. In October 1968, the club was raided, with multiple minors found, and in November of 1968 the liquor license was suspended. The club never opened again. In the December 18, 1969 issue of The Minneapolis Spokesman there is an extensive interview with Dean Constantine about the closing of his club...

In the short tenure of King Solomon's Mines, Constantine hired black rhythm-and-blues bands and attracted crowds that were 90 percent black. The real reason he was closed, he figures, was that the white tenants in the Foshay Tower and in surrounding buildings simply did not want blacks in the neighborhood. 'The raid that found the minors there was just an excuse. We always had two people checking IDs, and we often turned away 30 or more people a night because we didn't believe they were 21. We wanted an off-duty policeman to work at the door, but we couldn't find one who was willing.' (Clubs that hire off-duty policemen as bouncers are seldom raided.)



Gene Williams and the Backsliders live at King Solomon's Mines, Downtown Minneapolis circa 1968 courtesy Minnesota Historical Society. Photo by Mike Zerby.

It shouldn't be glossed over that there were real problems with violence at King Solomon's Mines. Dean Constantine recalls more than a few incidents. "Once in a while big Cadillacs would pull up and the trunks would open, then out would come the baseball bats."

One event in particular that shook Dean happened as they were closing for the night. "A guy pulled a gun on my bartender and the place went silent. My bartender, who was a big guy that looked like Belafonte, started slowing walking toward him. The guy

with the gun told him to stop or he would shoot, but he kept walking. When he got to him, the gunman just handed over his gun." People against King Solomon's Mines back in the day could say, "When black bands play downtown, black crowds come and there are more problems," but they would be overlooking something important. King Solomon's Mines was the only club downtown that catered to the black community. Because it was the only one, all people, upstanding citizens as well as less than upstanding ones alike, came to the club. It's likely if there had been more clubs like it, each club on its own would have had fewer problems.

When talking with members from local R&B groups from the sixties, King Solomon's Mines and The Cozy Bar come up far more than any other clubs. Donnell Woodson from the Exciters remembers, "King Solomon's Mines was a new venue, a crossover for both black and white. Dean Constantine was the door opener." Another Exciter, Herman Jones states, "The first guy that gave us a break to play in Minneapolis among the white population was Dean Constantine at King Solomon's Mines. Dean went to the state capital to fight for us – that we should be able to play downtown and in the suburbs. We were one of the few black bands that were playing for white and black audiences."

Dean himself has become a very revered figure to the musicians and it's easy to see why. Ricky Washington says when he was 16 he was playing drums with Billy Holloman at King Solomon's Mines. He got arrested in a raid and it was Dean Constantine who bailed him out. And Ronnie Scott from the Infinites and Blazers recalls, "Dean Constantine had a thing for the help and the bands. If you did so much business, everybody got bonus checks, which was rare."

Describing King Solomon's interior, Anthony Scott from Prophets of Peace remembers, "They used to have the room set up like you were in Africa. It looked like a jungle, it was real cool." The club obviously left an impression on Jack Harris from KUXL/Black & Proud Records because once he moved down to Omaha to work at a new radio station, he opened a club with the same name. It even had a picture of a Pharaoh as you entered the door, and mirrors on the walls. Dean Constantine had a career as a dance instructor before running King Solomon's and continued long after the club shut down. His daughter Deanna continues the dancing tradition.

THE COZY

James T. Fuller Sr., known as Jimmy, started The Regal Tavern in the mid-1960s. It was located on 7th Street and Olson Memorial Highway in North Minneapolis and was often referred to as the "Bucket of Blood" because of the number of fights there. One of the regular performers at the Regal was Mojo Buford. In fact, Wilbur Cole says the bar was where he first met Mojo, Maynard Walker, Donald Breedlove, and other musicians. He bought a piano and that night him and a friend dragged it all the way from St. Paul to The Regal. Adding, by the end of the night "I had been enjoying a drink or two and I fell off the stage and took the piano with me!" In the late 1960s, Jimmy Fuller moved his business to 522 Plymouth Ave North and upgraded the space, calling it The Cozy Bar. Throughout this period, the Regal Tavern and the Cozy Bar were one of the few black owned bars in Minneapolis.

Clubs like Jimmy Fuller's were essential to local Black R&B group. Maurice Jacox remember, "The music scene in the Twin Cities was pretty much segregated, it was black and white and the two did not mix at all. So black bands couldn't get any work at any of the established clubs in town. Blacks played at places like the Blue Note and the Cozy; these were black clubs. Incidentally, anyone was welcome but when blacks would go into white clubs you were made to feel distinctly uncomfortable. Clubs tried to discourage black people from coming in. But for example, the Blue Note did have quite a bit of white regulars. Dave Moore would come down after doing the ten o'clock news to listen to jazz. These clubs were where real music and real players were." The Cozy made a significant contribution by providing R&B bands with consistent work. Ronnie Scott from The Blazers remembers, "When the Cozy first opened up Jimmy was trying all these different bands..."

THIS WEEK!

TONIGHT (SUNDAY)
THE NILES
Back by Popular Demand
Monday thru Saturday

THE FABULOUS AMAZERS
Dance to the Tops
in Rhythm and Blues
Nightly including
Sunday!

NEXT SUNDAY:
**DAVE BRADY
AND THE STARS**

LUNGHERS, DINNERS, COCKTAILS

King Solomon's Mines
FOSHAY TOWER - 9th ST. SIDE

Ad from the Minneapolis Tribune, Sept. 17 1968 courtesy Dean Constantine

bands... everyone was playing the same songs. We were playing new songs from the radio, and doing different things and we became one of the regular bands.” Herman Jones from the Exciters saw “Jimmy Fuller as one of the leading black businessmen in Minnesota.” And Wilbur Cole adds, “If we broke down on the road, we would call Jimmy and he would always be there for us.”

When Interstate 94 was being constructed, the city compensated Jimmy for the loss of the Cozy and in 1980, at the age of 70, he started the Riverview Supper Club, rather than retiring. The Riverview was located on 2314 West River Road, just across the Mississippi from the old Grain Belt Brewery. James T. Fuller Sr. died at the age of 89 on December 27, 1999, and the Riverview closed its doors forever on December 10, 2000. Violent incidents became more frequent at the bar during the 1990s because of gangs. Then after a new law was enacted preventing off-duty police officers from acting as security guards in bars, it escalated further. James Fuller Jr. finally closed the bar after three of the club’s unarmed security guards were shot in the winter of 2000. Despite the bad actions of a few patrons, the clubs were longtime centers of the black community in North Minneapolis.

KAY BANK STUDIOS

Though widely known as Kay Bank, the studio on Nicollet Avenue and 26th Street in Minneapolis started in 1955 as Swedien Recording. It was built by Bruce Swedien when he was just 19 years old. Bruce remembers, “I first got into recording while growing up in Minnesota. After I graduated from school, I was working at Schmitt Music Company’s recording facility for a while. Then I bought their equipment and set up a recording studio in an old movie theater on Nicollet and 26th that’s still around today. It was and still is a world-class recording studio.” Bruce and his wife Bea moved to Chicago and he began working for Bill Putnam in 1957, going on to engineer, mix, and produce many legendary performers. He recorded jazz and blues greats during the 1950s and 1960s, got his first Grammy nomination in 1962 for “Big Girls Don’t Cry” by Frankie Valli and the Four Seasons, and began a longstanding partnership with Quincy Jones, later recording and mixing the majority of Michael Jackson’s solo albums, including *Off The Wall* and *Thriller*. Vern Bank bought the studio from Bruce in 1957 and named it Kay Bank, after his wife. He partnered with Amos Heilicher, one of the pioneers of record distribution and owner of Soma Records (Amos spelled backwards), and many classic recordings from Dave Dudley, The Trashmen, and others were made there in the 1960s. During that time, Tom Jung and Herb Pilhofer spent their formative years there learning the trade before founding Sound 80. In 1968, Vern Bank sold his share in the studio and it became Universal Audio Recording. Around 1970 it changed names again to Micside, then Cookhouse in 1971. In 1983 Twin/Tone records moved into the space and established Nicollet Studios, with both Hüsker Dü and the Replacements doing significant recordings there. The studio still exist today under the name Creation Audio.

SOUND 80

Tom Jung and Herb Pilhofer left Kay Bank Studios in 1969 and formed Sound 80. Their never ending quest to create the best quality recordings possible resulted in the most state-of-the art studio in Minnesota. Perhaps the most notable recordings made at Sound 80 come from the now legendary December 1974 sessions which yielded five songs for Bob Dylan’s *Blood on The Tracks* album, including “Tangled Up in Blue.” The Valdons, Prophets of Peace, Band of Thieves, and Lewis Connection all recorded at Sound 80, as did Prince for some early demos. David Rivkin engineered the Lewis Connection sessions at Sound 80, as well as the second, unreleased, record from Band of Thieves. He remembers, “I wasn’t really on their staff so they didn’t give me anything other than provide a place to record. Later though, they did build a recording truck for Sound 80 that we used a lot. I was doing a lot of live radio broadcasts then.” Sound 80 was also an early pioneer in digital recordings. It is often claimed that the first commercially released digital album came from the studio in 1978 – the fruits of a prototype machine brought into the studio by local company 3M. Another early digitally recorded album was Willie & The Bees’ second album, *Out of The Woods*. The studio shut down as the 1970s gave way to the 1980s. Today the building is used for audio testing and its current claim to fame is having an anechoic chamber that is the quietest place on earth, according to the Guinness Book of World Records.

David Z on A.S.I.

A.S.I. stood for Audiotek Studios, Inc. and was a studio and label started by Dan Holmes. It was located in the heart of North Minneapolis at 711 W. Broadway Ave. David

Rivkin A.K.A. David Z. started engineering at ASI in 1975. As a musician, David started playing guitar in a folk duo called The Dynamics in the early 1960s, moved on to playing rock with the Chancellors and Stillroven, and then briefly was a promotion man for A&M and Elektra. He was in California from about 1968-74 working as a staff songwriter for A&M, co-writing “How Much I’ve Lied,” with Gram Parsons, among others. After his contract with A&M ended, David returned to Minneapolis. He started up as a promotion man for WEA and then he put together a plan with Dick Shapiro, a booking agent friend, to record demos for bands and use the recordings to get gigs from club owners. He found the studio with the lowest rates, A.S.I., and took about 25 bands into the studio. At that point, he didn’t know how to record. David remembers, “In the middle of the third group the engineer said ‘why don’t you do this because I’m sick of it.’ I had no idea how to do it because I’m a guitar player and he said ‘well you’ll learn’ and they locked me in the room for two years and I learned.” David wasn’t on staff at a studio, he was freelance and had to find projects to record. He worked out of ASI, Sound 80, Creation (on Old Shakope Road),



David Rivkin AKA David Z working at A.S.I. in the mid 70s courtesy David Rivkin.

and occasionally at Cookhouse (formerly Kay Bank).

According to David, “A.S.I. was a great big room. The ceilings were so high, they must have been 40 feet high at the least. There were microphone stands hanging from the ceiling and they were on tracks. You could slide and pull them down and adjust the placement of the mics. It was the only studio I ever saw like that. It was a funky place and they didn’t have a lot of state-of-the-art equipment... We had an 8 track Scully at first and then a 16 track Scully. The board was a home made board. It was modules put together by friends of Dan... I don’t think we even had a counter on the tape machine. We had to go by sound to figure out where the song ended.”

As far as what the scene was like back then, “It was in North Minneapolis so naturally we got a lot of people from North Minneapolis wanting to record. I did a lot of R&B, pre-Prince stuff, and people wanted to be on KMOJ. That was their big dream. It was cool. People were trying to get over, but there wasn’t really success back then. Nobody made any hit records,” reflects David, adding, “I don’t remember any division of races at all, but I knew there were only a couple places that bands with black members could play. That was the extent of it. I think black music in Minneapolis was so frustrated because there weren’t all these clubs, like there were for the white bands, where you could make money and survive. So basically everyone was stuck practicing, woodshedding, and writing songs, and I think that’s the reason we had it break so wide open. When Prince broke the door down, everybody was ready to go. We all were frustrated to the fact that we had no outlet and the only outlet was original music.”

PHYLLIS WHEATLEY

The Phyllis Wheatley Settlement House was founded in North Minneapolis in 1924. It was in many ways the center of the early African-American community. Countless young people from nearby settlement houses received education at Phyllis Wheatley, and the athletic fields got heavy usage as children from the area played together. More than a few musicians got to know each other through Phyllis Wheatley. For one example, Maurice Jacox met a young drummer, future Willie and the Bumblebees member, Donald “Hye Pockets” Robertson at “The Wheatley.” Additionally, in the days when hotels in Minneapolis were segregated, many black musicians from out-of-state stayed at Phyllis Wheatley. The long standing home of Phyllis Wheatley was 809 Aldrich Ave North. This location was demolished during the construction of Interstate 94 in 1970, but a new facility was built and the Phyllis Wheatley Community Center continues to operate.

CREDITS

Newspaper layout/design: Eric D. Foss

Writing: Will Gilbert, Eric D. Foss, Danny Sigelman

Text editing: Will Gilbert, Danny Sigelman, Eric D. Foss

LP design: Eric D. Foss with help from Kyle Werstein

Audio remastering: Cory J. Wong

A&R: Eric D. Foss, Will Gilbert, Dale Burback, Brian Engel

Compilation produced by Will Gilbert and Eric D. Foss

Executive Producer: Eric D. Foss

THANK YOU

First and foremost, we would like to thank the musicians featured on this compilation for sharing their gifts with the world. It has been a distinct pleasure getting to know and work with many of them. We would like to extend personal thanks to the following musicians who have been of great help in putting together this project:

Billy Barnes, Carl Bradley, Bill Clark, Wilbur Cole, Steve Crowe, Clifton Curtis, Wanda Davis, Bill Gaskill, Russell Hagen, Terry Halvorson, Jack Harris, Leroy Hawkins, James Hebel, Tom Hoth, Maurice Jacox, Herman Jones, Sonny Knight, Pierre Lewis, Wally Lockhart, Bill Lubov, James Martin, Edgar Murphy, Willie Murphy, Bruce Palaggi, Anthony Scott, Ronnie Scott, Willie Scott, Charles Small, James Vasquez, Willie Walker, Jimmy Wallace, Ricky Washington, Morris Wilson, Donnell Woodson, Monroe Wright, Ted Wysinger, Maurice Young.

Additionally, we'd like to thank the Hot Pants and Hipshaker crews for all their help. Specifically, we'd like to extend a very special thank you to Dale Burback, Brian Engel, and Ben Mena for providing valuable assets to this package.

Many thanks to the families of the musicians, including Abram Markoe (Mojo Buford Estate), Damien Vasquez AKA DJ Espada (Jimmy Vasquez's cousin), Sam Riley (Wanda Davis' husband), and Sara Breedlove (wife of the late Donald Breedlove).

Thanks to the Hennepin County Library Special Collections for preserving and making available to the public Connie's Insider, The Spokesman, and The Minneapolis Tribune. Thanks to the Minnesota Historical Society for preserving the history of this great state.

Thanks to Al McFarlane from Insight News and Tracey Williams-Dillard and Jerry Freeman from the Minneapolis Spokesman-Recorder.

Thanks to Jack Harris, Jeffrey Diamond, Ralph Hull, Marvin Kosofsky, and Thornton "Pharaoh Black" Jones for helping piece together the history of KUXL Radio.

Thanks to Marc Percansky, Dean and his daughter Deanna Constantine, and Jimmy Fuller, Jr for sharing stories about their clubs

Thanks to Tom Murtha, Peter Dwyer, Judy Olausen, Mike Barich, Mike Zerby, Jeff Debevec, and Steve Kaplan for sharing their words and images with us.

Thanks to Bruce Swedien, David Rivkin, and Tom Herbers for educating us on the history of recording studios in Minneapolis.

Special thanks to The Cedar Cultural Center in Minneapolis for providing a space in which the musicians on this record could reunite and perform as the Twin Cities Funk & Soul All-Stars on September 22, 2012.

LEGAL

A1. All Day Long **The Valdons**

Original label: Twin City Movement

(P) The Valdons

Licensed from The Valdons

Published by Valdon Music (BMI)

Written by N. Crayton

Produced by T.C.M. and arranged by Morris Wilson

A2. Sock-A-Poo-Poo '69 (Part 1) **Maurice McKinnies & The Champions**

Original label: Black And Proud Records

(P) Jack Harris

Licensed from Jack Harris

Published by Marrio Publishing

Written by Jack Harris

Produced by Jack Harris & James B. Hebel

A3. Work Your Flapper (Part 1) **Jackie Harris & The Champions**

Original label: Black And Proud Records

(P) Jack Harris

Licensed from Jack Harris

Published by Marrio Publishing

Written by Jack Harris and Al Perkins

Produced by Al Perkins, S. Johnson, J. Harris

A4. She's A Whole Lot's A Woman **Mojo and His "Chi 4"**

Original label: Adell

(P) Abram Markoe OBO George Buford estate

Licensed from Abram Markoe

Published by Wildbird Publishing

Written by Mojo Buford

A5. Ridin' High **Dave Brady and The Stars**

Original label: Darby

(P) Dave Brady and the Stars

Licensed from Bill Lubov OBO Dave Brady and the Stars with additional

permission from Dave Brady and the Stars

Published by Chi Sound (BMI)

Written by Curtis Mayfield

A6. I Ain't Gonna Cheat On You No More **Willie Walker**

Original label: Goldwax

The copyright in this sound recording is owned by Ace Records Ltd.

(P) 2004 Ace Records Ltd.

Licensed from Ace Records Ltd

Published by ABKCO Music (BMI)

Written by Beverly Prudhomme

A7. Save Me **Wanda Davis**

Original label: Project Soul

(P) Wanda Davis

Licensed from Wanda Davis

Published by Kilynn-Pronto (BMI)

Written by C. Ousley, A. & C. Franklin

Produced by E. McIntosh, C. Dent, E. Grant

B1. Get Funky, Sweat A Little Bit **Jackie Harris & The Exciters**

Original label: Black And Proud Records

(P) Jack Harris

Licensed from Jack Harris

Published by Marrio Publishing

Written by Jack Harris and Al Perkins

B2. There Goes My Used to Be **"Wee" Willie Walker**

Original label: Goldwax

The copyright in this sound recording is owned by Ace Records Ltd.

(P) 1967 Ace Records Ltd.

Licensed from Ace Records Ltd

Published by Rise Music-Aim Music BMI

Written by R. Jamison

Produced by Q. Claunch & R. Russell

B3. Take Care **Wanda Davis**

Original label: Project Soul

(P) Wanda Davis

Licensed from Wanda Davis

Published by Camad Music Co. (BMI)

Written by Leonard Brown

Produced by E. McIntosh, C. Dent, E. Grant

B4. Sweet Smell Of Perfume **Maurice McKinnies & The Champions**

Original label: Black And Proud Records

(P) Jack Harris

Licensed from Jack Harris

Published by Marrio Publishing

Written by Jack Harris and Al Perkins

Produced by Al Perkins, S. Johnson, J. Harris

B5. Baby, Baby I Need You **Dave Brady and The Stars**

Original label: Darby

(P) Dave Brady and the Stars

Licensed from Bill Lubov OBO Dave Brady and the Stars with additional

permission from Dave Brady and the Stars

Published by Jobete (BMI)

Written by Wm. Robinson

B6. Love Me, Leave Me **The Valdons**

Original label: Twin City Movement

(P) The Valdons

Licensed from The Valdons

Published by Valdon Music (BMI)

Written by D. Breedlove and W. Clark

Produced by T.C.M. and arranged by Morris Wilson

C1. Dipstick **Willie and The Bumblebees**

Original label: Sweet Jane, LTD

(P) Mark Trehus

Licensed from Nero's Neptune Music

Published by copyright control

Written by Willie Murphy

Produced by Dave Ray and Willie Murphy

C2. Rusty McDusty **Morris Wilson**

Original label: MoWill Records

(P) Morris Wilson

Licensed from Morris Wilson

Published by MoWill (BMI)

Written by Morris Wilson

C3. Thieves In The Funkhouse **Band of Thieves**

Original label: Previously unreleased

(P) Band of Thieves

Licensed from William Gaskill with additional permission from Band of Thieves

Published by copyright control

Written by Wilbur Cole

C4. You Can Be **Prophets of Peace**

Original label: Maxx Records

(P) Anthony Scott

Licensed from Anthony Scott with additional permission from Prophets of Peace

Published by copyright control

Written by Williams, Scott and Bradley

Produced by P.O.P. Productions

D1. Saxophone Disco **Morris Wilson**

Original label: MoWill Records

(P) Morris Wilson

Licensed from Morris Wilson

Published by MoWill (BMI)

Written by Morris Wilson

D2. Honey From The Bee **Willie and The Bumblebees**

Original label: Sweet Jane, LTD

(P) Mark Trehus

Licensed from Nero's Neptune Music

Published by copyright control

Written by Willie Murphy

Produced by Dave Ray and Willie Murphy

D3. The Max **Prophets of Peace**

Original label: Maxx Records

(P) Anthony Scott

Licensed from Anthony Scott with additional permission from Prophets of Peace

Published by copyright control

Written by Williams, Scott and Bradley

Produced by P.O.P. Productions

D4. Get Up **The Lewis Connection**

Original label: PA Productions

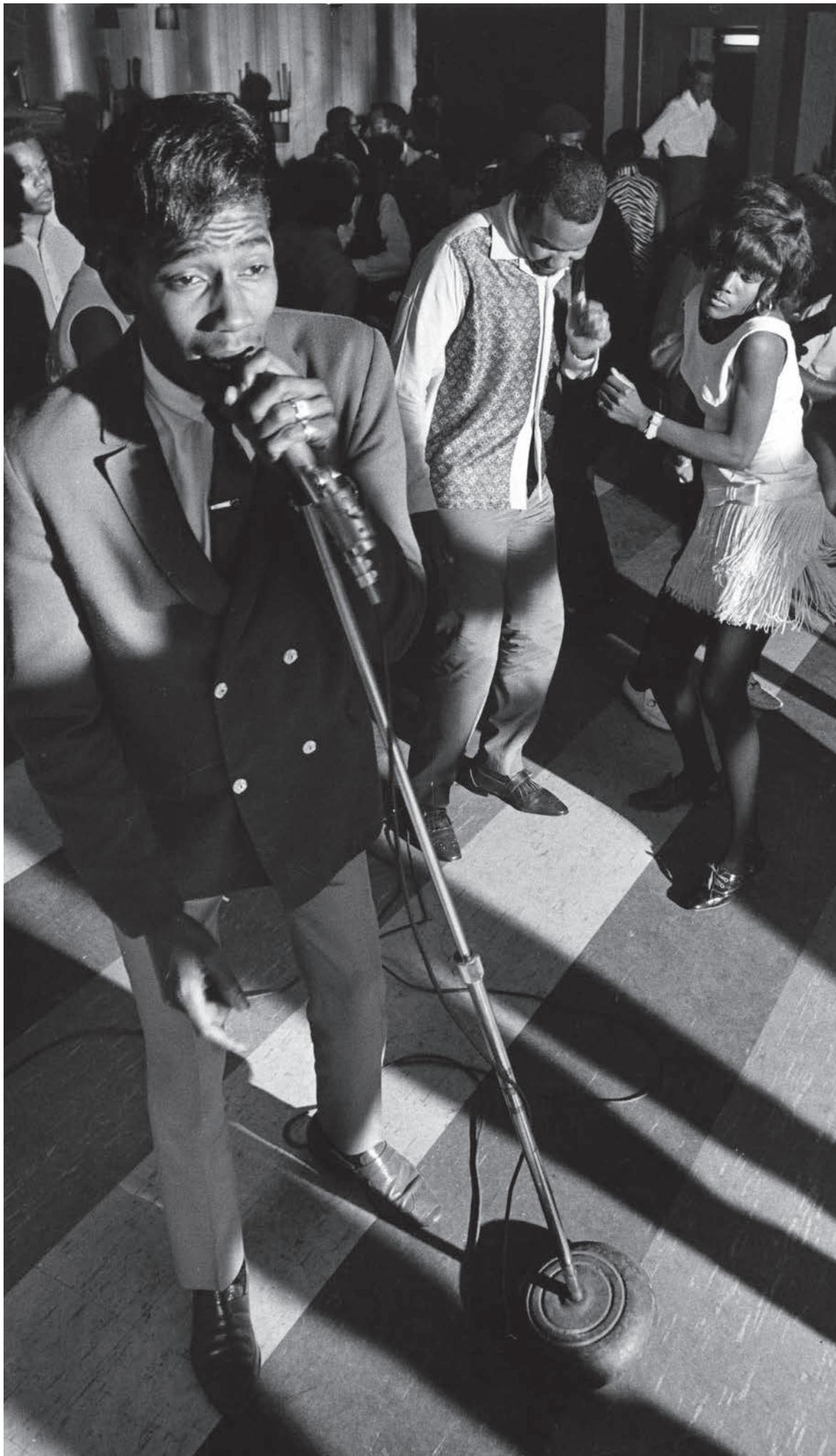
(P) Pierre and Andre Lewis

Licensed from Numero Group with the cooperation of Pierre and Andre Lewis

Published by PA Productions (BMI)

Written by Pierre and Andre Lewis

Produced by Pierre and Andre Lewis



TWIN CITIES FUNK & SOUL

LOST R&B GROOVES FROM MINNEAPOLIS/ST. PAUL 1964-1979

COMPILATION TRACK LIST

- A1. All Day Long **The Valdons** (2:45)
- A2. Sock-A-Poo-Poo '69 (Part 1) **Maurice McKinnies & The Champions** (3:23)
- A3. Work Your Flapper (Part 1) **Jackie Harris & The Champions** (2:52)
- A4. She's A Whole Lot's A Woman **Mojo And His "Chi 4"** (3:03)
- A5. Ridin' High **Dave Brady And The Stars** (2:56)
- A6. I Ain't Gonna Cheat On You No More **Willie Walker** (2:31)
- A7. Save Me **Wanda Davis** (2:29)

- B1. Get Funky, Sweat A Little Bit **Jackie Harris & The Exciters** (2:45)
- B2. There Goes My Used to Be "Wee" **Willie Walker** (3:01)
- B3. Take Care **Wanda Davis** (2:47)
- B4. Sweet Smell Of Perfume **Maurice McKinnies & The Champions** (2:40)
- B5. Baby, Baby I Need You **Dave Brady And The Stars** (3:29)
- B6. Love Me, Leave Me **The Valdons** (3:21)

- C1. Dipstick **Willie And The Bumblebees** (3:20)
- C2. Rusty McDusty **Morris Wilson** (5:23)
- C3. Thieves In The Funkhouse **Band of Thieves** (6:57)
- C4. You Can Be **Prophets of Peace** (3:32)

- D1. Saxophone Disco **Morris Wilson** (3:40)
- D2. Honey From The Bee **Willie And The Bumblebees** (3:20)
- D3. The Max **Prophets of Peace** (4:05)
- D4. Get Up **The Lewis Connection** (6:55)

This newspaper is a companion piece to a compilation of Twin Cities Funk & Soul available from Minneapolis based Secret Stash Records. Available on CD and 2XLP the record can be purchased directly from www.secretstashrecords.com.

Compilation album released under license from respective copyright owners. See enclosed for details.

Back photo: Maurice McKinnies & The Blazers at The Cozy Bar, Minneapolis, summer of 1968. Photo By Mike Zerby, courtesy Minnesota Historical Society.

© Secret Stash Records 711 W Lake St, STE B, Minneapolis, MN 55408

SSR-LP-25