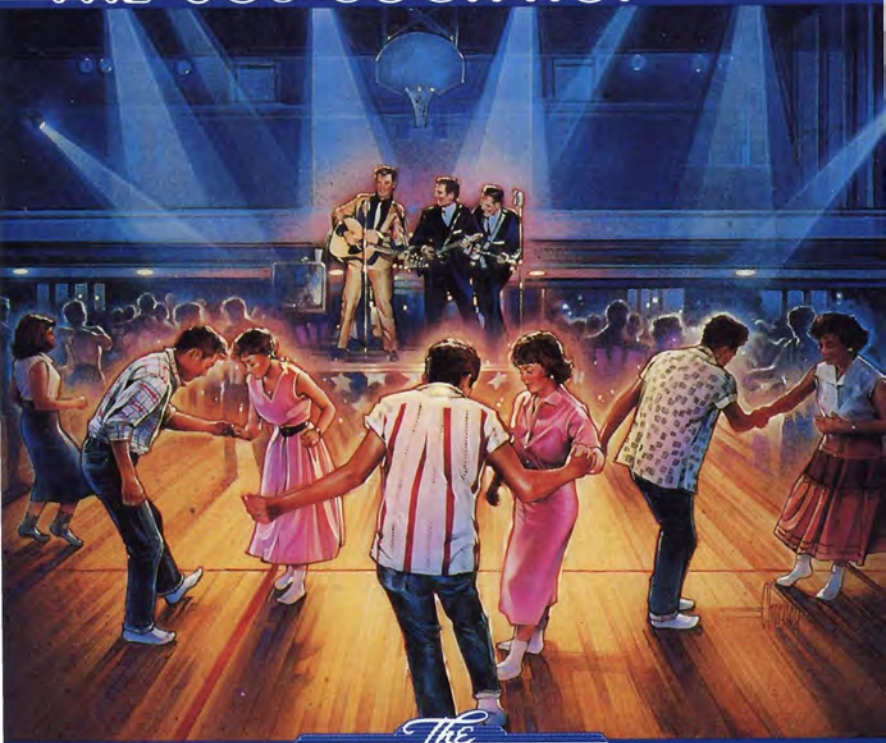


# THE '60s: SOCK HOP



TIME  
LIFE  
MUSIC

*The*  
**ROCK'N'ROLL**  
ERA

Digital Remaster

# THE '60s: SOCK HOP

- 1 **Sandy Dion** (1963)
- 2 **When My Little Girl Is Smiling**  
The Drifters (1962)
- 3 **A Thing of the Past** The Shirelles (1961)
- 4 **I'll Try Something New** The Miracles (1962)
- 5 **Burning Bridges** Jack Scott (1960)
- 6 **Deep Purple**  
Nino Tempo and April Stevens (1963)
- 7 **I Saw Linda Yesterday** Dickey Lee (1963)
- 8 **I've Told Every Little Star**  
Linda Scott (1961)
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- 12 **(I Wanna) Love My Life Away**  
Gene Pitney (1961)
- 13 **Only in America**  
Jay and the Americans (1963)
- 14 **Run to Him** Bobby Vee (1961)
- 15 **(He's) The Great Impostor**  
The Fleetwoods (1961)
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- 17 **New York's a Lonely Town**  
The Trade Winds (1965)
- 18 **Tower of Strength** Gene McDaniels (1961)
- 19 **Come On Little Angel** The Belmonts (1962)
- 20 **"Nag"** The Halos (1961)
- 21 **Tra La La La Suzy** Dean and Jean (1963)
- 22 **Once in Awhile** The Chimes (1960)

## SEE PROGRAM NOTES INSIDE

The high resolution of this compact disc may reveal limitations inherent in the original analog recordings.

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# The ROCK'N'ROLL ERA

## THE '60s: SOCK HOP

COMPACT  
disc  
DIGITAL AUDIO



2RNR-42  
OPCD-2612

TIME  
LIFE  
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- 1 Sandy
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- 3 A Thing of the Past
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MADE IN U.S.A. ALL APPLICABLE LAWS



*Linda Scott was a sophomore in high school when she had her first hit in 1961.*

## THE '60s: SOCK HOP

Brenda Lee was still six months shy of 16 when *I'm Sorry* was released in 1960, but owing to her father's death in a freak construction accident in 1953, she had been her Atlanta family's chief breadwinner nearly half her life. She had moved from radio to television shows in Atlanta, then on to an Augusta, Georgia, TV show when she was first spotted by Dub Allbritten, manager of country superstar Red Foley. Allbritten signed Brenda up for his client's ABC-TV country variety series, *Ozark Jubilee*, and quickly took over her career, winning her a contract with Decca in 1956 and appearances on the television shows of Perry Como, Steve Allen and Ed Sullivan.

But in 1959 Brenda's recording career still hadn't gotten off the ground, so the resourceful wheeler-dealer booked her in Paris. There he planted a story in local papers that the little girl with the big voice was a 32-year-old midget; he then denied the story publicly, and the resulting controversy led to tours of Europe and South America. Early in 1960, *Sweet Nothin's* became her first top-10 hit, paving the way for *I'm Sorry*. Fearful that the teenager sounded "too adult" on such a sexy song of unrequited love, Decca sat on the record for several months after the session before finally releasing it.

April Stevens and Nino Tempo represented another kind of early-'60s success story: A brother and sister born in Niagara Falls, New York, they each pursued a solo career before working together. April's career began almost by accident in 1951, shortly after the family moved to Hollywood, when she was spotted shopping at Wallich's Music City by the head of a small independent label. Nino, a jazzman, was playing a Bobby Darin session when he caught the ear of Ahmet Ertegun. The Atlantic-Atco president was already a fan of Stevens', and he perked up when Tempo said he was thinking about forming a duo with his sister.

Ertegun signed them right up but wasn't wild about their

version of **Deep Purple**, written by Peter de Rose in 1934 as a piano solo, with lyrics added by Mitchell Parish in 1939. April insisted they cut it, and so they knocked off two takes in 14 minutes at the end of the session that produced their debut single. When that song, another standard called *Paradise*, flopped, Ertegun gave in to the team's wishes and released *Deep Purple*. This time the duet went to No. 1.

Doo-wop evolved into vocal-group sounds of all stripes. The Jive Five's **What Time Is It?** was faithful to the old style. But the Belmonts weren't far off either with **Come On Little Angel**, co-written by Ernie Maresca, who had been working with both the group and Dion, the man who once fronted it, since 1958. Dion himself had moved over to Columbia Records by the time **Sandy** was released by Laurie, his former label. In a stroke of marketing genius that amounted to high concept in those days, the label surrounded *Sandy* with a batch of other old love songs that named names and released an album called *Dion Sings to Sandy (And All His Other Girls)*.

Rudy Lewis came out of the Clara Ward Singers, a pillar of the gospel community, to sing lead for the Drifters during the era represented by **When My Little Girl Is Smiling**. Lewis, perhaps the most underappreciated of the Drifters' leads, died of a drug overdose in 1964. The Miracles' **I'll Try Something New** provided a bridge between old and new vocal-group styles; baseball fan Smokey Robinson wrote it on a popcorn box as he and his father watched the hometown Detroit Tigers crush the Cleveland Indians.

According to co-writer Barry Mann, **Only in America** was originally earmarked for the Drifters as an ironic protest influenced by the early-'60s urban folk movement. Record-company politics dictated that the song be rewritten to take the sting out of the lyrics, but Jerry Leiber and

Mike Stoller went ahead and produced the new version with the black vocal group anyway.

Without the intended irony, though, the whole thing sounded all wrong, so Atlantic simply sold the instrumental tracks to United Artists, which then had vocals overdubbed by Jay and the Americans, a white group with a perspective more appropriate to these lyrics. Thus, did a protest song mutate into an exercise in unabashed patriotism.

The Trade Winds' **New York's a Lonely Town** came about when Leiber and Stoller, who owned Red Bird Records, told Rhode Island writers Pete Andreoli and Vinnie Ponia that they wanted a surf hit. The pair, who had a couple of Ronettes hits under their belts already, came up with this unlikely anthem about living where the waves don't break. They recorded it themselves using anonymous session players.

In 1960, with *Will You Love Me Tomorrow*, the Shirelles became the first girl group to reach No. 1. The Passaic, New Jersey, quartet worried constantly that they were made to sound "too white" by their producer, Luther Dixon of the Four Buddies, who also wrote hits for Pat Boone and Perry Como. But what seemed to hold back **A Thing of the Past** was not its sound but the popularity of its B side: The Carole King-Gerry Goffin tune *What a Sweet Thing That Was* siphoned off crucial air play.

Among female solo artists, Linda Scott brought back **I've Told Every Little Star**, the Oscar Hammerstein II (lyrics) and Jerome Kern (music) piece from the 1932 musical *Music in the Air*. Dionne Warwick's **Don't Make Me Over** arose out of less happy circumstances. Struggling to establish herself as a solo artist after several years of singing backup on the records of other artists, Dionne had gotten into a fight with her producers, Hal David and Burt Bacharach, over whether she could cut their song *Make It Easy on Yourself*. (She had loved it from the moment she sang the demo.)

After the men told her they'd already given the tune to

Jerry Butler, she lerninated the discussion by snapping, "Don't make me over," and stomped out of the room. David and Bacharach, knowing a good phrase when one was hurled at them, wrote a song around it.

Rockabilly was still the main influence on male solo stars, but it wasn't the only one. Gene McDaniels was classically trained, and he applied all manner of unprecedented vocal fillips to rhythm and blues material like **Tower of Strength**. Gene Pitney, an electronics student at the University of Connecticut, made extra money by cutting demos of songs he had written for producer Aaron Schroeder. He sang all the parts and played all the instruments except bass on the four-track demo of **(I Wanna) Love My Life Away**. As always, he passed the demo along to Schroeder, who had placed earlier Pitney compositions with other artists. But Schroeder liked this demo so much that he started Musicor Records so he could release it just the way it was. *Love My Life Away* took the songwriter to recording stardom.

Memphis native Dickey Lee was already a veteran of the Sun Records rockabilly scene when he cut **I Saw Linda Yesterday**. Jack Scott (**Burning Bridges**) was second-generation rockabilly even if he was born in Windsor, Ontario, Canada, and raised across the border in a Detroit suburb. Bobby Vee was a Buddy Holly imitator who launched his own career by singing with his brother's 15-piece band as the substitute act for Holly the night after the Texas rocker's plane went down. A few local hits in the upper Midwest brought Vee to the attention of Hollywood producer Snuff Garrett, the man behind **Run to Him**.

Ral Donner, meanwhile, had been the best Elvis imitator in Chicago since he was 15 (1958) when Gone Records decided in 1961 to take a chance on him with **Girl of My Best Friend**. The King himself had included the song on his 1960 *Elvis Is Back* LP to celebrate his release from the army, but he never released it as a single. So his sound-alike, backed by a Florida group called the Starfires, got



*Jay Black (far left)  
and the Americans*

the hit. Donner was such a faithful impersonator, in fact, that he was later used as narrator—which is to say he provided El's voice—in the 1981 docudrama *This Is Elvis*. Three years later, Donner himself was dead, of cancer, at the age of 41.

—John Morthland

*Firmly rooted in country music, Brenda Lee became a child star on Red Foley's television show in the mid-'50s.*





## DISCOGRAPHY

\*Indicates highest Billboard chart position

- 1. Sandy Dion • Music and lyrics by Dion DiMucci and Sieve Brandt.** *Laurie 3153 (1963).* Courtesy of Continental Communications Corp. No. 21\*
- 2. When My Little Girl Is Smiling** The Drifters • Music and lyrics by Gerry Goffin and Carole King. *Atlantic 2134 (1962).* Produced under license from Atlantic Recording Corp. No. 28\*
- 3. A Thing of the Past** The Shirelles • Music and lyrics by Bob Brass and Irwin Leime. *Scepter 1220 (1961).* Courtesy of Gusto Records. No. 41\*
- 4. I'll Try Something New** The Miracles • Music and lyrics by William Robinson. *Tamla 54059 (1962).* Courtesy of Motown Record Company, L.P. No. 39\*
- 5. Burning Bridges** Jack Scott • Music and lyrics by Walter Scott. *Top Rank 2041 (1960).* Courtesy of Capitol Records, Inc., under license from CEMA Special Markets. No. 3\*
- 6. Deep Purple** Nino Tempo and April Stevens • Music by Peter de Ruse, lyrics by Mitchell Parish. *Atco 6273 (1963).* Produced under license from Atlantic Recording Corp. No. 1\*
- 7. I Saw Linda Yesterday** Dickey Lee • Music and lyrics by Dickey Lee and Allen Reynolds. *Smash 1791 (1963).* Courtesy of PolyGram Special Products, a Division of PolyGram Records, Inc. No. 14\*
- 8. I've Told Every Little Star** Linda Scott • Music by Jerome Kern, lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein II. *Canadian American 123 (1961).* Courtesy of ERIC Records. No. 3\*
- 9. Girl of My Best Friend** Ral Donner and the Starfires • Music and lyrics by Beverly Ross and Sam Bobrick. *Gone 5102 (1961).* Under license from Rhino Records, Inc., by arrangement with Butterfly Entertainment Corp. No. 19\*
- 10. What Time Is It?** The Jive Five • Music and lyrics by Bob Feldman, Richard Gottehrer and Jerry Goldstein. *Bellone 2024 (1962).* Courtesy of Janus Records, Inc. No. 67\*
- 11. I'm Sorry** Brenda Lee • Music and lyrics by Ronnie Sell and Dub Allbritten. *Decca 31093 (1960).* Courtesy of MCA Records, Inc. No. 1\*
- 12. (I Wanna) Love My Life Away** Gene Pitney • Music and lyrics by Gene Pitney. *Muscor 1002 (1961).* Courtesy of Gusto Records. No. 39\*
- 13. Only in America** Jay and the Americans • Music and lyrics by Jerry Leiber, Cynthia Weil, Mike Stultel and Barry Mann. *United Artists 626 (1963).* Courtesy of EMI, a Division of Capitol Records, Inc., under license from CEMA Special Markets. No. 25\*
- 14. Run to Him** Bobby Vee • Music and lyrics by Jack Keller and Gerry Goffin. *Liberty 55388 (1961).* Courtesy of EMI, a Division of Capitol Records, Inc., under license from CEMA Special Markets. No. 2\*
- 15. (He's) The Great Impostor** The Fleetwoods • Music and lyrics by Sharon Sheeley and Jackie Shannon. *Dolton 45 (1961).* Courtesy of EMI, a Division of Capitol Records, Inc., under license from CEMA Special Markets. No. 30\*
- 16. Don't Make Me Over** Dionne Warwick • Music by Burt Bacharach, lyrics by Hal David. *Scepter 1239 (1962).* Courtesy of December 12. No. 21\*
- 17. New York's a Lonely Town** The Trade Winds • Music and lyrics by Pete Andreoli and Vince Ponzia Jr. *Red Bird 020 (1965).* Courtesy of Sun Entertainment Corp. No. 32\*
- 18. Tower of Strength** Gene McDaniels • Music by Burt F. Bacharach, lyrics by Bob Hilliard. *Liberty 55371 (1961).* Courtesy of EMI, a Division of Capitol Records, Inc., under license from CEMA Special Markets. No. 5\*
- 19. Come On Little Angel** The Belmonts • Music and lyrics by Ernest Moresca and Tom Bogdany. *Sobria 505 (1962).* Courtesy of Continental Communications Corp. No. 28\*
- 20. "Nag"** The Hatons • Music and lyrics by Arthur Crier. *7 Axis 709 (1961).* Courtesy of Selma Music. No. 25\*
- 21. Tra La La La Suzy** Dean and Jean • Music and lyrics by Brenda Lee Jones and Welton Young. *Rust 5067 (1963).* Courtesy of Continental Communications Corp. No. 35\*
- 22. Once in a While** The Chimes • Music by Michael Edwards, lyrics by Bud Green. *Tag 444 (1960).* Courtesy of Janus Records, Inc. No. 11\*

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