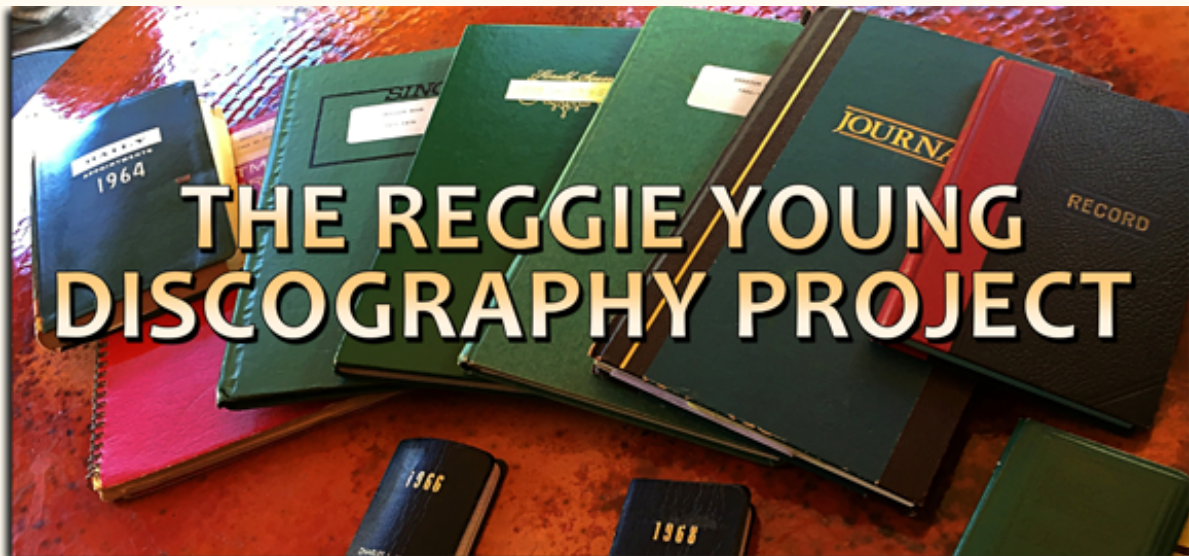


# SOUL DETECTIVE



## 1966 notes

### PART ONE - HI RECORDS

*This is part one of the companion 'liner notes' page for the complete 1966 discography. Please [click here](#) for Part Two... then join in the discussion and send us an [email](#) Thanks!*

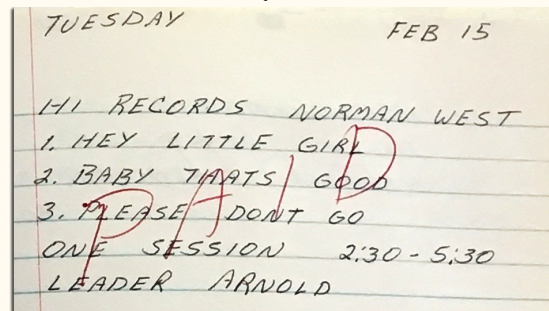
OK folks, I know it took a while, but we're back with our in-depth analysis of Reggie Young's session log books for the year 1966. Before we go any further, I'd like to say a few words about **Clarence Nelson**. As you may recall, Clarence was the focus of **case eight** here before we began the Discography Project. Nelson's distinctive style was a huge influence on the next generation of Memphis session guitarists like Chips Moman, Steve Cropper and Reggie Young. Reggie became so good at emulating Clarence's sound, that it was often difficult to tell them apart.

## Norm West - Hey Little Girl



This phenomenal record by Norman West, **Hey Little Girl**, is what got the ball rolling in the first place when both Howard Grimes and Darryl Carter (who know a thing or two about Memphis Soul) swore up and down that the guitar on here was definitely played by Clarence Nelson... and it sure does sound like him. I'm not criticizing them, believe me, I'm just pointing out how difficult it can be to tell one from the other.

Although not released until May of 1967, Reggie's session notes indicate that both sides of M.O.C. 664 were cut at Royal on February 15, 1966 (and that he, thankfully, got paid!). As I've said in the past, the wealth of information contained in these books just boggles the mind. *"Chips got the best sound out of Clarence,"* Reggie told me, *"he knew how to produce him."*



## The Triumphs... Walkin' th...



Well, as fate would have it, we've recently discovered a 45 that provides an excellent example of that. Chips resurrected his band The Triumphs (the precursor to 'The M.G.'s' that he had formed while still at Stax) for a one-off release on Verve in August of 1966, **Walkin' The Duck**. Just an awesome record, it's Memphis all the way, baby! That rockin' guitar, that organ, that wailin' sax! *"Ohhhh, Yeah!"* So, how do we know it's Clarence Nelson and not Reggie?

## The triumphs - Turn out th...



Well on the label of the flip side here, it says that **Turn Out The Lights** was written by 'Klein-Cogbill-Nelson'. Another slab of pure Memphis Grease, I'd say that no doubt refers to George Klein (an attempt to get the record played by the omnipresent Bluff City DeeJay), Tommy Cogbill, and our man Clarence. Although 'predicted to reach the R&B singles chart' in Billboard that September, it never made it, and this great record's gone virtually un-noticed all this time. I'm not sure where these sides were cut, but the books show that Chips was using Royal on a regular basis that year, as I don't think the

equipment at American was quite where he wanted it as yet. Tommy Cogbill was still working with Reggie at Royal. Hmmm...

**CHART** Spotlights—Predicted to reach the R&B SINGLES Chart

JOE SIMON—Too Many Teardrops (Combine, BMI). SOUND STAGE 7 2569  
 BILLY PRESTON—Sunny (Portable, BMI). CAPITOL 5730  
 BILLIE DEARBORN—Down (Saturday, BMI). DYNO VOICE 223  
 THE O'JAYS—Stand in for Love (Metric-Bar-New, BMI). IMPERIAL 46197  
 EARL GAINS—The Best of Luck to You (Ca, BMI). HBR 481  
 THE TRIUMPHS—Walkin' the Duck (Press, BMI). VERVE 10422

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THURS JULY 28  
 HI RECORDS WILLIE MITCHELL  
 4 TUNES  
 3 TUNES ON WILLIE + 1 ON  
 NORMAN WEST  
 WM-SM-FF-SC-ML-LB-RY-CLARENCE

As mentioned on the [Discography Page](#), Reggie had begun jotting down the initials of the other musicians who played on each session that Summer, and in the entry for July 28th above they translate as Willie Mitchell, James Mitchell, Fred Ford, Sammy Creason, Mike Leech, Larry Butler, Reggie Young and CLARENCE! I asked Reggie if that meant Clarence Nelson and he told me it did. (I freaked, of course... *what if we could identify a record with both Clarence and Reggie playing guitar on it!?*) *"I definitely would have stayed in the background, though,"* he said, *"out of respect."* Which is also why, I imagine, he couldn't reduce his name to mere initials!

Willie Mitchell - Sticks And...



The next Hi 45 on Willie Mitchell, [Sticks And Stones](#), was released in September, and I would bet the farm that it was recorded at that 7/28 session. First off, I'm thinking that that Brother Ray-like electric piano on this B side is being played by Larry Butler (more on him in part two), and that it's Clarence Nelson on the lead guitar. Although hard to tell their styles apart, Nelson's has a certain frenetic edge to it, while Reggie's seems just slightly more fluid... I asked Reggie about it, and he told me that *"the biggest difference between me and Clarence was tone, and how hard Clarence strikes the strings with his pick."*

WILLIE MITCHELL - MERCY



The top side of the record, [Mercy](#), 'bubbled under' the Hot 100 that October and, if you listen closely, actually features two guitars. I'd say that's Reggie playing pretty much the exact same rhythm he would use on [Memphis Underground](#) three years later (thus

'staying in the background'), and allowing Clarence to take the lead... *here's that Holy Grail!*

One of the very cool things about the year 1966 when it comes to researching Soul Music is the existence of **The!!!!Beat**, the ongoing R&B party filmed in technicolor by WLAC deejay Bill 'Hoss' Allen in Dallas that ran in 26 episodes that year from May to October. Episode 24, which would have aired around the same time that **Hi 2112** was released, features a Hi Records takeover led by Willie Mitchell and what Hoss refers to as "*his Hi Recording Band...*" Actually though, it's Willie's road band of that era, which included his brother James, Fred Ford, and the 20 year old Mabon Hodges (I have yet to identify the bass player, drummer, baritone sax and keyboard players - *detectives?* ed: our friend Howard Grimes has been able to identify them for us as follows: Bass: Leroy Hodges Drummer: Jeff Greer Baritone Sax: J.P. Louper and Keyboard: Joe Hall - *Thank You Bulldog!*). Although Reggie Young is nowhere to be found, I've decided to include this episode here in its entirety as I think it provides a priceless snapshot of the Hi Records stable of artists at that point.

The !!!! Beat (TV Program) Vol 6 # Sh...



The show starts out with a rare confluence of Jefferson and Beale Streets as Fred Ford and Teenie join the Nashville 'Beat Boys' (which at that point included Billy Cox, Johnny Jones, Freeman Brown, Jimmy Church and Aaron Varnell) in a raucous rendition of 'Night Train'. After that, sadly, the show shifts into its usual 'lip-sync' format, but it's interesting to watch Willie and the band faking it over the 45 version of 'Sticks And Stones' we talked about earlier.

BIG AMOS - HE WON'T BIT...



Next up to the plate is **'Big Amos' Patton**, who does his darndest to make it look like he's really singing and playing harmonica over the studio recording of **He Won't Bite Me Twice**, which had been released in June. The only session Reggie lists with Big Amos in 1966 was held on November 10th, so I'd say it's a safe bet that it's not him playing guitar on Hi 2108... *I'd bet that it's Clarence Nelson!* How do I know? well, in addition to the fact that it *sounds* like him, at 4:24 of the above video, towards the end of the B side, **Move With You Baby**, Big Amos says *"Look out, little Clarence!"* right before the lead. *How cool is that?*

As we've seen, Veniece Stalks made her fist appearance on Hi in **1965**. By January of 1966, the label had decided to drop her last name, and issued Hi 2099 as simply by 'Veniece'. Not much of a record, really, it apparently fell on deaf ears and sank like a stone. *[just an aside here for the record nerds among you, there appears to have been no Hi 2100 released, at least not to my knowledge. Has anybody ever seen a copy?]* Hi apparently had big plans for Veniece, however, and held a number of sessions on her that Spring.



Back to The!!!!Beat episode above: after a live instrumental from Willie and the band, Hoss introduces her as Veniece 'Starks' who then lip-syncs over a fully polished audio track called **Everything He Needs**, which very obviously has Reggie all over it. Allen was apparently so impressed with her that he asked her back for the next episode of the show where, once again, she sings over another great studio recording, **I've Got To Get You Out Of My Mind** which, according

to Reggie's notes, was cut April 5th. It is a total mystery to me why these sides were not released at the time... it just doesn't make sense. I mean this lady definitely had it goin' on, and her TV appearances would certainly indicate that Hi was interested in promoting her. *Hmmm...*




Anyway, *let's go to the videotape*: after the star segment by Little Milton, Willie and the band fake it over the studio recording of '20-75' (it's fun to watch Teenie replicating Reggie's guitar licks!) then show what a tight outfit they were by rockin' the house with a live instrumental before Hoss introduces absolute powerhouse Don Bryant. His stage presence (and dance moves), perfected over his years of working with Willie in the clubs, show what a star he was. You can hear Reggie driving the

excellent studio track that Don is lip-syncing to, **Sweet Baby Talk**, which inexplicably (once again) went unreleased at the time. This one would have give Marvin and Motown a run for their money - it's really that good. It's hard to imagine what Hi's owner Joe Cuoghi might have been thinking...

## DON BRYANT - I'll Do The ...




There were eleven separate sessions on Don held at Royal Studio in 1966, which would result in only two singles issued under his own name. The best of these,  **I'll Do The Rest**, was released in April. One of the great lost Memphis Soul records, it was written by Don himself, and features some of Reggie's best guitar work ever, mixed right up there with those trademark Willie Mitchell horns. They just don't come much better than this, folks. Selected by Billboard to reach the R&B top ten, it never made it. As a matter of fact, it didn't chart at all. *Why?* I think it's important to remember that Hi had historically sold most of their records on jukebox routes, and the company wasn't much interested in radio play and promotion. As times changed in the industry, and Memphis music was suddenly hot again (thanks, in large part, to Stax around the corner), I think Joe Cuoghi and Ray Harris, in many ways, failed to see the forest for the trees.

R&B SPOTLIGHTS	
<b>TOP 10</b>	Spotlights—Predicted to reach the TOP SELLING RHYTHM & BLUES SINGLES Chart
DON BRYANT— <b>I'LL DO THE REST</b> (Jec. BMI)— Slow, easy rockin' ballad with wailin' Bryant dual-track vocal will hit the r&b chart with impact. Soulful, emotional reading. Flip: "The Glory of Love" (Press, BMI). <b>HI 2104</b>	
<small>© billboard 4/9/66</small>	

## 1 + 1 Love's Gonna Live H...



Shortly after Hi 2104 was released, the decision was made to pair Don with a young lady named Marion Brittenum who actually had been recording around the corner for Volt as a member of **The Drapels**. Although Reggie's session notes indicate that at the time of recording the duo was named 'Don & Mary', the lone single by them,  **Love's Gonna Live Here**, was credited to '1 + 1', and relegated to Hi's newly re-activated M.O.C. subsidiary. I love this upbeat Country Soul cover of a Buck Owens tune which (in the words of **Heikki Suosalo**) *"sounds like Peggy Scott & Jo Jo Benson"* I guess they were ahead of their time though, as Peggy & Jo Jo hit the top ten two years later while, predictably, 1 + 1 never even dented the charts.

## JANIT &amp; THE JAYS - Witho...



Here's another little known Deep Soul record from the pen of Don Bryant. Janet and The Jays had recorded a single for Hoss Allen's Hermitage label in Nashville the year before that went nowhere, and perhaps signing the group to Hi was seen as a sort of advance favor for the upcoming appearances on his TV show. In any event, it's just fantastic stuff.

▶ **Without A Reason** was cut at Royal on April 25th, and Janet is just singing her heart out while both Fred Ford and James Mitchell are virtually weeping into their saxophones... all I can say is wow! By the time Hi got around to releasing the 45 that Summer, they couldn't even spell her name right, much less put any energy into promoting it.



It would appear that Joe Cuoghi was more interested in business as usual, and he made sure that the quality of the instrumentals the label had been famous for remained high. I absolutely love the way Reggie's rhythm guitar and Bobby Emmons' Hammond build this soulful arrangement of ▶ **Funny (How Time Slips Away)**, while Ace's wailing sax just brings it on home. Once again projected by Billboard to go top ten R&B, somehow it didn't make it. Are you beginning to see a pattern here? I'm not sure if Cuoghi was refusing to 'play the game' with the deejays, but for whatever reason, Hi just couldn't seem to buy a hit. Reggie and Bobby were still playing gigs with Cannon, performing with him over forty times in 1966 alone. *How I would have loved to have attended one of those!*

**R&B SPOTLIGHTS**

**TOP 10** Spotlights—Predicted to reach the TOP SELLING RHYTHM & BLUES SINGLES Chart

ACE CANNON—FUNNY (How Time Slips Away) (Pamper, BMD)—Soulful, driving revival of the blues hit should re-establish this all over again. Powerful sax performance. Flip: "Saxy Lullabye" (JEC, BMD) HI 2101

© billboard 2/5/66



◀ **Jumpin' Gene Simmons** had provided Hi with back to back novelty hits in 1964 but, despite several other attempts to mine the same territory, hadn't done much since. After an abysmal effort to cash in on the 1966 **Batman** craze bombed, the record that would become Gene's final release for the label, ▶ **Keep That Meat In The Pan**, was mentioned in Billboard's R&B Spotlights, but once again never made the charts. This great B side of that 45 we have here, ▶ **Go On Shoes**, had languished 'in the can' for over a year and, in my opinion, is the best thing Simmons ever recorded. Written by Reggie himself, this breezy British-Invasion flavored pop tune shows what a talented songwriter and arranger he had become, even if Hi didn't appreciate it at the time.

**R&B SPOTLIGHTS**

**CHART** Spotlights—Predicted to reach the R&B SINGLES Chart

THE JIVE FIVE—You're a Puzzle (Little Rick-We Three, BMI). UNITED ARTISTS 5009

BOBBY POWELL—Down Got Over (Su-Ma, Mirdean, BMI). WHIT 1725

JUMPIN' GENE SIMMONS—Keep That Meat in the Pan (Tree, BMI). HI 2113

EDDIE HOLMAN—Am I a Loser (Harthon-Cameo-Parkway, BMI). PARKWAY 106

OTIS WILLIAMS—Your Sweet Love (Rained All Over Me) (Pamper, BMI). OKEN 7261

© billboard 10/22/66

## Bill Black's Combo - Rambl...



One of only two singles by Bill Black's Combo released in 1966, this rockin' blues romp is a far cry from the middle-of-the-road standards that Hi had them recording for LP tracks, and demonstrates just how good the studio band was at that point. I played this one for Reggie, and he said *"Wow, that was me!"* Bill Black had passed away in October of 1965, and his widow was in the process of selling the rights to use the name to Bob Tucker (the 'road' guitarist that led the touring version of the Combo) and Larry Rogers. Rogers had been Black's engineer at his Lyn-Lou Studio, which he and Tucker would soon purchase as well. According to the books, Reggie cut eight sessions with Larry in 1966 at Sonic, American, Sun and Royal but, as far as I can tell, none of them were at Lyn-Lou. After moving Lyn-Lou further up Chelsea Avenue later on (and cutting some great records there with Clarence Nelson among others), Rogers moved on to Nashville and still runs Studio 19, the Music Row location originally owned by Scotty Moore.

**RECORDED IN MEMPHIS:  
3 simultaneous breakouts!**

<p><b>BILL BLACK'S Combo</b></p> <p>Rambler Hi-2115</p>	<p>First Hi release for this hit artist</p> <p><b>CHARLIE RICH</b></p> <p>Love Is After Me Hi-2116</p>	<p><b>ACE CANNON</b></p> <p>Wonder- land By Night Hi-2117</p>
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Hi (or London) was certainly trying, as evidenced by this full page ad in Billboard claiming the label had '3 simultaneous breakouts' which, alas, was not the case. The Bill Black and Ace Cannon records went broke (predictably) and Hi pinned it's hopes on their new signee...

## CHARLIE RICH - Pass On By





Like Gene Simmons, Charlie Rich had started out with Sam Phillips at Sun in the late fifties. After one 1960 chart appearance for Phillips, he had been unable to ring the bell despite over a dozen more releases on various labels until he signed with Mercury's Smash subsidiary in 1965. Producer Jerry Kennedy then brought Charlie back into the top 40 with **Mohair Sam**, but couldn't provide a follow-up, and Smash dropped him in September of 1966. Hi snapped him up, and dubbed him their 'hit artist', but the subsequent three releases on him died on the vine... they were just about three years ahead of their time. Check out Reggie on this incredibly deep B side,  **Pass On By**. Wow!

We continue our investigation into Reggie's 1966 session work in **part two**, which focuses on the records he cut for other labels besides Hi, and includes some of the greatest Soul Music of all time...

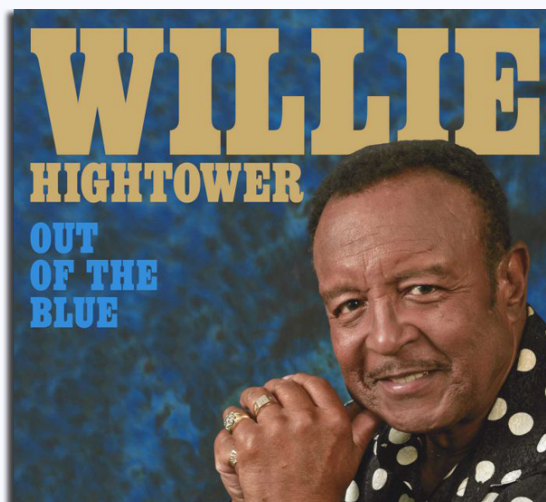
*Be sure to check out the complete **1966 discography** page, then join in the discussion and send us an **email**. - Extra Special thanks go to Reggie & Jenny Young, Mike Leech, Peter Hoogers, Colin Escott, Jay Halsey, John Broven and Georgette Keller.*



**SOUL DETECTIVE**


## SOUL SAUCE

By red kelly





*Every once in a while the forces of the Universe seem to align just right, and pull things together in unforeseen and miraculous ways... this is one of those times.*

Willie Hightower, one of the truly great Soul Singers of our time, has just released his first album in *FIFTY YEARS!* As good as anything he's ever done, it was recorded in Muscle Shoals, and produced by none other than **Quinton Claunch**, the legendary Goldwax impresario who gave us  **Dark End Of The Street**. That in itself is remarkable enough, but the fact that Willie is now 77 years old and Quinton turns *NINETY SEVEN* in December makes this event truly extraordinary.



I had first met Quinton back in 2008, as we put together the **O.V. Wright Memorial** weekend, and I made it a point after that to go see him whenever I was in Memphis. Sharp as a tack, he's still got one of the best 'ears' in the business. After the passing of his wife of *sixty nine* years in June of 2013, this dyed in the wool 'record man' decided to return to the studio. When my partner John Broven and I visited him on our Soul D Road Trip the following August, he played us the tracks he had just cut in Muscle Shoals on a Kentucky guitarist named Alonzo

Pennington. Although they sounded great, Quinton had trouble finding a distributor for the album when he released it on his own SoulTrax label in early 2015. *Hold that thought...*



Years back, Dr. Ike of The Ponderosa

Stomp asked author Peter Guralnick (who knows a little bit about Soul Music) which Soul Singer he would most like to see perform at The Stomp. "*Willie Hightower!*" was his immediate reply. After a few false starts, Ike contacted us here at Soul Detective to see if we could locate him for Stomp #12 in 2015. As fate would have it, John Broven's intrepid friend Seamus McGarvey had spoken with Willie several times at his home in Gadsen, Alabama, and was happy to supply Ike with his number. Once The Stomp booked Willie, Ike naturally wanted Peter to interview him at that year's Music Conference... only he had a prior commitment and was unavailable. "*What about Red Kelly?*" John Broven suggested (*bless his heart!*), and so I was invited to do an **interview and presentation** with Willie Hightower in New Orleans in October of 2015. *I was just over the moon...*



Like most people, I didn't know much about Willie beyond his amazing Fame singles, but as I began to do research for the interview, I discovered that he had recorded at Royal Studio in Memphis (the very studio that Quinton Claunch and his partners founded in 1957) in 1982, with Quinton handling the production. Although not released at the time, the album finally saw the light of day on a Japanese CD in 2007. I called Claunch to ask him about the sessions, and told him about Willie's upcoming Stomp

performance. "*Let me know how he sounds,*" he said.



Well, as anyone who was there that night can tell you, Willie Hightower gave one of the most solid and soulful performances I have ever witnessed, and proved to the

world he had lost absolutely nothing off his incredible voice. *He was back!* I reported all this to Quinton, as requested, and went on to send him a video of the show to prove my point. I didn't know it at the time, but Billy Lawson, the Muscle Shoals studio owner and engineer who had worked with Quinton on the Alonzo Pennington CD had asked him *"Don't you know of any old school Soul singers we could cut - that's what you do best!"* There's those forces of The Universe now, folks... *Quinton had his man!*



Lawson had just recently taken over Wishbone, the studio built by Clayton Ivey and Terry Woodford after they left Fame in 1973. When Larry Rogers' Studio 19 in Nashville (formerly Scotty Moore's Music City) faced the wrecking ball, Billy bought the console and just about went insane re-wiring and installing it at Wishbone. *"I'll never do that again!"* he told me when we visited the studio last month.



With the equipment finally where he wanted it, Billy brought in studio veterans like the aforementioned Clayton Ivey, Travis Wammack and Will McFarlane, and proceeded to cut a record that is pure Muscle Shoals magic. As the tracks were completed, Quinton began sending them up to John Broven and I here in New York, and we were just knocked out. This was Real Soul, as good as anything Willie had ever recorded! John in turn played them for Roger Armstrong at Ace in the UK, who jumped at the chance to release this landmark album.



**Out Of The Blue** was officially issued on August 31st, and is now available from **Ace** in Vinyl LP, CD and MP3 formats. *You need to own a copy!*



*...but the forces of The Universe weren't through.* Old friend Noah Schaffer got in touch a while back and asked for Willie's number. His buddy Eli Reed wanted to throw a 40th birthday party for him, he said, and was hoping Willie would agree to sing with his band. I honestly didn't think they could pull it off but, he lo and behold, Willie Hightower will be playing what may be his first ever Boston area gig on September 7th at Club Sonia in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Along with Deep Soul songstress Thelma Jones and The Natural Wonders, this show is gonna rock the house! Peter Guralnick will be there, John Broven will be there and so will I. *I wouldn't miss it for the world!*

BRING IT ON HOME TO ...



*...and as you can see, the show was truly amazing! Both Willie and Thelma Jones performances were an absolute revelation, and Eli's smoking band just tore it up! Life is Good!*

*- red kelly, September 2018*

CASE FILES

8 CLARENCE NELSON

 **part one**

 **part two**

 **part three**

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**7 THE MEMPHIANS**

**6 JAMES DUNCAN**

**5 ALLEN ORANGE**

**4 CHARLES 'SOUL' BROWN**

**3 J. HINES**

**2 LEE BATES**

**1 JOE HAYWOOD**

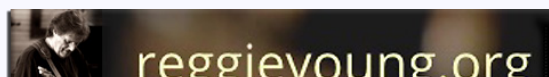
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RED KELLY INDEX

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MUSCLE SHOALS REGGIE ...



**PONDEROSA STOMP**  
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**SPECIAL REPORT**

Willie Hightower at FAME ...



Allen Toussaint & Deacon ...



Never Alone - The Gospel ...





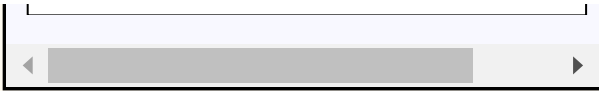
COSIMO CODE TRAILER



Darryl Carter - Looking ...







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