

band to back him up during his performance. After hearing the “Moroccos” on stage, to everyone’s surprise, Wilson Pickett asked Big Otis if his band was familiar with his newly released song, *In the Midnight Hour*, and would they play during his performance?

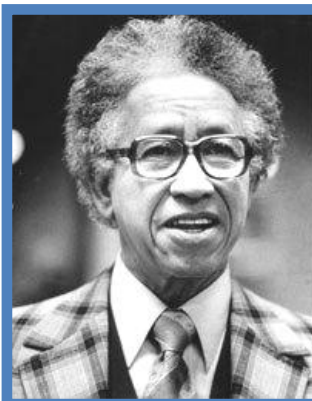
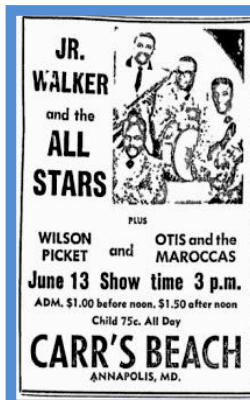
Later, “Wicked Pickett” working the crowd, dancing up and down both sides of the stage ramp. Following Wilson’s lead, the sax-trumpet-sax combo of Jones, Tatuem, and Dyson danced in unison. Reaching high and then dipping low they mesmerized the crowd. Roger Tatuem recalls Wilson’s being ecstatic with the band’s performance. Bob Daily, standing in the middle of the arena, recalled “The ‘Moroccos’ sounded great and performed beyond all expectations.” Tate 500 admits “their heads swelled so much that the next day they had to buy bigger hats.”

The “Moroccos” performance at Carr’s Beach quickly raised the level of their subsequent gigs. Their next appearances were in Accomack, Culpepper, and Warrington VA, and Charlestown WV. Unfortunately, the climb in fame was short lived. With the Vietnam War raging at the time, some band members were drafted and others drifted away.

In 1967 Arthur Conley composed his memorable *Sweet Soul Music* for Otis Redding. He died in 2003 at age 57.

Page 4

Wilson Pickett’s *In the Midnight Hour* reached number one in the R&B charts in August, 1965. He died in 2006 at age 64. The delightful memory of this Carr’s Beach event still endures for many in Harford County.



(l) An advertisement for the Carr’s Beach event (r) William L. “Little Willie” Adams (1914-2011), prominent Baltimore businessman and owner of Carr’s Beach Amusement Park. The Afro-American newspaper reported in 2011, Mr. Adams may have been one of the wealthiest Black men in America with an estimate worth of \$40 million in the late 1970’s.

Page 5

Author: Jerome Hersl
w/ Bishop Roger Tatuem

Copy Editor: Jim Chrismer

Reviewers: Leon and Margaret Ferguson,
Joan Wiggins, Barbara Hersl, Stephen Smith,
T. Roxann Redd-Wallace, Bernadette Low,
Rev. Donnie Berry and Jean White

Website: aahhcp.com

African-American History of Harford County, Maryland©



African-American Music Series From Africa to Harford County

Part 12

On Stage at Carr’s Beach

Pamphlet 0098
September 7, 2018



Cover: *Inside the open air pavilion with Hoppy Adams on stage (c. 1964-1965)*

During the 1950's and 60's, the City of Annapolis designated Carr's and Sparrow's beaches on the Chesapeake Bay south of town for use by Black patrons. In addition to providing normal beach activities, the two resorts also included venues that drew crowds upwards of 2,000 from the Baltimore and Washington D.C. regions for live music concerts. Top national performers on the Chitlin Circuit (e.g. Etta James, Little Richard, and Aretha Franklin) and local bands wanting to gain recognition, coveted a chance to perform at Carr's Beach (the more popular site).

One of the Harford County bands craving notoriety was "Otis and The Moroccos" (See Pamphlet 0089). These recent high school graduates experimented with new sounds while mastering the top 20 hits of the day. Harold Hoke, "Big Otis", and his band had started to make rumblings in the local music scene. To keep the group up-to-date, trumpeter Roger Tatuem "Tate 500" would visit the Havre de Grace (HdG) music store at 111 Washington Street to scout out new and interesting material.

A teenager from Georgia, Arthur Conley had joined the band as lead singer, and Baltimore promoter Rufus E. Mitchell signed the group to record on his Ru-Jac

Label. The group cut *I'm a Stranger* and *Where You Lead Me* at the Sheffield Studio in Baltimore. Later, Mitchell signed Conley as a single performer who recorded *Hiding Out in Blue Shadows* and *Whole Lotta Woman* as demos. (These have recently been re-mastered and digitized by Omnivore Recordings and can be heard on youtube.com.) Generally, disc jockey Charles W. "Hoppy" Adams Jr. (1926-2005) of Annapolis radio station WANN would promote the songs over the air. He also produced live broadcasts from the resort.

Rufus Mitchell also served as general manager of Carr's Beach. In the early spring of 1965 Mitchell booked "Otis and The Moroccos" to perform on June 13,



A copy of Where You Lead Me, vocals by Arthur Conley accompanied by Harold Hoke and his band. Note that Hoke was shown as Holt on the Ru-Jac label.

1965. Unknown to the band at the time, they would open for "Jr. Walker and the All-Stars" and Wilson Pickett - "The Wicked Pickett."

About two weeks prior to the Carr's Beach gig, Roger Tatuem went to the music store and purchased a 45 RPM of Wilson Pickett's latest song (an eventual classic), *In the Midnight Hour*. Back at practice sessions, the group played the record over and over as they untiringly sought to master Pickett's sound.

During the week leading up to the big event, Tatuem recalls, Hoppy Adams promoted *I'm a Stranger* over the WANN air waves. Band follower Bob Daily of HdG recalls over thirty friends of the "Moroccos" making the trek to Annapolis to see the show. On stage at Carr's Beach, "Otis and The Moroccos" belted out their two hit songs, *I'm a Stranger* and *Where You Lead Me*, with Arthur Conley as lead singer, Big Otis on drums, Walter "Jitter Bug" Reed on guitar, Edward "Clenny" Ferguson on bass guitar, William Dyson on alto sax, Tate 500 on trumpet, and Kenny Jones on tenor sax.

As occurred frequently in similar situations, Wilson Pickett came to Carr's Beach without his back-up band. Everyone expected Pickett would ask the more experienced "All-Stars"