

We continue our look at the Dakar label, picking up where we left off last time - December 1971, with the label undergoing a change in distribution, and something of a re-launch, that was to take it through the turbulent 70's. This was a time when major record labels were taking an ever-tighter grip on the market and independent's were being squeezed out of the frame.



At this point distribution changed from Atlantic / Cotillion to Brunswick. Dakar had been losing direction for some time, and whilst a constant string of Tyrone Davis records were keeping it afloat sales were declining. The new launch effectively gave the Dakar label some new signings and impetus (as well as a new label design). Nat Tarnopol head of Brunswick, had bought the label from Carl Davis, and was to buy in the services of Bruce Swedien and his studios. Swedien was to be the engineer responsible for some wonderful sounds in the 70's. Additionally publishing was to go through another Tarnopol company Julio Brian music. Artist wise the re-launched Dakar was to trawl it's net far wider than it's Chicago homebase, most notably relying on the East Coast (and New York in particular) for product. However for it's first release under Brunswick's distribution it went with it's most successful and trusted hitmaker...

#### **Tyrone Davis "I had it all the time / You wouldn't believe" (4501)**

A new distribution deal, and a fresh writing team - Richard Parker and Willie Henderson, resulting in a refreshing change of direction for Tyrone. The song starts as a ballad with an air steward announcing a flight arrival. Then our man is on the phone calling his baby and apologising for his misdemeanours. After a quite lengthy call home the tempo breaks into a stomping beat and Tyrone starts singing "*Here they go, the same two feet, Walking back down that one way street*" - sounds familiar? Well you can guess the rest. Nonetheless a good song. "*You wouldn't believe*" is a moody ballad showcasing Tyrone at his sultry and seductive best.

#### **Ben Monroe "Since you came into my life" (4502)**

First of two releases on the label for Ben, who is a very earthy tough vocalist. He actually sounds rather southern; unfortunately his debut for the label is marred by a poor production and weak and limp backing. I have never seen an issue of this, and it seems likely this was a double 'A' sided promo, that wasn't pressed up for commercial release.

#### **Smokestack- Walls between us / Take a look " (4503)**

A frantic funk number about an over possessive father preventing these sly guys from seeing his daughter, and who can blame him! Despite the complex guitar and horn riffs, I hear nothing in this side to differentiate it from a thousand other similar records. The lead singer was Larry Chance and this 45 was leased in from Daisy records.

#### **Jean Shy - "Nothing between us now/ I'll belong to you" (4504)**

Jean's last record for the label and recorded sometime earlier, it's a big ballad, but I cannot see where it is going. The flip has some good nervous strings, and is a better record. It's another ballad and like the A side just a little too glitzy. One wonders at what audience this was aimed. Goodbye Jean.

#### **Wales Wallace - A love like mine/ Forever and a day" (4505)**

Like the Jean Shy record this was cut a few months earlier than it's actual release, and is a semi spoken midpacer. Wales gives the song some impetus, but the number is not brilliant, and it is easy to see why this was not too successful. "*Forever and a day*" is the side that has garnered more interest among soul fans being a strong building love song and a classic example of early 70's smooth soul. Complete with twinkling vibes, triangles, all of the stops have been pulled out for this one. This side also saw the return to the fold of writers Daniels and Moore. Wallace then went over to Brunswick, where he recorded the memorable "shy guy" anthem and popular dance number "*Somebody I know*" (BRC101).

Wales had checked into the recording world some years earlier with an outing on Leo Austell's Renee label, renowned for collectibles by Cicero Blake, The Cascades, Eddie Sull (ivan), amongst others. "*I gotta have you*" (111) was a real old stomper-oonie, sprinting from start to finish in just over 2 minutes.

After Dakar and Brunswick Wales continued recording, adding a knighthood to his name. As Sir Wales he signed up for Innovation II for "*Whatever you want*" (8045). This was a wonderful spacey flutes and vibes almost two step floater - very nice. Superbly produced by Willie Henderson, and arranged by James Mack. I have this on a demo, and such was the label's belief in the song that they re-issued it (9157) (as by Sir Wales Wallace), with a strong ballad flip.

Next Wales appeared on Now Sound in 1976, a label fellow Dakar artist Johnny Sayles was later to try his hand with. "*People sure act funny*" (101) was a storming uptempo number -too fast for me, backed with another

quality ballad “*Why should we stay together*”, plodding along with crystal clear production and arranging, once again from the Henderson and Mack production team. Henderson, the man you will recall as the force (and horns) behind Tyrone Davis’s most successful hits (as well as being an occasional artist) left Dakar and Now Sounds was his own label, established in 1973. Aside from all this Wales was also in the line up of Wes Wells & The Stealers, who cut a number of fine sides, most notably for Epic and Torrid. This group had a come back CD issued in 1998.

**4506. Cotton “I know”**

I don’t know what this is like, as I don’t own a copy.

**Tyrone Davis -Was I just a fool / After all this time”(4507)**

Our man returns with a quality ballad, singing very effectively against full orchestration. Leo Graham co-penned this side; however the tempo changes for the chorus do detract from the overall feel just a little. Nonetheless a good number.

**Doug Haynes - “Oo wee baby I love you / Sly Slick and the Wicked” (4508)**

A new singer, tried out on the old Richard Parker standard (and hit for Freddie Hughes). However the song is delivered in a messy semi rap style, and the famous chorus is hardly recognisable buried beneath the instrumentation. This is a pity as Doug really turns it on in verse two; but he cannot save the song. The flip side was another cover version, this time of The Lost Generation’s classic. Again, stick with the original. Both sides were added to an album Doug put out in 1974 called “Mighty Doug Haynes” (76911). The album cover has an obese Doug holding up a globe in one hand. Again the implication is of something better than it actually is, as the album is nothing to write home about.

Doug originally came from Savannah Georgia, moving to New York when he was four. As a teenager he was gigging at various clubs and was “spotted” by a Mr. De Evans. He took Doug to Alonzo Tucker and Nat Tarnopol at Brunswick; the result was these sides.

**Mister T - “Love uprising/ Saving my love for you” (4509)**

What a cracking double header, it never ceases to amaze me how many little known treasures lie dormant within the ranks of labels like Dakar. Almost certainly from New York, the topside is a semi-spoken remake of Otis Leavill’s hit. Someone told me once that this was the star of the old TV series *The A Team*, but I doubt that very much indeed! As the intro kicks in, T raps “*Sit down, put your gun down, Quit talking about how you gonna fight and kill one another*”. When T breaks into song, he reveals an incredible vocal power and range. The b side “*I’m saving my love for you*” is a top drawer deep soul side. T is in fine fettle, leading an almost churchy minimalist backing. The vocals are pained as T asks forgiveness for keeping his baby waiting. T was infact Alonzo Tucker.

**Tyrone Davis “ Come and get this ring / After all this time” (4510)**

Back with an uptempo shuffler, familiar territory tune wise, and a tale of breaking up. The side is made better by the effective interplay between the piano, strings and vocal. “*Time*” is a dramatic ballad, Tyrone excelling in a sultry and downhome style vocal delivery; the song builds to a crescendo at the chorus, but suffers from slight under production. Both sides are lifted from the “*I had it all the time*” LP (76901).

**Otis Leavill - “It must be love / I still love you ” (4511)**

Otis’s final side for the label, and for his bow out he’s given a Phillip Mitchell ballad to work with. Once beyond the spoken intro the song develops into a subtle and sophisticated ballad, Otis effectively convinced that he’s under the influence of love. Spoilt by the spoken word sections of the song, Otis does not sound confident when he’s not singing. I have not actually seen an issue copy with “I still love you” on.

**Chuck Jackson “The man and the woman / I forgot to tell you) (4512)**

Main man from Wand and not as some would have us believe a singer from the group The Independents. This is a one off deal Jackson did for the label. The topside is a bubbling midpacer that in part at least borrows its backing from “Too busy thinking about my baby”. Dramatic vocalising on an organ led ballad - that’s my one line description of “I forgot to tell you”.

**Tyrone Davis “Was it just a feeling / If you had a change of mind) (4513)**

Another building tune, again with a rolling dance tempo personified on Tyrone’s recordings. This time aside from the obligatory horn section there are fewer strings, and the appearance of a fender rhodes piano. A tried and tested story about being shunned in love. “Change of mind” revisits Tyrone’s old hit, with new tune and lyrics. It does possess a pumping funky beat with the horns and plucked strings vying for attention.

**Cotton “Sweet and funky thing” (4514)**

Horrendous ! An obvious black singer with a strange hybrid cross between a country and western and pop song. Almost certainly not issued, due to lack of promotional airplay, and frankly I am not surprised !

**Aqua Sonics - Funky Fatso (4515)**

Propelled frantic early 70’s funk. It rolls along at 200 mph with bongos and manic drumming, and an annoying twangy backing. The lyrics are banal about an overweight female (in case you thought otherwise!).

There is no trace of a release for 4516.

**Brunswick Sound “Love is / Quiet nights of quiet stars” (4517)**

I don’t have this record.

**Bohannon Band – “Stop & Go / Save their souls” (4518)**

Hamilton’s debut release for the label. He was to become one of Dakar’s most consistent artists with a string of

disco hits. Originally from the south, Georgia, he'd been living in Detroit, and in fact used the nucleus of The Counts as his backing band to record this. He had also been percussionist at Motown, most notably on Stevie Wonder releases. "Wah wah" guitars and plucked strings lead into a stomping instrumental; a style he was to trademark as his own. "Save their souls" is a mono-syllabic slow moody side, not even saved by the gosselly girls singing backing or the weaving sax.

**Tyrone Davis - Without you in my life / How could I forget you" (4519)**

A stomping southern style tune that could have been cut down in Alabama; Leo Graham by now is writing unaided for the label's prime hit man. The flip is another uptempo side; one of those ones that takes a while to get going, building into an out and out 70's stomper.

**Channel Three - "You're the sweetest thing / Someone else's arms" (4520)**

This is a double sided delight, extremely rare on issue copy with a B side, which is a great shame as it is a top class ballad. Most people own "same both sides" demo copies. Still "Sweetest thing" is a classic in its own right, which will be familiar to anyone who has attended soul venues in the UK in the last ten years. For readers that haven't this is a pure adrenaline creator, a rolling uptempo (and uplifting) group sound that itches to be danced to. Some great singing on top makes this a Dakar classic. Even the 'pop' lyrics don't detract from the overall joyous bounce and feel of a singer who has got what he wants from life!

Channel 3 comprised Larry Blasingdale, ex-Notation Robert Thomas and ex-Ideals Jerome Johnson and Leonard Mitchell. (source: *Soul Harmony singles 1960-90* (Beckman Hunt & Kline).

**Bohannon "The Pimp walk / Happiness" (4521)**

A jerky funky disco hit dancer with girls warbling "Doing the pimp walk" throughout. "Happiness" is slower, being an organ led quasi-instrumental.

**B W & The Next Edition - "Stay with me baby" (4522)**

An excellent soulful dance sound with clip clop beat, expressive and committed "hoarse" vocalist and enough instrumentation to keep the sound on the boil, without overcooking it. This gives the song a slightly southern feel; and yet the song was co-written by Billy Nichols, so probably originates from New York. Quite a hard one to locate, again doubtful if it was commercially released. A good record with a lot of potential.

**Tyrone Davis "There it is / You wouldn't believe" (4523)**

Another foot stomping beater. Tyrone's got tears in his eyes, he has caught his missus enjoying herself with another guy. By now the ubiquitous string section has been relegated and horns and electric piano dominate the backing. The lyric follows our man as he pursues the cheating couple to a restaurant. He then loses it completely, more tears etc. Some very good loping tempo changes by a very tight backing band make this

one of his better tunes. The B side reminds me somewhat of the backing used on "Let's get it on", as Ty pleads his love for his woman. Just to make life complicated, she of course does not believe him, choosing to rely on the advice of what Tyrone calls a "back stabber".

**Jay Johnson "Ooh baby Pt 1 / Part 2" (4524)**

Dakar discovers the two part single! Another turkey too. After a long rapped intro, with loads of strings soaring all over the place, one thinks this will get going, but no more rapping, and so it goes on to the end. If this is supposed to be late night seductive soul, some sort of lightweight Barry White, it fails miserably. The vocalist doesn't sound at all soulful, and is probably white!

**Bohannon "Run it down Mr D.J / Part 2 (4525)**

More classic Bohannon with its stomping beat; virtually an instrumental, save only for the girls repeating the title ad nauseum. This formula was successful in the clubs with dancers. As a teenager growing up in West Kent I can remember all the discos playing Hamilton's records. The Elizabethan Barn, "The Beacon", and Bohannon's latest release filling the dancefloor, synonymous reminders of my somewhat mis-spent mid-teen years! As listening music though it's mind numbingly trite, and after three records by Bohannon, I am starting to drift off to sleep.

**Tyrone Davis "Wrapped up in your warm and tender love / True love is hard to find" (4526)**

A sad ballad at just below midtempo, allowing Tyrone to showcase his singing to the full "...Just like a heart attack, The pain keeps coming back...". Great side. "Time" is more of a dancer again in the familiar "Can I change my mind" style.

**Donald Height "A mean thing" (4527)**

The label debut for Mr Height sees him on a midpacer with clipped beat and subdued horn bursts and ever present 'high end' string accompaniment. The song is a fair effort and pleasant toe tapper, made all the better by Donald's baritone laid back and lazy vocal performance.

Height initially found success with Shout Records in New York, where his "Talk of the grapevine" (200), was the label's initial release in June 1966. Thereafter he had five subsequent releases for the label. Noteworthy are "You're gonna miss me" (204) - a plink plink piano'd ambient floater and "365 days" (208), a solid 60's soul mover, borrowing the riff from a slowed up "Barefooting", and complimented by a lunatic alto sax break. From Shout he moved to Jubilee in 1968, where he also had six releases. Try "Looking for my baby" (5648), a self penned on the fours r&b mover, with sparse backing, and constant beat. Thereafter Height enjoyed minor UK success in 1971 with "Rags to riches to rags" (Avco Embassy 6105.005), before joining the ranks of New Yorkers signing on with Dakar. One Richard Montague seems to have been involved with all of Heights work over the years, co-penning many sides with him.

**Bohannon "The fat man / Redbone" (4528)**

More stomping instrumentals, but with cleaned up production, harps and a wedge of stringed instruments

giving the sound a cleaner feel. The B side is more of the same done in Red Indian style tempo, and with its whining and screeching guitar would find more favour amongst the heavy rock fraternity.

**Tyrone Davis – “You don't have to beg me to stay / I wish it was me” (4529)**

Another slowie with tight backing on a strong ballad. A sax weaves in and out against a lazy summer tempo. “I wish” is a familiar mid pace beater but with a somewhat strange subdued backing, allowing Tyrone's excellent vocals to dominate the song.

**Sidney Joe Qualls – “I'm being held hostage / Where the lillies grow “ (4530)**

A new signing, and as if to enhance his marketability Sidney possesses a voice fairly close to the then popular Al Green. His debut lets him loose on a song penned by Lost Generation's Larry Brownlee and Lowrell “Mellow mellow right on” Simon. The end product is a gorgeous ballad with swirling strings, and refined backing as Sidney tells us how he is handcuffed to his baby's love. 70's soul balladry doesn't come too much better than this. \*Lillies) is a pleasant little midtempo affair, with too many changes to the rhythm to make it anything other than a listening record.

**Donnie Vann – “Turn me loose / I am the same one” (4531)**

An unusual floater from Vann, done in a funky almost stepping style, making it extremely infectious. Sadly slightly under produced; the backing is a bit thin, but Vann is a committed vocalist begging for his freedom from a love affair.

Donnie was an East Coast singer from Newark / New York way. He first appears in my collection on Reddi 101 with “*You're in love*” a curious ballad that takes a while to get going, but isn't a brilliant song. He had one side on Gamble “*A hundred pounds of clay*” (the standard) (241) c/w “*Hold back the night*” another ballad, that does nothing for me, and is going nowhere in a hurry. A year before his Dakar side in 1973 he had recorded for Brunswick, most notably “*You'll never get rid of me*” (108) a poppy, almost early bump record. Better, though still not brilliant was the slow flip “*I'm the same one*”, all about re-meeting someone you've split up with. It has potential but is spoilt by the over enthusiastic backing singers who get in the way. Throughout his recording career Vann seems to have relied heavily on Robert Banks for arrangements, who pops up on every record of his that I have!

**Tyrone Davis “What goes up (Must come down) / There's got to be an answer” (4532)**

For his next 45 Tyrone goes with an uptempo propelled shuffling dance side, and one that gained considerable popularity in the U.K soul clubs- a classic. “*Answer*” has Tyrone trying to sing against a similar backing, but the song isn't nearly as strong. Both these sides were lifted from his “*It's all in the game*” LP (76909).

**Gregory James Edition “Sunday lady” (4533)**

Gregory Bibbs and James Norris debut for the label with a racing uptempo funk number. Cymbals crash, then some dramatic orchestration starts the whole thing up before leading into a truly awful vocal “*She was black, She was fine, She was my baby, My Sunday lady*”. The song is a complex mix, which might have worked better as a live performance. On vinyl it fails, and this seems likely to be another example where lack of airplay resulted in no commercial release. These two artists were to hang round the Chicago scene, recording sporadically for a few more years. Most notable was an album they produced in the late 80's “*Touching Me*” on M.O.M.M.

**Hamilton Bohannon “Truck Stop / Happiness” (4534) (Some promos have label number TS 1)**

**Hamilton Bohannon - “Keep on dancing / Part 2” (4535)**

Another pair of sizeable hits for the label, and more shuffling instrumental funk pounders, arranged, directed written and produced by Hamilton. Flip of 4534 is a straight reissue of an earlier release. “*Dancing*” has more of a vocal line (just), funkier vibes and strange vocal chants of “*Do it*” and “*Get down*”. Whistles blow, there's some rapping, hey hey the party's over here! Disco'd to death!

**Tyrone Davis “Happiness is being with you / Where lovers meet (at the dark end**

Another lift from the “*It's all in the game*” elpee, and it's a moody down home ballad, with whiny guitar holds, and Tyrone “mmm...mmm-ing” it through the intro. Quite a pleasing ballad as Tyrone tells us how happy he is to be with his lady. By now his music has become far more sophisticated, an alto sax features, and the strings are plucked. “*Where lovers meet*” was reissued later, and we'll review it then..

**Sidney Joe Qualls “How can you say goodbye / I enjoy loving you” (4537)**

A midpace heavy soul wailer that a blind folded listener could mistake for Al Green; even the horn stabs are accentuated to mimic the Hi sound. The B side is far more of a ballad, and much darker and moodier.

**Tyrone Davis – “I can't make it without you / You wouldn't believe” (4538)**

Yet another track pulled from “*It's all in the game*” -who said Michael Jackson's \**Thriller*) was the first LP to exploit the singles buyer? Anyway the style is similar to \**What goes up*), but the song has less appeal. Flip is a straight reissue.

**Hamilton Bohannon “South African Man / Have a good day” (4539)**

His biggest hit, and popular in the U.K discos, and yet to these ears it is far less commercially honed. With its repetitive riff, wah wah guitar and repeated chants of the chorus, it doesn't seem to go anywhere; and yet as teenagers we danced to it in discos. “*Have a good day*” is a schmaltzy mix of 50's glam' show tune, with a rolling beat and a piano playing a different tune to the one the singers are singing. Still it's different. Both sides are taken from the “*Keep on dancing*” LP (76910).

**B W & The Next Edition – “Work work work / Chosen One” (4540)**

Second outing for this group with a good rapped intro about things going wrong in the singers life. The vocal delivery and rolling lolloping beat work well. Unfortunately the song is spoilt by a very weak chorus. “Chosen One” is another clip clop tune slightly too poppy for this ears, without being offensive. Billy Nichols is again heavy involved and this side was co-written by a young Willie Collins, reinforcing the New York connection of this group.

**Tyrone Davis - “Homewreckers/ This time “ (4541)**

A new LP (of the same name) and new writers sees our man tying up with southern Gods Sam Dees and David Camon. Song is a really earthy chugger; an electric guitar weaves a web against a steady beat and Sam Dees influence is there for all to see. Flip is a subdued almost midtempo ballad, with Davis dismissing his past loves and declaring that this time “*we’re gonna make it*”.

**Equations - “One Two Hamilton Street / I love your love” (4542)**

Sounds very much like a Jackson Five cash in, with a young group and a catchy pop number. The flip side is a sweet group soul harmony sound - much better. Incidentally this is almost certainly not the same group as the sweet soul balladeers who recorded for All Platinum.

**Boobie Knight & Universal Lady “Power greater than man” (4543)**

A sax laden loping up-beat song, but a poor vocalist, who speaks his way through the lyrics, and they are pretty dreadful. Making the whole thing worse are some over dominant horns and a messy chorus. In a word grim, and once again probably not released on issue.

**Hamilton Bohannon “Foot stomping music / Dance with your parno” (4544)**

Title says it all, a big hit with pounding “*Hey America*” type backing making it far more interesting than his previous releases. Still heavily cliched though. “*Dance*” is slow, jittery and boring.

**Tyrone Davis - A woman needs to be loved / Just because of you” (4545)**

A re-recording of an earlier hit has Tyrone shouting out the lyrics against a twinkling piano and tight backing. Real testifying stuff here, as Davis roars out how material things ain’t enough to keep your woman uptight. Obviously a 60’s song updated, relatively raw, and a good one. “*Because*” is vibes n’ strings floater Tyrone singing “*Like a man without a country*” kind of reminds me of the Impressions. Nice tune, with some good breaks - all in all a pretty cool number.

**Sidney Joe Qualls -“Run to me/Please he**

This is music to sacrifice limbs for, but fortunately is not rare, so there's no need. A gorgeous flowing dancier co-penned by Sam Dees. Dees is always championed in “*Voices*”, but it really stands as a testament to the mans capabilities just how often he turns up on writer credits on essential sides. Memorable chorus, crystal clear production and Sidney on top notch vocal form. The B

side is more uptempo, but the tune while interesting lacks the killer punch. I wonder whether he sung this number when he performed in the UK in 1990.

**Eddie McLoyd “Once you fall in love / Baby get down” (4547)**

A very catchy vibes laden stepper, with controlled backing from strings and bongos. Eddie performs well on this song, which was written arranged and produced by Billy Nichols. Saw a little dance floor action at the Blackpool Mecca. Another New York singer, who had previously waxed with the tiny Panic label.

**Boobie Knight & Universal Lady – “Somebody touch me (in the right place” (4548)**

Knight had previously been at RCA in 1972 with a group called Soulcietty. This side is a strident funk number, with a repetitive vocal. There's some nice shrill sax work, but that does not save this overall poor effort. Dakar obviously had faith in the artist as they put out an LP on them “*Earth Creature*” (76913).

**Hamilton Bohannon- “Disco stomp/ Part 2” (4549)**

A big hit in the clubs with its hypnotic and thumping beat. Features a Hamilton vocal, something of a rarity, but the lyrics are pretty meaningless as our man goes on a tour of cities calling out for people to do the stomp.

**Tyrone Davis “Turning point / Don't let it be too late” (4550)**

Our man bounces back with this chugging dancefloor winner. Being both a joyous and infectious sound, this side has always been a popular item in the U.K. The predictable tale is of how Ty's life has been changed by his new woman as the lyrics go “*No more running around...You'll find me settling down*”. Girls “mmm mmm” in the background, and the whole affair is surrounded by a tight backing band. Flip is a nice southern style ballad, spoilt by a messy chorus line. This song gave Tyrone his third Billboard R&B chart No. 1 hit, peaking at the top slot for one week in February 1976. Recorded at Paragon studios the session featured background vocals from Kitty Haywood. Despite its instant appeal, according to Leo Graham, Tyrone Davis initially wasn’t sure whether he liked the song, so it was offered to Bobby Jones (Jonz). While Jones was procrastinating, the song was re-offered to Davis, who on second hearing decided to go with the song.

**Hamilton Bohannon “East coast groove / Bohannon’s beat” (4551)**

Organ led stomper coupled with a jittery self proclaimer full of lyrics like “*Here comes the Mighty Bohannon*”.

**4552. No release**

**Tyrone Davis - So good to be home with you / I can’t bump” (4553)**

A lilting down home ballad with ‘plink plink’ piano, guitar bursts of horns and lazy vocals, a trademark Tyrone made his own. “*Bump*” is an uptempo number, far too fast to bump to, so the title is not really surprising!

**Hamilton Bohannon "Dance your ass off / Happy feeling" (4554)**

A disco stormer with overdubbed party crowd effects, and Hamilton telling the listener to make a lot of noise. Dramatic string breaks fail to save this. Flip is a jazzier more laid back roller.

**4555.No release**

**Donald Height "I choose you / Somp'in is somp'in" (4556)**

A gem; lovely cover of the Willie Hutch song. A very soulful affair, drenched in strings, and my favourite version with its lolling beat. Sadly the song is totally under produced, and the complete lack of bass gives the thing a weak and tinny feel (for a heavy soul version try The Chicago Gangsters attempt at the song on Red Coach 809). This is a great record, despite the production weakness, and I cannot understand why it did not get the exposure it deserved. Belatedly it has gained some exposure in UK clubs both via Dean Johnson, and at Yarmouth by me. Oh by the way, don't confuse this number with the Paris song, which is a totally different record. With that excellent song (again probably not commercially released in any quantity) Height seems to have joined the ranks of soul singers 'missing in action'. Flip is a cool and funky uptempo number, with a tight backing pretty good in its own right.

**Ben Monroe "Broken home / This melody is for my baby" (4557)**

After an absence from the label of a few years Ben bounces back with a goodie, and potential sleeper, having sat on the shelves for over twenty years. Starts with a rap, Ben telling his woman there will be no more fighting before breaking into a good 70's dance tune, with rolling tempo. Those ever present tight horns lead the charge as Ben asks "What are we gonna do with those babies...You wanna go your way, I wanna go mine". An underestimated sound; flip meanwhile is a smoocher, co directed by Horace Ott, but again slightly under produced.

**Tyrone Davis "Saving my love for you / I cant bump Pt 2" (4558)**

The old Sherman Johnson penned standard, Tyrone updating it with a schmaltzy backing. Flip is poor.

**Alvin Cash "Ali shuffle / Doing the feeling" (4559)**

Disco madness from this veteran of the Chicago dance fad scene. Cash seemed to have a curious fascination with Muhammad Ali, singing about him on at least three separate occasions! Anyway this was big in the hipper soul clubs as a new release, but sounds naff today. Flip is more pounding dance stuff, going nowhere.

**Hamilton Bohannon "Gittin' Off / Come winter" (4560)**

More stomping, backed with a ballad. The flip is far more interesting with its vibes and airy feel, marking a change in direction. Enhanced by the cool tenor sax and use of xylophone. In fairness to Bohannon he claimed

that the thumping disco beaters which became his trademark were not to his liking. This was his last release for Dakar and he was to resign in writing in August 1976 from his Atlanta home. Afterwards he was to claim that he was stifled at Dakar, and that his uptempo stomping sounds were not in the style he wished for. From Dakar Bohannon was to enjoy a string of successful releases with Mercury, produce Caroline Crawford, and record successful albums well into the 1980's.

**Tyrone Davis "Ever loving girl / Forever" (4561)**

By now we are into 1976, and Tyrone has departed for pastures anew and a rejuvenated recording career at Columbia. Dakar meanwhile continue to issue old Davis material, in the same way as O'Keh did after Major Lance joined Dakar back in 1968! Topside is a crashing midtempo beater with lots of bass, simple rhythmic construction and lyrics, almost like a slower "Can I change my mind". "Forever" is a building ballad, that never really reaches a crescendo. His Columbia debut "Give it up" was released early in 1976.

**John Freeman "Dynamite / Inst"(4562)**

A new artist, and a James Brown imitator on a horn filled clip clop dancer. Some girl singers fill in some of the lines between Freeman, and like any J.B impressionist the song possesses those mandatory frantic breaks, and screams. A committed vocal performance.

**Tyrone Davis "Where lovers meet at the dark end of the street / It's all in the game" (4563)**

Recorded a year or two previously, this was a small hit for Tyrone and coincided with his initial Columbia hits. The Dakar recycling factory lost the race though. We are on familiar territory vocal wise. A little bit too brassy for my liking; even the funky beat, wah wah guitars and backing girls cannot make this a classic ! Flip is the pop standard - altogether now "Many a tear has to fall..."

**Sandi Jones - "Tuscaloosa's calling me (but I'm not going)" (4564)**

I do not have this record, so cannot comment.

**Compliments "Falling in love / Chickens" (4565)**

We are now into 1977, and a Jimmy Roach arranged group ballad. Nice sweet soul has the group doing everything, and minimal backing. Flip is a testifying wailer, telling us not to count our chickens before they're hatched.

In June 1975 Brunswick and Dakar officials, including Carl Davis were indicted on various counts of fraud. The charges centred around allegations that they had been bulk selling product cheap to wholesalers, and thus depriving artists of legitimate royalties, and using the profits gained to pay for records airplay on radio. Specifically they were charged with obtaining more than \$371,000 by having sold their records too cheaply since 1971. Tarnopol was also charged with conspiring to cheat the IRS and wire and mail fraud. He was tried early in 1976 and acquitted of mail and tax fraud, but found

guilty of conspiracy, and sentenced to three years in jail. His conviction was then thrown out on a technicality. He was tried again in 1978, but this resulted in a mis-trial, and with that the government gave up on Tarnopol.

The trial of the Brunswick management came at a turbulent time in soul musical history and was part of a larger Federal operation called Project Sound. Project Sound was started back in 1973 with the aim of getting rid of corruption and payola in the record business. The operation netted a number of big fish in 1975 - most notably kingpins from Stax, Philadelphia International, and Radio station programmers such as Frankie "Loveman" Crocker; this is what Black Music magazine reported (not entirely accurately) in their April 1976 editorial:

*" Nat Tarnopol, president of Brunswick Record Corp. together with Brunswick Executives Peter Garris, Lee Shep and Irving Wiegman have been found guilty of various fraud and conspiracy charges after a seven week trial following on from the U.S government's investigations into payola. They will be sentenced shortly - Carl Davis and Melvin Moore were found not guilty. Kenny Gamble and various Philadelphia Intl. staff are due to stand trial on payola charges in April...."*

By the time Tarnopol had been through the appellate process and got his mistrial in April 1978, it was all over musically for a medium size independent. The industry by now was completely controlled by giants, with only minnow independents finding any space to try and exist.

Incidentally Tarnopol, like many successful businessmen had made his enemies along the way, and was notorious for his onerous contracts with Jackie Wilson which kept the singer in debt to Brunswick. In all my research into this article I don't think I've heard a bad word spoken about Carl Davis, who is generally regarded as one of the industries good guys. By complete contrast, apart from one interview Davis himself gave in 1972 (when working for Tarnopol) I haven't seen a single word of praise anywhere for Tarnopol.

Carl Davis had left the label in June 1976, and formed Chi-Sound records, but that, as they say, is another story.

Tarnopol meanwhile didn't give up completely. During the trial and appeals nothing was coming out, the doors at Dakar were all but closed. In 1980 there was a belated attempt to

get the label going again, though Brunswick / Dakar lacked the writing and production skills they previously had enjoyed; even more fundamental they had no big name stars. Nonetheless they tried to break "unknowns", and although did not achieve any real success, I would say, managed to put out some quality sides. Of particular note on Brunswick we had

Satin Dreams dancer "*Stay away from my lover*" (55557), and for a wonderful ballad by Parris "*Can't let go*" c/w "*Never take your love*" (214). Meanwhile the re-activated Dakar went with the following:

**First Love "Love me today / Don't say goodnight" (4566).**

After a three year absence the label bows back with this quality midtempo 80's strutter. Could and should have found dancefloor favour in Britain's then "Modern soul scene", with its clear strings and expressive lead femme. Great song. Flip is more mainstream disco orientated. Formed in the late 70's the group comprised Denise Austine, Martha Jackson and Demetrice Henrae. After this unsuccessful debut they reappeared in 1982 on CIM with "*Love at first sight*" and then on Mirage for "*Things are not t*

Evidence would suggest there may not be a connection between this group and the group who recorded the collectible LP "First Love" on HCRC in 1981. The lead female singer might sound similar, but the HCRC group included male members.

#### **4567. No release**

#### **AM:FM \*You are the one) (4568)**

Handicap machines, synths - we are now firmly into the 80's with a funky disco number, typical of its era. Probably only on demo copy.

#### **Charlie Singleton & Stargasm - " I wanna boogie with you/ Rock a bye baby" (4569)**

Dakar's last release. The 80's releases involved an entirely different backroom team, consistent names appearing are Lena Music, Ray Daniels and Michael Watson. Singleton, from New Orleans originally of course was to enjoy some later success in the 80's as a member of Cameo then back as a solo artist on Arista where he recorded as Charlie Singleton & Modern Man. From there he went to Epic where his "*Nothing ventured nothing gained*" LP enjoyed some acclaim. By now his style however was more akin to Prince.

And with that Dakar quietly disappeared. A classic Chicago label - dead.

#### **Significant albums.**

I am not going to offer substantive commentary on these, as many of the best sides were culled for single releases, particularly so with Tyrone Davis.

Tyrone Davis "Can I change my mind" (9005)

Tyrone Davis "Turn back the hands of time" (9020)

Tyrone Davis "I had it all the time" (76901)

76902 ?

Hamilton Bohannon "Stop & Go" (76903)

Tyrone Davis "Without you in my life" (76904)

76905 ? 76906 ? 76907 ? 76908 ?

Tyrone Davis "It's all in the game" (76909)

Hamilton Bohannon "Keep on dancing" (76910)

Mighty Doug Haynes (76911)

76912 ?

Boobie Knight & Universal Lady "Earth Creature" (76913). Described on its release as follows "*This group has some very tight songs that largely fall into the James Brown bag. Knight sings lead on most of the material*".

Sidney Joe Qualls (76914).

As well as the 45's the album is significant for the inclusion of Sam Dees "*Shut your mouth*". "*Can't get enough of your love*" is a Hi beater. There is also an

ethereal uptempo dance sound on "*The next time I fall in love*"

Tyrone Davis "Homewrecker" (76915)

Tyrone Davis "Homewreckers" (76915)

All round good album, includes the original version of Lee Shot Williams in demand Tchula side "It ain't me no more".

Tyrone Davis "Turning point". Noteworthy for a remake of "*Turn back the hands of time*" taken at a slower pace, giving the song a new perspective.

Hamilton Bohannon (76916)

Hamilton Bohannon "Insides out" (76917)

Tyrone Davis "Turning Point" (76918)

Finally a few additions to part one of the story.....

The **Lee Charles** Wand era was a couple of years earlier than mentioned, in 1972 in fact. He is listed as having two releases on the label. "*Let's play house*" (a beefed up version of a song originally recorded by Lee Sain on **Sidney Barnes'** Sunflower label) c/w "*When the deal goes down*" (Wand 11242). Both these sides are quite hard, but since writing the article I have managed to track down two copies. Of questionable existence is "*I get high on my baby's love*" (11238), which I have never seen – a bit like his first Hot Wax side! "*I get high*" was originally issued as his last 45 for Bamboo (119) and is excellent crossover

Reader John Farrell wrote to me regarding **Shirley Karol's** second release for the label, "Faith" on Dakar 606. John has this on a demo, with number 1453, which must be fairly scarce. I'd hazard a guess that it originally came out on demo alongside "*Can I change my mind*". When that side took off, and Atlantic became involved in distribution, Shirley's side was probably put on the back burner. Sometime later it was picked up and re-issued as 606. That's my theory anyway!

**Johnny Sayles** Chess 45 mentioned last time, was preceded by "*Teardrops / Hold my own baby*" on Lakeside 2012, a label which was distributed by Chess, and which used Chess release numbers.

More worthy of a mention was **Otis Leavills'** Brunswick side "*Baby Why can't you hear me*" (55337), which has previously been championed in this magazine by Tim Brown (Issue 18).

**The Visitors** lead singer on Dakar was Eugene Smiley (who also recorded solo). **Mel Britt** apparently took over lead duties sometime after they left Dakar (source: Shades of Soul). After Dakar the Visitors recorded at least one other 45 around 1971. That was "*Little golden band*", a superior version of a song also recorded by Donnie Mann on Mister Chand Records. The Visitors version was on Dispo, and has more of a crossover feel; it seems unlikely though that it ever got beyond a fairly limited promotional run.

Finally **Tyrone Davis's** two biggest hits "*Can I change my mind*" and "*Turn back the hands of time*" saw a

series of cover versions, and answer records, and a few of the better ones follow. "*Can I change my mind*" prompted (at least) two worthwhile responses from the female perspective titled "*Help me make up my mind*". **Joyce Jones** for Vee-Eight (10001) is the better version with more spirited vocals and a better backing. Obscurer is **Deloris Hughes** version on Trackdown -an organ led romp let down by dual tracked vocals. The hype on the plug sheet I have proclaims '*Sell out concerts*', and '*A chartbuster worldwide, exploding all over*' - hyperbole exemplified. A third female to have a go at the song was Norfolk based **Ida Sands**, who cut "*Start all over again*" for How Big (202,129). This has to be the best of the female versions, with a backing (and lyrics) fairly close to the original and expressive vocalising. Another cover worth checking was by **George Perkins** - this is a smoother early 70's version on Red Stick (7701). Incidentally, Perkins also used the tune of "*Turn back the hands of time*", changing the words for the flowing floater "*I'm so glad your mine*" (Royal Shield 115661). Other versions of "*Hands of time*" I'd recommend include **Otis Clay's** super version on Elka 301, with its distinctive clip-clop beat, and a 1981 uptempo bluesy version by big **Twist & Mellow Fellows** on Flying Fish 4006. There are other versions also, but these are the best.

Steve Guarnori.