

## A Christmas Yuleblog

Cozy up to the fire as a Christmas obsessed music collector chats about new CDs to his collection, the Christmas music that got away, and links to Christmas music via the web (and the occasional mp3 post).

Thursday, December 17, 2009

### [Dorothy Collins - Won't You Spend Christmas With Me \(STEREO\)](#)



In [yesterday's post](#), I gave props to Buster over at Big 10-Inch Record for posting some darn good shares this downloading season. Late last month, I [posted](#) an entry that mentioned that two albums I originally had planned on sharing out were already posted to Buster's blog.

One of those two albums was this gem of a Christmas album. I was ready to file it away for the winter and move on to other shares when our friend [Ernie \(not Bert\)](#) pointed out in a comment that Buster had posted a high-fidelity copy of the album whilst mine read STEREO!

It's commonplace here for me to miss small things like that. Maybe it's the early stages of Alzheimer's... Thanks for bringing that to my attention Ern!

Backstory: Marjorie Chandler was born in 1926 in Windsor, Ontario, Canada - just across

the river from Detroit, Michigan. She developed a love for music and began singing on radio stations on BOTH sides of the river in her teens. It was also during this time she adopted a new stage name: Dorothy Collins.

On a trip to Chicago in 1940, 14-yr. old Dorothy met bandleader/composer Raymond Scott and was quickly hired into his band. Throughout the 1940s, Scott mentored, tutored, and taught everything Collins needed to know about phrasing, breath control, etc., and became a popular vocalist of the day.

In 1949, CBS asked Scott to take over the band leading duties for one of its popular shows, "Your Hit Parade". Just as they were getting their feet wet in radio, NBC decided to create the television version of "YHP". With her good looks and style, Dorothy quickly became a fan favorite and rose to stardom.

"Your Hit Parade" was a huge hit on television throughout the 1950s. People tuned in weekly to see and hear the popular songs of the day with male vocalists Snooky Lawson, Russell Arms, and another popular female Canadian vocalist named [Gisele MacKenzie](#)!

Then came rock-n-roll. With the advent of Elvis, Ricky, Chuck Berry, Little Richard, and others climbing the charts, "Your Hit Parade" tried desperately to stay in touch with the times.


Needless to say, "Your Hit Parade" took a dive in the ratings. Before its run ended, Collins went into the recording studio to create the album you're looking at. With the backing of Nathan Van Cleve & His Orchestra, she recorded twelve straightforward renditions of Christmas songs.

Nothing really jumps out at you, style wise. Except Collins' wonderful voice.

After the demise of "YHP" in 1959, Collins appeared on television shows and in musical theater. In 1971, she was one of the original cast members in the Stephen Sondheim landmark musical "Follies" and was nominated for a Tony Award for her role.

For five years (1974-1979), she was co-host of a syndicated version of "Candid Camera" with Allen Funt. One such stunt that I remember was Dorothy driving a Volkswagen bug into a gas station and asking the attendant to fill it up. They had replaced the gas tank with a 55-gallon drum inside the car! One guy stood there for 20 minutes in bewilderment!

After "Candid Camera" ended, Collins settled into semi-retirement and made occasional public appearances after that. She had suffered with asthma for most of her life and as she got older, the disease took its toll in 1994. She was 67.

Posted by CaptainOT at [12/17/2009 09:09:00 AM](#) 

Labels: [Big 10-Inch Record](#), [Buster](#), [Christmas](#), [Christmas Music](#), [Dorothy Collins](#), [Ernie \(not Bert\)](#), [Videos](#), [Your Hit Parade](#),