

City of Philadelphia



Council of the City of Philadelphia
Office of the Chief Clerk
Room 402, City Hall
Philadelphia

(Resolution No. 060603)

RESOLUTION

Also naming Poplar Street between Broad Street and 21st Street “Dixie Hummingbirds Way.”

WHEREAS, The Dixie Hummingbirds were a pioneering force behind the evolution of the modern gospel quartet sound and were among the longest-lived and most successful groups of their era; and

WHEREAS, They are renowned for their imaginative arrangements, progressive harmonies and all-around versatility, they earned almost universal recognition as the greatest Southern quartet of their generation, and their influence spread not only over the world of spiritual music but also inspired secular artists ranging from Jackie Wilson to Bobby "Blue" Bland to the Temptations; and

WHEREAS, Formed in Greenville, South Carolina by James B. Davis, the Dixie Hummingbirds began their career during the late '30s as a jubilee-styled act; joined in 1938 by 13-year-old baritone phenom Ira Tucker and bass singer extraordinaire Willie Bobo, a former member of the Heavenly Gospel Singers, the group made their recorded debut a year later on Decca, where they issued singles including "Soon Will Be Done with the Troubles of This World," "Little Wooden Church" and "Joshua Journeyed to Jericho"; and

WHEREAS, Upon relocating to Philadelphia in 1942, the Hummingbirds' popularity began to grow and their harmonies continued to grow more sophisticated and their virtuosity did not go unnoticed by audiences, and throughout the mid-'40s — an acknowledged golden age of a cappella quartet singing — the group regularly played to packed houses throughout the south; and

WHEREAS, Under names like the Swanee Quintet and the Jericho Boys, the Dixie Hummingbirds also regularly appeared on Philadelphia radio station WCAU; and

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WHEREAS, The Dixie Hummingbirds recorded a series of masterpieces including 1952's "Trouble in My Way," 1953's "Let's Go Out to the Programs," 1954's "Christian's Testimonial," 1957's "Christian Automobile" and 1959's "Nobody Knows the Trouble I See"; now therefore

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That Poplar Street between Broad Street and 21st Street be also named "Dixie Hummingbirds Way."

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CERTIFICATION: This is a true and correct copy of the original Resolution, Adopted by the Council of the City of Philadelphia on the fifteenth of June, 2006.

Anna C. Verna
PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL

Patricia Rafferty
CHIEF CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Introduced by: Councilmember Clarke

Sponsored by: Councilmember Clarke