

The Belmonts were friends from the area around Arthur Avenue in the Bronx. They attended Roosevelt High School and hung out together. They began singing together and named themselves after Belmont Avenue in the Bronx. They recorded for the Mohawk label in 1957, making their debut with the song, *Teenage Clementine*. Dion, who lived in the neighborhood, joined the group for the next recording, *We Went Away*. It was cut for Mohawk Records under the direction of conductor/arranger Hugo Montenegro.

The group moved to Laurie Records, newly founded by Bob Schwartz (who had been a part-owner of Mohawk) and his brother Gene and cut their label debut *I Wonder Why* that made it to the top of the charts followed to the top by a pair of hits, *No One Knows* and *Don't Pity Me*. *A Teenager in Love*, *Where or When* and *When You Wish Upon a Star* elevated The Belmonts with Dion to a major worldwide act. Their vocal talent as a singing group was displayed prominently on all the recordings with their collective musical tastes ranging from rock 'n roll to jazz, to country, to pop and blues, and they were voted best vocal group of 1959 by *Downbeat Magazine*. Of note is one particular performance at the Surf Ball Room in Clearlake, Iowa, the night on which Buddy Holly, Richie Valens, and the Big Bopper lost their lives in a plane crash.

In 1960, Dion and The Belmonts went their separate ways. The Belmonts continued to enjoy success on the stage as well as on the charts. The group remained with Laurie Records for one single, *We Belong Together*, and then formed their own label -- originally named Surprise, then Sabrina, and finally christened Sabina Records. The label became active (as Surprise) in March of 1961 with The Belmonts recording of *Tell Me Why* which rose to the top of the charts nationally. The follow-up record late that summer, *Don't Get Around Much Anymore*, and the next release, *I Need Someone*, also became chart hits for The Belmonts.

The group's next hit records were Sabina singles, *C'mon Little Angel*, written by Ernie Maresca and *Diddle Dee Dum*. In 1963 Warren Gradus, a studio musician/songwriter, joined original members Freddie Milano and Angelo D'Aleo and the group next charted in the early '70s, amid the oldies boom. They cut an album for Buddah Records, entitled *Cigars Acappela Candy*, on which they performed several classic oldies tracks and also applied their sound to



contemporary hits like *My Sweet Lord* and *Na Na Hey Hey (Kiss Him Goodbye)*. The album was hailed by Billboard magazine as "the best acappela album ever recorded". In 1972, The Belmonts reunited with Dion for a performance at New York's Madison Square Garden, which was not only a sell-out event but was also recorded for posterity in the album entitled *Dion and The Belmonts Reunion Live at Madison Square Garden* which was released on Warner Bros. Records hitting the national charts in that summer.

In 1974, Dan Elliott joined the group as lead singer. Elliott had previously performed throughout the United States and toured the Orient with The Glenn Miller Orchestra. The group continued recording with the release of the *Cheek to Cheek* album, and in 1981 produced the hit single, on Mia Sound Records entitled *Let's Put the Fun Back in Rock N Roll* on which they were teamed with Freddy Cannon of *Palisades Park* fame.

The Belmonts recent hit Christmas recording, *The Bell That Couldn't Jingle*, written by Burt Bacharach, and the new CD entitled *The Belmonts Anthology Vol. 1* which includes the single *A Hundred Pounds of Clay* have been released on the Downtown Music Group label.

<http://www.thebelmonts.net>



I Wonder Why
Teen Angel
No One Knows
I Can't Go On (Rosalie)
Just You
Don't Pity Me
A Teenager In Love
I've Cried Before
Every Little Thing I Do
A Lover's Prayer
Where Or When
That's My Desire
When You Wish Upon A Star
Wonderful Girl
In The Still Of The Night
A Funny Feeling
We Belong Together
Such A Long Way
A Brand New Song



Tell Me Why
Smoke From Your Cigarette
Searching For A New Love
Don't Get Around Much Anymore
I Need Someone
That American Dance
I Confess
Hombre
Come On Little Angel
How About Me
Diddle-Dee-Dum (What Happens When Your Love Has Gone)
Farewell
Ann Marie
Ac-Cent-Tchu-Ate The Positive
Let's Call It A Day
Walk On Boy
More Important Things To Do
C'mon Everybody
Why
Summertime
Nothing In Return



I Wonder Why
A Teenager in Love
The Wanderer
That's My Desire
Where or When
Ruby Baby
Runaround Sue
Little Diane
No One Knows
Drip Drop



My Sweet Lord
Street Corner Symphony
Loving You is Sweeter Than Ever
Rock 'n Roll Lullaby
Where or When
That's My Desire
NaNa Hey Hey Kiss Him Goodbye
Da Doo Ron Ron
You're Mine and We Belong Together



Movin' Man
Berimbau
Come to My Side
All I Wanna Do
But Not for Me
New York Town
Loserville
For Bobby
Jump Back Baby
Baby You've Been on My Mind
My Girl of the Month of May



Have You Heard
The Worst That Could Happen/Secret
Love
No One Knows
Runaround/Laughing on the Outside
(Crying on the Inside)
Tears on My Pillow
Up Up and Away/Fly Me to the Moon (In
Other Words)
Chanson d'Amour/Love Me With All Your
Heart (Cuando Calienta El Sol)
Love Me Forever
Till
Answer Me My Love



A Hundred Pounds Of Clay
Shake It Sally
Let's Put the Fun Back In Rock 'n Roll
I Don't Like Rock 'n Roll (I Love It)
Hot Dogs, Apple Pie and Rock 'n Roll
Dance The Night Away
Teenage Queenie
Play A Doo Wop Song for Me
C'mon Little Angel
Tell Me Why
I Need Someone
**Diddle Dum (What Happens When Your
Love has Gone)**

Uptown Disk Werks
Strawberry Records
Mia Sound
Rhino
Collectables Records
EMI
Ace Records
Relic Records
Crystal Ball Records
Time- Life Records
Capital Records
Sony/CBS Records

Credits, Just To Mention a Few...



Awards:

Doo Wop Hall of Fame
Harmony Award
Key to the City of Buffalo New York
Photoplay Best Vocal Group of 1959
Bronx Borough Presidents Award
Belmont Arthur Avenue Association Award

Motion Picture Music:

Peggy Sue Got Married
Diner
American Hot Wax
Buddy Holly Story
La Bamba
The Junkman
A Bronx Tale

Television:

American Bandstand
The Mike Douglas Show
Solid Gold
The Clay Cole Show
The Tonight Show
The Merv Griffin Show
The Ed Sullivan Show
The Joe Franklin Show
many, many more.....

Stage:

Madison Square Garden, New York
The Meadowlands, New Jersey
Wembley Convention Center, London, England
Sweet Waters, Tokyo, Japan
Radio City Music Hall, New York
Westbury Music Fair, L.I., New York
Nassau Coliseum, L.I., New York
many, many more.....

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