



Barbara Ann Hawkins – Biography

Barbara Ann Hawkins is an American singer and founding member of the legendary girl group The Dixie Cups, known for their chart-topping hits and enduring influence on pop and R&B music. Born and raised in New Orleans, Louisiana, Barbara began singing in grade school alongside her sister Rosa Lee Hawkins and cousin Joan Marie Johnson. The trio originally performed as *The Meltones* before being discovered by singer and producer Joe Jones in 1963.

Jones introduced them to the famed songwriting and production duo Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller, who signed the group to their newly formed Red Bird Records. Just before recording their first single, the group was renamed The Dixie Cups.

Career Highlights

Barbara's voice helped propel the group's debut single, "Chapel of Love", to #1 on the Billboard Hot 100 in 1964. The song sold over a million copies and became a cultural staple, featured in films like *Full Metal Jacket* and *Father of the Bride*. The Dixie Cups followed up with several other hits, including:

- “People Say” (#12)
- “You Should Have Seen the Way He Looked at Me” (#39)
- “Little Bell” (#51)

- “Iko Iko” (#20), a spontaneous studio recording inspired by a chant Barbara heard from her grandmother.

Barbara remained active in the group even as members changed over the years. After Joan Marie Johnson left due to health issues, Barbara continued performing with her sister Rosa Lee and later with Athelgra Neville Gabriel, sister of The Neville Brothers.

Awards & Recognition

Barbara Hawkins and The Dixie Cups have received numerous honors:

- Gold Record for “Chapel of Love”
- Rhythm and Blues Foundation Pioneer Award (2003)
- Induction into the Louisiana Music Hall of Fame (2007)
- Honored by the Global Directory of Who’s Who for her contributions to music and community service

Personal & Community Work

Barbara attended Southern University for two years and has remained deeply involved in charitable work, including fundraisers for scholarships and local causes. She also performs tributes to New Orleans music legends like Blue Lu Barker, and announced plans to release a new CD in 2023.

Legacy

As the last surviving original member of The Dixie Cups, Barbara Ann Hawkins continues to perform and preserve the legacy of the group’s music. Her dedication to both her craft and her community has made her a beloved figure in American music history.