Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Bobby Bennett

Bennett, Bobby

Alternative Names: Bobby Bennett; Marshall Payne, III

Life Dates: July 20, 1943-September 8, 2015

Place of Birth: Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA

Residence: Punta Gorda, FL

Occupations: Radio DJ

Biographical Note

Radio DJ Bobby Bennett was born on July 20, 1943 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. From a young age, Bennett knew that he wanted to be a radio DJ. Following high school, he enrolled in a broadcasting school in Pittsburgh.

In 1967, Bennett worked as a news reporter for Pittsburgh's WAMO-AM and WZUM radio stations. One year later, in 1968, he moved to WOL-AM in
Washington, D.C., where he became known to radio fans as “The Mighty Burner” and hosted a show until 1980. Bennett then hosted a sports talk show on WTOP in the early 1980s, and served as program director for WHUR-FM from 1987 to 1992. After his time at WHUR, Bennett was hired as a morning talk show host at WXTR; and, in 1997, he became the host of an R&B radio show on WPFW-FM. In 2000, Bennett created the “Soul Street” channel for XM Satellite Radio, and served as its program director until 2010. During his career, he also was employed as a record executive and as a voice over narrator.

Bennett was the co-author of The Ultimate Soul Music Trivia Book: 501 Questions and Answers About Motown, Rhythm & Blues, and More, which was published in 1997. In 1988, Bennett was presented with several awards from Washington, D.C., Maryland and Pennsylvania. In 1972, he was named Billboard magazine’s R&B Disc Jockey of the Year, and, in 1973, was recognized as Disc Jockey of the Year by the Gavin Report.

Bennett passed away on September 8, 2015 at age 72.

Related Entries

Dilworth Elementary School [STUDENTOf]
[from ? to ?]

Westinghouse Academy [STUDENTOf]
[from ? to ?]

Gladstone High School [STUDENTOf]
[from ? to ?]

Capitol Records, Inc. [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from ? to ?]
WAMO-AM [employee of] [from 1967 to 1967]
  News Reporter

WZUM [employee of] [from 1967 to 1967]
  News Reporter

WOL-AM [employee of] [from 1968 to 1980]
  On-air Host

WTOP [employee of] [from 1980 to ?]
  On-air Host

WHUR-FM [employee of] [from 1987 to 1992]
  Program Director

WXTR [employee of] [from 1992 to 1997]
  On-air Host

WPFW-FM [employee of] [from 1997 to 2000]
  On-air Host

Sirius XM Radio, Inc. [employee of] [from 2000 to 2010]
  Creator and Program Director, Soul Street Channel