Their youthful, soulful sound was dubbed "bubblegum soul."

It was during 1971 that Michael Jackson started his parallel solo career. His albums "Got To Be There", "Ben", and "Music And Me" produced such hits as "Got To Be There," "Rockin' Robin," "Ben," and many others. Jermaine started his solo career in 1972 and produced two top 10 hits: "Daddy's Home" in 1973 and "Let's Get Serious" in 1980. Jackie also tried out a solo career in 1973 when he released "Jackie Jackson", but the album did not make the charts and no more were released.

Citing the fact that they only received 2.7% royalties and were not allowed to record their own material, the Jackson brothers had decided that they needed to change record companies. Even though they were later sued for breach of contract, they signed with Epic Records under the name "The Jacksons" (because Motown owned the rights to the name Jackson Five) and underwent some line-up changes. Michael had signed a solo contract with Epic, and he was replaced by his younger brother Randy (Stephen Randall Jackson). Temporary additions to the group also included the sisters LaToya and Rebbie (Maureen Jackson). The family went on to record many successful records, even receiving a Grammy Nomination in 1980 for the album "Triumph".

Meanwhile, Motown capitalized on his commercial status by re-issuing a recording from the mid-70s, 'One Day In Your Life', which duly topped the UK charts. Jackson continued to tour and record with the Jacksons after this solo success, while media speculation grew about his private life. He was increasingly portrayed as a figure trapped in an eternal childhood, surrounded by toys and pet animals, and insulated from the traumas of the real world. This image was consolidated when he was chosen to narrate an album based on the 1982 fantasy film ET - The Extra Terrestrial. The record was quickly withdrawn because of legal complications, but still won Jackson another Grammy award.







(More about Michael Jackson to be continued next week)