

Bobby Curtola and Coca-Cola

by Brad Howard, Coca-Cola records, tapes and films collector

I am a specialty collector. I collect Coca-Cola jingles from the '60s and '70s and a bit before and beyond these decades. If it is from the "Things Go Better With Coke" and "It's The Real Thing" or "Coke Adds Life" campaigns, then I want or need it. Oh, and I also collect the TV commercials, too.

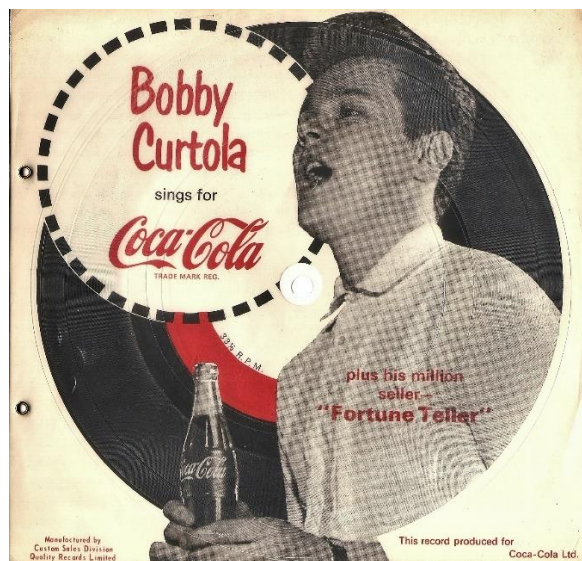
Radio campaign jingles are available on records (in part, on 7 inch vinyl, 12 inch albums, and 16 inch transcription discs) and on reel-to-reel tapes. In Canada, there were separate campaigns in French and English, although the French language jingles that were released at the same time as "Things Go Better With Coke" were based on an a 1937 French song by Charles Trenet, "Y a d'la Joie" - the Coke version is "Avec Coke, y a d'la Joie."

September 1963 saw the launch of the biggest advertising campaign for Coca-Cola, at the time. In the U.S.A., The Limelites got the nod to perform the "Things Go Better With Coke" jingle on radio and television, while in Canada, this honour was given to the hottest star in the country, Bobby Curtola. While The Limelites recorded their jingles in Hollywood at the Radio Recorders Studio, Bobby was in Nashville belting out his versions with the help of the Jordanaires. There is some speculation that Bobby Curtola's "Things Go Better With Coke" jingle was aired on Canadian radio BEFORE The Limelites version was released in the States.



"Things Go Better With Bobby Curtola" 1964 - Chatham Daily News, June 2016

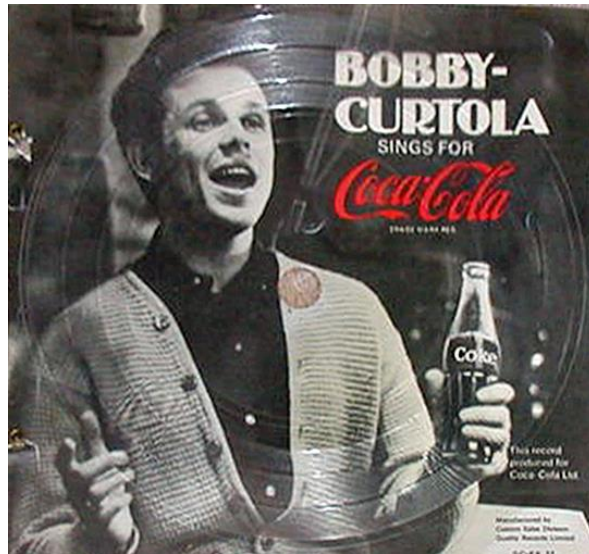
To keep up with the demand of fans, Coca-Cola capitalized on Curtola's unwavering popularity by putting out at least three flexi records with Bobby. These Quality Records discs were mostly likely public giveaways, but I'm not sure.



1. **"Bobby Curtola Sings For Coca-Cola"** - a Quality Records flexi-disc that features a 60 second Coke jingle AND Bobby's international hit, "Fortune Teller." Estimated release date: 1964
<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/0Bzfu5R-Ue-gdeFExTHNxNmE1UDg?usp=sharing>



2. **"Bobby Curtola Sings For Coca-Cola"** - a Quality Records flexi-disc that features two 60 second Coke jingles (one featuring Grady Martin). Estimated release date: 1964-65.
<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/0B5g5u8X4R1ZsVzNkc2N0S1RyBWs?usp=sharing>



3. **"Bobby Curtola Sings For Coca-Cola"** - three Coke jingles - Quality Records flexi-disc QC FR 33. Estimated release date: 1965.
(note: the original image was repaired, straightened and enlarged. The actual contents are unknown)



4. **"Bobby Curtola Sings For Coca-Cola"** - four Coke jingles - Hallmark Recording Studios 10577 (1964-65).
<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/0B5g5u8X4R1Zsf19KWE14NFF2bk1DdmNxUm92a0o0S3BFRTzkZ19YOXZTMTJPTG5NbmZ4bVk?usp=sharing>



5. **"Bobby Curtola Swings The Jingle"** - Teen Disc 100 - Hallmark Recording Studios (1965). This single-sided LP has 14 tracks (7 are repeated). It was the first album in a set of 14 "Swing The Jingle" Canadian released albums. To the best of my knowledge, Bobby's album was not part of the American Coca-Cola series.

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/0B5g5u8X4R1ZsVUxOR3NpS19ydG8?usp=sharing>

Please note: some release dates shown are my best guess.

And now some myths that must be addressed:

With Bobby Curtola's multiple Coca-Cola contributions, many websites are perpetuating and professing several falsehoods as facts:

MYTH 1: Bobby Curtola composed the jingle "Things Go Better With Coke" OR it was written by Curtola's writing team, Basil Hurdon and Dyer Hurdon.

FACT 1: Bobby did NOT compose "Things Go Better With Coke" nor was it written by Hurdon & Hurdon (even though there is a gold record label that attributes the composition to them). "Things Go Better With Coke" was skillfully crafted for Coca-Cola by advertising genius Bill Backer at McCann-Erickson.



Fantasy piece, with WRONG song credits, given to fan Jim Gamble by Bobby Curtola

MYTH 2: Bobby created the "It's The Real Thing" Coca-Cola campaign.

FACT 2: Bobby did NOT create the "It's The Real Thing" Coca-Cola campaign. Again, this 1969 campaign and the jingle were the products of Bill Backer.

MYTH 3: Bobby wrote "The Real Thing" - a minor 1966 Curtola hit.

FACT 3: His recording, "The Real Thing" was NOT written by him, but by Basil Hurdon & Dyer Hurdon.

MYTH 4: "The Real Thing" was written for and about Coca-Cola.

FACT 4: The song "The Real Thing" was NOT written for NOR about Coca-Cola. To the best of my knowledge, it was never used in a Coca-Cola commercial. Again, the "It's The Real Thing" jingle was written by Bill Backer.

Miscellaneous:

I have found a couple of Bobby Curtola Coca-Cola rarities.

The first is a terrific film clip from CJOH-TV OTTAWA's "Saturday Date" with John Pozer and Bobby Curtola. It is all "Things Go Better With Coke" and from 1964. This was found on YouTube posted by "Storydon" Don Marcotte.

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ZgwjQf-riArmNAks2KsWqC5ywCR54aZB/view?usp=sharing>

The other clip is another one from Ottawa. This time it is an interview broadcast April 3, 2016 (2 months before Bobby's death) by Dan Pihlainen from CFRA 580 AM radio. There is a segment in this interview where Bobby sings and talks about being the spokesperson for Coca-Cola.

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ggnCJN3prmoGVhuCBF9GBce7vQbJ4BHG/view?usp=sharing>

IF you have any information, additions, or corrections about Bobby Curtola's Coca-Cola records (and possible TV commercials), please let me know. Although I do have most of the tracks from the above records, I do not have 2 of the records. I am also seeking copies of other Canadian and American Coca-Cola records/tapes (I have thousands of Coca-Cola jingles, but I do not have them all.)

Of course, if you are a collector of Coca-Cola records/tapes or TV commercials from the '60s and '70s, let's connect.

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