

ARKANSAS BLACK HISTORY



Image courtesy of Encyclopedia of Arkansas

Born in Cotton Plant, Arkansas (Woodruff County) in 1915, Rosether Atkins (1915 - 1973), better known as Sister Rosetta Tharpe, became a pioneer in music. From a young age, she showed skill in singing, but her talent on the guitar was what introduced her to the world. Her guitar innovations, including creative riffs, melodies and strumming chords, are still studied today. Throughout her career, Tharpe performed in various musical genres, a practice that was considered controversial at the time. However, Sister Rosetta Tharpe continued to define her career for herself. She produced several hit songs and challenged conventional thinking about gospel and other forms of music until her death in 1973. In 2012, Sister Rosetta Tharpe was inducted into the Arkansas Black Hall of Fame.

