



COUNTRY'S BRIGHTEST STARS TAKE A VARIETY OF ROADS TO OPRY MEMBERSHIP

Trace Adkins, 2003

Proposed to his now-wife while making his Opry debut.

Bill Anderson, 1961

Has had more than 80 singles reach the country charts.

Dierks Bentley, 2005

His dog Jake shared in his Opry induction moment on stage.

Clint Black, 1991

He and his song "Good Run of Bad Luck" appeared in the movie Maverick.

Garth Brooks, 1990

He is the top selling country artist in history.

Jim Ed Brown, 1963

First achieved success with sisters, Maxine & Bonnie.

Roy Clark, 1987

Singer, comedian & musician, he made his Opry debut at age 18.

Terri Clark, 2004

Sang for tips at Tootsie's on Nashville's famed Lower Broadway before hitting the top of the charts.

John Conlee, 1981

One of the original organizers of FarmAid.

Wilma Lee Cooper, 1957

Her recordings are among those archived in the Library of Congress.

Charlie Daniels, 2008

Made his Opry debut at the Ryman Auditorium as part of the Earl Scruggs Revue. "...Quite a thrill for a country boy who has been listening to the Opry for as long as he can remember," Daniels says.

Diamond Rio, 1998

Grammy-nominated for their vocals as well as their musicianship.

Little Jimmy Dickens, 1948

First radio job was to crow like a rooster to open the morning program.

Joe Diffie, 1993

Once worked on an oil rig, in an iron foundry, and in Gibson Guitar's Nashville warehouse.

The Gatlins, 1976

Larry, Steve & Rudy Gatlin won acclaim for "Broken Lady," which Larry wrote in 15 minutes.

Vince Gill, 1991

Declined first call to perform on the Opry to attend his daughter's recital.

Billy Grammer, 1959

Developed the Grammer guitar, one of the finest flat-top guitars on the market.

Jack Greene, 1967

Performed on the Opry as the drummer in Ernest Tubb's Texas Troubadour band before starting out on his own.

Tom T. Hall, 1971

Had six songs he wrote recorded by other artists on the charts at one time.

George Hamilton IV, 1960

First million-selling record was the 1956 pop classic "A Rose and A Baby Ruth."

Emmylou Harris, 1992

One of her many Grammy Awards is for her work on the album O Brother, Where Art Thou?

Jan Howard, 1971

Has an expressway named after her in her hometown, West Plains, Missouri.

Alan Jackson, 1991

Before stardom, delivered mail to the Opry House.

Stonewall Jackson, 1956

Acuff-Rose's Wesley Rose helped him get an audition & an Opry contract.

George Jones, 1956

This ex-marine once experimented with rockabilly music under the name "Thumper Jones."

Hal Ketchum, 1994

Is a master carpenter and an accomplished painter.

Alison Krauss, 1993

Recorded her first album, Too Late to Cry, at age 14.

Charlie Louvin, 1955

Joined the Opry with his brother & duet partner, Ira, who passed away in 1965.

Patty Loveless, 1988

Is a distant cousin of fellow Opry member Loretta Lynn.

Loretta Lynn, 1962

Sissy Spacek won an Academy Award for her portrayal of Lynn in the film Coal Miner's Daughter.

Barbara Mandrell, 1972

The first person to win the CMA's Entertainer of the Year award two years in a row.

Martina McBride, 1995

Sold T-shirts for Garth Brooks one year and the next year was the opening act on his tour.

Del McCoury, 2003

Was invited to join the Opry while accepting the International Bluegrass Music Association Award for Entertainer of the Year.

Mel McDaniel, 1986

Wrote "The Grandest Lady Of Them All," a tribute to the Grand Ole Opry.

Reba McEntire, 1985

Has earned more gold and platinum awards than any female artist in any field of music.

Jesse McReynolds, 1964

Grew up singing on the family farm in Virginia.

Ronnie Milsap, 1976

Blind since birth, he played the violin by age 7, piano by age 8, and guitar by age 12.

Montgomery Gentry, 2009

Were part of the group Early Tymz in their native Kentucky before becoming a duo.

Craig Morgan, 2008

One of few country artists raised in Nashville.

Lorrie Morgan, 1984

Daughter of Opry star George Morgan made her Opry debut at age 13.

Jimmy C. Newman, 1956

First sang country and Gene Autry's cowboy songs before switching to Cajun tunes.

The Osborne Brothers, 1964

Pursued separate musical careers until they teamed up in 1953.

Brad Paisley, 2001

At age 13, opened shows for Opry members Ricky Skaggs and George Jones.

Dolly Parton, 1969

Once lost a Dolly Parton look-a-like contest.

Stu Phillips, 1967

Listened to the Opry in his native Canada and set his sights on a music career.

Ray Pillow, 1966

Earned his first appearance on the Grand Ole Opry by winning a national talent contest.

Charley Pride, 1993

Before singing, he pursued a professional baseball career.

Jeanne Pruett, 1973

Was the last vocalist to join the Grand Ole Opry at the Ryman Auditorium.

Riders In The Sky, 1982

Won a Grammy for their work on the Toy Story soundtrack.

Jeannie Seely, 1967

Opry membership came a year after recording her first No. 1 hit, "Don't Touch Me."

Blake Shelton, 2010

Was invited to join the Opry via Twitter the night the show returned to the Opry House following Nashville's May 2010 flood.

Ricky Van Shelton, 1988

Was a pipefitter, construction worker, car salesman, grocery store clerk, and house painter before becoming an Opry member.

Jean Shepard, 1955

Was one of the first female artists to receive notoriety without being a member of a group.

Ricky Skaggs, 1982

At age 5, he hopped on stage to play Bill Monroe's mandolin.

Connie Smith, 1965

In less than a year, went from being a small-town housewife in Ohio to a country music star with a No. 1 hit.

Mike Snider, 1990

2,000 of his Gleason, Tennessee, neighbors were there in support on the night of his Opry debut.

Ralph Stanley, 2000

Bob Dylan calls singing with Stanley "the highlight of my career."

Marty Stuart, 1992

First played his mandolin on the Opry at the Ryman at age 13 after joining Lester Flatt's bluegrass band.

Mel Tillis, 2007

Was officially inducted into the Opry family by his daughter Pam, who became an Opry member in 2000.

Pam Tillis, 2000

Born in Plant City, Florida to famous dad Mel Tillis and mom Doris, she debuted on the Opry at the age of eight singing "Tom Dooley."

Randy Travis, 1986

Worked as a dishwasher, short-order cook, and singer at the Nashville Palace a mile from the Opry House just 15 months before joining the Opry.

Travis Tritt, 1992

Appeared in the movie Blues Brothers in 2000 as a member of the Gator Boys band.

Josh Turner, 2007

Received two standing ovations for his breakthrough song "Long Black Train" during his Opry debut.

Carrie Underwood, 2008

Made her Opry debut two weeks after winning American Idol in 2005.

Steve Wariner, 1996

Made his Opry debut at age 17 at the Ryman Auditorium as the bass player in Dottie West's band.

The Whites, 1984

Daddy Buck & daughters, Sharon & Cheryl, had their first recording session in a motel room using bed mattresses to insulate the walls.

Trisha Yearwood, 1999

Was presented with a necklace belonging to an idol, Patsy Cline, upon her induction into the Opry.