



GRAND OLE OPRY

SOUVENIR PROGRAM





Grand ole Opry at the Ryman Auditorium, Nashville, Tenn.



THE STORY OF THE GRAND OLE OPRY

When radio was in its infancy, a quarter of a century ago, Radio Station WSM, "The Air Castle of the South," in Nashville, Tennessee, started a Saturday night program which through its hundreds and hundreds of successive Saturday night broadcasts without a single break, has developed into perhaps the greatest program ever produced in the interest of American Folk Music.

In this quarter of a century and through these hundreds and hundreds of broadcasts many new bright stars have hit their "peak" from this start.

Grand Ole Opry started on the air in 1925, and since then there has never been a vacation for the program, never a summer replacement . . . never for any cause . . . a break in this long chain of fine entertainment.

As we think back, we are reminded of a few of the many fine people who have come and gone . . . some still working . . . some retired . . . some who have passed on. We want to think for a few minutes and bring back to our memories the names of George Hay, the first man of the Opry; Uncle Jimmy Thompson; Dr. Humphrey Bate and his Possum Hunters; the Fruit Jar Drinkers; the Crook Brothers; Arthur Smith; Kirk and Sam McGee; the Gully Jumpers; and many others. Many of these people are still active, and a few of them are still with the Grand Ole Opry.

Along about this time came the first real professional of them all . . . THE DIXIE DEWDROP; Uncle Dave Macon . . . who today is still active at almost eighty. Then came the Sizemores . . . Asher and Jimmy . . . but now with the exception of Uncle Dave and Kirk McGee, all of the old timers are supplanted by new entertainers, and the Grand Ole Opry is still growing. Now through the efforts of Mr. Stone and Mr. Denny, any Saturday night you will hear as many as one hundred and fifty professional musicians.

We hope you enjoy this program . . . we hope that some day you will be able to come to Nashville and see the Opry with all the romance, happiness and life that they try to impart to the live audience as well as to the millions of radio listeners every Saturday night all over America.

Remember that the Opry . . . as it is . . . and we pray it always will be . . . as big as it is . . . is never dominated by any one person because the Opry is much bigger than just one or two. It is still the greatest name in radio . . . a show that perhaps has played in part or in its entirety to more people than any other show of any kind in the history of Radio.



HANK THOMPSON

Born in Waco, Texas, Hank Thompson stands six feet five inches without his ten-gallon hat and cowboy boots. Considered one of the handsomest hillbilly singers today, Hank is also one of the best-liked artists, on-stage and off-stage, and his fine voice and personality have placed him among the most popular stars in the country. On Capitol Records, Hank Thompson has recorded such hits as "Humpty Dumpty Heart," "Green Light," "Whoa, Sailor," "New Rovin' Gambler" and currently, the top numbers "Waiting in the Lobby of Your Heart" and the sensational "Wild Side of Life."

Hank was called to serve three years in the Navy during the War. Upon his return, he signed with Capitol, started making personal appearances throughout the country and has subsequently become a coast to coast favorite.

A prolific song writer, Hank has composed such tunes as "Humpty Dumpty Heart," "Green Light," and countless others.



MARTHA CARSON

Martha started picking out folk tunes and spiritual numbers on her mail-order guitar when she was in grammar school, began composing songs of her own before she was ten years old, and was a favorite entertainer in the Kentucky rural sections while in her early teens. She entered the professional music field as featured artist on Radio Station WSB in Atlanta Georgia, where she was retained, by popular demand, for better than four years. From there, Martha Carson headed her own programs on various Radio Stations in Knoxville, Tennessee, Birmingham, Alabama and others.

Martha Carson's sacred and spiritual numbers are considered among the finest and most moving in this field today. On Capitol Records her recent releases, "Satisfied" and "I'm Gonna' Walk and Talk With My Lord" have reached the tops in record sales. Martha, incidentally, composes all her own songs heard on Capitol, and many others which have been recorded by various artists in the folk music field.



COWBOY COPAS

This tall, dark and handsome from Muskogee, Oklahoma, has been for many years a popular figure at the GRAND OLE OPRY every Saturday night. Copas is the artist responsible for such hit recordings as "Filipino Baby"—"Signed, Sealed and Delivered"—"Forever"—"The Blue Pacific Waltz"—"Open Door Open Arms"—"Blues in the Moonlight." Copas has appeared in many motion pictures including "Barn Dance Jubilee."



KATHY COPAS

Pretty, blond-haired Kathy Copas, young daughter of Cowboy Copas began singing duets with her famous father on stage during Grand Ole Opry Saturday nights in Nashville around the middle of 1951. On February 10, 1952, Kathy made her first personal appearance with a show featuring Cowboy Copas in Kansas City. There had been so many requests for her on his recent tours that Copas included sixteen-year-old Kathy on the program. She was a tremendous success with Kansas City fans who loudly applauded her duets with her Dad, such as "Copycat" and "You'll Never See Me Cry" plus her solos. King Records cut "Copycat," among others, as a duet featuring Cowboy Copas and Kathy, and the reaction has been such that many other releases are scheduled, which means that the folk music world will be seeing and hearing much about this talented girl in the future.



STRINGBEAN

Stringbean, the "Kentucky Wonder," is the banjo-playing wizard heard each Saturday night on the coast to coast GRAND OLE OPRY program. He combines comedy with the unexcelled banjo work and is a favorite with audiences all over the country with his sad, puzzled expression and ridiculous get-up. A natural for television spots, STRINGBEAN is also featured on many radio programs and has a busy personal appearance schedule.

1939



MOON MULLICAN



RAY PRICE

In keeping with WSM's strict requirements Ray possesses a fine and outstanding singing voice with a style which has a true, country flavor.

On Columbia Label Ray Price has enjoyed immediate popularity with such releases as "Hay La La", "Weary Blues", "Talk To Your Heart", and others.

Texas born, Ray attended North Texas Agriculture College where he studied to become a veterinarian. A few years ago he helped a friend in introducing an original tune to a music publisher, became deeply interested in American Folk Music and finally discarded his plans to become a Vet. Ray then served with the Marine Corps during the war for 3 years in the South Pacific after which he returned to the professional music field and appeared around Dallas, Oklahoma and Louisiana. Ray makes his home in Nashville, divides his time between a busy schedule of radio and television spots, personal appearances on the road and composing such top-notch tunes as "Give Me More, More More", "Talk To Your Heart", "Heart-achin' Blues" and others. If time permits Ray Price enjoys his favorite sports, hunting and fishing.



RUSTY GABBARD



JOHNNY AND JACK

Johnny Wright and Jack Anglin have been together as one of the country's most successful vocal and instrumental duets since 1937. Their version of "Poison Love," "Just When I Needed You," "I'm Gonna Love You One More Time," and others are favorites with folk music fans. Their "Ashes of Love" and "You Tried To Ruin My Name" are listed on popularity polls from coast to coast.

Johnny and Jack include as part of their group the Tennessee Mountain Boys featuring Paul Warren on fiddle, "Shot" Jackson on steel guitar and "Dobro" (Hawaiian guitar), and Lester Wilburn on bass fiddle and maracas.

Tennessee-born, Johnny and Jack now make their home in Nashville where they are starred on the famous Grand Ole Opry.

