

Plank Road Folk Music Society



Autumn - October 2021 | www.plankroad.org

In This Issue

- **Thanks Bob!** *A tribute to our president of 13 years*
- **Andy's Music Trivia Quiz**
- **The String Band is Back!**
- **Remembering . . .** *Nanci Griffith, Don Everly, Tom T. Hall, Charlie Watts*
- **Jo Stafford . . . and more!**

QuarterNotes has a new look!

You may have noticed that this issue is a week late . . . and the format has a different look. That's because the provider we use for editing has changed to a new version.

The good news is that the new **Responsive Design** makes it much easier for you to view the latest Plank Road news on your phone or tablet without having to scroll left to right.

The downside: You may notice that our Table of Contents above no longer functions as links to the articles.

It's a work in progress. As we learn the editing and design intricacies of this new format, there will be additional changes and improvements.

President's Message

President's Message October 2021

This has been an up and down year, and the optimist in me expects better times ahead for the country, the community and for Plank Road. During this year we have been able to hold our regular sing-arounds, first on Zoom, then in person, so our monthly contact has remained consistent. Other activities have been cancelled or limited. We continue to look for interesting and enjoyable things for our members.



On a personal note, I celebrated my 80th birthday in June, with a family party and backyard concert. I must admit that eighty sounds pretty old, but I am still able to enjoy all the same pleasures of life, so I am blessed.

I understand there is an article about me in this issue of QuarterNotes, including some photos of my younger days, so there is proof that I was young once. I have had an enjoyable life and being involved in Plank Road is a nice way to enjoy the present era. Great people and music is as good as it gets. I can't wait for the pandemic to be behind us and we can get back to in-person contact again.

**Bob O'Hanlon
President**

Bob O'Hanlon, our fearless leader . . .

***Wrapping up 13 years as Plank Road president
— and looking ahead for more.***

Some say 13 is an unlucky number. But for the Plank Road Folk Music Society it's a very lucky number. That's because Bob O'Hanlon is in his 13th year – and counting -- as our



president.

Bob discovered Plank Road in 2007. A year later he joined the organization's board – and the following year became president. In those 13 years Bob has utilized his managerial skills, his love of music, and uncanny ability to juggle the many responsibilities of his position. Not to mention his enthusiasm, good humor and dedication to doing what's best for Plank Road and our members.

And that includes the long, difficult months of cancelled events, face masks, remote virtual sing-arounds, and ongoing uncertainty during the ups and downs of the pandemic.

Yet, Plank Road's membership has remained stable and our finances are healthy. Bob will be the first to say it's been a team effort. But let's find out a little more about what makes him tick:

Small-town kid moves to the suburbs . . .

Bob was born in Blair, Nebraska, a small town near Omaha, where his parents were born. "I was the oldest of 8 children, a good Irish-Catholic family," says Bob. "My Dad worked in Omaha, and was offered an opportunity to move to the company headquarters in Chicago, so we moved here when I was 14 years old."



He attended Lyons Township High School in LaGrange, and went on to college at Bradley University in Peoria. Bob recalls that his college years brought some life changes, including earning a degree in Business Management, meeting his future wife -- *and* taking up guitar.

He was a member of Sigma Nu fraternity, where a couple of his friends played guitar and sang. "I began to sing along with them, and eventually, one of them gave me his old 4-string guitar." That was in 1960 – and Bob hasn't stopped playing and singing since then.

There was another big event in college. "I met a pretty cheerleader named Mimi," says Bob, "and we've been married since 1963."

ABOVE: Bob and future wife Mini on their way to a campus dance at Bradley University.

After graduating, Bob began a 42-year career in business. "My first job was with USG, a Chicago based corporation," says Bob, followed by 5 years with Hallmark Cards, as a salesman. He then joined a smaller company, Intercraft Industries, in a low-level management job. "Over 15 years, I worked my way up to Vice President, marketing. Then changed jobs and went to Arvey, who operated a national chain of office products stores." He started as Marketing VP, and after 5 years, became President of the company, retiring from there at age 63.



Let's talk about the music . . .

"My love of music began young," says Bob. "My Dad was a country music fan, with a good singing voice, but no one in the family played an instrument, until I started playing. Then several of my younger brothers took it up."

"I loved early rock n roll -- Elvis, Chuck Berry, Buddy Holly -- then the folk craze of the late 50s and early 60s," says Bob.

"The Kingston Trio was my inspiration when I began playing. I was in a trio in college -- we

sang at parties and on stage a few times.” Bob remembers their repertoire was heavy with Kingston Trio, Peter, Paul and Mary, and Brothers Four songs.

“I also liked country music, which was considered corny at that time, so we were light on that. But, thanks to Willie Nelson, Gram Parsons and others, country music gained in popularity and is now more mainstream.”

Bob says he’s been fortunate to have attended dozens of music concerts in his life. “We’ve seen some very popular performers. It’s been a big priority for us.”



RIGHT: Bob with Jerry Jeff Walker — he’s seen him over 30 times!



A little about the O’Hanlon family . . . and a flock of grandchildren.

“Mimi and I have 3 daughters,” says Bob. “All three are married and we have a total of ten grandchildren. Lucky us!” All three families live in the area, so they see them regularly. Their grandchildren include 4 college graduates, 4 in college and 2 seniors in high school. And, adds Bob, “There are some good musicians in the group.”

LEFT: Meredith, Mimi, Kelly, Bob, and Kim.

Ah, yes, the retired life!

When Bob retired from business, he thought he’d have enough activities to keep him busy and enjoying life. “I’m a golfer, a sports fan, a reader, we travel regularly, we have friends and family to socialize with. But, I wanted to take my enjoyment of music to a different level -- more than just playing at parties and family gatherings.”



Bob discovers Plank Road . . .

One of his daughters knew about Plank Road through her involvement with the Murphy Roche Irish music organization. He looked into it and eventually called Cheryl Joyal, Plank Road’s president. “She invited me to a music gathering at her home over Labor Day weekend, as the 2007 Fox Valley music festival had been cancelled, due to flooding on the island. I went to that gathering, met a lot of Plank Road people and joined the organization.”

One thing led to another, and . . .

Bob began attending George Mattson’s Saturday sing-arounds and the bluegrass jams. He must have made a good impression, because within months Cheryl and vice president Vicki Ingle invited him to join the Plank Road board of directors, beginning in January, 2008.

“At the end of that year, they asked me if I planned on staying on the board for 2009. When I said yes, they asked if I would take over as President,” recalls Bob “I was surprised, to say the least, since I was just getting to know people and how the organization operated, and most importantly, the culture.”

Bob wanted to be sure it would be a good fit. “Every organization has a unique culture, which develops over many years,” he says. And because he was fairly new, he didn’t want to step into a situation that wasn’t compatible. But, he agreed to do it for a “couple of years.”

“And here I am, finishing 13 years in this position.”

Here’s what Dottie Lee says about Bob’s leadership:

“What can we do for our members?”
This is the sincere, number one priority question Bob always raises for discussion in Board meetings; as our President, he is

“Being President of Plank Road has been both enjoyable and rewarding . . .”

Bob says it’s because of the people involved. “It’s not stressful or controversial. Plank Road members, for the most part, are involved

always looking out for ways to ensure that Plank Road Folk Music Society continues to be the place "where people come together to play, sing, and enjoy acoustic music of every kind!"

Throughout the challenges of the pandemic, Bob never lost focus on this goal and worked tirelessly to lead us past ever-changing obstacles, enabling us to provide Zoom sing-arounds, eventual in-person sing-arounds, the digital release of Down the Old Plank Road albums, a wonderful workshop led by Mark Dvorak, a lively Annual Meeting with a rousing performance by George Mattson Trio, and our other ongoing activities and communications.

because they like folk music and enjoy being with people. I have been blessed with great boards of directors during my tenure – people who are dedicated to Plank Road and bring different experience and points of view to the group. We may disagree on an issue, but everyone gets along."

"Our goal is to move Plank Road forward without losing sight of our roots and mission statement."

More tributes to Bob . . .

I would like to thank Bob for serving as president of the Plank Road Folk Music Society for the past 13 years. His organizational skills and steady leadership have made our group successful in promoting acoustic music-making in the western suburbs; this is a continuation of the original aim of the PRFMS. Thanks & Congrats!

- George Mattson

Is there just one word to describe Bob? As Fred and I were thinking about that question, we came up with a few more: Facilitator, moderator, peace keeper, recruiter and all-around nice guy who knows a lot of music.

- Carol & Fred Spanuello

Bob, In appreciation for all of your support and encouragement since I joined the PRFMS jam sessions, you kept me going through the difficult first years. Thank you for everything you do for PRFMS and for being a good friend.

- Connie Lawlor

A big thank you for all the time, effort, and TLC you have given PRFMS over the years.

Please don't retire anytime soon!

- Jen Shilt

Bob is the consummate leader, fair, friendly, and welcoming to one and all. He's the one that makes the calls that the rest of us are uncomfortable to make. And fair play to him for standing by the tent at Fox Valley on BOTH days when one day is good enough for the rest of us. And not to forget the support he gets from his beloved Mimi. A pure "Country Gentleman".

- Jim Gilroy

Bob, a huge *Thank You!* for your guidance, persistence, and creativity in piloting the Plank Road ship for 13 years! But you're not done yet! We continue to cherish your leadership, and most of all, your friendship.

- Dave Humphreys

In-Person Events Resume

We're back!

Plank Road's regular sing-around events

Please join us for our in-person get togethers -- co-sponsored by Two Way Street Coffee House.

Sing-Around

1st & 3rd Sat. | 2-4 pm
Vocal instrumental jam and sing-along with songbooks and leader.

Country and Western Sing-Around

4th Sat. | 2-4 pm
Sing along with your favorite C&W songs.

Local venues now open for live, in-person concerts

Some of our favorite venues have reopened for in-person concerts, with restrictions. Be sure to check their websites for current information.

Two Way Street Coffee House Friday Night Concert Series.

On September 10 the venerable [Two Way Street Coffee House](#) resumed in-person concerts.

As the safety of performers and patrons is paramount, 2WS will be following all recommended CDC guidelines.

2nd Tuesday Song Circle -- BYOS!

2nd Tues. | 7-9 pm

Bring Your Own Song! A monthly opportunity for musicians to perform songs for each other, within a song circle.

Plank Road String Band Practice

First Church of Lombard

630-620-0688

2nd Sat. | 2:00-4:00 pm

An old-time string band practice for intermediate/advanced players. from Sept to April

The church committee and Plank Road have decided it is safe to meet in person, with these stipulations:

- *At this time, face masks are required.*
- *We'll continue to use the large room on the lower level, down the hall from the Coffee House, so we can spread out. Use the regular entrance near the Coffee House.*

Be sure to check the [Two Way Street](#) website, [Plank Road](#) website or [Facebook](#) page for details about each event.

Currently masks must be worn during concerts, except when eating or drinking. As needed, 2WS will monitor the status, adjust accordingly and communicate to fans any changes regarding safety measures.

For those who prefer to watch online, virtual options continue.

Doors open at 7:30pm and concerts starts at 8pm. Check out each concert's details for more information on how to gain online access.

Maple Street Concerts.

Live concerts have returned to Maple Street Chapel in downtown Lombard. Concerts are subject to CDC guidelines, including wearing masks while in the chapel. Please check the [Maple Street](#) website for concert listings and additional information.

Other venues . . .

- **Acoustic Renaissance Concerts**
- **Acorn Coffeehouse**
- **Tobias Music Concerts**
- **Old Town School Of Folk Music**
- **Friends of Lisle Library Concerts**
- **The Brashler Barn**

Some of these venues may have live concerts — check their websites.



String Band is back in action!

Good news for Plank Road's old-time String Band! Jen Shilt announced that practices will resume October 9. They'll be held from 2:00-4:00 PM at the First Church of Lombard on the second Saturday of each month, with Betsy Anderson leading.

The String Band practice sessions are open to newcomers. Those who are interested in playing with the band should be able to play their instruments at an intermediate or advanced level. **NOTE:** Masks are mandatory until further notice, based on state mandates.

Folks who would like to play with the band at barn dances and in performances should attend the monthly practices regularly, become familiar with the music and practice at home. If you have any questions, please call Jen at 630-518-2619 Or email: j.shilt@comcast.net

The First Church of Lombard is located at 220 South Main Street in Lombard, IL (next to Maple Street Chapel).

Things to Bring:

- Instrument
- Tuner
- Music stand



Jo Stafford

By Andy Malkewicz

"I'm a careful singer with good relative pitch."
— Jo Stafford, dismissing her reputation for perfect pitch.

One of the most popular (and gifted) vocalists of the post World War II era, Jo Stafford sang in all genres -- pop, folk, country, big band jazz and so on. Her mother played banjo and sang folk songs, influencing her later career. As a child, she learned to play piano, and also took voice lessons (hoping to sing in opera).

In high school, she and her sisters started the Stafford Sisters, and later appeared on radio and TV. At the age of 21 (1937), the sisters were in the movie cast of *Alexander's Ragtime Band*. It was here she met the Pied Pipers, and became the group's lead singer, performing backup vocals for the Tommy Dorsey Orchestra in 1939. By 1944 she was the featured solo artist.

A cute little side note: In 1937, she worked with Fred Astaire, creating arrangements for him

- Chord sheets and/or sheet music downloaded from our [tune list](#)
- Paper and pencil recommended
- Optional but strongly recommended: Hand-held recording device

BYOS in session . . . and sounding good!

Feel like trying out a song in front of other people?

Don't forget about our Bring Your Own Song sessions (otherwise known as BYOS) at 7 PM on the second Tuesday of every month.

We're back with in-person sessions in the lower room next to the Two Way Street Coffee House. Masks or face shields are required until further notice. Yeah, nobody likes masks, but it's time to get together with others and share music! And it's better than sitting home watching TV!

BYOS is a great opportunity to play and sing your version of any tune – an oldie, or a new one you're working on, or an original song. No pressure, and lots of fun!

Promote Yourself — Advertise!

- Plank Road members only.
- \$50 annually (4 newsletters).
- Ads must be related to folk or acoustic music.

Contact: plankroadfolk@hotmail.com

for *Damself In Distress*. She had to adapt “Nice Work if You can Get It” for him because he was having trouble with some of the syncopation. In her words, “the man with the syncopated shoes can't do the syncopated notes.”

Stafford was the first solo artist signed to Johnny Mercer's new Capitol Records label. Her solo career led to a string of live performances including 6 months at New York's La Martinque nightclub. Reviews of her performances were very good, but singing in-person became uncomfortable. During WW2, she performed for the USO in the U.S., and gained the nickname “GI Jo.”

Her first number one hit was “Candy,” a duet with Johnny Mercer and the Pied Pipers. She repeated on a duet with Gordon MacRae with “My Darling My Darling.” She and MacRae had several million-sellers, including “Say Something Sweet to Your Sweetheart,” “My Happiness” and “Whispering Hope.”

In 1950, she changed to Capital Records, but agreed to record 8 more songs for them by the end of the year. She would become the second artist after Bing Crosby to sell 25 million records for Columbia.

At Columbia, she made the 2 biggest hits of her career: 1952 “You Belong to Me,” and 1954 “Make Love to Me.” She had a total of 21 charted songs, of which 1952 “Jambalaya,” and 1951 “Shrimp Boats” are two of my favorites by her.

She was married twice. In 1937 to back-up singer John Huddleston, and divorced in 1943. And in 1952, to band leader and arranger Paul Weston, with whom she had two children. They remained married until their deaths: Paul in 1996 and Jo in 2008.

Transitions



Nanci Griffith

Singer, guitarist and songwriter Nanci Griffith kept one foot in folk and the other in country with a soaring voice equally at home in both genres. She

died August 13 at the age of 68.

While Griffith often wrote political and confessional material, her best-loved songs were tales of small-town life, sometimes with painful details in the lyrics. One of her most popular songs, “Love at the Five and Dime,” was actually a hit for Kathy Mattea. But Griffith didn't mind, saying “It feels great that Kathy has to sing that for the rest of her life and I don't.”

Griffith was born in 1953, in Seguin, Texas, later



Congratulations Dave!

Dave Humphreys was honored recently as the 2021 recipient of the Montrew Dunham Award by the Downers Grove Historical Society. The award was created in 2019 to honor those whose significant service and contributions to the Village of Downers Grove have earned them a place in its history.

Dave was cited for “his lifetime of dedication to countless civic and cultural programs that make Downers Grove a great place to live.”

Not to mention almost half a century with the Two Way Street Coffee House, and his long tenure with Plank Road. ***Well done Dave . . . and well deserved!***

Close encounters?

moving to Austin. By the time she was 12, she was writing songs and playing in Austin clubs. As a teenager, she saw a performance by Townes Van Zandt, and identified with his song "Tecumseh Valley" about a doomed young woman – and it became a staple of her songbook.

Folk music was an early influence. "When I was young I listened to Odetta records for hours and hours. Then when I started high school, Loretta Lynn came along. Before that, country music hadn't had a guitar-playing woman who wrote her own songs."

After attending the University of Texas, Griffith stayed in Austin, working as a kindergarten teacher while pursuing music. She won a songwriting award at the Kerrville Folk Festival and released her first album in 1978, followed by three more albums while touring constantly.

She married fellow singer-songwriter Eric Taylor in 1976, but divorced in 1982. She kept performing through two bouts of cancer, and a painful condition which severely limited the mobility of her fingers.

In 1985, she moved to Nashville, signed with MCA records, and assembled a band, creating a sound she called "folkabilly." Her breakthrough came when she shifted labels to Elektra, and returned to her folk roots. Her 1993 album, *Other Voices, Other Rooms*, included versions of songs by her folk forebearers, including Malvina Reynolds, Woody Guthrie, Bob Dylan, John Prine and others -- winning the 1994 Grammy Award for best contemporary folk album.

Tom T. Hall

Singer-songwriter, Tom T. Hall, composer of "Harper Valley P.T.A." and songs about life's simple joys, died August 20. He was 85. Known as "The Storyteller" for his unadorned yet incisive lyrics, Hall composed hundreds of songs, and was considered country music's consummate blue-collar bard.

Hall helped usher in a literary era of country music in the early '70s, with songs that were political, like "Watergate Blues," deeply personal like "The Year Clayton Delaney Died," and philosophical like "Old Dogs, Children and Watermelon Wine."

One writer said Hall used the simplest words to tell complicated stories. "It felt like Tom T just caught the songs as they floated by, but I know he carved them out of rock."

Hall was born in Kentucky in a log cabin built by his grandfather. He started playing guitar at age 4 and wrote his first song by the time he was 9. Later, he began playing in a bluegrass band, but when that didn't work out he became a disc jockey. In 1957 he joined the Army and after 4 years returned to songwriting.

In 1964 he moved to Nashville, earning \$50 a week. He wrote songs for others, but had so many

Let's hear about it!

Tell us about your up-close-and-personal experiences with famous (or not so famous) music idols.

REMINDER: In the previous issue we asked you to drop us an email about up-close-and-personal experiences you may have had with famous music idols. Alas, none of you responded . . .

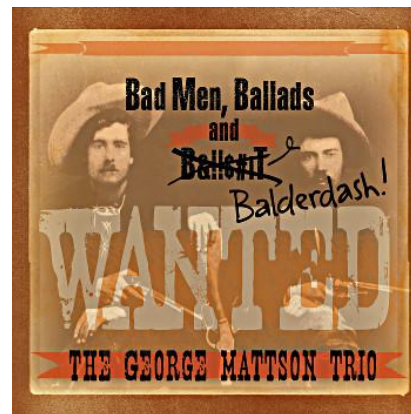
So we're asking again. Hey, it's your chance to impress us with your celebrity encounters – and see your name in this newsletter!

Here's the deal:

- **Maybe you've been lucky enough to meet an artist you admired.** (We know some of you have rubbed shoulders with legends like Pete Seeger, Jerry Jeff Walker, Michael Smith, and others.)
- **Or, maybe you had a life-altering experience at a concert** — even if you didn't actually meet your musical idol. **NOTE:** We're *not* looking for a list of all the great concerts you've attended. That's for another issue. Just one (or two) experiences and why they were extra special.

Please respond to lemos.bill@comcast.net

With a little help from our friends . . .



George Mattson Trio
gmtrio.com

he began recording them himself. When he got his recording contract, the middle initial "T" was added to make his name "catchier."

His breakthrough song was "Harper Valley P.T.A.," a 1968 international hit about small-town hypocrisy recorded by Jeannie C. Riley. It became a No. 1 country and hit, selling millions of copies – and won a Grammy for Riley. In fact, the song was so popular it spawned a movie and a television series. "It was the most awesome time of my life," Hall said.

His own career quickly took off and he had a string of hits in the late 1960s. Throughout the '70s, Hall became one of Nashville's biggest singer-songwriters, with multiple hit songs. He was inducted into the Country Music Hall of Fame in 2008 and the Songwriters Hall of Fame in 2019.

Hall also wrote songs for children, authored several books and hosted the TV show *Pop Goes the Country*. Tennessee Democrats even urged him to run for governor in 1982, but he declined.

He was married to songwriter Dixie Deen, and the two would go on to write hundreds of bluegrass songs after Hall retired from performing in the 1990s.



Don Everly

Don Everly, the last surviving member of the Everly Brothers and a pioneer of rock 'n' roll and country/rock, died August 21. He was 84. The guitar styles and harmonies of

Don and his brother Phil influenced scores of other artists for decades.

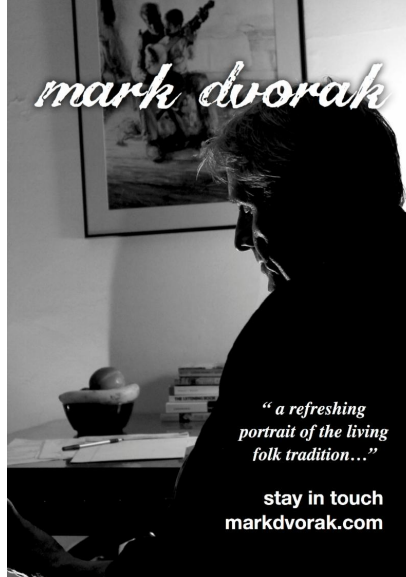
Isaac Donald Everly was born in 1937 in Muhlenberg County, KY. His formidable father, "Ike" Everly, was a coal miner — and guitar player — and when the coal was gone, he moved the family to Chicago in search of a career in music.

After second son, Phil, was born, the family moved to Shenandoah, Iowa, where Ike had a radio show in the mid-1940s. "Little Donnie" sang the theme, "Free As a Little Bird As I Can Be."

In 1953 the Everlys moved to Knoxville, TN. Ike arranged a meeting for the boys with Chet Atkins, who was so impressed with Don's songwriting that he placed one of his songs with Kitty Wells.

Two years later the family moved to Nashville and the boys auditioned for labels as a brother act. Eventually they signed with Cadence and were given a tune written by Felice and Boudleaux Bryant. That song, "Bye Bye Love," topped the country chart and hit No. 2 on the pop chart in 1957 — followed by another chart-topping Bryant number, "Wake Up Little Susie."

Some of the Everly's biggest hits were composed by Don, including "Til I Kissed You," "So Sad (To See Good Love Go Bad)," and "Cathy's Clown."



Mark Dvorak
markdvorak.com

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Andy's Music Trivia Quiz

Thanks for your responses. If you have any trivia to contribute, please do.

Answers to previous Quiz:

Q1. What is a Clavichord?

A1. A stringed rectangular keyboard instrument, used in the Late Middle Ages, through the Renaissance, Baroque and Classical eras. It was mostly used as a practice and composition instrument, since it was not loud enough for larger performances. It produces sound by striking metal strings with small metal blades, the vibrations transmitted through the bridge to the soundboard.

Q2. What dance craze song was written in under 5 minutes on a bet? What was the song? Who sang it? Who wrote it? How much money was won?

A2. This is best answered by the songwriter Billy Strange in his own words:

"It began with a friend and I sitting in a drive-in on Sunset Blvd., drinking coffee to sober up after we finished a recording session. (BTW — the drinking took place AFTER the session!)

"We were listening to the radio some country station and a record came on by Wayne Raney & Lonnie Glosson titled "What This Whole World Needs Is A Lot More Jesus And A Lot Less Rock And Roll"!!! At that point I said, "I could write a better song than that in five minutes!" My friend pulled a hundred dollar bill out of his wallet and threw it down on the front seat and challenged me to do it!

"I always kept a small score pad in the back seat and I reached for it and began to just write down some notes and titled it, "Monotonous Melody," which I sang to him, and picked up his hundred and we had a big laugh over it. I didn't give him the hundred back, either!!! I threw the score pad into the back seat and forgot about the entire thing.

"Several weeks later I were doing a Ricky Nelson session and his band leader, Buzz Adlam, asked if anyone has a song that he could publish in his new music publishing firm. When Buzz left the studio the musicians and I laid down a track and then we all sang the words. "What A Monotonous Melody ... What a Monotonous Melody" etc, etc, etc. Again we all had a great laugh about the dumb thing that we'd just laid down. Buzz came back and I gave him a tape of it and, again, totally forgot about it.

"Several weeks later I got a phone call from Dave Burgess asking if he could record my song "Monotonous Melody." Naturally I said

Don was known as "the dark brother," tapping into a strain of "Appalachian gothic despair" that was absorbed by audiences as teenage heartache. In 1959, he married the first of four wives, and the Everly Brothers moved from Nashville to Los Angeles.

(Some useless information from the editor: "In 1969 I literally ran into Don as he was exiting a dry cleaners in L.A.")

The years on the road were draining, and Don became addicted to various amphetamines, even attempting suicide in a London hotel room in the early '60s. He recovered, only to find the music was changing and the hits were over.

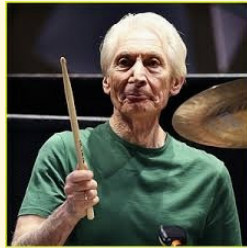
The Everlys kept touring, with Don hanging out with Bob Dylan and Jimi Hendrix. But life on the road together created tensions for the brothers. At one point Don said, "I'm tired of being an Everly Brother," and the act itself famously imploded at a show at Knott's Berry Farm in July 1972.

Don moved back to Nashville and studied cooking, wine and photography. He and Phil both released solo records over a 10-year period -- during which they didn't speak. Then in 1983, they reunited for a concert in London and produced a comeback album.

In 2019, Don was voted into the Musicians Hall of Fame in Nashville. In a recent eulogy a writer said "Don's influence reverberates through the songs and ethereal harmonies he conjured with his brother Phil."

Charlie Watts

Jazz aficionado and foundation of the Rolling Stones, Charlie Watts died August 24 in London, at age 80. His strong but unflashy drumming powered the



Stones for over 50 years. Reserved, dignified and dapper, Watts was never as flamboyant as most of his rock-star peers. As Keith Richards said, "Charlie Watts has always been the bed that I lie on musically."

Bruce Springsteen wrote, "As much as Mick's voice and Keith's guitar, Charlie Watts's snare sound is the Rolling Stones."

Watts was born in London in 1941. Oddly, his first instrument was a banjo, but, baffled by the fingerings required to play it, he removed the neck and converted its body into a snare drum.

He discovered jazz when he was 12 and soon became a fan of Miles Davis, Duke Ellington and Charles Mingus. His parents bought him a drum kit when he was 13 and he played along to his collection of jazz records. By 1960, Watts had graduated from art school and found work as a graphic artist. In the evenings, he played with a variety of groups, mostly jazz combos.

The newly formed Rolling Stones needed a good drummer — but couldn't afford Watts, who was

already drawing a regular salary from various gigs. In early 1963, when they could finally guarantee five pounds a week, Watts joined the band. He moved in with his bandmates and immersed himself in Chicago blues records.

Watts was ambivalent about the fame he achieved as a member of the Stones. "I loved playing with Keith and the band — I still do," he said. "But I wasn't interested in being a pop idol sitting there with girls screaming. It's not the world I come from. It's not what I wanted to be, and I still think it's silly."

While the Stones cultivated bad-boy images and indulged an appetite for debauchery, Watts mostly eschewed the sex and drugs. On tour, he would go back to his hotel room alone. Similarly, while other members of the Stones battled for control of the band, Watts largely stayed out of the internal politics, saying, "I'm usually mumbling in the background."

In the mid-1980s, however, Watts experienced a midlife crisis that became a two-year bender. Just as the other Stones were settling into moderation in their 40s, he got hooked on amphetamines and heroin, nearly destroying his marriage. After passing out in a recording studio and breaking his ankle when he fell down a staircase, he quit, cold turkey.

Watts lived with his wife on a farm in Devon, where they bred Arabian horses. He also collected everything from American Civil War memorabilia to old classic cars . . . which was curious since he didn't drive.

Watts's true love remained jazz, and he would fill the time between tours with various jazz groups. .

The band was inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame in 1989. Charlie skipped the ceremony.



***Even in Seattle they know
Plank Road.***

This candid photo shows some random guy walking down an alley in Seattle, WA wearing a Plank Road t-shirt. *We're everywhere!*

"Yes". He then asked if he could change the title, to which I said, "I don't give a damn WHAT you want to call it!!!" I never knew what the new title was! A few months later I received a call from Chubby Checker's manager, Jon Sheldon, asking if he could put lyrics to my song. I was thrilled that I might have a Chubby Checker record and told him, "Certainly!"

"Fast forward a few months to royalty time. . . . I received a check from BMI in the amount of \$63,000. After enjoying the check for a few minutes I called a friend at BMI and told him that they had made a terrible mistake and that I wanted to return the check to them. He told me to hang on for a minute . . . so I did. In a couple of minutes he got back on the phone and asked if I'd written a song entitled, "Monotonous Melody" . . . to which I answered "Yes"!! He then went on to explain that it had been recorded by "The Champs" under the name of "Limbo Rock" and that it had consequently been recorded by Chubby Checker and was a big hit!!! You could have knocked me down with a feather when he said that the check was, indeed, mine!!!"

Q3. Who sang 1962 #1 hit, "He's a Rebel"?

A3. In 1962, girl group "the Blossoms," with Darlene Love, were hired to sing on a session by producer Phil Spector. When girl group, the Crystals, couldn't make it to Los Angeles in time for the session, Darlene Love was paid \$5,000 to sing lead on "He's a Rebel," her first time on a Spector recording.

The single was credited to the Crystals, and was hurriedly released on Philles Records to get the Gene Pitney song to market before Vikki Carr. The ghost release of this single came as a total surprise to the Crystals who were an experienced and much traveled girl harmony group in their own right, and they were required to perform and promote the new single as if it were their own.

Q4. What famous singer spoke to John Lennon's killer the day before John died?

A4. "The day before John was murdered, I stood right in front of the Dakota and a guy attached himself to me in a manic, and alarming way. He just started talking a mile a minute at me. Eventually I just sort of scraped him off. I got out of the conversation as soon as possible, and made it past my doorman, into the safety of my building. But in fact, that was Mark David Chapman, the guy who killed John." – James Taylor

Q5. What group opened for the Beatles on their first US tour? What big star did they influence to go solo, and perform in the pop/soul direction?

A5. The Exciters ("Tell Him" 1962, & "He's Got the Power" 1963), were one of the opening acts for the Beatles in Aug-Sep of 1964. Dusty Springfield, while still with her group, the Springfields ("Silver Threads and Golden Needles") heard "Tell Him" playing while walking past a music store in NYC, and she decided, "That's what I want to do!"

A Special Thanks to our Membership Contributors!!

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QuarterNotes Contributors

Bill Lemos - Editor
Bob O'Hanlon
Andy Malkewicz
Dottie Lee

NEW Trivia Quiz:

Q1. When and how did Hank Williams die?

Q2. What is a Harpsichord?

Q3. What 1950's and 60's pop song was used in a restaurant commercial featuring school lunches and cafeteria personnel?

Q4. What 2-word 1960's song became a craze for high school sports games?

Q5. Paul McCartney in "Just Another Day" references the "Sound of Five." What is he referencing?

BONUS – "Just Another Day" was Paul McCartney's first solo hit peaking in the UK at #2, and in the US at #5. It received a lot of critical flac. It was previewed in the Beatles *Let It Be* recording session in 1969. His drummer on the song called it "Eleanor Rigby in New York City." Critics called it irrelevant. John Lennon described McCartney's new music as Muzak, and derided "Just Another Day" in his own 1971 song, "How Do You Sleep," in the lines: "The only thing you done was "Yesterday," and since you've gone you're "Just Another Day."

Keep those responses coming in to:

pictq@yahoo.com

2021 PRFMS Officers

Bob O'Hanlon - President

reohanlon@gmail.com

(630) 702-0150

Bill Lemos - VP, Secretary

lemos.bill@comcast.net

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