

## ***ALWAYS ... PATSY CLINE Chronology***

Jewel Theatre Company, May 2024

Shaun Carroll, Director

© 2017 and 2024, Susan Myer Silton, Dramaturge

**Key:** DJ (disc jockey), NYC (New York City), UK (United Kingdom), US (United States), WWI (World War I)

### **1932**

---

Patsy is born Virginia Patterson Hensley on September 8 at Winchester Memorial Hospital, Winchester, Virginia.

### **1932-1946**

---

The events of Virginia (Ginny's) life during these years are described narratively throughout the glossary, in the definitions and in her biography on pp. 1-10 of the glossary.

### **1946 - 1947**

---

Virginia auditions for DJ Joltin' Jim McCoy at Radio Station WINC, Winchester. She wins a regular spot on McCoy's Saturday broadcast.

### **1948**

---

Virginia catches the ear of Wally Fowler when Fowler brings his Oak Ridge Quartet to the Palace Theater in Winchester. Fowler invites Virginia to audition for WSM in Nashville. Ginny and Hilda travel to Nashville. Virginia auditions for Opry talent manager Jim Denney, but does not receive an immediate offer for employment. She returns to the clubs and taverns around Winchester.

### **1952**

---

Virginia begins working with Bill Peer and his Melody Boys at the Moose Lodge in Brunswick, Maryland. Peer becomes her manager, and at his urging, she adopts the stage name "Patsy," derived from her middle name of Patterson. They become lovers, even though he is married. Peer manages Patsy's career, getting her gigs and working tirelessly to ensure that she is seen and heard by people who will put her in the spotlight. He not only guides and nurtures her career, but he also bankrolls it out of his own pocket, working several jobs and often going into debt to do so. Bill has been credited with taking the rough-hewn singer and transforming her into a dynamic Country belter. It was his goal to record Patsy. He produced and circulated several demonstration tapes of Patsy's vocals, but ultimately, he couldn't deliver on his promises to get her the right contacts outside of where they lived. Bill was well-known regionally and had connections, but his contacts with Nashville stars didn't lead to recordings. The Nashville folk didn't see him as more than a respected local musician whom they could call on in a jam or use for backup when they toured through the area.



Bill Peer with Patsy

Patsy meets Gerald Cline at a Moose Lodge dance where she is singing. They begin dating. Cline, from Frederick, Maryland, is 7 years her senior but looks much older. He is overweight, only a bit taller than Patsy, and not particularly good-looking. However, he is completely smitten with Patsy and pursues her persistently.

### **1953**

---

Patsy marries Gerald Cline on March 7, officially becoming Patsy Cline. She justifies the surprising move by reasoning that it will bring her respectability after her scandalous affair with Peer, take her out of the small town of Winchester, and provide a financial boost to her career through his family's money. Not long after they marry, she resumes her affair with Bill Peer.



Patsy and Gerald in the early days of their relationship

## **1954**

---

Patsy wins first prize at the National Country Music Championships, held in Warrenton, Virginia, sponsored by Washington, DC Country music promoter, Connie B. Gay. She later joins Mr. Gay's radio broadcast, *Town and Country Time*.

On September 30, Patsy signs her first recording contract with Four-Star Music Sales, aka Four-Star Records, through its president, William A. McCall.

According to Ellis Nassour in *Honky Tonk Angel*, "Four-Star was basically a music publisher, but McCall signed artists, recorded them at their expense, then leased product to a major label, such as Decca. This is exactly what McCall did with Patsy's records: before the year was out, he would negotiate a Leasing and Distribution Arrangement with Decca Records through Paul Cohen, who oversaw the label's A&R (Artists and Repertoire). Decca secured control of the recording sessions and choice of producer.

Cohen would later pair Patsy with Owen Bradley, who developed the sound around Patsy's unique attributes as a singer. Bradley, who is described more below, respected Cohen's "ear" for a song. Bradley said, "he was not a musician, but he had a great sense of rhythm. I learned from him how to pick songs. There are some people who will analyze a song, but Paul didn't. He just felt them. He'd either say, 'I love it!' or 'I don't like it' -- you know, a gut reaction" ([Patsy: The Life and Times of Patsy Cline](#)).



Owen Bradley (left), Patsy Cline and Paul Cohen in the Bradley Studio in Nashville

Pioneer record producer Milt Gabler, for years A&R chief at Decca, claimed McCall “operated just this side of the law. You didn’t envy anyone who dealt with him. Just about everyone considered McCall a nuisance, yet he made good economic sense. The label distributed his product and reaped nice commissions” (*Patsy: The Life and Times of Patsy Cline*).

Songwriter Don Hecht was also interviewed by Nassour for his book. “Nashville is full of Bill McCalls,” Hecht said, “They’re hard-driving, profit- and loss-minded executives who know how to recoup their investments. No one thinks of them as suspect. Writers, some desperate for money, went to McCall. He’d, say, name a price for the publishing rights, then he’d buy the song. He didn’t twist any arms. When that song would become a hit, McCall was found guilty. He couldn’t see into the future. A lot of what he bought didn’t even make it to the bottom of the charts.”

Patsy’s contract with Four-Star was a standard American Federation of Musicians (AFM) form, specifying “a minimum of 16 (sixteen) 78 rpm record sides, or the equivalent thereof ... and additional recordings shall be made at our election. The musical compositions to be recorded shall be mutually agreed upon between you and us, and each recording shall be

subject to our approval as satisfactory.” Patsy was required to be exclusive with Four-Star for two years and had a one-year renewal option. Any recordings made would remain the property of Four-Star. Patsy’s royalty of 2.34% of the retail list price on records sold in the United States was about half the royalty paid to established stars. Session musicians would be paid within fourteen days of services and such payments, at scale, would be deducted from Patsy’s royalties—the industry norm.

“After the contract signing, McCall took Peer, Gerald, and Patsy for drinks and dinner. Years later, Patsy remarked, ‘McCall paid that night, but it ended up being on me. I paid for every goddamned thing from then on. I didn’t know how much till it was too late’” (*Patsy: The Life and Times of Patsy Cline*).

Many musicians have difficulty with their initial contracts, because at this stage in their recording career, they are naïve, the record companies are powerful, and they will capitulate because the market is so competitive and they fear not being signed at all.

The themes of resilience and fighting oppression in Tom Petty’s song “I Won’t Back Down,” though universal, have been attributed to his own struggle with a recording contract early in his career.

## **1955**

---

In the Spring, Patsy has an abortion. She wants to postpone children until her career has moved further ahead, and because she resumed her affair with Bill Peer after her marriage



to Gerald Cline, she is unsure who the father is.

On June 1, under the supervision of producer, arranger, pianist and big band leader Owen Bradley, Patsy has her first recording session in Nashville. Bradley, who was elected to the Country Music Hall of Fame in 1974, was years ahead of his rivals as a producer. He was innovative at a time when Country Music had grown stagnant.

Bradley had his own pop combo, the Owen Bradley Quintet, where his brother, Harold, also a session player, played guitar.

Farther out toward the West End of Nashville, Music Row, as it came to be known, was taking shape. Bradley was one of its masterminds, having built a studio with his brother in 1952, to which they later added an adjacent metal “Quonset Hut”, which is now part of Sony-Columbia. It was soon christened “Bradley’s Barn”. On the main floor was a studio for and in the basement, Bradley created one of the most technically advanced recording studios in the region.



Interior of Owen Bradley's Quonset Hut studio

Paul Cohen saw Patsy as a crossover star and heard in her voice a pop sound that wasn't like that of other Country female soloists. It was the quality that he wanted Bradley to develop in her songs. Bradley had his feet in both the Country Music and Pop world. His studio was in Nashville, and he worked with many Country musicians, but earlier in his

career, he had been a pianist and arranger for Kay Starr, Jo Stafford, Dinah Shore and Perry Como.

At the time Cohen introduced Patsy to Bradley, Bradley had no magic formula for Patsy's voice. Bradley noted later that even if he initially wanted to record her as Pop, it wouldn't have been accepted. Despite Cohen's insight about Patsy's voice, she was being sent to Nashville to record Country Music, and that's what Bradley did at first. Besides, Patsy would have nothing to do with the pop sound. She was steeped in her Country roots and preferred growling, yodeling, and the flashy up-tempo endings suited to her big voice. These were the devices that she was convinced set her apart from other female Country soloists. They were appropriate for in juke joints and firehalls, but Owen soon recognized the potential Cohen found in her, and took her, kicking and screaming, out of those venues. Eventually, because of her stardom and pop crossover, Patsy changed the entire perception of women in Country Music.



Owen Bradley and Patsy rehearsing at the Quonset Hut

On July 1, Patsy makes a guest appearance with Ernest Tubb on the Ralston-Purina portion of the Grand Ole Opry. She is received enthusiastically by the audience, and Tubb rushes onstage to encourage the audience's applause and induce Patsy to take another bow. Many guest spots follow.

## **1956**

---

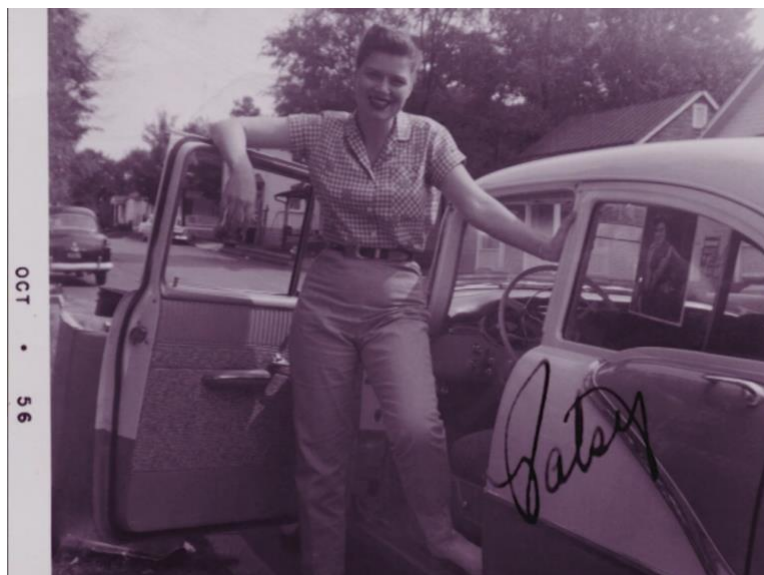
Patsy separates from Gerald Cline.

Patsy meets Charlie Dick, while singing at the Armory dance in Berryville, Virginia, about eight miles east of Winchester. Although Charlie is a known drinker, fighter and

womanizer, and Patsy is still having an affair with Bill Peer, she begins dating Charlie.



A Decca publicity photo of Patsy from 1956



A Polaroid of Patsy from October 1956

Patsy's father, Samuel Hensley, passes away at age 67 on Dec. 11. Shortly before his death, as related in *Honky Tonk Angel*, Patsy and her mother visit him in the Veteran's Hospital in



Martinsburg, West Virginia, where he is being treated for terminal lung cancer, having developed it working around coal most of his life. When Patsy tells him she has been accepted on Arthur Godfrey's Talent Scouts, her father admonishes her against going to NY because it is unsafe and far away. She reacts angrily, telling him he has no right to be concerned after being out of her life for seven years. Seeing his chastened response, she softens, asking him to be sure to tune in to the program because he has never really heard her sing. He dies before he can.

## **1957**

---

Patsy appears on the January 21 broadcast of Arthur Godfrey's Talent Scouts. The live audience responds enthusiastically to her performance of "Walkin' After Midnight", a song she never wanted to record and didn't want to perform on the show because it wasn't "Country" enough. Her choice was "A Poor Man's Roses (or a Rich Man's Gold)," a song with more of a "hillbilly" sound. Janette Davis, Godfrey's administrative right hand and a featured vocalist of the show, urges her to do "Walkin' After Midnight" because of how perfectly Patsy's voice lends itself to the song's bluesy sound. She convinces Patsy to sing it, telling her it "just might make her famous" (*Honky Tonk Angel*). It does: for the first time in the show's history, the overwhelming applause freezes the applause meters, and Patsy wins the contest before a combined radio-TV audience of 82 million people, launching her career on a national level. (See more on pp. 16-18 of the glossary.)

"Walkin' After Midnight" is released by Decca on February 11. It becomes a #2 Country Hit and a #12 Pop Hit. Despite its success, Patsy makes little money from it. Her contract with Four-Star severely limited her royalties and exacted many deductions.

Patsy and Gerald divorce on March 28.

Decca releases Patsy's first album, *Patsy Cline*, on August 5.



Charlie and Patsy opening presents on their wedding day, September 15, 1957

Patsy marries Charlie Dick on September 15 (pictured on previous page).

## 1958

Patsy gives birth to a daughter, Julie, on August 25



Newspaper article about Julie's birth

## 1959



Julie, Patsy and Charlie, 1959

Charlie, Patsy and Julie Move to Nashville

Patsy signs a management contract with Randy Hughes.



Patsy and Randy Hughes

## **1960**

---

Patsy's contract with Four-Star comes to an end, and she signs with Decca.

On November 16, in her first recording session under the new Decca contract, Patsy records "I Fall to Pieces".



A Polaroid of Charlie and Patsy, June 1960

## **1961**

Patsy gives birth to a son, Randy, on January 21.



Patsy, new baby Randy, and Julie, early Spring 1961

Decca releases "I Fall to Pieces" on January 30. The song begins a slow climb up the charts.

Patsy and Louise Seger meet in early May. Their friendship would inspire *Always ... Patsy Cline*.

On June 14, Patsy is critically injured in a car accident near her home in Madison, Tennessee. She remains hospitalized for a month. This is discussed in more detail in the glossary on pp. 16-18.

While she is in the hospital, "I Fall to Pieces" becomes Patsy's first #1 Country hit. Much has been made of how much Patsy first liked and then disliked the song. As Harlan Howard, who co-wrote the song with Hank Cochran, predicted, Patsy didn't hate "I Fall to Pieces" so much when it reached number one in the trades and on the top country radio stations. When "I Fall to Pieces" reached the Billboard pop charts top-40, Patsy proved a country solo woman could actually sell records and get them not only on the country charts but also high on the pop charts. She was acclaimed one of the nation's leading recording artists, ranked in popularity among such popular stars as Jimmy Darren, LeRoy Van Dyke, and Bobby Vee.

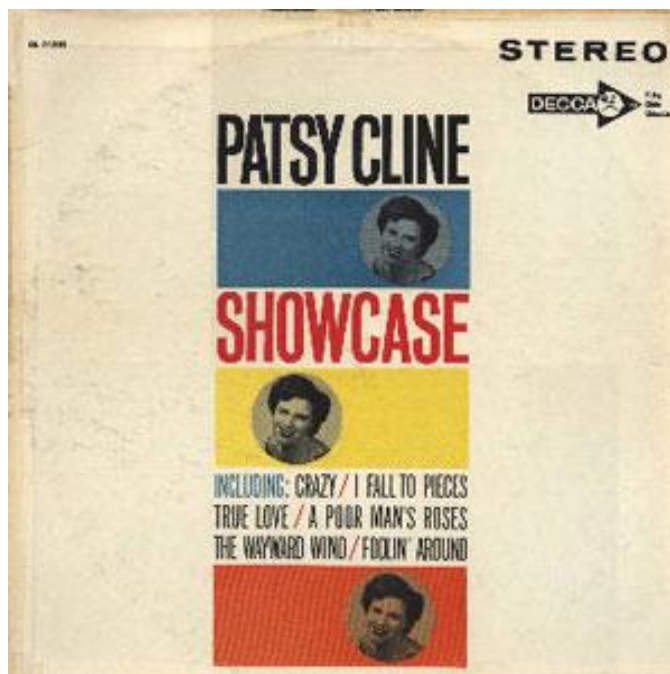
Patsy performs her first post-accident concert at the Cimarron Ballroom in Tulsa, Oklahoma on July 29.

During an eight-day period in August, Patsy records "Crazy," along with other tracks for her second Decca album.

Patsy introduces "Crazy" at the Grand Ole Opry on October 14. She receives three standing ovations.

Decca releases "Crazy" on October 16. It becomes a #2 Country hit and a #9 Pop hit.

Decca releases Patsy's second album, *Patsy Cline Showcase*, on November 27. The original album cover is shown below.



Patsy is named Favorite Female Vocalist by major industry publications, including *Billboard* and *Cashbox*.

Patsy performs at Carnegie Hall, in NYC, on November 29 as part of a Grand Ole Opry show to benefit the Musicians Aid Society.

In *Honky Tonk Angel*, Ellis Nassour interviews Bobby Sikes about how Patsy was received at Carnegie Hall. Sikes was there as a guitarist and backup singer for Marty Robbins, a popular and successful Country singer who had crossover success with pop hits like Patsy did. Sikes observed, "She just about blew the end of the building out when she sang. For Patsy, especially, life was to be enjoyed. She was vibrant, bouncy. She took life with a grain of salt and it came over in her performance. The musicians have to get most singers cooking and driving, but with Patsy it was the opposite. She cooked and drove the band. You felt like playing up a storm when she was in the studio or onstage with you. That's the way it was that night. "Nothing scared Patsy and, onstage, she was willing to try anything once. That night was a success. From looking, there was no way you could tell all those folks were hillbillies! They'd turned away hundreds and people were hanging from the rafters. They stood in their seats and filled the aisles, yelling and screaming for more."

A NYC writer interviewing Patsy was so impressed, he raved: "Patsy Cline comes over like Ava Gardner, Marilyn Monroe, and Gina Lollobrigida all rolled up in one!"



Patsy singing at Carnegie Hall, Nov. 1961

Patsy records "She's Got You" on December 17, then takes the final two weeks of the year to rest and relax.

## 1962

---

Decca releases "She's Got You" on January 10. It becomes Patsy's second #1 Country hit, spending five weeks at the top of the chart. The song also becomes a #14 pop hit as well as Patsy's first entry on the UK charts.

Other singles released during the year include "When I Get Through with You" (#10 Country, #21 Pop), "So Wrong" (#14 Country, #85 Pop) and "Heartaches" (#73 Pop).

Patsy joins "The Johnny Cash Show" to tour as the mainstay vocalist. The tour includes a performance at the Hollywood Bowl on June 15.

Patsy purchases her "dream home" on Nella Drive in Goodlettsville, Tennessee.

Decca releases Patsy's third album, *Sentimentally Yours*, on August 6.



Patsy in 1962 with Randy (left) and Julie

For the second year in a row, industry publications name Patsy Favorite Female Vocalist.

Patsy performs a 35-day engagement from November 23 to December 28 at the Mint Casino's Merri-Mint Theater in Las Vegas, Nevada. She is generously compensated and uses the money to remodel her "dream home" to her lavish and exacting specifications.



Patsy, Carl Perkins and Hilda, Las Vegas, 1962



Patsy in one of the outfits she wore for her 1962 Vegas gig



1963

A last-minute addition, Patsy performs at a benefit concert in Kansas City on March 3.

After being delayed by bad weather, Patsy, Randy Hughes, Cowboy Copas and Hawkshaw Hawkins depart for Nashville on the afternoon of March 5, with Randy piloting his Piper Comanche. Dodging the weather along the flight path, they make a refueling stop in Dyersburg, Tennessee. Departing Dyersburg at 6:07pm, the plane encounters turbulent weather and crashes near Camden, Tennessee at approximately 6:30pm. There are no survivors. More details about the crash are provided throughout the glossary.

**THE NASHVILLE TENNESSEAN** Served by America's Greatest News Service

At the Crossroads of Natural Gas and TVA Power—Telephone ALpine 5-1221

VOL. 87—No. 308 NASHVILLE, TENN., WEDNESDAY MORNING, MARCH 6, 1963 10 CENTS 30 PAGES

# OPRY STARS' PLANE HUNTED

## Whisky Price Fight Waged In Committee

By CHARLES L. FORTNEY

The fight to repeal Tennessee's whisky price-fixing law focused on the tightly-controlled House Calendar Committee yesterday, after the repeal bill made its second try, 23 to 9.

There were indications that opponents of the repeal would be backed by strong lobbying pressure from the liquor industry, were fighting a desperate rearguard action to keep the bill off the House floor until a meeting scheduled to meet Tuesday.

It takes only a majority vote in the House to repeal the whisky price-fixing law, but a two-thirds vote would be needed to amend the constitution to prevent a referendum.

**Bill To Repeal Fair Trade Law Passes Senate**

By CHARLES L. FORTNEY

The Senate passed a bill to repeal Tennessee's fair trade law yesterday, after the measure passed in the House last week.

The bill, which would allow retailers to sell goods at lower prices than the manufacturer's suggested retail price, passed by a vote of 23 to 9.

## Heavy Rains Wreck Train in Ohio

CHILLICOTHE, Ohio—Heavy rains wrecked a train here last night, derailed several cars and five cars of the train were also wrecked when they were derailed.

The train, which was carrying coal, was derailed by a washout of the tracks. The train was derailed in the high water area.

## Craft Lost On Flight To City

Cline, Hawkins, Copas Aboard; Hughes Pilot

By GERALD HEWRY

CAMDEN, Tenn.—A search was launched here last night for a single engine airplane carrying three Grand Ole Opry stars and a talent scout, after it was four hours overdue in Nashville.

The plane, a Piper Comanche, was piloted by Randy Hughes, who was flying from Dyersburg to Nashville.

The plane was last seen flying over the area near Camden, Tennessee.

## Liquor Store Bill Killed

JACK HENRY

City Council killed on third reading last night a bill authorizing the location of a retail whisky store at 2323-2325 West End Ave., after a large crowd of residents of the affected area protested its passage.

The crucial vote came after Councilman Walter Morgan filed 11:14 a.m. a motion to "reject" the whisky store bill.

## Flu Epidemic Sweeps State

Tennessee is now gripped by an influenza epidemic, Dr. H. H. MacIntosh, state public health officer, said yesterday.

MacIntosh reported that the epidemic is spreading rapidly throughout the state.

## Strikers Defy De Gaulle

PARIS (AP)—The strike in the coal mines of France was shown last per cent effective yesterday in labor's first big challenge to President Charles de Gaulle's authority.

Hundreds of thousands of workers in other industries locked the mines with symbolic, 10-minute walkouts.

## Marine Held in Rape, Robbery

By JAMES TALLEY

A 21-year-old Marine was held yesterday with armed robbery and rape of the body of a 19-year-old girl in the city of New York.

The Marine was held in New York City after being arrested by police.

## Sign of Spring

Spring flowers are in bloom in the city of Nashville, Tennessee.

The weather is improving, and the flowers are starting to bloom.

## Pickets Ask Short Pants For Horses

By MADRID WINTER

WASHINGTON—Pickets picketed in front of the White House yesterday, demanding that the government provide short pants for the horses of the White House.

The pickets claimed that the government was not providing enough short pants for the horses.

## Sunny, Mild

Nashville and Vicinity—Sunny and mild today with high temperatures in the 60s and 70s.

The weather is expected to remain sunny and mild through the week.

When she was alive, Patsy mentioned several times that when she died, she wanted her casket laid out in the living room of her beautiful new “dream” home, of which she was so proud. Her family grants her wish, as pictured below.



Patsy's coffin, laid out in the living room of her dream home

Patsy has several posthumous hits, including "Sweet Dreams (of You)," #5 Country and #44 Pop, and "Faded Love," #7 Country and #96 Pop. Decca releases Patsy's fourth album, a deluxe two-record retrospective entitled *The Patsy Cline Story*, on June 10.

For the third consecutive year, Patsy is named Favorite Female Vocalist by leading industry publications. Daughter Julie accepts the awards at the Country Music Festival ceremonies in November.

### **1964 - 1969**

Decca continues to release Patsy Cline singles, with several registering on the charts, including "He Called Me Baby" (#23 Country, 1964) and "Anytime" (#73 Country, 1968).

Decca releases Patsy's fifth and sixth albums, *A Portrait of Patsy Cline* and *That's How a Heartache Begins*. Decca's budget subsidiary, Vocalion, releases the albums *Here's Patsy Cline* and *Country Great*.

Decca releases *Patsy Cline's Greatest Hits* on March 13, 1967. The album goes on to become the biggest selling hits collection by a Country female artist.

Bill Peer dies Sept. 19, 1968, aged 48.

### **1973**

---

Patsy becomes the first female soloist elected to the Country Music Hall of Fame

### **1980**

---

*Coal Miner's Daughter*, a biographical film about Loretta Lynn based on her autobiography of the same name, is released, and gains a wide audience. Beverly D'Angelo portrays Patsy alongside Sissy Spacek as Loretta Lynn. Contrary to the movie script, Cline and Lynn never toured together, and Patsy also never owned a bus, although she had planned to buy one before her death. Stars during her time usually traveled in caravans and limousines.

The movie would go on to win several Academy Awards and nominations. Tom Rickman, its screenwriter, was nominated for Best Writing of a Screenplay Based on Material from Another Medium. Tom is the former husband of screenwriter and playwright Kate Hawley, who was commissioned by Jewel to write *Complications from a Fall* (2015), *Coming of Age* (2018), *Remains to Be Seen* (2022), and *Under Ben Bulben* (2024).

### **1984**

---

Ernest Tubb passes away on Sept. 6

### **1985**

---

HBO releases *Sweet Dreams: The Life and Times of Patsy Cline*, starring Jessica Lange in the lead role with Ed Harris as Charlie Dick and Ann Wedgeworth as Hilda Hensley. Lange was nominated for an Academy Award for her performance.

### **1988**

---

*Always ... Patsy Cline*, created and originally produced and directed by Ted Swindley, premieres in Houston, Texas at Stages Repertory Theatre, where Swindley is the founding artistic director. The story was taken and expanded from a section of Ellis Nassour's biography of Patsy, *Honky Tonk Angel*. The show has run off-Broadway in NYC, and at Nashville's Ryman Auditorium for more than a year, where it starred singer Mandy Barnett, and sold out nightly. It has performed extensively in the US, UK, Canada, and Australia ever since.

### **1991**

---

*A Closer Walk with Patsy Cline*, a musical tribute to Patsy that showcases her life and music, is released. Created by Dean Regan, it has been produced across the United States and Canada, with multiple productions by the Springer Opera House and Troupe America, Inc. It ran under the name *Patsy!* at the Grand Palace in Branson Missouri for a year, starring Gail Bliss. Other performers in the role have been Katie Deal, Julie Johnson, Devra Straker, Sara-Jeanne Hosie, Bridget Beirne and Alison MacDonald.

Dottie West, one of Patsy's closest friends, dies at 58 from injuries sustained in a car accident on Sept. 4.

### 1992

The US Postal Service creates special-issue postage stamps to honor Patsy Cline, along with other Country superstars such as Hank Williams, the Carter Family and Bob Wills.

### 1993

A Patsy Cline exhibit is featured when the Grand Ole Opry opens its doors in September in Nashville for its inaugural season. Several of her awards, stage outfits, wigs, make-up, hairbrushes, and a fully furnished replica of her dream home's music room are on display. Since 1993 is the 30th anniversary of her death, the Opry makes its Saturday night segment a tribute to Cline, Hawkins and Copas. With Charlie Dick and Julie Dick Fudge in attendance, Patsy's longtime friend, Jan Howard, sings "I Fall to Pieces," which was co-written by Howard's ex-husband, Harlan Howard. Loretta Lynn followed with "She's Got You." Later that year, Lynn, Dolly Parton, and Tammy Wynette included Cline's cover of "Lovesick Blues" on their *Honky Tonk Angels* trio album, singing along with Cline's original vocals lifted off the early multi-track tapes.

The US Post Office issues a Patsy Cline stamp on September 26 as part of their "Women in the Performing Arts" series.



### 1994

Virginia, who is Julie Dick Fudge's daughter from her first marriage to Michael Connors, and named for her grandmother, is killed in an automobile accident.

Patsy is made a member of the Texas Cowgirl Hall of Fame.

**1995**

---

Patsy is given the Lifetime Achievement Award from the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences. The Lifetime Achievement Award is presented by the Recording Academy's National Trustees to performers who, during their lifetimes, have made creative contributions of outstanding artistic significance to the field of recording.

Patsy is portrayed in *Big Dreams and Broken Hearts: The Dottie West Story*, a 1995 CBS made-for-TV movie featuring Tere Myers as Patsy and Michelle Lee as Dottie.

**1997**

---

Patsy's recording of "Crazy" is named the number one jukebox hit of all time. "I Fall to Pieces" is No. 17.

**1998**

---

Patsy is nominated to The Hollywood Walk of Fame by a dedicated fan.

Gerald Cline passes away at age 73.

Patsy's mother, Hilda Hensley, passes away at age 82.

Owen Bradley passes away at age 82.

**1999**

---

Patsy receives a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

A street is named for Patsy on the back lot of Universal Studios.

VH1 names Patsy number 11 on its 100 Greatest Women of Rock and Roll.

Patsy is honored with the Nashville Golden Voice Award in its Legend Category.

**2001**

---

"I Fall to Pieces" is listed at No. 107 on RIAA's (Recording Industry Association of America) list of Songs of the Century.

Loretta Lynn releases a sequel to her autobiography, *Coal Miner's Daughter*, entitled *Still Woman Enough*. She again dedicates a chapter to her friendship with Cline, which she calls, "Still Thinking of Patsy".

**2002**

---

CMT (Country Music Television) names Cline first on its 40 Greatest Women of Country Music, voted by members of the music industry.

**2004**

---

Louise Seger passes away at age 72. (See biography on pp. 10-14 of the glossary.)

Patsy's brother, Sam, called John by the family, passes away at age 65.

## **2005**

---

*Patsy Cline's Greatest Hits* album is certified by the RIAA as Diamond, recognizing the sale of 10 million copies.

*Patsy Cline's Greatest Hits* is listed as Longest-Charting Title by a Female Artist in the 2005 edition of the Guinness Book of World Records.

## **2007**

---

For the 40th anniversary reissue of *Patsy Cline's Greatest Hits* in 2007, Bob Ludwig remasters it and featured the original 1967 cover art.

A biopic entitled *Crazy*, about the life of Hank Garland, lead guitarist on many of Patsy's records, is released. It features Mandy Barnett of *Always ... Patsy Cline* fame from Nashville's Ryman Auditorium as Patsy.

Later in 2007, Cline's childhood home in Winchester Virginia is awarded a place on the National Register of Historic Places, with its attendant cast bronze on-site marker prominently displayed. Additionally, the house is placed on the Virginia Landmarks Register, identified by a State of Virginia Historical Marker on the street in front.

On September 8, Charlie, Julie, and all of Patsy's grandchildren and great-grandchildren, as well as other family members, attend the 20th annual gathering to celebrate her birthday at Shenandoah Memorial Gardens. Each year since her death, thousands of fans have assembled there on Labor Day weekend to honor Patsy.

## **2009**

---

Patsy's alma mater, John Handley High School, which was built in 1923, has an extensive, multimillion-dollar renovation. The Patsy Cline Theatre is dedicated to her. Winchester also built a memorial bell tower at Shenandoah Memorial Park and named two roadways after her, the Patsy Cline Memorial Highway and Patsy Cline Boulevard. Previous attitudes about Patsy, as described on pp. 5-8 of the glossary, had shifted.

## **2015**

---

Charlie Dick dies on November 8 at 81. Despite their often-rocky marriage, Charlie was devastated by Patsy's loss. He stayed in Nashville and remained a devoted father to Julie, only four years old, and Randy, only a year old, when their mother died. Dedicated to preserving Patsy's memory, he produced documentaries about her and attended fan functions. In 1965, he married singer Jamey Ryan, who signed a brief contract with Columbia Records before giving birth to a son. They divorced in the early 1970s. In the film *Sweet Dreams*, Ryan provided the vocals for one song, "Blue Christmas," a tune Patsy never actually recorded.

After his death in 2015, the family was surprised to find a treasure trove of Patsy's possessions that Charlie had lovingly preserved. They knew that Bill Miller was collecting

memorabilia for the Patsy Museum that was slated to open in 2017, so they contacted him. Much of what they found has a home in the museum today. (See the following entry.)

## **2017**

---

Marking the 85th anniversary of Patsy's birth, PBS remieres the documentary *Patsy Cline: American Masters* across all of its US affiliates beginning March 4. It aired during Women's History Month as part of the 31st season of the American Masters series. Narrated by Rosanne Cash, the film features both archival and new interviews with past and current musical professionals. It examines Patsy's impact on country, pop, and rock music, as well as her contribution to the advancement of women in the music industry.

The Patsy Cline Museum opens to the public on April 7, 2017. Dedicated entirely to Patsy's life, it is located at 119 3rd Avenue South in Nashville, Tennessee, on the second floor of The Johnny Cash Museum building. The Patsy Cline Museum houses the largest collection of Cline artifacts and memorabilia under one roof. Exhibits include original clothing and stage costumes, awards, as well as household and personal items from Cline's Nashville-area "dream home." Patsy's daughter, Julie Fudge (nee Dick), worked closely with the exhibit's organizers, drawing from her personal collection of artifacts that had been previously locked away for more than 50 years.

## **2018**

---

An updated version of *Always ... Patsy Cline*, renamed *Crazy*, opens at the Willow Leaves of Hope, in Hope, Indiana, on August 4. The company, which performed *Always* in 2016, featured a slightly different collection of 25 to 30 songs.

## **2019**

---



*Patsy and Loretta*, a film about Patsy's friendship with Loretta Lynn, is released on Lifetime on October 19, 2019. Patsy's daughter, Julie Fudge, was involved with the film.

The film was nominated for Best Movie at the 10th Critics' Choice Television Awards. Megan Hilty, who played Patsy, and Jessie Mueller, who played Loretta, were each nominated for Best Actress in a TV Movie.

## 2021

---

Patsy's "dream home" in Goodlettsville, a suburb Nashville, goes on sale. Still retaining much of the décor from when she lived there, it sells for \$540,000 by the year's end.

## 2023

---

Willie Nelson releases his autobiography, *Energy Follows Thought: The Stories Behind My Songs* on October 30, 2023. He writes about his song, "Crazy," which Patsy recorded in 1961. The song, which became her signature, catalyzed his career as a songwriter. "Because Patsy liked it, I was poor no longer," he writes in the book. "This particular 'Crazy' convinced me, at a time when I wasn't a hundred percent sure of my writing talent, that I'd be crazy to stop writing".

Four pages of the glossary, pp. 41-44, are devoted to the story of the song. An interesting fact: contrary to what Nelson said, Patsy didn't like the song and had to be convinced to record it, which she ended up doing in only one take.

## 2024

---

*Rolling Stone* places "Crazy" in position 195 in its 500 best songs of all time. It held the same position in 2021 and was number 85 in 2004.



# 195

## Patsy Cline, 'Crazy'

1961

WRITER(S): WILLIE NELSON

▶ | [PLAY THE FULL SONG](#)

Powered by MUSIC

Cline wasn't impressed when her husband, Charlie Dick, brought home a demo by a 28-year-old rookie Nashville songwriter named Willie Nelson. Told that the song's title was "Crazy," she responded, "It sure is." But producer Owen Bradley helped Cline make the song her own with a lush arrangement and understated backing vocals from gospel quartet the Jordanaires. "Crazy" would, years later, help set the stage for a sophisticated new phase of the C&W sound known as "countrypolitan," although Cline herself wouldn't be around to shape it: She died in a plane crash less than two years later.

---