



Cradle of the Stars

the story of the
Louisiana Hayride

FACTS ABOUT HANK WILLIAMS, JR.

- GIVEN NAME:** Randall Hank Williams, Jr.
- BIRTHDATE/PLACE:** May 26, 1949 in Shreveport, Louisiana
- FATHER:** Hank Williams, the first and the most enduring of country music's superstars who was responsible for the national popularization of country music in the late 1940s. Hank, Sr. was a prolific songwriter; decades after his untimely death on New Year's Day, 1953, his catalog of classic songs, including "Hey Good Lookin'," "I'm So Lonesome I Could Cry," "Your Cheatin' Heart" and others, remains extremely popular.
- MOTHER:** Audrey Sheppard Williams, a country singer in her own right. Audrey is credited with much of the responsibility of getting Hank, Sr. to Nashville.
- MAJOR INFLUENCES:** Hank Williams' music was played constantly at home and Hank, Jr. learned it all at an early age. But a number of other famous musicians, including Jerry Lee Lewis, Ray Charles, Brenda Lee and Johnny Cash, spent a lot of time at the Williams' home. Other personal favorites were Elvis Presley and Chubby Checker.
- FIRST PERFORMANCE:** Hank, Jr.'s first professional performance was at the age of eight in Swainsboro, Georgia. "I walked out on that stage with my hands stuffed into the pockets of my little black suit and I sang 'Lovesick Blues' in my little eight-year-old voice. The audience loved it. They went crazy, shouting about 'Hank's little boy.'" Hank, Jr. also appeared on the "Louisiana Hayride" at an early age.

Hank Williams, Jr. has received numerous awards and appeared in more than twenty television shows. On the road, the Hank Williams, Jr. show comprises some twenty-five persons (performers and crew). Singer/songwriter Merle Kilgore opens all Hank Williams, Jr.'s shows.

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