

WE'RE TURNING 35

It's hard to believe, but in 2021, Royal Records celebrates 35 years!!! It's been a wild ride. Our very first session was in 1986. We were both recording on separate labels – Jerry was on Rhythm and I was on Ranch House. We were both happy and very grateful to be on these labels, but as we became closer friends, we wanted to branch out on our own.

Both Wade Driver (owner of Rhythm Records) and Darryl McMillan (owner of Ranch House Records) were both extremely gracious and helpful in getting us started. Elmer Sheffield (ESP Recordings) was also integral in our beginnings.

In June of 1986 we went to Nashville with a pocketful of tunes and absolutely no idea of what we were doing. Kevin McManus had engineered several other square dance labels over the years, so he was able to work around the two novices he had in his studio.

That session produced some of our biggest hits – Beautiful Brown Eyes, Morning Sky, and the patter record Josh/Ricky. Watching the musicians and Kevin do their magic in the studio was absolutely amazing. And now, 35 years later, it is still as amazing!

Jerry and I have been very fortunate to have some of world's best musicians recording music for Royal Records. These Nashville "pickers" are the cream of the crop!!!

So, to acknowledge our anniversary, Jerry and I would like to introduce you to the amazing artists that we are honored to have making and producing our music.

We have used various musicians over the years. We have several, however, that have been with us since our very first session. Our current group of pros are:

Kevin McManus has been our engineer since our first session. He is known to the world of recording as an expert engineer and producer. His list of Southern Gospel and Country Music hits is significant. He also has an outstanding reputation for his expertise in producing award winning videos. Among the many awards bestowed on Kevin are Video of the Year 1987, a 1994 Emmy Award, 1997 Producer of the Year, 1997 Engineer of the Year, 1998 Engineer of the Year, 2000 Engineer of the Year, 2001 Engineer of the Year, and 2002 Engineer of the Year Award!! Kevin has engineered or produced numerous country music projects for artists such as Ray Price, Floyd Cramer, Clinton Gregory, Gene Watson, Billy Walker, Faron Young, Lorrie Morgan, Western Flyer and numerous others. He has also produced Gospel Music projects for most of today's popular artists including, The Crabb Family, The McGruders, The Lesters, Gold City, The Whisnants and the legendary Cathedrals, Hinsons and The Kingsmen...to name only a few! Kevin's experience in live production dates back to 1974 when during his days with the Marshall Tucker Band he mixed FOH in venues such as Madison Square Gardens, Boston Garden, The Louisiana Super Dome, The Houston Astrodome, Denver's Mile High Stadium, Atlanta's Fulton County Stadium, Texas Stadium in Irving, TX, The Hollywood Bowl and others.

David Smith has been the bass player on every Royal Records Nashville session since 1987. He has recorded with Alabama, George Jones, and Loretta Lynn – just to name a few. David is our session leader – handling all of the arrangements and charting for the band.

Jenee Fleenor plays the fiddle, mandolin and acoustic guitar. In 2019, she became the first woman named the Country Music Association's Musician of the Year and the first fiddle player to win the award in over 20 years. She has performed with artists including Jon Pardi, Steven Tyler, Terri Clark, Martina

McBride, Cody Johnson, and Rascal Flatts. She has written songs for many of the same musicians, as well as Dolly Parton, Gretchen Wilson, Kathy Mattea. She currently tours with Blake Sheldon and is a **featured musician on NBC's *The Voice***.

Bruce Wadkins was on our very first session, and has been on every one since. Bruce is our acoustic guitar and banjo player. He is a Grammy award winning artist and has been a session player in Nashville for over 35 years. He has recorded with Alan Jackson, Alabama, George Jones and many others.

Doug Jernigan, like Bruce Wadkins, was in our very first session, and has been on every one since then. Bruce was inducted into the International Steel Guitar Hall of Fame in 1994. Today, Doug tours as a concert performer, records with a host of Country Music artists and has plays on the Opry

Mike Schrimpf has been our harp (harmonica) player since 2012. Mike has worked with some of the most popular recording artists, including George Jones, Loretta Lynn, Conway Twitty, and Steve Mariner.. In addition to being a professional musician, Mike is also a producer, arranger, songwriter, and recording engineer

Rodger Morris, is our piano player, and like Bruce and Doug, has been on every Royal session since the beginning. Rodger, too, has recorded with many of country music's most popular artists. He engineered, recorded and produced one of Royal's most popular patter tunes – Kayla Raye.

Eddy Anderson has been our drummer since 2016. He has played on numerous records for artists such as: Merle Haggard, Waylon Jennings, B.J. Thomas, Dottie West, Earl Scruggs, Dolly Parton, Kenny Rogers, Ronnie McDowell, and Joe Tex. He's toured with several artists throughout the years, including: Dolly Parton, Ricky Van Shelton, and Patty Loveless.

Kelly Back, on lead guitar, is the newest addition to our band. Kelly is highly regarded in the Gospel Music field. He has recorded with The Gaither Vocal Band, The Hoppers, Mark Lowry, and many others. In addition, he has recorded with various country artists – including The Oak Ridge Boys, T.G. Shepherd, and T. Graham brown.

Thanks to all of you for giving us 35 years of fun and for allowing Jerry and I to continue to produce, what we think is the best music in the business.

Take Care, and Stay Safe,

Tony Oxendine and Jerry Story