

LIFE  
AND  
TIMES  
OF

# ROCK 'N' ROLL

THE PLAIN DEALER

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## A CELEBRATION

Do you remember the first time you listened to rock 'n' roll? Maybe you attended Alan Freed's Moondog Coronation Ball in March 1952, or watched the Beatles perform at Public Hall in September 1964.

The first rock 'n' roll record I heard – and the first record I bought – was the Beatles' "Please Please Me" in 1963. I still have it – and everything else the Beatles recorded. The grooves may be worn down, but my feelings for the music are as strong as ever.

Rock 'n' roll defines each generation it touches. With the Concert for Bangladesh in 1971, rock stars showed they not only cared about making music but were concerned about world problems, too.

Some say rock almost died in the '80s only to be saved by MTV.

And in the '90s, the immensely popular Lollapalooza Festival is the summer concert ticket.

Six years after the announcement that there would be a Rock and Roll Hall of Fame – and that it would be in Cleveland – we're finally going to see a groundbreaking this week. It will be several more years before the rock hall opens, but in the meantime, celebrate with us The Life and Times of Rock 'n' Roll.

**CHERYL KUSHNER**, *Entertainment Editor*

# Rock steady

## *How Cleveland got the hall*

A CITYWIDE PEP rally that lasted almost a year.

That was the mood and manner by which Cleveland politicians, commerce leaders, media and music fans secured the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum.

Whispers of a rock hall began in early 1985. By July, a contingent of business leaders flew to New York to meet with Atlantic records chairman Ahmet Ertegun and other foundation members.

The aim was to convince the New Yorkers that Cleveland had the accessibility, enthusiasm and claim to rock fame the foundation was looking for.

CLEVELAND WAS accessible. So campaigners focused energies on proving enthusiasm and the city's longstanding claim as the "home of rock 'n' roll." By August, performers Cyndi Lauper, Hall and Oates, Pat Benatar and the Everly Brothers had endorsed Cleveland as the site, and a media-driven petition campaign was under way.

In October, Ertegun and others chartered a \$14 million jet and spent a day as guests of then-Mayor George V. Voinovich and civic leaders.

Rumors flew for the next few months. A few had Cleveland losing to San Francisco, while others put the city on the short list.

USA Today had taken a strong interest in the site selection, and its coverage included a telephone poll in which callers logged 110,315 votes for Cleveland. That was 103,047 over runner-up Memphis, and other cities lagged far behind. Cleveland also garnered 660,000 petition signatures, and while neither the poll nor the petitions were official decision makers, they were proof of the city's enthusiasm.

So were the three records cut especially for the rock hall, including one by former Raspberry Eric Carmen and his lawyer brother, Fred, called "The Rock Stops Here."

And so was the March 21, 1986, birthday bash, a Friday night citywide party celebrating the 34 years that had passed since the first rock concert, Alan Freed's Moondog Coronation Ball.

It also celebrated an event that would not occur until May 5, when Voinovich, former U.S. Rep. Mary Rose O'Leary and then-Gov. Richard F. Celeste flew to New York for the announcement that Cleveland had been selected.

"Cleveland does rock, that I can guarantee," Ertegun said.

# Rockin' around the clock



Alan Freed

**1945** Bluesman **Arthur (Big Boy) Crudup**, sometimes called the father of rock 'n' roll, releases "Rock Me Mama."

**1952** Cleveland deejay **Alan Freed** and local record retailer **Leo Mintz** reportedly coin the term "rock 'n' roll" to describe the new music — a mixture of blues and R&B — that Freed is playing on his WJW radio show. Freed hosts the first rock 'n' roll concert, "The Moondog Coronation Ball," on March 21 at the Cleveland Arena.

**1953** **Bill Haley & His Comets** release "Crazy Man Crazy," the first rock record to make the Billboard pop charts. Bluesmen **Muddy Waters** and **Howlin' Wolf**, who will later influence British rock and blues acts like the **Rolling Stones** and **Eric Clapton** and **Cream**, release their first major label albums. **Willie Mae Thornton** scores an R&B hit with "Hound Dog."



Bill Haley, Elvis Presley

**1954** **Bill Haley & His Comets** record "(We're Gonna) Rock Around the Clock." It becomes a national hit in 1955, after being featured in the film, "The Blackboard Jungle." **Elvis Presley** cuts his first demos at **Sam Phillips'** Sun Records in Memphis. One of the songs, **Arthur (Big Boy) Crudup's** "That's All Right (Mama)," becomes his first hit single.

**1955** **Chuck Berry** becomes a national star with the hit single, "Maybellene." RCA Records pays **Sam Phillips** \$35,000 for **Elvis Presley's** recording contract.

**1956** Rock 'n' roll becomes a national cultural phenomenon as the cool, hip-shaking rebel **Elvis Presley** becomes the idol of millions of American teens. Presley scores five No. 1 hits and puts another 12 singles in the pop charts. He makes his television debut on the **Dorsey Brothers'** "Stage Show" and stars in his first hit movie, "Love Me Tender." As Presley takes the country by storm, black singing groups such as the **Cletones**, **Frankie Lymon & The Teenagers**, **The Five Satins** and others lead the doo-wop revolution with harmonious hits such as "Why Do Fools Fall in Love?" and "Little Girl of Mine."

**1957** The Cavern Club, future home to the **Beatles**, opens in Liverpool, England. **John Lennon** and **Paul McCartney** meet at a



John Lennon, Ringo Starr

church picnic. **Dick Clark's** "American Bandstand" debuts on ABC. **Buddy Holly** and **The Crickets** release their debut single "That'll Be the Day."

**1958** **Elvis Presley** is inducted into the U.S. Army, marking the end of the early rock era. **The Quarrymen** featuring **John Lennon**, **Paul McCartney** and **George Harrison** begin playing gigs around Liverpool. The first Grammy award for record of the year is awarded to "Volare," sung by **Domenic Modugno**, beginning a long tradition of the Grammys ignoring rock music.

**1959** **Buddy Holly**, **Ritchie Valens** and **J.P. (Big Bopper) Richardson** die in a plane crash while en route to a concert in Fargo, N.D.

**1960** A bad year for rock, as early pioneers are replaced on the record charts by homogenized groups and clean-cut teen idols. Using the money he made from writing the hit single "Money" for **Barrett Strong**, Detroit native **Berry Gordy Jr.** founds the Tamla label, precursor of Motown, in Detroit.

**1961** The **Beatles** make their first appearance at the Cavern Club. **Bob Dylan** appears for the first time in New York, at Gerde's Folk City in Greenwich Village.

**1962** **Mick Jagger** and **Keith Richards** join a band called **Alexis Korner's Blues Incorporated**. The drummer is **Charlie Watts**. A few months later, they form the **Rolling Stones** with **Brian Jones** and **Bill Wyman**. **Ringo Starr** replaces **Pete Best** as drummer for the **Beatles**. The **Beach Boys** debut with "Surfin'" and "Surfin' Safari."

**1963** The **Beatles** release their first record in the United States, "Please Please Me."

**1964** The Year of the **Beatles** in the United States. "Meet the Beatles!" is released in United States and the group makes its first trip to America in February, prompting a mob scene at New York's Kennedy International Airport and kicking off Beatlemania.

**1965** The British Invasion, led by the **Beatles**, **Rolling Stones**, **Yardbirds** and **The Who**, begins. **Bob Dylan** makes his first electric

album, "Bringing It All Back Home," and is booted from the stage during the Newport Folk Festival for playing with electric instrumentation. **Simon and Garfunkel** debut with "Wednesday Morning, 3 A.M."

**1966** The **Beatles** perform their final concert tour in the United States. **Jimi Hendrix and the Experience** record their first single, "Hey Joe" in England.

**1967** The **Beatles** classic work, "Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band" is released. The Monterey Pop Festival featuring **Janis Joplin, Jimi Hendrix, The Who** and **Otis Redding** is the world's first major rock festival. The first issue of Rolling Stone magazine is published. **Ginger Baker, Jack Bruce** and **Eric Clapton** form **Cream**.

**1968** The Summer of Love in San Francisco. **Led Zeppelin** is formed by **Jimmy Page, Robert Plant, John Paul Jones** and **John Bonham**. "Hair," the first rock musical, opens on Broadway.

**1969** The **Beatles** give their final concert on the roof of Apple Studios in London. The Woodstock rock festival is held Aug. 17, 1969, in upstate New York. A spectator is killed by Hell's Angels security guards at a **Rolling Stones** concert at Altamont Raceway.

**1970** **Elton John** debuts in United States with "Border Song." **James Taylor** releases his first single to reach the top 10, "Fire and Rain." The **Beatles** break up. **Jimi Hendrix** and **Janis Joplin** die of drug overdoses.

**1971** **Michael Jackson** has his first solo hit after leaving the **Jackson 5**, "Got to Be There." The Concert for Bangladesh featuring **George Harrison, Eric Clapton, Ringo Starr** and others is held at Madison Square Garden to raise money for starving people in East Pakistan. **Simon and Garfunkel** disband.

**1972** **Bruce Springsteen** signs with Columbia Records. The **Eagles** featuring **Glenn Frey, Don Henley, Randy Meisner** and **Bernie Leadon** release their debut single "Take it Easy." Other future '70s superstars with debut albums include **Steely Dan, the Doobie Brothers, Loggins and Messina, Foghat, Styx** and **ZZ Top**.

**1973** **Pink Floyd** releases "Dark Side of the Moon," which will stay on the Billboard album charts for an unprecedented 741 weeks (14 years). Country rock becomes popular thanks to success of acts such as the **Allman Brothers** and **Lynyrd Skynyrd**.

**1974** The **Ramones**, one of the earliest punk bands, begins playing in New York City. **Ron Wood** joins the **Rolling Stones**, replacing **Mick Taylor**.

**1975** **Bruce Springsteen** releases "Born to Run," and is hailed on the cover of both Time and Newsweek magazines as the future of rock 'n' roll. The first of the mainstream disco singles hits the Top 10, including the **Bee Gees'** "Jive Talkin'." **Donna Summer** releases "Love to Love You Baby."

**1976** The pioneering punk band, the **Sex Pistols**, forms in England. New York's punk underground begins to thrive with groups such as **Blondie** and the **Ramones** playing regular gigs at clubs like CBGB.

**1977** **Fleetwood Mac's** "Rumors" album is released, becoming the best-selling album by a rock group. The **Clash** form in England. **Elvis Presley** makes his last concert appearance at Market Square Arena in Indianapolis. He dies Aug. 16 of a drug overdose at his Graceland mansion in Memphis. He is 42. The movie "Saturday Night Fever," starring **John Travolta**, kicks off the disco craze.

**1978** The **Sex Pistols** tour America for the first and last time. By the end of the year the group will have disbanded and bassist **Sid Vicious** will be arrested in New York City and charged with the stabbing death of his girlfriend. The **Cars** debut with "I Can't Hold On." Journey, the epitome of '80s corporate rock, debuts with "Wheel in the Sky." **Van Halen** releases its first album.

**1979** The **Sugar Hill Gang** releases the first mainstream rap hit, "Rapper's Delight," touching off a musical revolution. Eleven fans are trampled to death at a **Who** concert in Cincinnati.



The tragedy leads to the banning of festival, or first-come-first-served seating at rock concerts.

**1980** **Led Zeppelin** disbands after the death of drummer **John Bonham**. Former Beatle **John Lennon** is shot to death on Dec. 8 by lunatic fan, **Mark David Chapman**, outside Dakota apartments in New York.

**1981** MTV goes on the air Aug. 1, with the video "Video Killed the Radio Star" by the **Buggles**. A revolution begins. **Simon and Garfunkel** reunite for a concert in Central Park.

**1982** **Sony** and **Philips** invent the compact disc. The days of the LP, or long-playing album, are numbered. The **Eagles** break up. The **Who** announce their farewell tour. **Bryan Adams, Duran Duran** and former **Generation X** vocalist **Billy Idol** release their first albums.

**1983** **Run-DMC** becomes the first rap group to sell more than 500,000 albums with its self-titled debut. **Michael Jackson** debuts his moonwalk dance at a legendary televised performance at Motown's 25th anniversary show. It is the first pub-

lic performance of "Billie Jean," the first single off "Thriller," which goes on to sell 37 million albums worldwide.

**1984** Rocker **Bob Geldof** organizes Band Aid, a supergroup project to benefit Ethiopian famine victims. The group, featuring the likes of **David Bowie, Phil Collins, Paul McCartney** and **Sting**, records "Do They Know Its Christmas?" The first of the big benefit records.

**1985** The "We Are The World" benefit single featuring 43 major stars, including **Bruce Springsteen, Bob Dylan, Michael Jackson** and **Billy Joel**, is recorded in Los Angeles to fight famine in Africa. Springsteen begins his "Born in the U.S.A." tour. The Live Aid benefit concert is held concurrently at JFK Stadium in Philadelphia and Wembley Stadium in London. Organized by **Bob Geldof**, the 16-hour rock festival features more than 40 bands and raises \$40 million for African famine relief.

**1986** Atlantic Records founder **Ahmet Ertegun** announces that Cleveland has been chosen as site of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum. The first artists are inducted into the Rock Hall. They include **Chuck Berry, James Brown, Ray Charles, Sam Cooke, Fats Domino, the Everly Brothers, Buddy Holly, Jerry Lee Lewis, Little Richard** and **Elvis Presley**.

**1987** **Run-DMC's** "Raising Hell" becomes the first rap album to sell more than 3 million copies.

**1988** The release of **Eric Clapton's** boxed sets "Crossroads" touches off the CD boxed set craze. The Amnesty International tour featuring **Bruce Springsteen, Sting, Peter Gabriel, Tracy Chapman** and others kicks off in London. Soul singer **James Brown** is sent to prison for trying to run down a police officer.

**1990** The rap group **Public Enemy** releases "Fear of a Black Planet," solidifying its position as the leader of the emerging hard-core, "Message" rap movement. A Florida record retailer is indicted on obscenity charges for selling a record by rappers **2 Live Crew**. This touches off a national movement to ban the group's album, "As Nasty as They Wanna Be." The members of **Milli Vanilli** admit they did not sing on their Grammy-winning album "Girl You Know It's True."

**1991** Country singer **Garth Brooks** begins his long climb to superstardom with release of "Ropin' the Wind," his second album. The first Lollapalooza alternative music festival is organized by **Jane's Addiction** frontman **Perry Farrell**.

**1992** Grunge rockers **Nirvana** and **Pearl Jam** emerge from Seattle to national superstardom. Their success sparks record company and radio interest in so-called alternative rock. Commercial success of pop rap groups such as **Arrested Development**, with their positive messages and more melodic musical approach, might spell the death knell of the "gangsta" rap practiced by groups such as **Ice Cube** and **NWA**.

# Celebrating the inductees

## NON-PERFORMERS

◆ **ALAN FREED** The Cleveland deejay is sometimes credited with giving rock 'n' roll its name. He hosted the first rock concert, the Moondog Coronation Ball, in Cleveland in March of 1952. He became a target of the payola investigation of the early 1960s, was convicted of commercial bribery and died a broken man in 1965.

◆ **SAM PHILLIPS** The founder of Sun Studios in Memphis (considered by many to be the birthplace of the rock 'n' roll sound) recorded many of the influential stars of the early rock era, including Elvis Presley, Jerry Lee Lewis and Roy Orbison.

## EARLY INFLUENCES

◆ **JOHN HAMMOND** Beginning in the 1930s, the legendary producer and talent scout for Columbia Records discovered and recorded some of the greatest talents of 20th-century pop, rock and jazz, including Billie Holiday, Count Basie, Aretha Franklin, Bob Dylan and Bruce Springsteen.

◆ **ROBERT JOHNSON** Legend has it that Johnson sold his soul to the devil to become the greatest bluesman of all time. If that's true, the devil kept his part of the bargain. Johnson was the first and best of the Delta Bluesmen, writing such standards as "Dust My Broom" and "Crossroads."

◆ **JIMMIE RODGERS** The father of modern country music, Rodgers was among the first performers to mix rural blues and traditional folk and mountain music. His 1927 single "Blue Yodel" was the first million-selling country single.

◆ **JIMMY YANCEY** Boogie-woogie piano innovator Yancey became an international star before World War I, then disappeared from music for years, supporting himself as a groundskeeper at Chicago's Comiskey Park. He was rediscovered during the boogie-woogie craze of the '30s and '40s.

## ARTISTS

◆ **CHUCK BERRY** From his famous duck walk to his signature guitar lick, Chuck Berry was the archetypal 1950s rock 'n' roller. He influenced everyone who came after him and many of his songs have become rock standards: "Maybellene," "Roll Over Beethoven," "Johnny B. Goode." He studied hairdressing and cosmetology in night-school and worked the assembly line at a General Motors Fisher Body Plant before becoming a performer.

◆ **JAMES BROWN** Known as the Godfather of Soul and Soul Brother No. 1, Brown revolutionized popular music in the 1960s by cooking up an original blend of gospel-influenced dance and funk in tunes like "Please Please Please," "Papa's Got A Brand New Bag" and "It's A Man's, Man's, Man's World." His live perfor-

mances were legendary, so electric and energetic that he reportedly sweated off seven pounds during each show.

◆ **RAY CHARLES** The younger generation may know him only for his Pepsi commercials, but Ray Charles Robinson will go down in pop history as the man who invented soul music. He's also a master of jazz, blues, pop, rock and country, having recorded albums in nearly every genre during his 50-year musical career. He went blind at age 6 after contracting glaucoma.

◆ **SAM COOKE** One of the great soul singers of the '50s and '60s, Cooke started out with the popular gospel group the Soul Stirrers but was booted out for recording a solo pop song, "Lovable" in 1956. The following year he scored a No. 1 hit with "You Send Me." His other hits included "Chain Gang," "Twistin' the Night Away" and "Bring It On Home to Me." He was shot to death in 1964 in a Los Angeles motel room by a woman who claimed he had attacked her.

◆ **FATS DOMINO** A disciple of New Orleans piano master Professor Longhair, Domino introduced America to the Big Easy rock sound with hits like "Ain't That A Shame," "Blueberry Hill" and "I'm Walkin'." Of all the '50s rock pioneers, only Elvis Presley has sold more records.

◆ **THE EVERLY BROTHERS** One of the first acts to mix country harmonies with rock rhythms, Don and Phil Everly were one of the top pop duets in the world from 1957 to 1962, with a string of hits that included "Bye Bye Love," "Wake Up Little Susie," "All I Have to Do Is Dream" and "Bird Dog." They faded into a nostalgia act after that, breaking up on stage in 1973 in a bitter blowup at the John Wayne Theater in Hollywood. They later reconciled and performed several reunion concerts.

◆ **BUDDY HOLLY** In the two short years he recorded rock music, Buddy Holly left a monumental legacy. His catalog of hits is among the most impressive in rock, including such standards as "That'll Be the Day," "Rave On" and "Peggy Sue." What's more, his unique vocal style, innovative recording techniques and two-guitar arrangements influenced an entire generation of rockers. He died at the age of 21 in a Feb. 3, 1959, plane crash that also took the lives of Ritchie Valens and the Big Bopper.

◆ **JERRY LEE LEWIS** The piano-playing Lewis blazed a trail in the 1950s with hard-edged, slamming rock hits like "Great Balls of Fire," "Whole Lotta Shakin'" and "High School Confidential." But his career burned out almost before it started after he married his 13-year-old cousin in 1957; the ensuing scandal caused him to be blackballed in the industry.

◆ **ELVIS PRESLEY** The King of rock 'n' roll, Presley brought rock to the masses in the 1950s by crossing the color line in popular music. He was a white Southerner who mixed the blues, country and gospel in a way that summed up the rebellious spirit of rock 'n' roll. His cool, hip-shaking stage act bristled with danger and sexuality and was a harbinger of cultural changes. From 1956, when he became a national star, until 1958, when he was inducted into the U.S. Army, he strung together an unprecedented string of No. 1 hits, including "Hound Dog," "Heartbreak Hotel," "Don't Be Cruel" and "Love Me Tender." He continued to be successful in music and movies in the '60s and '70s, but was overtaken creatively by the juggernaut he helped create. He died on Aug. 16, 1977, at his Graceland Mansion in Memphis, of complications from drug abuse.

◆ **LITTLE RICHARD** Rock's archetypal piano man made his mark with rollicking, wild, shouting rockers like "Tutti Frutti," "Long Tall Sally" and "Lucille." He quit the music business in 1957 at the height of his fame, claiming a religious conversion, but returned to recording and touring in the 1960s.

## NON-PERFORMERS

◆ **LEONARD CHESSE** Co-founder of Chicago's famed Chess Records, which recorded many of the most important and influential blues, rock and R&B artists of the 1950s.

◆ **AHMET ERTEGUN** The co-founder of Atlantic Records helped lead the R&B revolution of the 1950s with artists like Ray Charles and Ruth Brown, then moved into soul in the 1960s with the likes of Aretha Franklin and Otis Redding.

◆ **JEROME LEIBER AND MICHAEL STOLLER** One of pop's great songwriting partnerships ("Hound Dog," "Love Me Tender" and "On Broadway"), Leiber and Stoller were also rock's first independent studio team, producing hits for the Coasters, the Drifters, Ruth Brown, Joe Turner and LaVern Baker.

◆ **JERRY WEXLER** One of the great producers of the 1950s and '60s, Wexler introduced Southern soul to the mass of America through his work with Aretha Franklin and Wilson Pickett in Memphis and Muscle Shoals during the 1960s.

## EARLY INFLUENCES

◆ **LOUIS JORDAN** Jordan's great jump band toured and recorded extensively in the '40s and '50s, churning out hits like "Caldonia," "Choo Choo Ch' boogie" and "Ain't Nobody Here But Us Chickens" that greatly influenced early rock and R&B acts.

◆ **T-BONE WALKER** It's difficult to imagine what electric guitar rock would be like without Aaron Thibaux Walker. The first bluesman to experiment with the electric guitar in the 1940s, his style was a major influence on the blues and rock guitarists that followed him, including B. B. King, Buddy Guy and Chuck Berry.

◆ **HANK WILLIAMS** If Jimmie Rodgers is the father of country music, then the immortal Hank Williams is the man who brought it to the masses. He called his style of singing "moanin' the blues," and his bluesy country records ("Cold Cold Heart," "Hey Good Lookin'") were a major influence on the country, pop and rock singers that followed him.

## ARTISTS

◆ **THE COASTERS** Carl Gardner, Billy Guy, Will (Dub) Jones, Cornell Gunther. One of the great doo-wop groups of the late 1950s, the Coasters' comic style and association with the songwriting team of Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller resulted in such chart hits as "Yakety Yak," and "Charlie Brown."

# 1986



Chuck Berry

# 1987



Aretha Franklin