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Fall Edition

The Death of 'Real' Country Music

by Grant Heywood

I quietly remembered my father, Earl Heywood, who passed away 6 years ago in September. Although he lived a long life, I couldn't help but think of the lives of country music artists whose careers were cut short by an early death or tragedy. Rock & roll has had its' fair share of tragic deaths, but country music has been around a lot longer and has left its' own trail of tears not to be forgotten.

Hank Williams was one of the first country stars to meet his maker. He died from an apparent heart attack in the backseat of his Cadillac while being driven to a gig in Jan. 1, 1953. A heavy drinker, Hank was only 29 years old. While country music was going strong in the 1950's, a rock & roll pioneer named Buddy Holly, from Lubbock Texas died in a plane crash along with Richie Valens & 'The Big Bopper' on Feb. 3, 1959, minutes after take-off from Clear Lake, Iowa while enroute to Fargo, North Dakota. Holly was only 22. Waylon Jennings, who would also go on to become a country music icon, gave up his seat on the plane to 'The Big Bopper'. Holly joked to Jennings that he hoped the bus he would have to ride on to the next gig would freeze up, and Jennings guipped he wished the plane would crash, something that would haunt him for the rest of his life.

Johnny Horton ("Battle Of New Orleans") was killed in a car crash by a drunk driver on the night of Nov. 5, 1960 at the age of 35. Horton's wife at the time of his death was Billie Jean Jones. Strangely enough, she was the widow of legend Hank Williams. Horton was discovered by a Louisiana DJ named Jim Reeves. Jim became the

famous 'Gentleman Jim' Reeves ("He'll Have To Go") who got his break when he was asked to fill-in for another musician who'd failed to show up for a show: ... none other than Hank Williams.

In 1964 Jim Reeves was flying his plane to Nashville and became disoriented when he flew into a thunderstorm and crashed near Brentwood, TN. Jim Reeves was 39 years old. Reeves flying instructor was the same man who taught Randy Hughes to fly. A year before Reeves' death, Randy Hughes was the pilot of Patsy Cline's plane when it crashed, also in TN. Patsy Cline ("Crazy", "I Fall To Pieces") was a country music star who had pop and country hits. She was feeling apprehensive weeks before she died, along with Cowboy Copas and Hawkshaw Hawkins, in a plane crash while flying to Nashville in 1963. Cline was only 30 years old. While driving to Patsy Cline's funeral,

country singer Jack Anglin, (country duo Johnny & Jack) was killed in a car accident.

Two years before Patsv Cline died, she was involved in a serious car crash, and fellow singer Dottie West came upon the scene. When she arrived. West glass picked out of Patsy









Cline's hair and heard her insist that the driver of the other car be treated by paramedics first. Years later, 1991 to be exact, Dottie was killed in a car crash while heading to appear on the Grand Ole Opry. Supposedly, it was reported that she insisted that the driver be treated first, which may have contributed to her death.

It was 1989 when we lost Keith Whitley ("Don't Close Your Eyes") due to a life of alcoholism. Whitley had been in a couple of car accidents early in his life, one time driving his car off a cliff into a frozen river, and walking away with just a broken collar bone. Whitely was only 34 when he died. From the young to the old, in 1992 the legendary Roy Acuff died at the age of 89. The early 90's also took Conway Twitty ("It's Only Make Believe") which by the way was written between sets by Conway and his drummer while performing in Hamilton, Ont. Harold Jenkins, (his real name) was not mar-

Continued on Page 3





Some of our famous country stars. Can you name them?

The Editor Speaks by Grant Heywood



Seems like there were more musical events this summer than ever before. The warm weather sure must have been a contributing factor. I know personally, that I did my fair share of gigs, and even had to buy a personal fan just to keep cool. I also got to hear a lot of different music this summer and was delighted to see & hear a variety of musical styles.

One of my daughters, (Janessa), coaxed me into spending a Saturday at the Owen Sound Summer Folk Festival. The weather was almost perfect and we barely got a place to park. I was lucky that this was the one weekend I had off. I've always been too busy to attend the festival in the past. The festival took place in Kelso Park in Owen Sound and many of the performance stages were spread out throughout the park. This festival has been going for some time now and is one of the biggest of its kind in Canada. Very well organized and a super variety of musical acts made for a fun day and evening.

Everything from blues to reggae, pure folk to latin and celtic. There was an amateur stage, workshops, one of which my friend Richard Knechtel from Walkerton, was working at. Richard is involved with Owen Sound Summer Folk and was the director for the past few years. The main stage amphitheatre at night had a stellar lineup of mainly Canadian talent. There was a young guitarist that really

blew me away when I saw him playing his double-neck acoustic guitar, both at the same time and then playing slide guitar with a spoon in his mouth as well. I think I'm going to make the trek again to the Owen Sound Summer Folk festival another time if I'm not too busy.

All of our Barn Dance shows have been highly successful this year. Our Blyth Campout Jamboree at the end of May was very well received. Having George Hamilton IV from the U.S.A. as a special quest on the Barn Dance was a treat for our Barn Dance Anniversary. It's also great to see some new talent on stage along with many regulars. But it's really wonderful to have younger talent on the Barn Dance stage and then have them return again a year or two later. Many of them have become professional entertainers themselves and tour reqularly now.

Our own Barn Dance pioneer, Lynn Russwurm staged Sunday's in the park in Elmira over the course of the summer. Almost every performance, from bluegrass to traditional country, had a capacity attendance. With the great summer weather only one show was cancelled due to rain. Unfortunately for Lynn, it was his own show that got rained out, and this was to be his CD release party. Oh well, you will be able to read the CD review of Lynn's latest recording in this issue.

The annual early fall Barn Dance show at Paul Weber's Commercial Tavern in Maryhill is always sold out in advance and we had rave reviews from the audience of what a spectacular show it was. CCMA Guitar Player of the Year award winner, Wendell Ferguson wowed the crowd, along with the 13 year old singer,

The Barn Dance Historical Society and Entertainment

Museum

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(or leave a message)

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Brontae Hunter, John & Geneva Heman, rockin' Kiley Joe Mason, Betty Beer, Larry Mercey and Paul Weber as well. M.C. Jim Swan kept the show movin' along.

It's so nice to see so many familiar faces at the Barn Dance Shows. I hope I get to see you all again at the next Barn Dance show.

Remember 'The Show must go on'.

Comments? Please contact: Grant Heywood 5584 Deborah Glaister Line, R. R. #2, Wellesley, Ontario N0B 2T0 Phone: (519) 656-2552 E-mail: heywoods@golden.net

or send a message on facebook.

Continued from Page 1

ketable and so he chose his stage name from a roadmap pointing out Conway, Arkansas and Twitty, Texas. Conway was performing in Branson, Missouri in June of 1993, when he became ill on the tour bus and died later in Springfield, Missouri. He was only 59. And not long after, in 1996, Faron Young ("Hello Walls") died from committing suicide. He was in his 70's.

1998 was a bad year for country music as we lost Carl Perkins, Eddie Rabbit (lung cancer at age 56), Gene Autry, and the iconic Tammy Wynette ("Stand By Your Man") died at age 56 from complications from years of health problems (she had 26 operations in all). Others we have lost along the way: Waylon Jennings in 2002, Johnny & June Carter Cash in 2003, Buck Owens in 2006, Del Reeves, Porter Wagoner, & Hank Thompson in 2007. In 2009 we lost Vern Gosdin, Dan Seals, and Hank Locklin, and in 2007 John Denver died while piloting a plane. Most recently, senior artists Earl Scruggs and Doc Watson have passed on.

BARN DANCE SOUVENIRS

Barn Dance CD's \$15.00 ea. **Barn Dance Cassettes** \$ 6.00 ea. \$ 5.00 ea. Souvenir 1997 Calendar **Barn Dance Logo T-Shirts** (gold logo on blue only) Sizes S, M, L, XL, XXL \$20.00 ea. **Heywood Family Three** Generations" CD \$15.00 ea. NEW Al Cherny CD - "Live / The Lost Recordings" \$15.00 ea. **NEW Eleanor & Graham Townsend** CD "The Talented Townsends" (36 unheard recordings) Best of The Barn Dance CD \$15.00 ea. All purchases include HST.

Please include \$3.00 per item for mailing or pick up at Ernie King Music.

Many of our own Canadian country artists who have passed on come to mind such as, Hank Snow, Wilf Carter, Earl Heywood, Gene MacLellan, Papa Joe Brown, Colleen Peterson, Bob Nolan, Don Messer, Jack Kingston, Gary Buck, Terry Sumsion, Ernie King, Orval Prophet, and so many, many more. It's really sad when I look up many of these well known Canadian country artists who have died, and there is hardly, if any information online.

In 1985 the New York Times declared that country music was dead. That same year on New Years Eve, actor/rock & roller, turned country musician, Rick Nelson, died in a plane crash. That said, country music really hasn't died, it's just morphed into something else ... dare I say classic rock. Oh the new artists will throw a fiddle or steel lick in

once in a while and maybe pull out an old country nugget, but for the most part, it's just rehashed rock and roll. Real country music, traditional country music is fading, there's no doubt about that, but it's not dead ... at least not yet. You won't find it on the airwaves, most of our favourite country stars are too old to tour, and many have died ... but believe me, real traditional country music lives on, and the Barn Dance Shows are living proof of that.

Merry Christmas and
Happy New Year
from
the Barn Dance
Historical Society.

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WHO WROTE THE SONG?

(Walkin' After Midnite)

A plane crash ended the brilliant career of Patsy Cline in 1963. She was a singer, piano player and tap dancer, and had only been a star for a brief five years. In that short time she carved an undying memorial to herself.

It was songwriter, Don Hecht, who wrote one of her biggest hits, Walkin' After Midnite. Don decided to resurrect this song he had written for Kay Starr, but Kay turned it down. Patsy Cline decided she didn't want to do the song either. Both writer Don Hecht, and Decca recording executives encouraged Patsy Cline to record the song. She finally agreed to do a tape of Walkin' After Midnite.

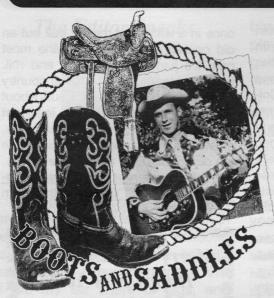
An appearance was scheduled for Patsy Cline to appear on the popular Arthur Godfrey TV show on January 28th, 1957. That night she was exposed to more than ten million viewers introducing that song. Decca Records quickly released a single to the surge of increased demand from the fans. The song, *Walkin' After Midnite*, was a song that Patsy Cline almost didn't record and it quickly became a smash hit! An instant million seller.

... And now you know who wrote the song.

2012 COMING EVENTS

2012 COMING EVENTS		
Date	Event Name	Place
Sun., Oct. 14	Barn Dance Show - 2:00 p.m. Fundraiser for Christmas Care	Southwold Keystone Complex, Shedden SOLD OUT

4 Fall Edition Vol. 75 2012



by Lynn Russwurm

I'd like to touch on some of the people who contribute to our world of country music, mainly in the background and never fully get the recognition they deserve. The first one who comes to mind is the late Johnny Brent. Although Johnny was well known as the Emcee of the Barn Dance, I'll bet many of you don't know how much Johnny was really involved. He looked after the booking, renting of the halls, hiring the entertainers, in short he was really Mr. Barn Dance. You could always talk to Johnny, always cordial, always firm with his decisions. My own case comes to mind, my wife and I must have auditioned for the Barn Dance 3 or 4 times and Johnny always let us down gently. Finally after we had done a stint on the Main Street Jamboree, he accepted us for the Barn Dance, I'm sure he felt we needed more experience before he took us on. Our association became a friendship that lasted until Johnny passed away.

Johnny was always on hand for setting up the stage for every Barn Dance, overseeing rehearsals, making sure ticket takers were there on time and every oth-

er little detail that needed checking up. His contribution was much more than being the Emcee of the show. Really, without Johnny Brent there would have been no Barn Dance as we so fondly remember.

Other people that don't really get enough appreciation are those who create the magazines and other written word to give us a place to publicize events, or to keep abreast of the current happenings in country music. Such a person is Larry Delaney, who for over 25 years published COUNTRY MUSIC NEWS magazine out of Ottawa. Other magazines started up throughout the years and fell by the

wayside, but Larry kept on through hard times, giving so much of himself, until finally he had to throw in the towel due to the people in the industry's lack of support with the necessary advertising that was needed to keep the paper afloat. Larry devoted over 25 years of his life and finally had to say what's the use. So today, we don't have one single newspaper or magazine to read about the current events in country music. All we have is what the radio stations choose to feed us, and that's mostly pretty much self-effacing. I for one, don't listen to the radio anymore and the same goes for TV, there's nothing there for me anymore.

Then there are the volunteers that are needed to stage Barn Dance Shows and other events. Many hands create these jamborees and festivals that most of us like to attend at one time or another. Volunteers are usually needed to take tickets, set up and tear down chairs, look after refreshments and a million other things that are necessary to make an event successful. Without the volunteers, it would be impossible for the organizers to look after all that needs doing.

The entertainers may take all the bows, but there are many others who are really just as important to the show, so let's not forget them.



40th Anniversary of the CKNX Barn Dance gathering at Johnny Brent's home in Wroxeter - circa 1976 - 77.

BARN DANCE JOURNAL ADVERTISING PRICES

Business Card Size \$25.00 plus HST
1/4 Page \$75.00 plus HST
1/2 page \$150.00 plus HST
Full Page (inside) \$275.00 plus HST
Full Page (back cover) \$300.00 plus HST
All prices are per issue.

Ernie King Music Store, Goderich

BACK IN ACTION

Goderich hasn't been the same since that devastating F3 tornado in August of 2011. One of the business casualties was Dave Wallace's, Ernie King Music Store. The good news is they are back and better than ever with a new location in Goderich, at 37 West St.

Dave and Marie Wallace had a lot of soul searching to do after that terrible day in August. They were likely luckier than most people on that day as they weren't completely wiped out by the tornado. But the building and much of the merchandise didn't fare so well. I'm sure trying to keep the Wingham location on Josephine St. going while coping with the loss of the Goderich store was almost more than they could handle. But Dave and Marie are survivors and are now operating both locations once again.

Check out both locations and you'll find some fine stringed instruments in stock as well as other music items. Sound equipment can also be rented if I'm not mistaken, and Dave takes the time to make sure any repairs are done right. Unlike some big city music stores, Ernie King music prides itself in personal service with a small town attitude and a varied selection of beginner to professional musical instruments.

Dave and Marie have been staunch supporters of the Barn Dance and have supplied us with a piano at the Blyth Campout Jamboree for the past 15 years. Often if we require Dave's assistance, he has always been there to help. We are so glad that their new store in Goderich is finally open and we wish them continued success at both locations of Ernie King Music. Drop in to either store and say hi.

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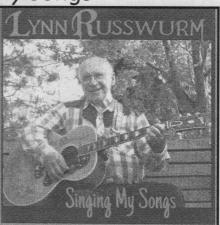
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FEATURE C. D. REVIEW

Lynn Russwurm

"Singing My Songs"

When it comes to writing country music songs, Lynn Russwurm of Floradale, has a catalogue of songs that spans decades. I've known and played with Lynn since the late 1960's and 70's when he was performing with his band 'The Hummingbirds'. Lynn has a style of writing that harkens back to genuine country/cowboy music. This is a CD that Lynn has wanted to do for many years, even though he's still



writing songs. All of the songs on this c.d. are written by Lynn and all are under 3 minutes long except for one. The CD was recorded at Eric Duerrstein's DSP Studio in Waterloo.

The upbeat 'In The Dark of the Night' kicks off this 20 song set. 'Lonesome Like Me', is a song Lynn has been doing in a bluegrass style at many concerts lately. In fact you'll find some great dobro work on this CD by Bob Tremblay, also rounded out with fine steel guitar work by Doug Dietrich and fiddler extraordinaire, Mr. Gerry Smith. 'Wild Heart' is another good tune that Lynn plays in concert on a regular basis. 'How Can You Talk To A Heartache' is a lively song and definitely one of my favourites on this CD. Former band-mate, Guylaine Basque sings harmony with Lynn on the haunting 'Twilight Is A Lonesome Time' as well as 'Walking In The Shadows' and a few others as well. Lynn's son Lance, also sings backup on several of Lynn's songs here.

The song 'Mr. Knowitall' is a cute little tune that clocks in at a mere 1:54. Lynn has always been a songwriter who believes less is more and focuses on keeping a song simple, and in a familiar style ... mainly traditional country. Over the years Lynn has had his fair share of success especially with a song he co-wrote with western swing artist, Hank Thompson called 'I Cast a Lonesome Shadow', later recorded by Martin Gore from the rock group Depeche Mode. The Mercey Bros. also recorded a song by Lynn and I recently discovered a couple of songs that my dad, Earl Heywood, had co-written with Lynn as well.

The first time Lynn ever heard one of his songs being performed, was at a Barn Dance where Ernie King sang 'In Our Dreamboat Let's Pretend'. Since then, Lynn has written 100's of songs and many are included on this 20 song CD. Lynn plays bass and acoustic guitar and I had the privilege of laying down the drum tracks on Lynn's first CD of all original songs. There are a variety of songs here that will satisfy the ears of many traditional country music fans. The CD also includes some great pictures and liner notes by daughter, Laurel Russwurm. It's about time that Lynn Russwurm

FOUNTY MUSTER NOTION





Dixie Bill Hiton



Stu Davis





Ron McLeod



Ron McMunn





Harry Rusk

COUNTRY CALENDAR



by Doreen Brown
(Toronto and surrounding area)

- ***** Appearance by the Barn Dance Band: Oct. 13, Grand Bend, two shows; Oct. 19, Drayton Theatre; Oct. 20, Penatanguishene, two shows. This band is heading to Alberta for 3 shows ~ Way To Go!!
- ***** Appearances by Mike Pollard: Oct. 20, Kendal Community Centre, Dendal, Ont.; also Oct. 20, Oshawa Legion, South; Oct. 26, benefit for Aggie MacPhee, Moose Lodge, 27 and Lakeshore (Aggie is a well known east coast entertainer), music by Silver Wings, Linda and Scotty Wells.
- * October 21 Canada's Yodelling Sweetheart, Naomi Bristow, also appearing Marion Drexler Band, Gig Centre for the Arts, 19 Civic St., Stouffville, 1:30 pm. Snacks, free coffee and donuts.
- * October 27 Classic Country Halloween, Port Hope Lion's Centre, 29 Thomas St., Port Hope. 8 pm to 12 am. 705-355-1411. Tickets \$10 per person. Featuring James Ryce, Ginny McIllmoyle, Katelyn Brant, Andy Schick, Shaw Kellet, Dan Washburn, Garth Bowes, Sherr-A-Tune Sounds, Tim Peters.
- ***** Contact Peter Chittly 705-436-3927 for the following appearances at Music Up Close House Concerts, 2226 Richard St., Innsfill -Oct 27, 8 pm, Wayne Taylor & Appaloosa; Nov. 9, 8 pm, Craig Bickhardt; Nov. 25, 8 pm, Spinney Bros. musicupclose@rogers.com
- *** Bluesky Bluegrass Club -** Jam every Thursday at RCL, St. Vincent St., Barrie 7 to 10:30 pm. All welcome.
- *Appearance by Ben Lintir Nov. 2 and 3, 4:30 pm, Northern Oprey, Sault Ste. Marie.
- * Calico Creek, with Roger, Cathy, Ollie and Barry, 1 to 5 pm, third Sunday, at Warminister and fourth at Mactier.
- *** October 9 -** Jam with Bob Bunton, Miami Beach Hall, 590 Lake Drive, Keswick, Tues. 7 to 10 pm.
- * November 14 20 Honey Grass will be performing on the main stage at 10:50 pm for Central Canadian Bluegrass Awards, Deer Resort, Huntsville, Ont. www.northernbluegrass.com
- *Appearances by Doreen Brown: Oct. 16 Rosemont Fiddle and Square Dance Club, also held the third Tues. of the month; Oct. 14, Shelburne Community Centre, also the second

Sunday of the month, except July and August; Oct. 26, Moose Lodge, Etobicoke, benefit for Aggie MacPhee; Oct. 21, Harriston Jamboree.

- * December 31 Classic Country New Year's Eve, 29 Thomas St., Port Hope, 8 to 1 am. Tickets at the door \$20.00 per person, \$35.00 couple. Call Time at 905-355-1411. Featuring James Ryce, Joanne Post, Katelyn Brant, Andy Schick, Shaw Kellet, Dan Washburn, Garth Bowes, Sherr-A-Tune Sounds, Tim Peters.
- *** Third Sunday Jam -** 1 p.m. St. Patrick's Church, Pine Street, Stayner.
- * First & Third Sunday Jam and open mic. Masonic Lodge, 157 Elm St., Brighton. 613-475-8847.
- * Appearances for Arlene Quinn 613-253-8028. arlenequinn@yahoo.com
- ***** December 9 2 p.m. Christmas Show, Sweet Water Country Music Series 2012, 10th Anniversary, The Concert Hall. Drums/vocal Joe Howe; guitar Steve O'Connor; keyboards Steve Piticoo; guitar/vocals

Don Reed; fiddle Dusty King Jr.

- ** Old Time Christmas Tour 2012 Scott Woods. Toll free 1-855-scottwoods. Email info@scottwoods.ca www.scottwoods.ca All shows a 7 p.m. Nov. 9, Paris Fairgrounds Building; Nov. 10, Carlisle United Church; Nov. 17 St. Andrew's United Church, Chatham; Nov. 23, Rockway Community Centre, St. Cathariens; Nov. 24, Bridlewood Pres. Church, Scarborough; Nov. 27, St. Mathews United Church, Belleville; Nov. 30, Russell High School, Russell; Dec. 6, St. Andrews Pres. Church, Parry Sound; Dec. 8 Centre 2000, Erin.
- *** For upcoming appearances, -** contact Hard Ryde, Canadian Bluegrass www.hardryde.ca
- * Ontario's #1 Country Dance Hall, Purple Hill Country Music Hall, 519-461-0538. For future shows check out ~ www.purplehillcountryhall.com



CNKX Barn Dance Reunion Show in Brussels, Ontario. Circa mid 1970's

BOOKING THEBARN DANCE

If you are interested in more information about booking the Barn Dance Musical Production, please write to:

Barn Dance Bookings, P. O. Box 68, Wingham, Ont. NOG 2W0; or call ~ (519) 530-8000

E-mail: stlgtrman@rogers.com

NEWS & NOTES

Barn Dance members, Al, Doug, Fred and Grant, along with fiddler, Linsey Beckett, played to a sold out show at the Roxy Theatre in Owen Sound recently. The sensational Amberley Beatty performed her Loretta Lynn Show to a standing ovation. Jim Swan was the guest emcee.

BARN DANCE CORNER

by Peter Saros

Musical mountaineering is one way to try to describe the shopping experience at the cavernous flagship Sam the Record Man store on Yonge Street in downtown Toronto. Every found title was a hard-fought act of discovery amidst the dangerous sloping floors, unexpected steps, and sneaky stairwells. Its dingy interior set it apart from the clean, well-lit competition of HMV and Tower Records. Nothing spoke more to that sense of home-spun independence than the musical dividers in the CD racks. Artist's names were scrawled across the nowsmudged-but-once-white plastic cards by hand with Sharpies.

The whole Sam the Record Man experience felt somewhat unprofessional, vaquely disorganized, and all together sloppy. But most importantly, it felt so wonderfully grand. Like every music lover's own personal music store to get lost

Being able to successfully navigate

its inventory was a coming of age experience. Canadian pop music artists Hawksley Workman described the store as "a temple." Blue Rodeo's Jim Cuddy said, "It had a members-only feel to it."

I know I took pride in walking those wonky steps with the loose railing to the second floor where I could flick-and-click my way through the expansive and inclusive country music collection, jostling with other fans whose musical sensibilities I always secretly questioned.

Sam's always had it all. Now Toronto doesn't even have a Sam's (the only franchise outlet still in operation is in Belleville, Ontario), and the Canadian music scene no longer has Sam. Sam Sniderman, the co-founder of the eponymous Canadian record-store empire, died in his sleep at the age of 92 on Sunday 23 September.

In his Globe and Mail obituary for Sniderman, music journalist Brad Wheeler said, "The passing of Sam the Record Man, the store and the man, is perhaps symbolic of something greater than one chain of retail outlets and the one man responsible for it - that being the social record-buying ritual. A

mouse-click or a keyboard-tap is cold cyber comfort, compared to the rubbing of shoulders among the bins of CD or vinyl."

Might that be what I miss the most, shared sense of experience that buying your music in a store from knowledgeable staff engendered? So long as we had brick and mortar music stores we had a common sense of musical event and spectacle. Remember when album release dates really mattered? Heck, remember when albums mattered?

The ritual of consuming music is so fragmented and lonely today that it is sometimes difficult to remember that going record shopping used to be an event in itself. As Workman said, Sam the Record Man was "an opportunity to commune." The enthusiasm and magic of simply browsing a music section at Sam's is gone, and with it another piece of our musical ancestry is lost.

I guess the music is what ultimately matters, regardless of how we consume it or listen to it, but with the passing of Sam Sniderman, and all he stood for, I am reminded of a past that somehow seems brighter than the future.

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