

## Mr. George Hamilton IV Background information

George, a Winston-Salem Native and graduate of R.J. Reynolds High School who rose to National & International Acclaim as a Million-Selling Recording Artist and 54-year Member of The "Grand Ole Opry", who was named "The International Ambassador of Country Music" for his countless Globe-Trotting Achievements in the Music World.

1. Mr. Hamilton was born in Winston-Salem, NC on July 19, 1937.

\*\*The Son of George Hamilton III & Mary Pendry Hamilton. George's Father, George Hamilton III, rose to the position of Executive Vice President of Winston-Salem's "Goody's Headache Powders" adjacent to Old Salem, where George Hamilton IV is buried (along with his Parents, Grandparents & other Family & Friends).

\*\*George Hamilton IV was raised in the Moravian Church and as mentioned, is buried in The Moravian Cemetery, "God's Acre".

2. George Hamilton IV Graduated from R.J. Reynolds High School in Winston-Salem, NC where his very first Stage Performances were in High School Talent Contests. While still in High School, George formed a Band, "The Serenaders", with high school friends and they performed his music in and around the Winston-Salem area. The "Caption" under George's R.J. Reynolds High School Annual Photo reads: "Grand Ole Opry, Here I Come!".

3. In 1956, while a freshman student at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Hamilton recorded the 'Teen Pop Ballad' "A Rose and A Baby Ruth" for Chapel Hill's "Colonial Records". George's recording became so popular on radio in the Carolinas and regionally, that it was bought by ABC-Paramount Records for National Distribution & Radio Promotion and soon became ABC-Paramount's FIRST Million-Selling Hit Record. George's "label mates" on ABC-Paramount included: Ray Charles & Paul Anka!

4. George was soon invited to move to Washington, DC to become a member of the cast of the Jimmy Dean TV Show. There he performed regularly with Jimmy Dean & Patsy Cline. At the same time, George attended American University in Washington, DC, continuing his higher education.

5. Mr. Hamilton appeared on Dick Clark's "American Bandstand", Arthur Godfrey's "Talent Scouts" and The Perry Como Show on National TV in the mid thru late 1950's. Also at this time, George toured America & Canada with other Pop, Rock & Roll and Rhythm & Blues Stars: Buddy Holly, Brenda Lee, Sam Cooke, The Everly Brothers, Little Richard, Chuck Berry, Bobby Darin, Jerry Lee Lewis, Paul Anka, Jackie Wilson and Many More! He even appeared "On Broadway" with Louis Armstrong in 1957. (In 1959, George toured Australia with Chuck Berry & Bobby Darin.)

6. In June, 1958, George married his RJ Reynolds "High School Sweetheart", Adelaide "Tinky" Peyton (They would have 3 Children: Peyton, George V & Mary Dabney and in 2008 "George & Tink" celebrated their 50th Wedding Anniversary with Family & Friends at Old Salem's Salem Tavern.)

7. "George IV" recorded several other "Pop" Hit Records for ABC-Paramount throughout the 1950s and hosted his own "George Hamilton IV" National Television Musical/Variety Shows on both CBS-TV (in 1958) and ABC-TV (in 1959).

8. In 1959, Mr. Hamilton decided to make a move back to his favorite music: Country Music, and moved his Family to Nashville, TN where he recorded his first 'Country' Hit ("Before This Day Ends") for ABC-Paramount and was soon signed by the Legendary Chet Atkins to RCA Nashville where he recorded numerous Hit records including his 'signature' Country (and Pop) Hit: "Abilene" which spent several week at No. 1 on the Billboard's Country singles Chart and Top 20 on the Pop Chart.

9. George Hamilton IV became a member of the "Grand Ole Opry" in February of 1960. He remained a Member of the Grand Ole Opry and performed regularly on The Opry for 54 years. His final performance @ The Grand Ole Opry was on Sept. 6, 2014. (He passed away on Sept. 17, 2014).

10. In the Mid 1960s, George IV was a pioneer of 'Folk-Country' Music and was the FIRST to record a song by Joni Mitchell, scoring a Hit with Joni Mitchell's "Urge For Going". George also had 'Folk-Country' Hits with Gordon Lightfoot's "Steel Rail Blues" and "Early Morning Rain".

11. Mr. Hamilton appeared at the First International Festival of Country Music at London's Wembley Arena in 1969 and went on to appear on this major International Festival more than any other American Country Artist over the years. George and fellow Opry Star Bill Anderson persuaded the Country Music Association in Nashville to present a Nashville version of what they experienced in London at Wembley. The Nashville, TN festival -- first known as "Fan Fair" -- is now known as the "CMA Music Festival".

12. Following his success at the International Festival of Country Music in London, BBC-TV invited George to Host his own Musical Variety Television Series on BBC-TV across Great Britain. This was the Britain's first Country Music TV Series. He went on to host several such TV Series throughout the 1970s and into the 1980s. Also in the 1970s, George IV Hosted his own Musical TV Series recorded and broadcast across Canada. When his Canadian TV Shows were screened on Britain's ITV national network, at the same time as George's BBC-TV Series, he made history by appearing on Both Channels at once. His BBC-TV Series were also Broadcast in South Africa and Hong Kong.

13. During the 1970s, in-between Hosting his TV Series in Britain & Canada, George began touring the world and performed on the First International Country Festivals in Sweden, Finland, Holland, Norway, and Germany.

14. Around 1972, George, his wife and 3 Children moved back to North Carolina where he became a partner with Arthur Smith ("Guitar Boogie", "Dueling Banjos", etc.) in the "Arthur Smith TV Show" recorded in Charlotte, NC.

15. In 1974, George IV was invited by the US State Department to be the First Country Music Performer to go "Behind the Iron Curtain" where he gave a Lecture/Concert on the History of American Country Music at Moscow University. At the same time he headlined Four Sold-Out Concerts at the Sports Arena in Prague, Czechoslovakia. Referring to George IV's Eastern Europe Tour of March 1974, ENCYCLOPEDIA YEAR BOOK wrote:

"...the hardiest bloom in America's musical garden proved to be country and western music, which sent its own ambassador, with the blessing of the U.S. State Department to the Soviet Union. George Hamilton IV took the Nashville Sound to Moscow's Palace of Culture of the Railway Workers in March after four concerts in Prague that drew audiences of 28,000."

16. Also in the 1970s, George was the Presenter/Narrator for BBC Radio's Acclaimed Music Series: "How The West Was Sung" (a history of American Country Music tracing the Roots back to the British Isles), Produced by Sir Charles Chilton.

17. For all of his International Achievements in promoting American Country Music globally, BILLBOARD Magazine gave George the Title "The International Ambassador of Country Music".

18. In the 1980s, George recorded several Gospel Albums and performed with Billy Graham Crusades, perhaps most notably in the Summer of 1984 as Musical Guest during Dr. Graham's "Mission England" (Nationwide English Crusade) followed by "Mission '89" (Earl's Court, London) and again during Dr. Graham's "Mission Scotland" in 1991.

19. Over the years, George Hamilton IV, a kid from Winston-Salem, sang his songs on major stages across America, Canada, Great Britain, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Holland, France, Germany, Austria, Poland, Russia, Czechoslovakia, Lithuania, South Africa, Japan, Greenland and India.

\*In 1993, he visited Jamaica and Africa while filming a PBS-TV Documentary on the Moravian Church.

\*George was the Co-Star & Narrator of Britain's First "Country Musical": "Patsy Cline the Musical" which toured Great Britain & Ireland almost annually and made it to Britain's "Broadway" -- London's West End Theatre District at the "Whitehall Theater" near Trafalgar Square for a successful run in 1994. (Upon George's passing in Sept. 2014,

his son, "George V", stood-in for "George IV" on his already scheduled Oct.- Nov. 2014 Patsy Cline Musical Theatre Tour.)

20. In 2000, Harper Collins Publishing Co. released his Biography: "George Hamilton IV: International Ambassador of Country Music".

21. Other Interesting Career Notes: George was the First "Pop" Singer to "go country" in 1959 followed later by Conway Twitty, Jerry Lee Lewis and Carl Perkins. Not to be confused with the "George Hamilton, The Actor", George Hamilton IV also "starred" in some Films:

"Hootenanny Hoot" (1963), "Second Fiddle to A Steel Guitar" (1965) and most recently "Praise Band: The Movie" (2008) where he played a leading role. \*His Classic RCA Recording "Abilene" was also featured in the Kevin Costner/Clint Eastwood Film "A Perfect World" (1993). George also appeared in several Hee-Haw episodes in the 1970's.

22. Throughout the 1990s & 2000s, Mr. Hamilton continued to tour Internationally, performing Country Music Concerts & Headlining Country Music Festivals and also performing Gospel Concerts and Headlining Gospel Festivals and Church Concerts. One of George's Annual Concert Tours was his "Country Christmas" Tour of Churches across America and Britain. He also created a Christmas Program and Tour celebrating his Moravian Roots and Christmas Traditions: "A Moravian Country Christmas". As mentioned earlier, he also continued performing regularly at the Grand Ole Opry in Nashville, TN thru his final performance there on Sept. 6, 2014. Mr. Hamilton passed away on Sept. 17, 2014.

23. George is one of Eight Individuals included in the "Popular Culture" section of the book "The North Carolina Century: Tar Heels Who Made a Difference"(from 1900 - 2000), along with fellow North Carolina Entertainers: Andy Griffith, Arthur Smith, and Doc Watson.

24. George Hamilton IV's Awards & Honors include:

Gold Records, Grammy & CMA Nominations, The Dove Award (and multiple nominations), "International Male Vocalist of The Year" Award (1971), BILLBOARD Magazine's "Trendsetter Award" (1975), and:

Induction into the "North Carolina Hall of Fame" (2000)

Induction into the "North Carolina Music Hall of Fame" (2010)

Induction into the "Blue Ridge Music Hall of Fame" (2012)

He recorded for ABC-Paramount Records, RCA Records, MCA Records, Word Records, EMI Records and many others during his 58-year music career, releasing over 100 Albums.

25. Many of George Hamilton IV's Papers, Press Clippings, Photos, Audio and Visual Recordings and Archives are housed and available for research at the "Southern Folklife Collection" at UNC-Chapel Hill.

26. Throughout his lengthy and acclaimed International Music Career, George Hamilton IV always proudly referred to his Hometown of Winston-Salem, North Carolina in Press Articles and Television & Radio Appearances.

27. Mr. Hamilton's Obituary ran Internationally in such publications as: Rolling Stone, New York Times, Los Angeles Times, The Daily Telegraph (London), The Guardian (London), The Daily Mail (UK), The Independent (UK), The Belfast Telegraph (Northern Ireland) and Ireland's National Newspaper along with National Wire Services across the USA and Nashville's THE TENNESSEAN Newspaper along with Newspapers across North Carolina.

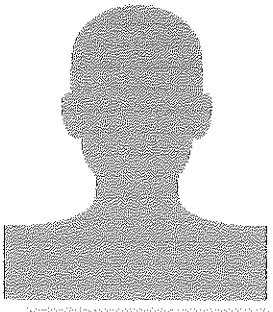
28. A Public Memorial & "Celebration of Life" was held for Mr. Hamilton at the "Ryman Auditorium", Historic Home of the Grand Ole Opry thru the mid 1970s (often called "The Mother Church of Country Music") in Nashville on Wed., Sept. 24, 2014. The service included long time friends and Opry members Ricky Skaggs, Bill Anderson, Marty Stuart, Connie Smith, the Whites, Gail Davies, John Loudermilk, Eddie Stubbs, Dave Moody, and Jimmy Capps.

29. George IV was a very kind, gentle, humble man and always took time to greet and talk to his fans. Through the years, George performed at many benefit concerts and churches through the Carolina's and the US without being paid as he did it for the love of country and gospel music and for his love of people.

30. In 1973, George Hamilton IV was the Host/Narrator for the Film: "Winston-Salem: Same Town, New City" Produced by WXII Television in cooperation with The Greater Winston-Salem Chamber of Commerce. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SS9XyTYj7y0&t=7s>

31. On July 19, 2016, the Business I-40 Bridge in Winston Salem over Salem Ave and Research Parkway was officially renamed George Hamilton IV Bridge by the NC Department of Transportation and the City of Winston-Salem in his honor.

\*One of George IV's most memorable & frequent "quotes" from his concert performances -- referring to Language Barriers, etc. around the world: "In a World of Walls, Music Builds Bridges."



George Hamilton IV  
July 19, 1937 - September 17, 2014

George Hege Hamilton IV, 77, died Wednesday, September 17 in Nashville with his family by his side. George had been a member of the Grand Ole Opry in Nashville, TN, for more than 50 years. For a complete biography of his life work, please see [www.georgeiv.net](http://www.georgeiv.net). Son of George III and Mary Lillian Hamilton of Winston-Salem, NC, He survived by his wife, Adelaide "Tink" Peyton Hamilton, of Franklin, TN; son, Edwin Peyton (Anne) Hamilton and their son, "Mac", of Indian Land, SC; son, George V (Lillian) and their son, George VI "Nash" of Franklin, TN; daughter, Mary Dabney (Doug) Arcure and their children, "Mick" and Aubrey, of Waxhaw, NC; brother R. Cabot (Teri) Hamilton of West Jefferson, NC. Visitation is at Williamson Memorial Funeral Home, 3009 Columbia Ave., Franklin, TN, 37064, on Tuesday, September 23, from 4:00-7:00 p.m. A Celebration of his life and music is at the Ryman Auditorium, 116 5th Ave., Nashville, TN, at 11:00 a.m. on Wednesday, September 24. A graveside service will be held Saturday, September 27, at the Salem Moravian Graveyard "God's Acre" in Winston-Salem, NC, at 1:00 p.m. where he will be laid to rest followed by a visitation at Fries Memorial Moravian Church. In lieu of flowers, the family requests memorials be made to: Fries Memorial Moravian Church, 251 N. Hawthorne Rd., Winston-Salem, NC, 27104; Oak Valley Baptist Church Building Fund, 1161 Lewisburg Pike, Franklin, TN, 37064; or the Opry Trust Fund, 2804 Opryland Drive, Nashville, TN, 37214.