

Muscle Shoals Music Educator Resource Packet



By Brian Corrigan, MSNHA Consultant

Muscle Shoals National Heritage Area

UNA Box 5231

Florence, AL 35632

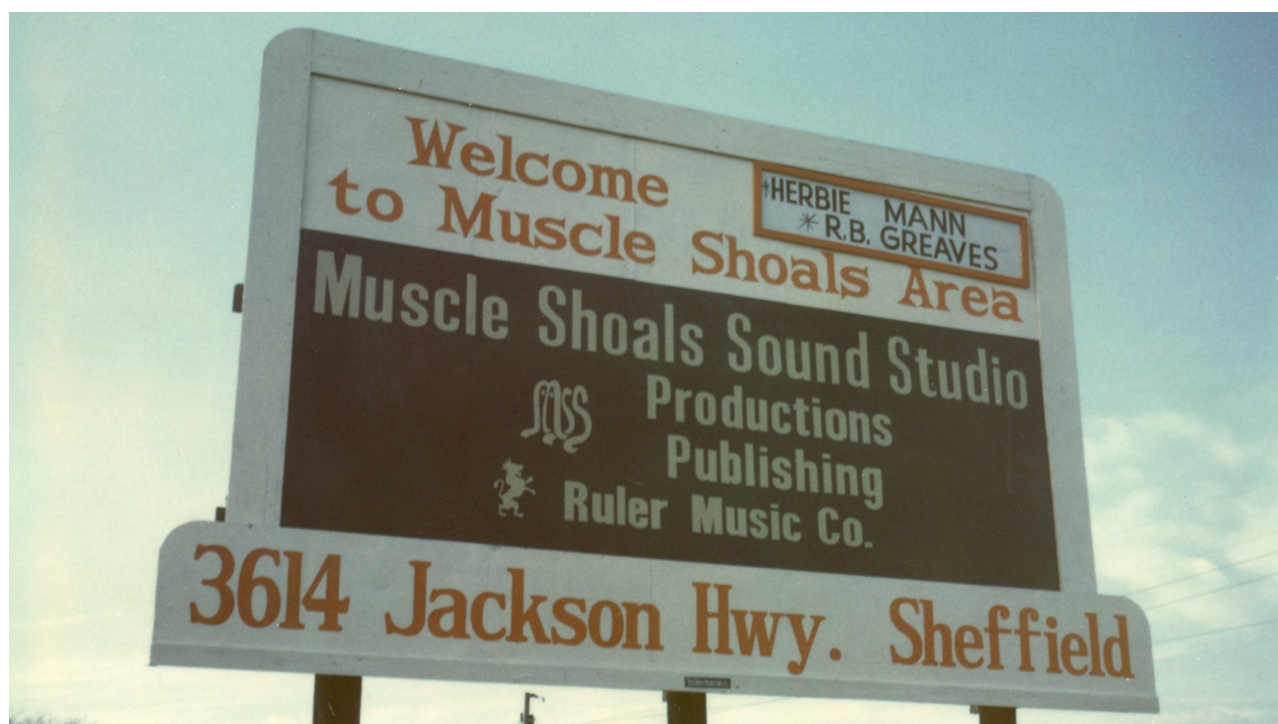
msnha.una.edu

256-765-5028



Table of Contents

Historical Overview.....	3
Muscle Shoals Music Makers.....	9
Muscle Shoals Recording Studios.....	14
Music Playlists.....	20
Worksheet Activities.....	25
Curriculum Standards.....	47
Glossary.....	49
Bibliography.....	50
Photo Credits.....	51
Special Thanks.....	53



Historical Overview

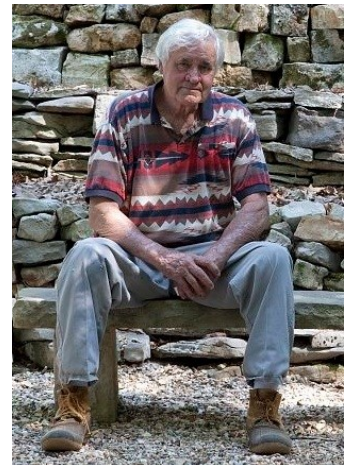
It has been said that something in the water has given residents of the Shoals a special musical vitality. Local legend holds that the Chickasaw people referred to the Tennessee as the “Singing River.” The late Florence historian William McDonald dates this legend back to the 1820s, but the earliest known publication to mention it is a 1917 pamphlet written by former first lady of Alabama and Florence native Mrs. Emmet O’Neal. According to Mrs. O’Neal, the Cherokee believed that a “Great Spirit” had trapped the “Goddess of the Tennessee” beneath the waters of Muscle Shoals. While the lovestruck “Prince of the Power of the Air” hovered longingly above, the goddess, in Mrs. O’Neal’s telling, “murmured tender secrets” to him “beneath myriad southern moons.”



Archaeological evidence suggests that music indeed played an important role in the lives of Indigenous peoples who inhabited the Shoals. Tom Hendrix (below), the late local historian of Creek heritage, noted discoveries of flutes or whistles made from waterfowl wing bones and cane centuries before the arrival of European settlers. Though there is no direct historical connection between the music making of Indigenous peoples and that of today’s Shoals residents, the “Singing River” legend has forged a mythical link between past and present, “effectively creating a nearly two-thousand-year-old musical tradition,” as author Christopher Reali puts it:

“At some point, the legend of Muscle Shoals and the legend of the ‘Singing River’ became synonymous... This particular Alabama history story unleashed a powerful cultural force that has since shaped the promotion and reception of the Muscle Shoals music scene.”

—Christopher Reali



Many of the white settlers who moved to the Shoals in the late 18th and early 19th centuries were of Scots-Irish descent. These settlers brought their Celtic traditions with them and made the fiddle a centerpiece of entertainment at dances and in contests of musicianship. Meanwhile, African slaves who worked the cotton fields of area plantations had their own musical traditions, including chants, field hollers and songs of spiritual hope. “Father of the Blues” W.C. Handy, who was born in Florence in 1873, recalled in his autobiography:



“It was my good fortune as a youngster to be the water boy in rock quarries, iron furnaces, on farms and on the Tennessee River... where I heard Negro laborers and steamboat roustabouts sing many work song[s] which since those days have been a part of musical America. It was such snatches of song that turned my attention to what we now know as the blues.”

—W.C. Handy

By the time Mrs. O’Neal published her pamphlet in 1917, these traditions were blending with the hymns and gospel music heard in area churches to create new musical styles that still paid tribute to their origins. Handy, who had been raised in the Greater St. Paul AME Church, became an important progenitor of these emerging styles. Fellow Florence native Sam Phillips, who later built on Handy’s innovations and pioneered new musical styles of his own, echoed Handy in his youthful appreciation of the Shoals as a musical melting pot:

“When I was growing up, we heard it all... In the fields we heard the black man’s blues, in the churches we heard black spirituals and white gospel, and on the radio we heard the Grand Ole Opry... Out of that we created a sound that’s hard to define, hard to pigeon-hole, because it includes the best elements of all those tremendous sources.”

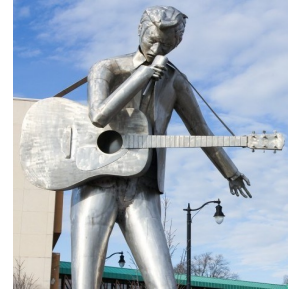
—Sam Phillips



Poverty was another defining feature of life in the Shoals, even after the construction of Wilson Dam and the establishment of TVA brought electricity and unprecedented economic opportunities. The Great Depression and the death of his father in 1941 forced Phillips to drop out of Coffee High School, where he conducted the marching band, and work to support his mother and siblings. “Relentless poverty was a constant part of my life,” music publisher and producer Buddy Killen (below) said of his childhood in Florence. “It was all I knew.”



For Phillips, Killen and others growing up in the Shoals during the Depression era, music held the promise of “escape from their small-town existence.” Killen “realized that he wasn’t interested in working for Reynolds Aluminum or moving north for a factory job,” Christopher Reali writes, so he “left the Shoals for Nashville in the early 1950s.” Phillips, meanwhile, left for Memphis, where he founded Sun Records and discovered the “King of Rock and Roll,” Elvis Presley. So many budding Shoals musicians charted similar paths that, by the end of the 1950s, a “broader musical network... connected the Shoals with Nashville and Memphis.”



The story of the Blue Seal Pals (below) shows the role this interstate network played in the birth of the Muscle Shoals recording industry. Quinton Claunch, whose family came to the Shoals from Mississippi after his father took a job with Reynolds Aluminum, was working at the same factory when he met fellow musician Edgar Clayton. They formed a band and by 1946 they were performing regular live gigs on “a twelve-station regional radio network” that included Florence station WJOI. These performances led to successful audition for Grand Ole Opry founder George Hay, and the group relocated to Nashville.

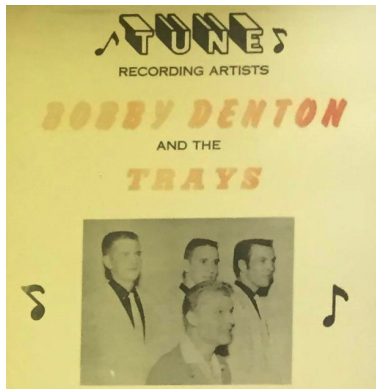


After the Blue Seal Pals disbanded in 1948, Claunch moved from Nashville to Memphis, where he worked as a session guitarist for Phillips’ Sun Records. Another former Blue Seal Pal, Bill Cantrell, joined Claunch in Memphis where they played together with future FAME guitarist Terry Thompson on studio sessions for Meteor Records. Eventually they co-founded their own Hi Records label and opened their own Memphis studio.



Other Blue Seal Pals made their way back to the Shoals. Pals co-founder Edgar Clayton returned to his roots in radio with a job at Florence station WLAY, where he hosted a program called *Shoals Music Jamboree*. Pals bassist Dexter Johnson (left), meanwhile, settled in Sheffield and installed a recording studio in his garage in 1951.

It was Johnson who inspired bus-station owner James Joiner to launch Shoals Recording Services, Inc., from his Alabama Street depot in January 1956. And it was Joiner who co-founded the state’s first record company, Tune Records, later that year.



Joiner “didn’t envision starting a recording industry in Alabama,” Christopher Reali writes. Instead, the budding songwriter “viewed his Florence-based operation as a springboard to Nashville.” In early 1957 Joiner invited local high-school student Bobby Denton to sing on a demo recording of Joiner’s composition, “A Fallen Star.” Joiner then used his connections with Buddy Killen to secure a publishing deal for the song through Nashville’s Tree Music. Within a month of the demo session, singer Jimmy Newman had released the first commercial recording of “A Fallen Star” on the Nashville-based Dot Records label. Joiner’s Tune Records then released Denton’s version, which became a regional hit. Before the year was out, Bill Monroe, Ray Price, Ferlin Husky, The Hilltoppers and a comedy duo called Lonzo and Oscar had released their own versions.

Following the success of “A Fallen Star,” word of the burgeoning Shoals recording industry spread across the state, attracting a number of aspiring songwriters and musicians to the area. Among them were Rick Hall (below left) and Billy Sherrill (below right) of Hamilton-based band The Fairlains, who began making weekly trips to the Shoals to pitch their material to Joiner. One of their Tune-published songs, “Sweet and Innocent,” was recorded by Roy Orbison in 1958, and later produced by Hall with greater success in a version by Donny Osmond.



Hall and Sherrill made regular trips to Nashville, too, and professional musicians still burn up the road between Nashville and the Shoals. But it was a blend of Nashville-style country with other stylistic influences that would, in the hands of a younger generation of musicians, produce what known today as the “Muscle Shoals sound.” The most important of these influences was Black rhythm and blues music, or R&B, which captivated white teenagers throughout the South and initially reached Shoals listeners thanks to Nashville station WLAC. As Swampers keyboardist Barry Beckett later recalled:

“Everybody picked up... WLAC at night. Nobody wanted to hear strictly country music, which in a small town like Muscle Shoals was all you got, and the only alternative was WLAC out of Nashville.”

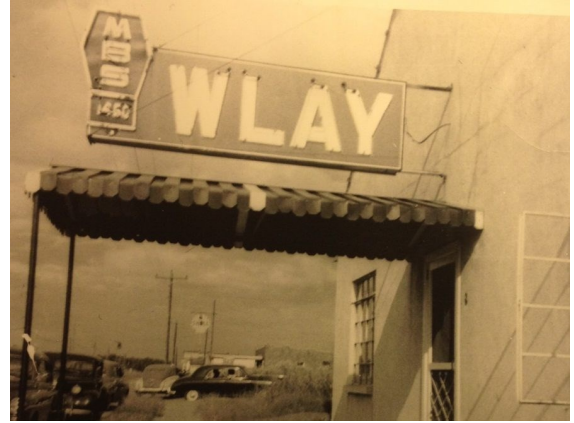
—Barry Beckett



By the mid-1950s, even Florence-based WLAY had begun to program R&B music. According to David Hood, Beckett's later bandmate in the Swampers:

“WLAY was a station that played everything. It played rock and roll, R&B, country... Everything was all the same. And so we grew up hearing Chuck Berry and Bobby Vee and Elvis and Ray Charles and some country music all on the same station. And as a result, we didn't really know what was white music and what was Black music. It was just music to us.”

—David Hood



Tuning in to WLAC and WLAY was an act of rebellion for teenagers like Beckett and Hood, exposing them to music that was “markedly different” from the country sounds preferred by their parents' generation, and which profoundly shaped them as they began to perform music themselves. “The music of Black Americans intrigued many who sought a different musical path from that of their parents,” Christopher Reali writes, and “altogether, the sociocultural interactions during the 1950s that mingled the sounds of Black and white America helped to distance young southern audiences from the highly charged racialized exchanges of their parents' generation.”

This “cultural exchange” was especially fruitful in places like the Shoals, where “in comparison to other Alabama towns and cities, the racial climate... was relatively calm in the 1960s, even though *everything*... was segregated.” And this climate, Reali argues, allowed for “the cross-pollination of musical styles” that defines the Muscle Shoals sound:



“Black artists from the area, such as Arthur Alexander and James Carr, used white country music styles in their work, and white artists from the Shoals frequently borrowed from the blues [and] gospel influences of their black contemporaries, creating a distinct sound.”

—Christopher Reali

The predominately white musicians who played on these recordings loved R&B, but the northwest Alabama setting meant they could not forsake their country roots. As Barry Beckett later recalled:

“We were trying to figure out how to blend [country and R&B music] because we would have to play [both] for fraternity gigs and clubs around town.”

—Barry Beckett

The result was the chameleon-like quality for which Muscle Shoals musicians are known and celebrated the world over. As Swampers guitarist (and nephew of Dexter) Jimmy Johnson explained:

We are a band. When we play on someone's record, we become that person's band... We've been called chameleons, because we blend in with the artist we're working with. We don't outshine them.

—Jimmy Johnson



Muscle Shoals Music Makers

W.C. Handy (1873-1958), regarded as the “Father of the Blues,” is one of the most influential composers in American music history. Born in Florence, he developed a passion for music at a young age but his father and grandfather, both preachers, believed that secular music was wicked, and forced Handy to trade his guitar for a dictionary. After watching another musician play the cornet, Handy saved enough money to buy his own, which he wrapped up and hid in the woods behind his family’s home. Handy’s musical career began in 1896, when he left the Shoals to play cornet with the Chicago-based Mahara’s Minstrels. In 1909 he relocated to Memphis, performing on Beale Street and composing the theme song for Edward Hull Crump’s campaign for mayor. Later Handy altered the lyrics and changed the name of the song from “Mr. Crump” to “Memphis Blues.” Handy eventually moved to St. Louis where he combined African rhythms with European styles and techniques to create “St. Louis Blues.” By 1930, it had become the most recorded song in popular music. His contributions to music are commemorated annually in his hometown during the W.C. Handy Music Festival, and his birthplace in Florence now operates as a museum and library.



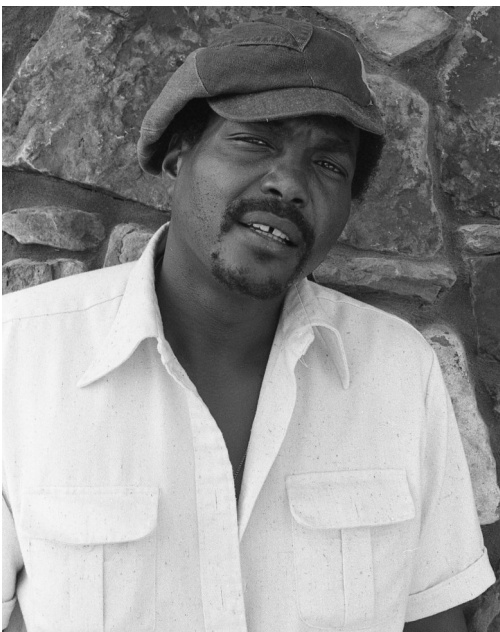
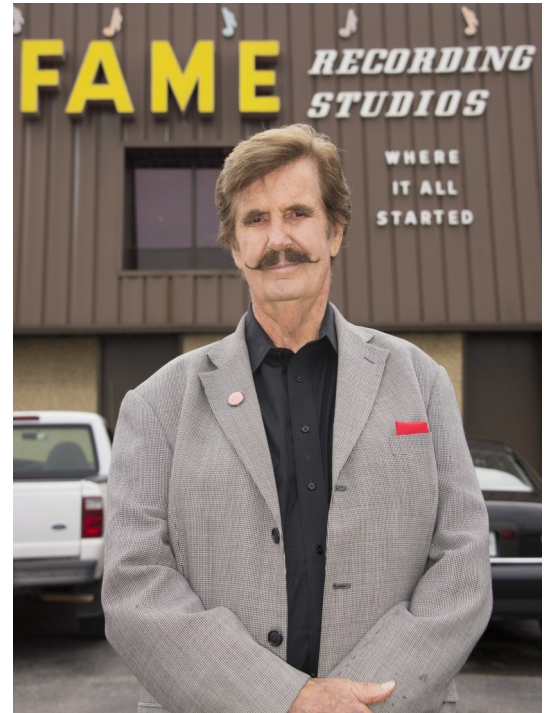
Sam Phillips (1923-2003) was a key figure in the development of rock and roll music. During the 1950s, as the founder and owner of Sun Records, Phillips produced such legendary artists as Roy Orbison, Jerry Lee Lewis, Carl Perkins and Johnny Cash, but he is perhaps best known for his role in launching the career of Elvis Presley. Phillips was born and grew up on his parents’ farm near Florence where the singing of black laborers inspired an early interest in music. As a student at Coffee High School, Phillips conducted the marching band and aspired to go to law school, but the hardships of the Great Depression and the death of his father in 1941 forced Phillips to abandon his education and work to support his mother and siblings. After working at WLAY Radio in Muscle Shoals, Phillips moved to Memphis and opened the Memphis Recording Service, drawing inspiration from the “raw and unadorned” spirituals he had heard while growing up in Florence. Soon Phillips established his own label, Sun Records. Elvis Presley first came to Sun when he was 19, hoping to record a song for his mother. He ended up staying and recording such hits at “That’s All Right” and “Blue Suede Shoes.” Phillips even brought Presley to the Shoals in 1954, and again in 1955, to perform at the Sheffield Community Center.





Dexter Johnson was a bluegrass musician who established the Shoals area's first professional recording studio in 1951. Born in 1918, Dexter grew up on a farm in Mississippi and learned to play guitar and mandolin at an early age. By the time he was 14, he and his brother Ray were performing together as a duo and appearing regularly on Sheffield radio station WNRA (later known as WLAY). After moving to Nashville, where he played with the Blue Seal Pals, Johnson returned to the Shoals settled into the Sheffield home where he would build his studio. Several big-name talents made early demo recordings in Dexter's garage, including Kenneth Lovelace, who became famous as Jerry Lee Lewis' guitarist and bandleader. Dexter's nephew Jimmy Johnson, later the guitarist for The Swampers, also got his first taste of recording in his uncle's studio.

Rick Hall (1932-2018), recognized as the "Father of Muscle Shoals Music," produced the Shoals music industry's first national hits at his own FAME Studios. Born in Mississippi, Hall began his music career playing fiddle with The Country Pals, a popular group known for performing at square dances and hosting its own weekly radio show from Hamilton, Alabama. Hall and bandmate Billy Sherrill formed a songwriting partnership and began pitching songs to James Joiner of the Florence-based Tune Records and Publishing Company. Eventually the pair partnered with theatre manager Tom Stafford to launch their own publishing company, which they named Florence Alabama Music Enterprises (FAME). When the partnership dissolved in 1960, Hall took the FAME name to Muscle Shoals, where he built his own studio and recorded his first hit single as a producer, Arthur Alexander's "You Better Move On." Over the next several years, Hall's reputation as a producer of soul and R&B grew steadily thanks to hits like Etta James' signature tune "Tell Mama." In the 1970s, Hall shifted his focus to mainstream pop and eventually country music, recording hits for the Osmonds, Paul Anka, Mac Davis, Shenandoah and others. Hall was inducted into the Alabama Music Hall of Fame in 1985 and received a Grammy Trustees Award in 2014 for his significant contributions to the field of recording.



Arthur Alexander (1940-1993) was a singer-songwriter and a pioneer of what has since become known as "country-soul." Born in Sheffield, Alexander cut his first single, "Sally Sue Brown," at Tom Stafford's SPAR Music in downtown Florence. The following year he recorded another original song, "You Better Move On," at Rick Hall's FAME Studios. It is now among Alexander's best-known songs thanks to covers by the Rolling Stones, the Hollies and George Jones. Two other Alexander songs, "Soldier of Love" and "Anna (Go to Him)," were covered by The Beatles. Alexander's commercial fortunes declined in the mid-1960s, but his career briefly rebounded after a session at the Music Mill studio in Muscle Shoals produced the minor hit "Every Day I Have to Cry Some." Eventually Alexander left the music business and took a job as a bus driver. However following his 1990 induction into the Alabama Music Hall of Fame, he returned to performing and recorded what proved to be his final album, *Lonely Just Like Me*.



Percy Sledge (1940-2015), best known for his number-one hit “When a Man Loves a Woman,” was one of the most recognizable voices in the country-soul genre pioneered by fellow Shoals natives Arthur Alexander and Donnie Fritts. After performing as a member of gospel quartet The Singing Clouds, Sledge began performing secular music at fraternity parties as front man of the popular Esquires Combo. In late 1965, Norala Sound Studio owner Quin Ivy saw Sledge performing with the group at the Elks Club in Sheffield, and arranged to produce a record with the singer. Backed by keyboardist Spooner Oldham and other members of the FAME Studios rhythm section, Sledge recorded “When a Man Loves a Woman” at Norala on February 17, 1966. Released two months later, the song topped the Billboard Hot 100 chart and became Atlantic Records’ first gold single. In 1993 Sledge received the Alabama Music Hall of Fame’s Lifetime Award for Performing Achievement, and in 2005 he was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.

Donna Jean Godchaux is a Florence-born singer who began her career as a session musician, contributing background vocals to such number-one hits as Percy Sledge’s “When a Man Loves a Woman” and Elvis Presley’s “Suspicious Minds.” After moving to San Francisco in 1970, she married keyboardist Keith Godchaux and together they joined the Grateful Dead, touring with the group from 1972 to 1979. During their time with the band, the couple also recorded the album *Keith & Donna* with help from the Dead’s frontman, Jerry Garcia, and returned the favor by performing as part of his Jerry Garcia Band. Godchaux, who lives in Killen, was inducted into Rock and Roll Hall of Fame as a member of the Dead in 1994 and continues to make occasional appearances with Dead spinoff acts like RatDog and Dead & Company.



Donnie Fritts (1942-2019), a pioneer of country-soul whose songs have been recorded by hundreds of major artists, was a key player in the formation of the Muscle Shoals music scene. His trademark “funky” blend of R&B, country and rock shattered racial and musical barriers, helping to shape and define what is known the world over as the Muscle Shoals sound. Fritts was born in Florence and played drums during his teenage years with local groups like Hollis Dixon and the Keynotes. In the late 1950s, he struck up a friendship with Tom Stafford of SPAR Music, which became an important gathering place for Fritts and other budding Shoals musicians. It was there, with encouragement from Arthur Alexander, that Fritts wrote his first songs. When Stafford’s business partner Rick Hall split with SPAR in 1961 and established FAME Studios, Fritts and Alexander followed. By the mid-1960s Fritts had joined David Briggs, Norbert Putnam and other FAME musicians in moving to Nashville. There Fritts quickly built a reputation as a songwriter, and by the end of the decade he had scored his first major hits, including “Breakfast in Bed,” co-written with guitarist Eddie Hinton and recorded by Dusty Springfield. In 1970, Fritts joined the touring band of “outlaw country” singer Kris Kristofferson, and their friendship led to Fritts being cast by director Sam Peckinpah in three feature films. His songwriting talents also continued to be in high demand, and Fritts returned to the Shoals to record his own solo album in 1974. Fritts moved back to the Shoals full-time in the 1990s and remained a prominent fixture of the local music scene until his death in 2019.



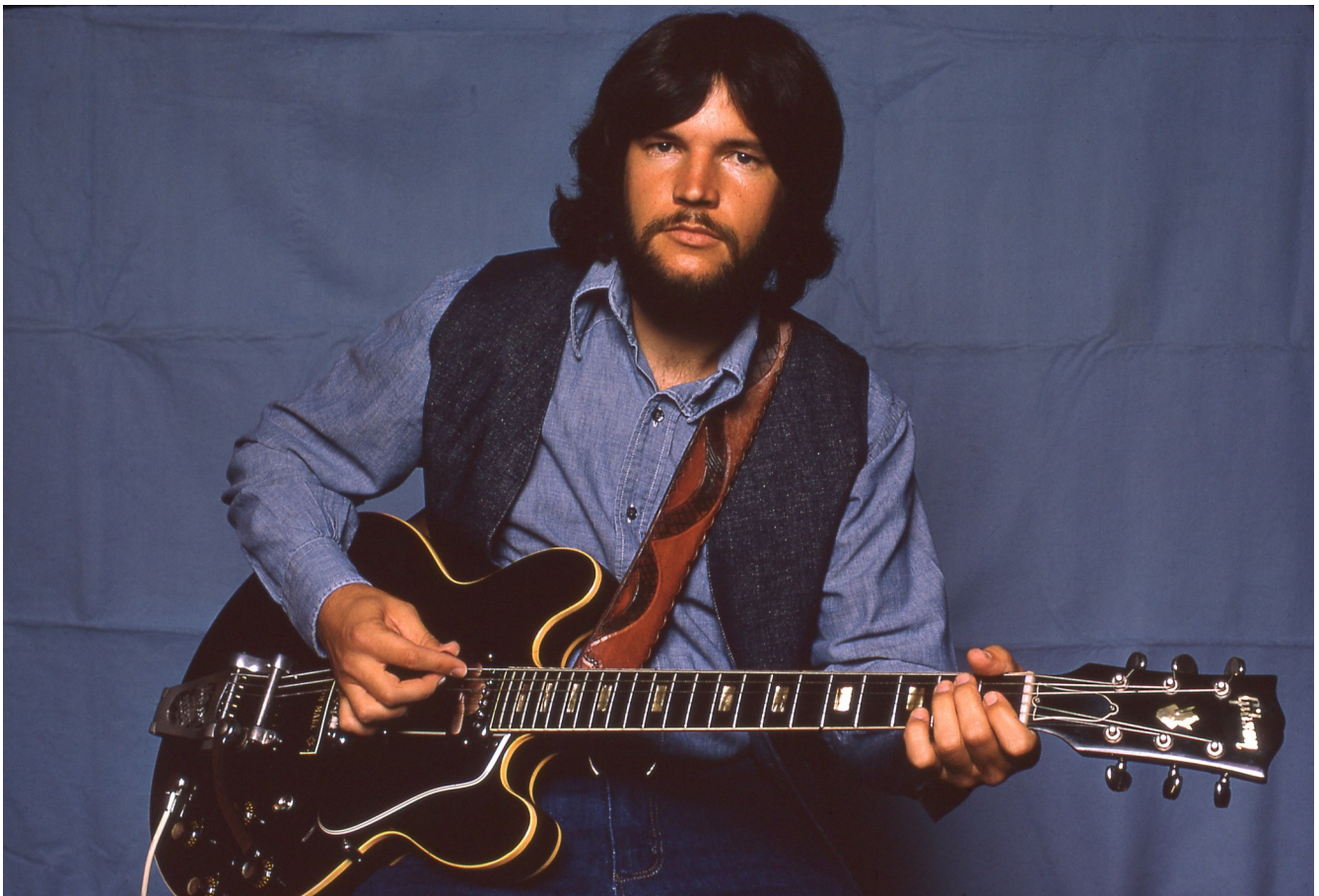
Spooner Oldham started playing piano during high school and performed on a who’s who of hit records, including “When a Man Loves a Woman” by Percy Sledge, “Mustang Sally” by Wilson Pickett and “I Never Loved a Man” by Aretha Franklin. He also toured with Franklin and has performed in concert with everyone from Bob Dylan and Neil Young to Linda Ronstadt and Drive-By Truckers. As a songwriter, Oldham teamed with Dan Penn to compose such hits as “Cry Like a Baby,” recorded by The Box Tops; “I’m Your Puppet,” recorded by James and Bobby Purify; and “It Tears Me Up,” recorded by Percy Sledge. In 2008 Oldham was inducted into the Musicians Hall of Fame in Nashville, and he was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame for his keyboard playing in 2009.





Ava Aldridge (1946-2003) was a singer, a prolific songwriter and a “maternal” figure for up-and-coming Muscle Shoals musicians beginning in the 1970s. She contributed backing vocals to recordings by Percy Sledge, Wilson Pickett, Hank Williams Jr., Amy Grant and others, in addition to recording her own album and several singles for the MCA Records label. However, she is perhaps best remembered for her successes as a songwriter, including the top-ten hits “Sharing The Night Together,” co-written with Eddie Struzick, and “Treat Her Right,” co-written with Lenny LeBlanc. And in 1977 Aldridge became the first woman to produce a recording session in Muscle Shoals, collaborating with the Spraggins Sisters at Al Cartee’s Music Mill where she was one of 38 staff songwriters.

Travis Wammack, also known as “Snake Man” due to his passion for wrangling rattlesnakes, is a Shoals-based singer, songwriter, musician, and producer. Born in Walnut, Mississippi, he moved to Memphis with his parents when he was three years old and started playing guitar at when he was eight. Growing up in the suburb of Binghampton, he caught the attention of concert promoter Eddie Bond, and by the time he was ten he was performing as Little Travis alongside music legends like Johnny Cash and Carl Perkins. Wammack was just twelve when he made his first records, and as a teenager he started playing on sessions at Sonic Studios in Memphis. At Sonic, he recorded his original composition “Stratchy,” which became a national hit in 1964. Soon Wammack caught the attention of Rick Hall, who began flying him down to Muscle Shoals to play on sessions at FAME Studios. Eventually Wammack relocated to the Shoals full-time, and in 1969, when Hall’s studio band left to establish Muscle Shoals Sound Studio, Hall asked Wammack to find suitable replacements. He enlisted the services of Memphis-based session musicians who would become fixtures of the Shoals music scene, and Wammack himself played on such iconic FAME tracks as Clarence Carter’s “Patches,” Bobby Gentry’s “Fancy,” and “One Bad Apple” by the Osmonds. He resumed his career as a solo artist in 1972, when Hall produced Wammack’s self-titled debut album and released it on the FAME Records label. Hall again produced Wammack on his 1975 follow-up, *Not for Sale*, which generated two U.S. chart singles.



Muscle Shoals Recording Studios

Spar Music
COMMERCIAL
RECORDINGS

CYPRESS MOON
STUDIOS

Muscle Shoals Sound
3416 JACKSON HIGHWAY

WIDGE

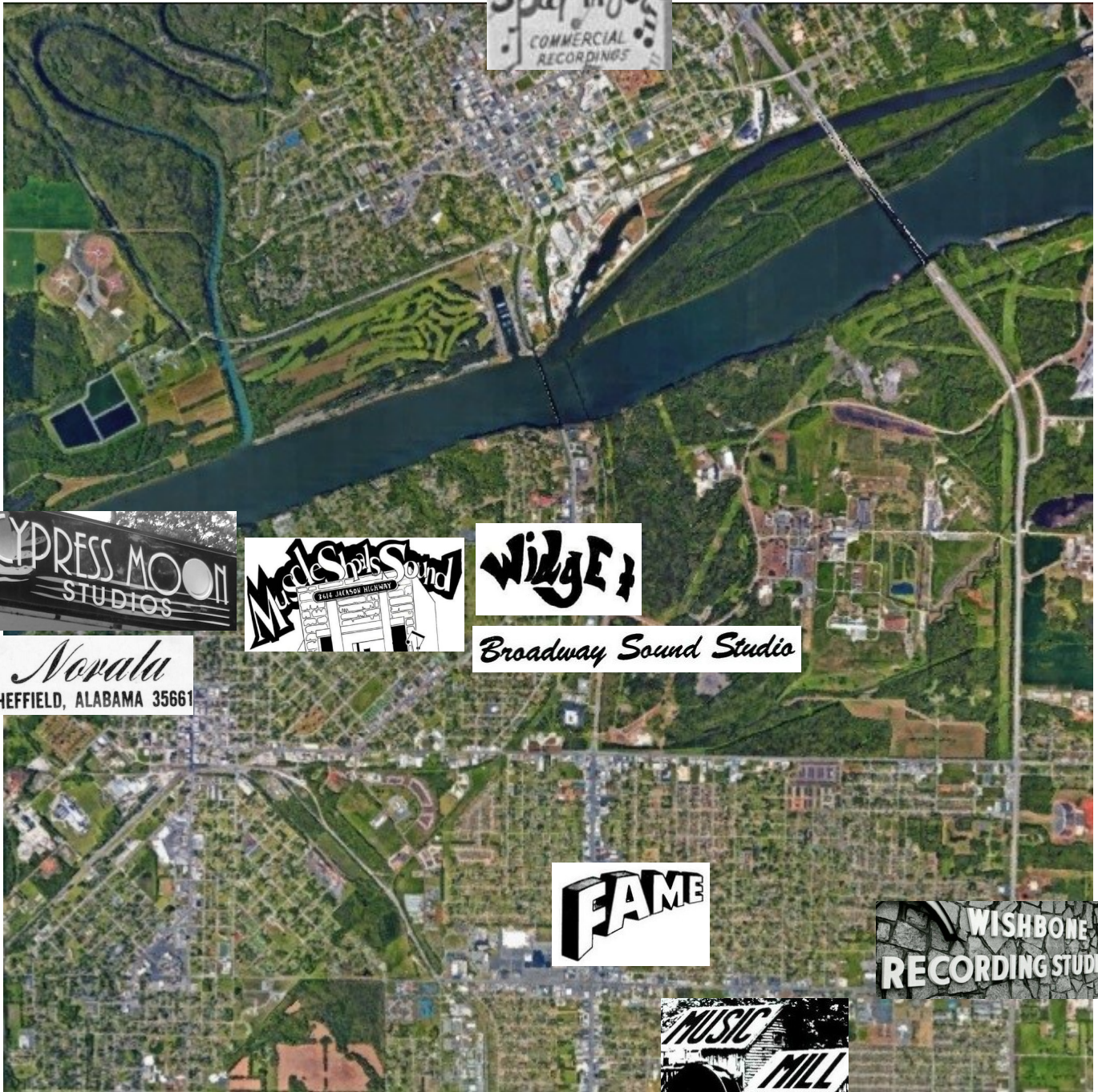
Broadway Sound Studio

Norala
SHEFFIELD, ALABAMA 35661

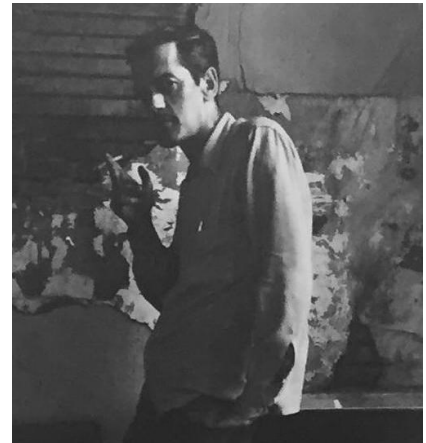
FAME

WISHBONE
RECORDING STUDIO

MUSIC
MILL

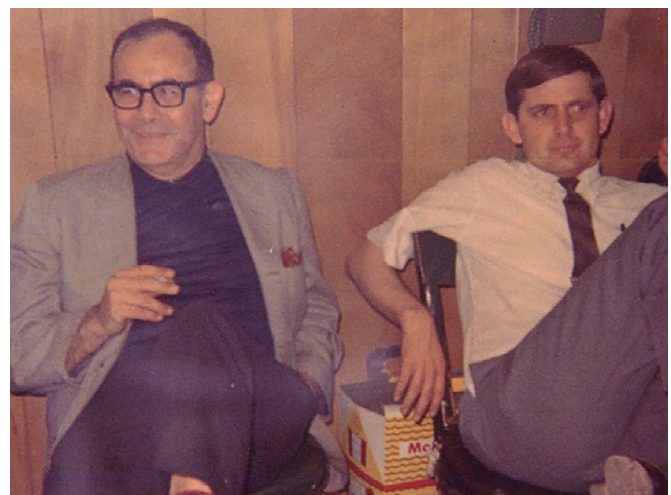


SPAR Music was located above the City Drug Store in downtown Florence at the intersection of Seminary and Tennessee streets. Tom Stafford (right), the son of the store's owner, opened the studio in 1959 with a \$300 investment from Tune Records founder James Joiner. As manager of the Princess Theatre, Stafford had befriended several aspiring young musicians, including Dan Penn, Spooner Oldham, David Briggs and Norbert Putnam, and SPAR was where they honed their craft. Former Tune songwriters Rick Hall and Billy Sherrill came onto the scene in 1959 and entered into a partnership with Stafford, which they called Florence Alabama Music Enterprises (FAME) but the union didn't last long. Sherrill soon left for Nashville where he became a top producer of country music. Hall, meanwhile, bought the FAME name for one dollar and struck out on his own.



FAME Studios was established by Rick Hall (left) in a former tobacco warehouse on Wilson Dam Highway in the spring of 1961. Almost immediately, Hall's old partner Tom Stafford came calling. SPAR recording artist Arthur Alexander had written a potential hit called "You Better Move On," but Stafford had little experience with professional recording and asked Hall to produce it. Hall recognized the song's potential and agreed to record Alexander in his own studio with musicians recruited from a local band called Dan Penn and the Pallbearers. Hall then took the tape of "You Better Move On" to Nashville and pitched it to various record labels, eventually finding a buyer in Dot Records. The single was released in December of 1961, climbing to number 24 on the pop charts. Using the proceeds from his surprise hit, Hall hired Nashville producer Owen Bradley to build a new and larger studio complex for FAME on Avalon Avenue. Bill Lowery, an Atlanta-

based music mogul, starting bringing artists to record at FAME in the summer of 1963. While he was in the Shoals, Hall played Lowery a tape of Leighton native Jimmy Hughes singing an original song called "Steal Away." It was, in fact, the first recording Hall had produced at his new studio, but he couldn't find a label to release it and was about to give up on the song. Lowery, however, was impressed and encouraged Hall to release the record himself. Eventually Hall found a distribution deal with Vee Jay Records and scored his biggest hit yet when "Steal Away" cracked the top twenty. The success of Percy Sledge's 1966 classic "When a Man Loves a Woman," recorded at the Quinvy Recording Studio in nearby Sheffield, caught the attention of another music mogul, Jerry Wexler of Atlantic Records. Convinced that the Shoals had something special, Wexler came to FAME with soul singer Wilson Pickett. The session resulted in Pickett's first top-ten hit, "Land of 1,000 Dances," and Wexler was sold on the Shoals area's hit-making potential. He returned with Aretha Franklin the following year to record "I Never Loved a Man," but his partnership with Hall proved to be short-lived. Shortly thereafter, Hall's FAME rhythm section left to establish Muscle Shoals Sound Studio, but these twin catastrophes did not spell the end of Rick Hall. In 1969 Hall signed a multi-million-dollar deal with Capitol Records, which heralded a shift away from R&B toward more mainstream pop music and initiated the most commercially successful phase of his career to date.



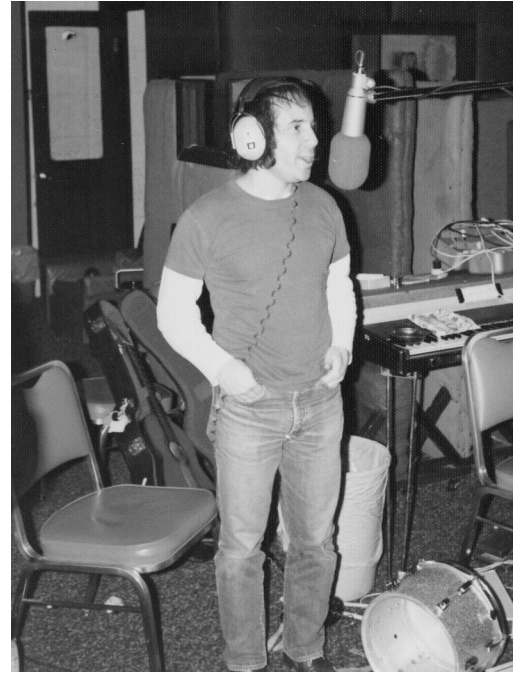


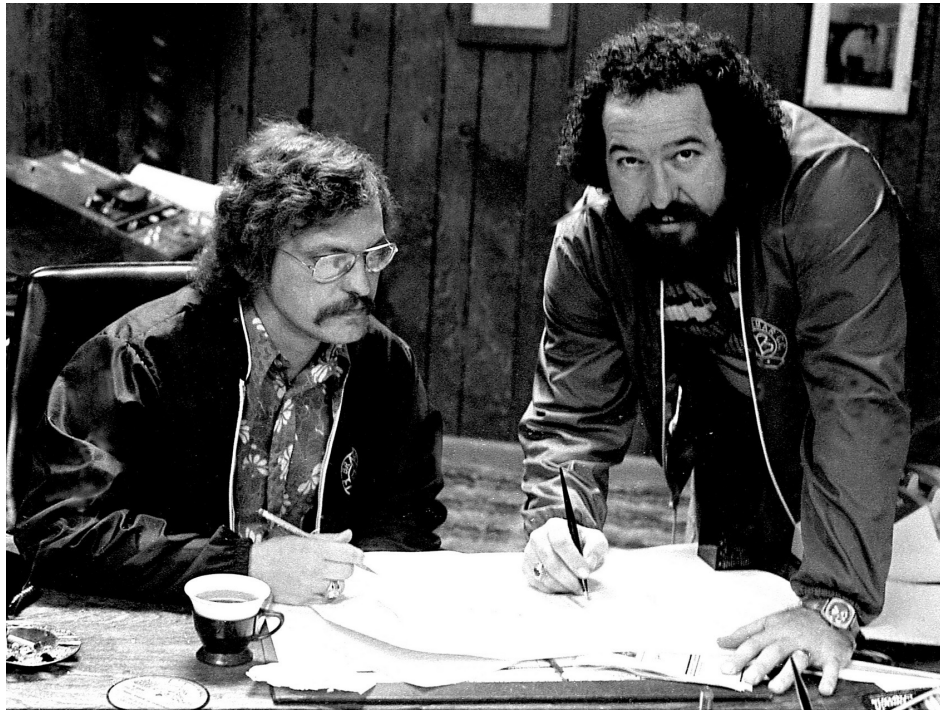
Norala Recording Studio was established in 1965 by FAME songwriter and WLAY disc jockey Quin Ivy, across the street from the Tune Town record store in downtown Sheffield (which Ivy also owned). Norala was technically a competitor, but Rick Hall of FAME Studios gave the venture his blessing and even let Ivy borrow FAME's rhythm section. Success came early and unexpectedly, in late 1965, when Ivy recorded Percy Sledge (left) singing "When a Man Loves a Woman" at the new studio. "Quin called and said he had a song he wanted me to hear," Rick Hall remembered. "I had him bring it over here one Sunday and play it... I said, 'It's a smash.'" Hall turned out to be right: issued by Atlantic Records in February 1966, the Ivy-produced single became an overnight success, spending two weeks at the top of the pop charts and topping the R&B charts for four weeks. Eventually Ivy was able to build a larger, more modern facility on nearby Broadway Street and moved his renamed Quinvy Recording Studio there in mid-1968. The original Norala building on 2nd Street in Sheffield no longer stands, but its location is commemorated by an Alabama Tourism Department historical marker, erected in 2014.

Soon after Quin Ivy (below left) moved his Quinvy Recording Studio to a new facility at 1307 Broadway Street in Sheffield, he became less involved in the studio's day-to-day operations. By mid-1970, when producer Jerry "Swamp Dogg" Williams started bringing artists to record at Quinvy, Ivy's engineer David Johnson (below right) was handling most of the production duties. When Ivy sold his interest in the studio to Johnson in late 1973, Quinvy shifted its focus from R&B to what is now known as "Southern rock." Having produced a demo recording for Lynyrd Skynyrd at Quinvy in 1970, Johnson went on to record other Southern rock acts, including The Outlaws, who opened for Skynyrd when they performed at the Florence-Lauderdale Coliseum in 1974. **Broadway Sound Studio**, as it was known during Johnson's tenure, closed in 1989 when Johnson was named executive director of the Alabama Music Hall of Fame.



Muscle Shoals Sound Studio was established in 1969 by Jimmy Johnson, David Hood, Barry Beckett and Roger Hawkins. All four owners were studio musicians and had been members of the FAME rhythm section before breaking with Rick Hall and striking out on their own. They had played at FAME and elsewhere on some of the biggest hit recordings of the decade and were building a reputation as session pros when Hall signed a contract with Capitol Records that would require them to work exclusively at FAME. Meanwhile, church music director Fred Bevis, who had converted a former coffin factory on Jackson Highway into a studio decided to sell the building. And the FAME rhythm section decided to buy it, with help from their old friend Jerry Wexler of Atlantic Records. Weeks later, Atlantic brought singer-songwriter R.B. Greaves to the new studio to record "Take a Letter, Maria," which went to number two on the Billboard charts. The studio's winning streak continued when the Rolling Stones arrived to record three songs: "You Gotta Move," "Wild Horses," and the number-one smash "Brown Sugar." Muscle Shoals Sound soon developed a fruitful relationship with another label, Memphis-based Stax Records. A two-day session in mid-1972 produced the Staple Singers hits "Respect Yourself" and "I'll Take You There." The latter song climbed to the top of the charts and sold more than two million copies, earning the studio its first platinum record. Among those impressed by "I'll Take You There" was singer-songwriter Paul Simon (above), who scheduled a four-day session to record a single song, "Take Me to the Mardi Gras." He was pleasantly surprised, however, when the rhythm section nailed the song on the second take. With studio time to spare, Simon ended up recording five tracks with the four "Swampers" (below). Among the songs were "Kodachrome" and "Loves Me Like a Rock," both of which went to number two on the pop singles charts.





Wishbone Productions was established in 1971 by songwriter-musician Terry Woodford (above left) and former FAME keyboard player Clayton Ivey (above right). They released their first full-length album production in April 1973, and the following year, got their big break when they signed an exclusive production arrangement with Motown Records. In 1976, Ivey and Woodward ended their ties with Motown and built their own studio on Webster Avenue across from the Muscle Shoals Airport. It was a state-of-the-art facility at the time, boasting the first 24-track recorder in the Shoals area. Woodford and Ivey further distinguished themselves from competitors in their treatment of staff songwriters. While other local publishers paid writers "only when a song produced an income," Wishbone supported songwriters during their "developmental stages," ensuring that they "had money to pay for food and rent by placing them on draw as soon as the company signed them to a contract." Among the successful local songwriters who honed their craft at Wishbone were Mac McAnally and Robert Byrne. Another former Wishbone songwriter, Billy Lawson, now owns the Webster Avenue studio.

Former FAME Studios engineer Al Cartee and his partner George Soulé opened **Music Mill** in 1974. The studio was one of the largest in the Shoals area at the time and the only local studio to specialize in the recording of country music. It even had its own basement-level lounge for artists and songwriters, "filled with farm antiques, a video-tape machine, television set and sound equipment." Music Mill scored its first hit less than a year after opening, when "Reconsider Me" by Narvel Felts reached number two on the Billboard Hot Country Singles charts. "In the studio's first three years of operation," Cash Box reported, "there was never a week when Music Mill sessions weren't on the country charts." Other artists who recorded at the studio over the years included George Jones, Carl Perkins, Roy Clark, Bobby Bare, and Hank Williams, Jr. By 1977 Cartee's publishing companies, Music Mill and Alan Cartee Music, employed 38 songwriters and had an office in Nashville. Staff writers included Ava Aldridge, Eddie Struzick, and Max Lee. Aldridge alone had more than 55 of her songs recorded and while working for Music Mill as director of creative services, "became the first woman to produce a session in a Muscle Shoals studio."





Widget Sound Studio was opened in 1968 by Ron Ballew as a demo studio, publishing firm and production facility. It is best known today for the 1972 hit “Motorcycle Mama” by Sailcat. The Decatur-based band, led by singer-songwriters Johnny Wyker and Court Pickett, were supported by a who’s-who of Muscle Shoals musicians during the recording of the single and album of the same name, including Pete Carr, Terry Woodford and Clayton Ivey. Another noteworthy Widget client was actor-musician Billy Bob Thornton, who recorded there as the drummer of a three-piece band when he was 17 years old. When Thornton’s friend Donnie Fritts asked why they weren’t working at Widget’s more famous neighbor Muscle Shoals Sound Studio, Thornton replied, “We couldn’t afford it.”

By 1978, the Muscle Shoals Rhythm Section had outgrown the modest concrete building at 3614 Jackson Highway. “As the end of the nine-year building lease approached,” Record World reported, “the opportunity opened up to buy a 31,000 square foot building at 1000 Alabama Avenue overlooking the Tennessee River.” Built in the early 1900s, it had housed a Naval Reserve facility during the 1950s and early 1960s when the Swampers were cutting their teeth as musicians. “The Naval Reserve used to let our local high school... have the space for dances,” Swampers guitarist Jimmy Johnson later recalled. “We actually played our first gigs on the gymnasium floor, where the studios now sit.” The new Muscle Shoals Sound, known today as **Cypress Moon Studios**, opened for business in April 1979 following an extensive renovation process. The Swampers signed a contract with Capitol Records following the move and established their own Muscle Shoals Sound imprint through the label. Swampers keyboardist Barry Beckett, who had become an accomplished producer in his own right, also established a fruitful partnership with Jerry Wexler of Atlantic Records. Perhaps most notably, Beckett and Wexler produced a pair of albums for Bob Dylan at the new Muscle Shoals Sound. The first of these, 1979’s *Slow Train Coming*, included the single “Gotta Serve Somebody,” which earned the legendary singer-songwriter a Grammy award for “Best Rock Vocal Performance.”



Music Playlists



FAME Studios

https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLxcE7amMcv2_YEAKYKvROGRoxZH4RrT_G

Norala Sound Studio

<https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLxcE7amMcv29FEfWtnQn0HeVfC2DgLxCG>



Broadway Sound Studio

<https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLxcE7amMcv28UVuq95r9c90TXi2sQcQYn>

Muscle Shoals Sound Studio

https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLxcE7amMcv28T_O_hae3EpNIu_lbAbbm



Cypress Moon Studios

<https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLxcE7amMcv2-YKLNpSBTZVKHI915kJD7->

Wishbone Recording Studio

<https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLxcE7amMcv2-GvVPEsOVMxJbcmuXEEKIN>





GETTING READY — Rick Hall, from left, producer of Candi Staton's new Warner Brothers album, Miss Staton, and John Salstone, assistant to the President of Warner Brothers

Records, help Miss Staton prepare for the kickoff of promotion for her new record. (Times-Daily Photo)



SECOND PLATINUM — The members of Muscle Shoals Sound Studio show off the second platinum record they have been awarded within a month. The record represents the sale of two million copies of the Luther Ingram song "If Loving You

Is Wrong (I Don't Want To Be Right)." Standing left to right are, Pete Carr, guitarist; David Hood, bass; Roger Hawkins, drums; Jimmy Johnson, guitarist; Jerry Masters, engineer; and Steve Melton, assistant engineer.



RIBBON CUTTING — Jimmy Hunt, standing at left, attorney for Paradox Studio, looks on as Sheffield Mayor F. E. (Buddy) Draper cuts the ribbon opening the studio. Others present at the ceremony are David Johnson, Larry Brewer, president of Paradox; Bobby Oldham; Jerry Wallace; Billy Griffith, studio

manager at Paradox, Larry Griffin and Kicker Willis. Kneeling from left are Bill Burchell, Johnny Cooke, vice president of the studio; Roger Hawkins, Terry Skinner and Bill Coffield, secretary-treasurer of Paradox. (Staff Photo)



WORK ON ARRANGEMENT — Al Catee, president of Music Mill Studio, from left, looks on as Jerry Foster, and Billy Strange prepare an arrangement for one of Foster's songs. Foster

has been at the studio the past two weekends working on new recordings. (Times-Daily Photo)



PRESENTED GOLD ALBUM—Harrison Callaway, center, was presented a gold album last week for his arrangement of the song "Firefly", which was included on the Temptations hit LP "A Song For You". With Callaway are, Clayton Ivey, from left, co-producer of the song; Charles Rose, a member of the Muscle Shoals Horns; Callaway; Harvey Thompson, a member of the horn section, and Terry Woodford, co-producer of the song. (Staff Photo by Doug Allen)



TRIES FACILITY — It is unusual that the photographer gets in front of the camera, but the opening of 104 East Second St., is an exception. Dick Cooper, from left, tries out the new facilities at Muscle Shoals Sound's new studio, as David Hood, Randy McCormick, Mike O'Rear, Steve Melton, Lenny LaBlanc, Greg

Hamm, Jerry Masters, Tom Roady, Jimmy Johnson and Barry Beckett look on, Jimmy Evens, drummer with the new facility, was not available for the photograph, and Roger Hawkins, vice president of the studio, was behind the camera for a change.



FINAL MIX — Jerry Williams, left, producer of Little Big Man, looks over the shoulder of David Johnson, president of Broadway Sound Studio, as he completes the final mix on the British group's recently recorded album. (Times-Daily Photo by Dick Cooper)



LISTEN TO FIRST TAPES — The staff of Music Mill Studio gathers around as the first recordings are played back. Listening are, seated from left, Al Cartee, president, George Soule, engineer and producer, J. Frank Guthrie, secretary,

treasurer, and Kathy Thornton, secretary; standing from left, Tommy Brasfield, songwriter, Brent Cartee, who will head the publishing company, and Don Cartee, drummer.



REMOVING THE BUGS — Steve Melton, from left, Greg Hamm and Jerry Masters, engineers with Muscle Shoals Sound Studio, work out the bugs in the studio's new facility in Sheffield after the first test track was recorded. (Staff Photo)



TOGETHER AGAIN — Ron Ballew, standing, president of Widget Recording Studio, looks on as Donnie Fritts, left, and Dan Penn, two prominent musicians, songwriters and producers, try out some of the old tunes. Fritts was in town visiting relatives after completing a recent movie, and Penn was here to mix some material on John Fred. (Staff Photo).



READY FOR FRITTS SESSION — Tony Joe White, from left, Donnie Fritts, Kris Kristofferson, Jerry Wexler, John Prine and Dan Penn, gather outside

Muscle Shoals Sound Studio prior to a recent recording session by Fritts. Kristofferson and Wexler produced the session while the other played and sang.



DECISIONS, DECISIONS—Paul Simon, left, strikes a pensive pose as he and Art Garfunkle listen to a recording at Muscle Shoals Sound Studio. The duo reunited to record a new single, and may later record enough tracks for an album. For more photos and details see page 43. (Times-Daily Photo)



NOT SO DELICATE — Paul Simon explains that he wants the sound of a track to be more forceful and not quite so delicate, as Art Garfunkle looks on. The duo was at Muscle Shoals Sound Studio Wednesday and Thursday cutting a new single. (Times-Daily Photo)



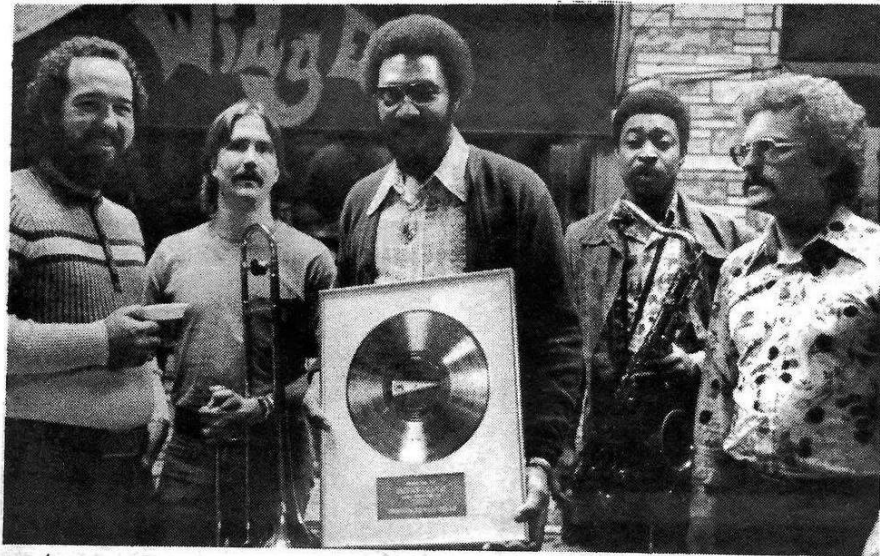
ALL SERIOUSNESS ASIDE — Paul Simon is swallowed by Jimmy Johnson hat during a lighter moment while Simon and Art Garfunkle were at Muscle Shoals Sound Studio recording a reunion single. (Times-Daily Photo)

Simon and Garfunkle Reunite To Record at Local Studio



BRIEF REST — The musicians, producers and technicians working with Candi Staton take a break during rehearsal for shows in New York and Boston this week. Top row, from left, are Larry Hamby, engineer; John Salstone, assistant to the president of Warner Brother Records; David Hood, bass; Barry

Beckett, keyboards; Ken Bell, guitar; and Jimmy Johnson, guitar. Seated from left are, Laura Struzick, background vocals; Rick Hall, producer; Suzy Storm, background vocals; Candi Staton, Randy McCormick, keyboards. Seated on the floor is Roger Hawkins, drums. (Times-Daily Photo)



PRESENTED GOLD ALBUM--Harrison Calloway, center, was presented a gold album last week for his arrangement of the song "Firefly", which was included on the Temptations hit LP "A Song For You". With Calloway are, Clayton Ivey, from left, co-producer of the song; Charles Rose, a member of the Muscle Shoals Horns; Calloway; Harvey Thompson, a member of the horn section, and Terry Woodford, co-producer of the song. (Staff Photo by Doug Allen)



BARRY BECKETT AND PETER YARROW



STEVE CROPPER, ROD STEWART AND PETE CARR AT MSS

Copyright, Tommy Wright, 1975.



GEORGE SOULE AND AVA ALDRIDGE



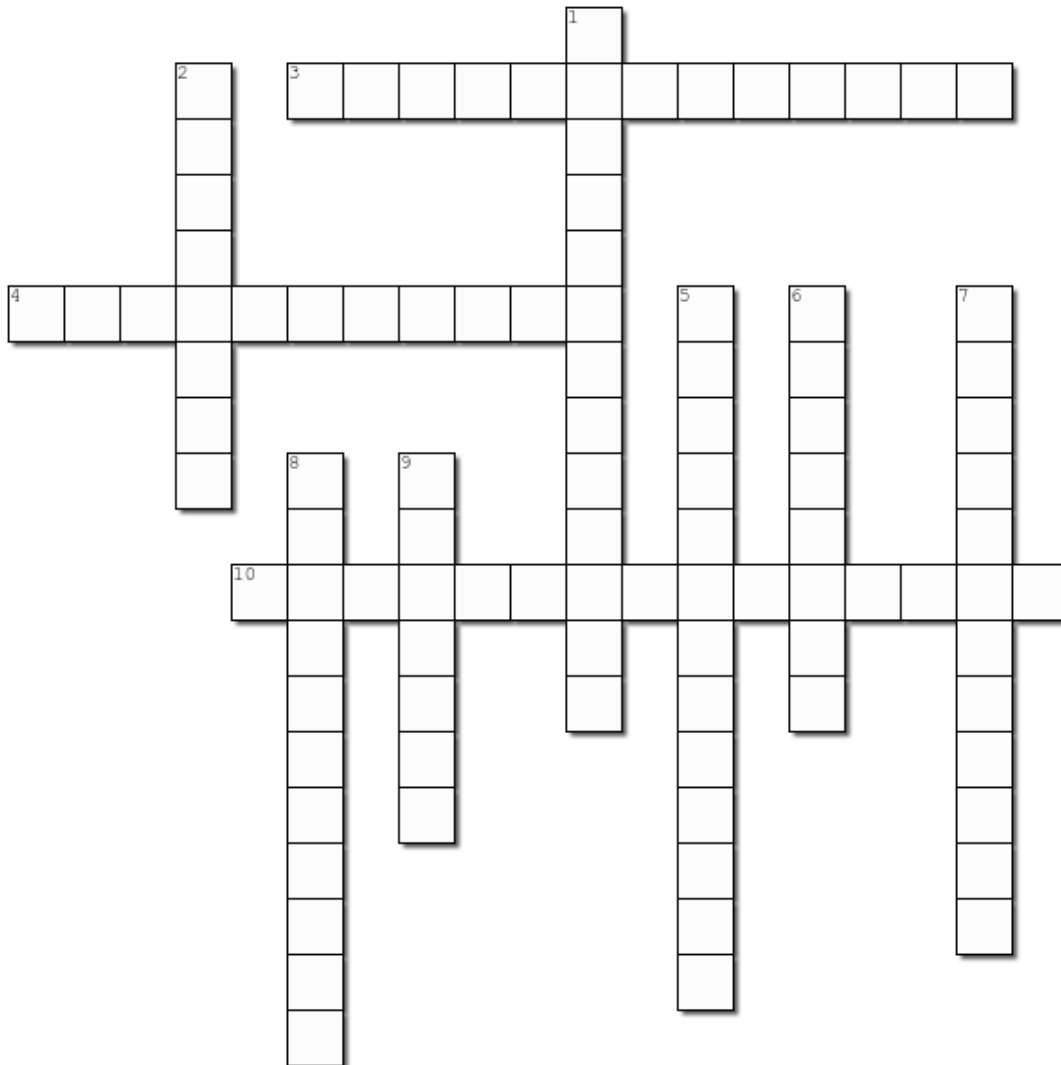
CLAYTON IVEY AND TERRY WOODFORD ...Partners in one of the firms backing UNA commercial music course.

Worksheet Activities



Name: _____

Muscle Shoals Music Makers



Created using the Crossword Maker on TheTeachersCorner.net

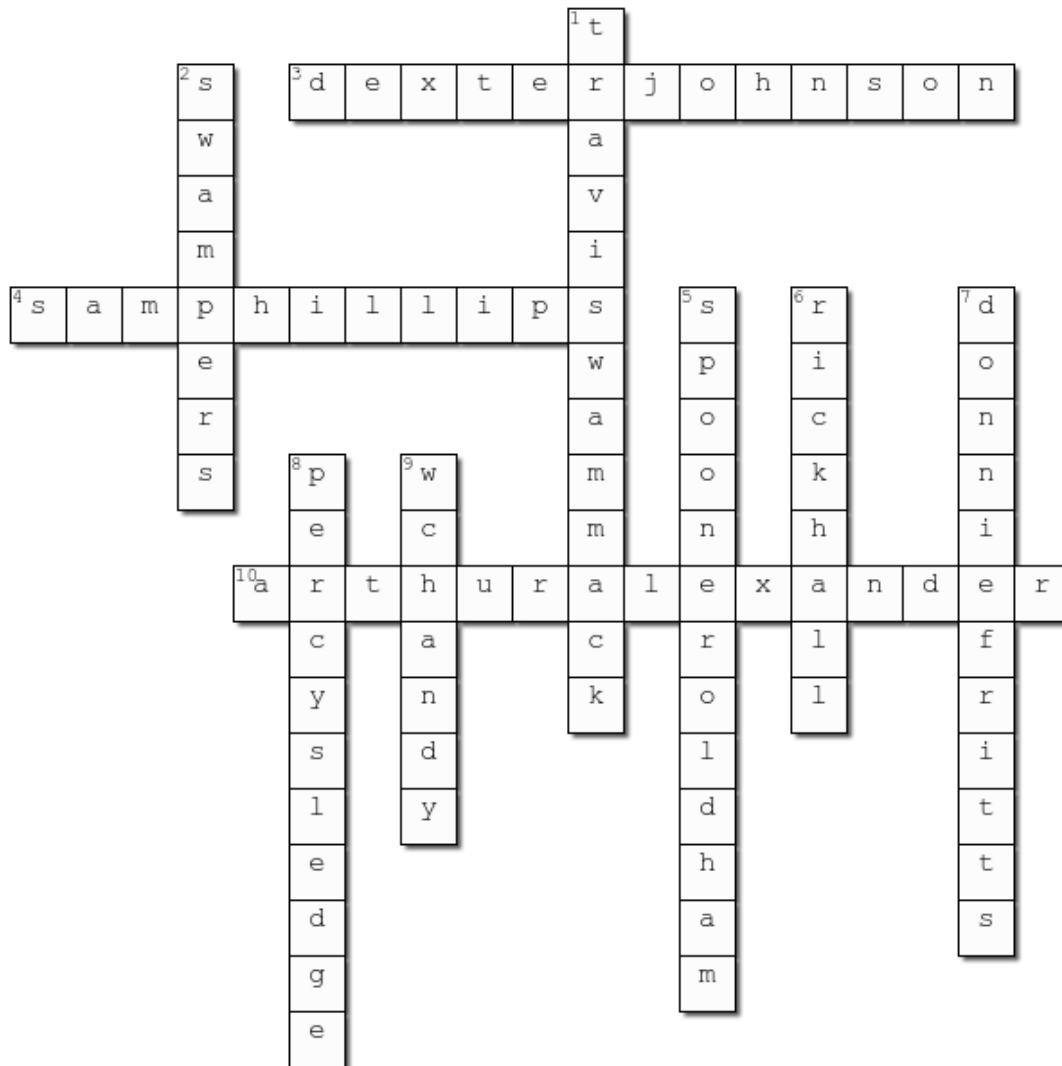
Across

- 3.** Bluegrass musician who established the first professional recording studio in the Shoals.
- 4.** Florence native who started Sun Records and discovered Elvis Presley.
- 10.** Sheffield-born singer and writer of songs covered by The Beatles and The Rolling Stones.

Down

- 1.** Shoals-based guitarist and singer-songwriter known as the "Snake Man."
- 2.** Muscle Shoals Sound Studio band, for short.
- 5.** Keyboardist and songwriting partner of Dan Penn.
- 6.** Founder of Fame Studios and producer of the Shoals music industry's first national hits.
- 7.** Florence-born singer-songwriter who was part of the "outlaw country" scene and acted in several movies.
- 8.** Singer of "When a Man Loves a Woman," the first number-one hit recorded in the Shoals.
- 9.** 'Father of the Blues' who was born in Florence.

Muscle Shoals Music Makers



Created using the Crossword Maker on TheTeachersCorner.net

Across

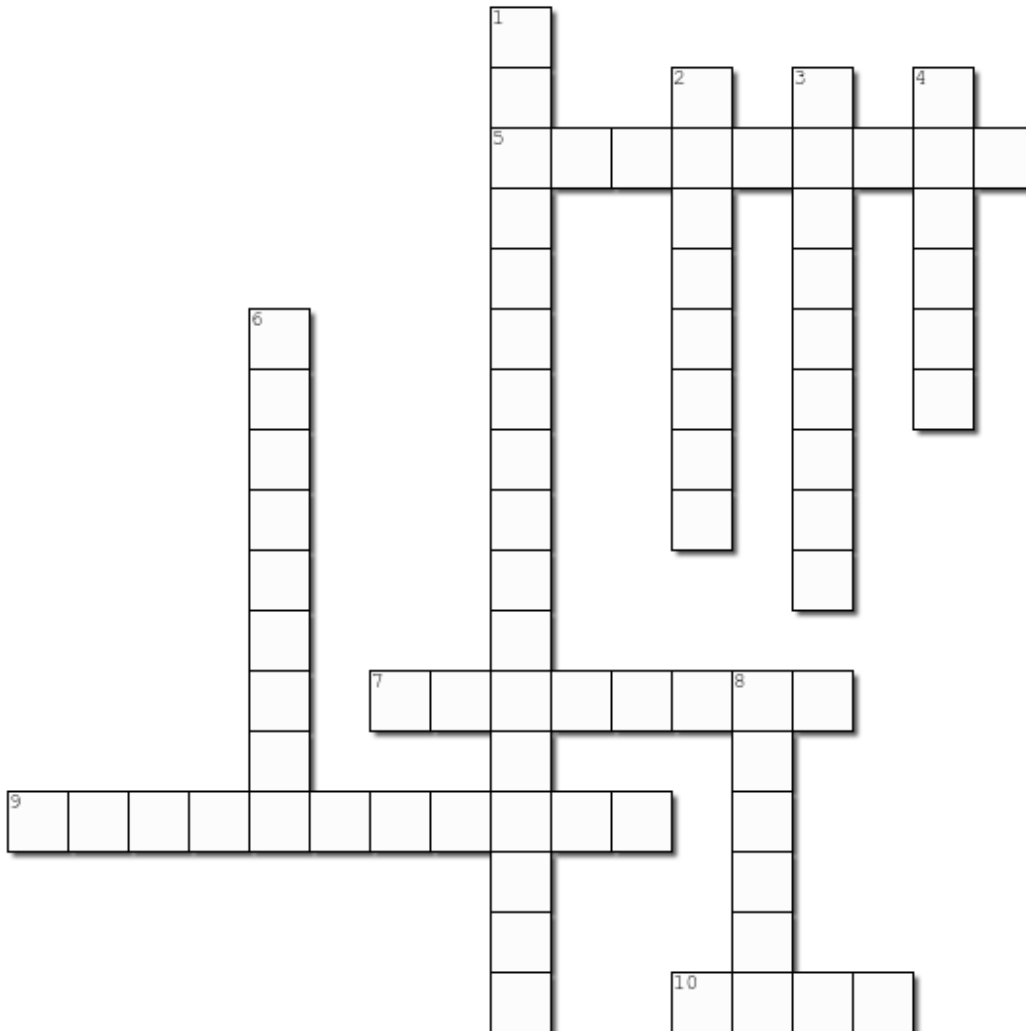
- 3.** Bluegrass musician who established the first professional recording studio in the Shoals. (**dexterjohnson**)
- 4.** Florence native who started Sun Records and discovered Elvis Presley. (**samphillips**)
- 10.** Sheffield-born singer and writer of songs covered by The Beatles and The Rolling Stones. (**arthuralexander**)

Down

- 1.** Shoals-based guitarist and singer-songwriter known as the "Snake Man." (**traviswammack**)
- 2.** Muscle Shoals Sound Studio band, for short. (**swampers**)
- 5.** Keyboardist and songwriting partner of Dan Penn. (**spooneroldham**)
- 6.** Founder of Fame Studios and producer of the Shoals music industry's first national hits. (**rickhall**)
- 7.** Florence-born singer-songwriter who was part of the "outlaw country" scene and acted in several movies. (**donniefritts**)
- 8.** Singer of "When a Man Loves a Woman," the first number-one hit recorded in the Shoals. (**percysledge**)
- 9.** 'Father of the Blues' who was born in Florence. (**wchandy**)

Name: _____

Muscle Shoals Recording Studios



Created using the Crossword Maker on TheTeachersCorner.net

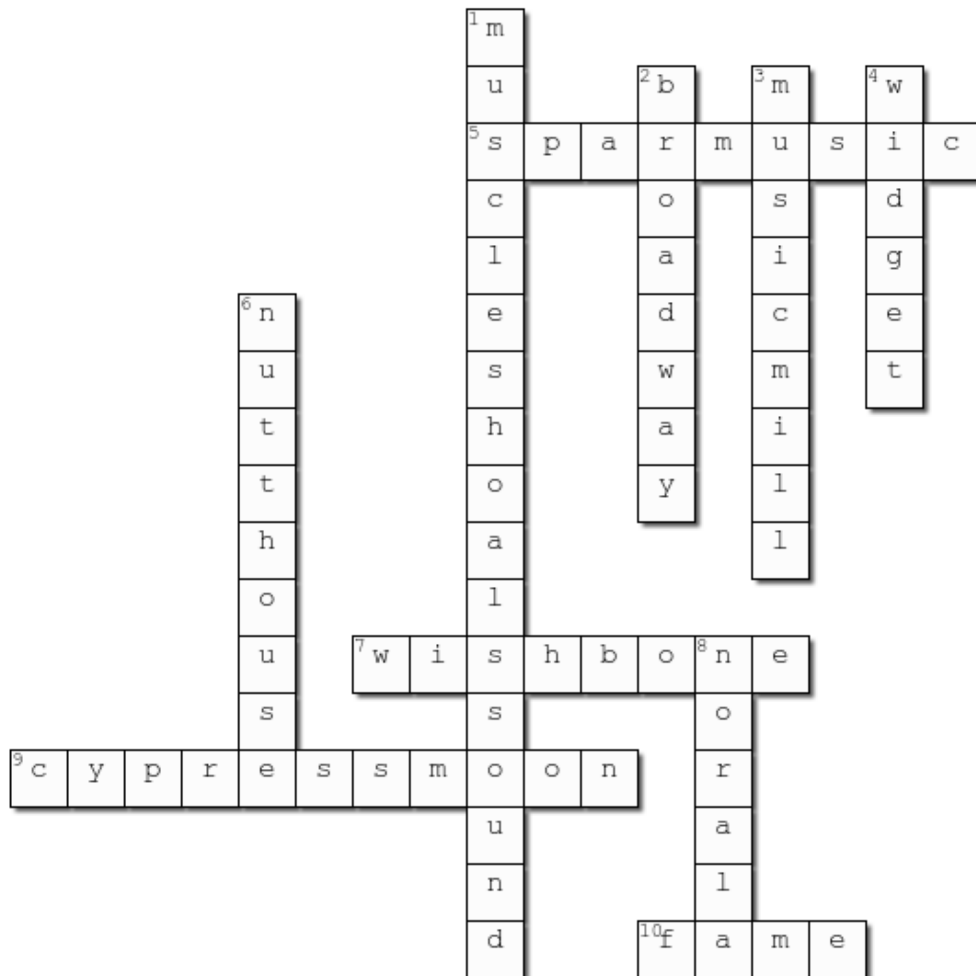
Across

5. Early gathering place for up-and-coming Shoals musicians where Arthur Alexander recorded "Sally Sue Brown."
7. _____ Recording Studio was built in 1976 by two former producers for Motown Records.
9. The second studio owned and operated by the Swampers, as it is known today.
10. Rick Hall produced hits like "Mustang Sally," "Tell Mama," and "Sweet Soul Music" at _____ Studios in Muscle Shoals.

Down

1. Legendary hit factory at 3614 Jackson Highway in Sheffield.
2. Name of the street and the studio where Lynyrd Skynyrd made their first Shoals-area recordings.
3. The first local recording studio to specialize in making country music.
4. _____ Sound Studio in Sheffield is best known for the 1972 hit "Motorcycle Mama."
6. Studio named for its Grammy-winning owner which opened in downtown Sheffield in 2008.
8. The first Shoals hit to reach number one on the national pop charts was recorded not at FAME but at _____ Sound Studio.

Muscle Shoals Recording Studios



Created using the Crossword Maker on TheTeachersCorner.net

Across

5. Early gathering place for up-and-coming Shoals musicians where Arthur Alexander recorded "Sally Sue Brown." (**sparmusic**)
7. _____ Recording Studio was built in 1976 by two former producers for Motown Records. (**wishbone**)
9. The second studio owned and operated by the Swampers, as it is known today. (**cypressmoon**)
10. Rick Hall produced hits like "Mustang Sally," "Tell Mama," and "Sweet Soul Music" at _____ Studios in Muscle Shoals. (**fame**)

Down

1. Legendary hit factory at 3614 Jackson Highway in Sheffield. (**muscleshoalssound**)
2. Name of the street and the studio where Lynyrd Skynyrd made their first Shoals-area recordings. (**broadway**)
3. The first local recording studio to specialize in making country music. (**musicmill**)
4. _____ Sound Studio in Sheffield is best known for the 1972 hit "Motorcycle Mama." (**widget**)
6. Studio named for its Grammy-winning owner which opened in downtown Sheffield in 2008. (**nutthouse**)
8. The first Shoals hit to reach number one on the national pop charts was recorded not at FAME but at _____ Sound Studio. (**norala**)

Muscle Shoals Hit Makers

Can you find all the names of the artists who recorded hit songs in the Shoals?

S N O T A T S I D N A C S U F O B N I E
A T D N Z F B O B D Y L A N T I Z O U N
D R A H C I R E L T T I L Z L S I M T B
A T R A W E T S D O R I P K S J L I Y P
A L I J U L I A N L E N N O N U D S H U
V S X R O L L I N G S T O N E S X L B P
P E P B F K F F M A T T L H B W R U O A
Y C E T T A J A M E S H F Y Z E U A B H
E Y R V Q U B Z L U Z D T T T X F P S V
L X C G X C A O M U G D V R F I O H E C
N I Y O A R E T H A F R A N K L I N G A
O Z S H L S I M A C M C A N A L L Y E Y
C R L X R S T A P L E S I N G E R S R N
R L E S W H F I B C Q L J J L D W M N P
U Y D Y O Y V B N K U U R D X E T Z F P
H E G D E L B E R T M C C L I N T O N T
T M E L U X R Y D Y A M C U Q I P T W J
R W Z W D A D E J O H Y R A S E G I R C
A S Z O L I S E H G U H Y M M I J N R D
B B R C L X W I L S O N P I C K E T T N

JIMMY HUGHES
ETTA JAMES
CANDI STATON
ROLLING STONES
ROD STEWART
JULIAN LENNON

WILSON PICKETT
CLARENCE CARTER
LITTLE RICHARD
STAPLE SINGERS
BOB SEGER
BOB DYLAN

ARTHUR CONLEY
ARETHA FRANKLIN
PERCY SLEDGE
PAUL SIMON
MAC MCANALLY
DELBERT MCCLINTON

Muscle Shoals Hit Makers

Can you find all the names of the artists who recorded hit songs in the Shoals?

S	N	O	T	A	T	S	I	D	N	A	C	S	U	F	O	B	N	I	E
A	T	D	N	Z	F	B	O	B	D	Y	L	A	N	T	I	Z	O	U	N
D	R	A	H	C	I	R	E	L	T	T	I	L	Z	L	S	I	M	T	B
A	T	R	A	W	E	T	S	D	O	R	I	P	K	S	J	L	I	Y	P
A	L	I	J	U	L	I	A	N	L	E	N	N	O	N	U	D	S	H	U
V	S	X	R	O	L	L	I	N	G	S	T	O	N	E	S	X	L	B	P
P	E	P	B	F	K	F	F	M	A	T	T	L	H	B	W	R	U	O	A
Y	C	E	T	T	A	J	A	M	E	S	H	F	Y	Z	E	U	A	B	H
E	Y	R	V	Q	U	B	Z	L	U	Z	D	T	T	T	X	F	P	S	V
L	X	C	G	X	C	A	O	M	U	G	D	V	R	F	I	O	H	E	C
N	I	Y	O	A	R	E	T	H	A	F	R	A	N	K	L	I	N	G	A
O	Z	S	H	L	S	I	M	A	C	M	C	A	N	A	L	L	Y	E	Y
C	R	L	X	R	S	T	A	P	L	E	S	I	N	G	E	R	S	R	N
R	L	E	S	W	H	F	I	B	C	Q	L	J	J	L	D	W	M	N	P
U	Y	D	Y	O	Y	V	B	N	K	U	U	R	D	X	E	T	Z	F	P
H	E	G	D	E	L	B	E	R	T	M	C	C	L	I	N	T	O	N	T
T	M	E	L	U	X	R	Y	D	Y	A	M	C	U	Q	I	P	T	W	J
R	W	Z	W	D	A	D	E	J	O	H	Y	R	A	S	E	G	I	R	C
A	S	Z	O	L	I	S	E	H	G	U	H	Y	M	M	I	J	N	R	D
B	B	R	C	L	X	W	I	L	S	O	N	P	I	C	K	E	T	T	N

- JIMMY HUGHES
- ETTA JAMES
- CANDI STATON
- ROLLING STONES
- ROD STEWART
- JULIAN LENNON

- WILSON PICKETT
- CLARENCE CARTER
- LITTLE RICHARD
- STAPLE SINGERS
- BOB SEGER
- BOB DYLAN

- ARTHUR CONLEY
- ARETHA FRANKLIN
- PERCY SLEDGE
- PAUL SIMON
- MAC MCANALLY
- DELBERT MCCLINTON

Name: _____

Songs and Studios

Write the letter of the correct studio next to the song recorded there.

Created on TheTeachersCorner.net Match-up Maker

- | | | |
|----|----------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. | It Ain't No Use | a. Spar Music |
| 2. | Gotta Serve Somebody | b. FAME Studios |
| 3. | Reconsider Me | c. Broadway Sound Studio |
| 4. | Wild Horses | d. Muscle Shoals Sound Studio |
| 5. | Sally Sue Brown | e. Wishbone Recording Studio |
| 6. | Motorcycle Mama | f. Music Mill |
| 7. | Steal Away | g. Widget Sound Studio |
| 8. | Angel in Your Arms | h. Cypress Moon Studios |



Name: _____

Songs and Studios

Write the letter of the correct studio next to the song recorded there.

Created on TheTeachersCorner.net Match-up Maker

- | | | | |
|----|----------|----------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. | <u>c</u> | It Ain't No Use | a. Spar Music |
| 2. | <u>h</u> | Gotta Serve Somebody | b. FAME Studios |
| 3. | <u>f</u> | Reconsider Me | c. Broadway Sound Studio |
| 4. | <u>d</u> | Wild Horses | d. Muscle Shoals Sound Studio |
| 5. | <u>a</u> | Sally Sue Brown | e. Wishbone Recording Studio |
| 6. | <u>g</u> | Motorcycle Mama | f. Music Mill |
| 7. | <u>b</u> | Steal Away | g. Widget Sound Studio |
| 8. | <u>e</u> | Angel in Your Arms | h. Cypress Moon Studios |



Gregg Hamm

Watch the video at this link and answer the questions below:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nRUWr5jd5nU>

1. He left the music business in 1982 and has since worked with his brother in the _____ business.
2. How did he get started in the music business?
3. How does he describe his working relationship with producer and Swampers keyboardist Barry Beckett?
4. He remembers singer-songwriter _____ as “a talent beyond talent,” and “a different sort of fella” who “kept to himself a lot.”
5. Name three of the artists he had the “most fun” working with.
6. Who does he credit for the success of the “Muscle Shoals sound”?



Gregg Hamm

Watch the video at this link and answer the questions below:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nRUWr5jd5nU>

1. He left the music business in 1982 and has since worked with his brother in the _____ business.

Heating and air conditioning.

2. How did he get started in the music business?

"I started writing songs with Cris Moore when I was probably 15 or 16... In working with him on writing songs and recording some demos, that's when I became really interested in engineering... I told my dad that's kind of what I wanted to do, and he just happened to know Jimmy Johnson at Muscle Shoals Sound... Jimmy said, 'Bring him home [from college]. Let him come to work for us over here. We'll show him what to do first-hand.' So that's how I started."

3. How does he describe his working relationship with producer and Swampers keyboardist Barry Beckett?

"I worked with Barry Beckett for probably six or seven years... We had the kind of relationship where I could almost read his mind... I knew what he was thinking. I knew what he wanted to do before we did it. He would look at me from the studio and pretty well tell by my body language how it was sounding, how it was feeling."

4. He remembers singer-songwriter _____ as "a talent beyond talent," and "a different sort of fella" who "kept to himself a lot."

Bob Dylan.

5. Name three of the artists he had the "most fun" working with.

John Prine, Dire Straits, Mark Knopfler, Wilson Pickett, Millie Jackson and Dr. Hook.

6. Who does he credit for the success of the "Muscle Shoals sound"?

"It was just the musicians... They worked together for so long, you know, they just sort of had this feel. Everything they did was by feel... They just really knew how to put that sound together... They really knew how to make it work with anybody that walked through the door."



Marie Tomlinson Lewey

Watch the video at this link and answer the questions below:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zXjhV1D0xnl>

1. Why did she move to Muscle Shoals from Clark County, Alabama?
2. How does she describe the life-changing conversation she had with Rick Hall soon after her arrival?
3. Which local studio took her “under their wing” when she was getting started in the music business?
4. She experienced “some of the most musically thrilling moments” of her life at _____ Recording Studio.
5. Singer-songwriter _____, with her “big, contagious laugh,” was a “maternal” figure for Marie and other up-and-coming Shoals musicians.
6. How did Aerosmith’s Stephen Tyler and members of Extreme react to hearing Marie and other vocalists during a recent Shoals recording session?



Marie Tomlinson Lewey

Watch the video at this link and answer the questions below:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zXjhV1D0xnl>

1. Why did she move to Muscle Shoals from Clark County, Alabama?

"I came to Muscle Shoals hoping to have a big career as a country music singer. I had heard about Muscle Shoals from my brother-in-law, Dennis Homan. He was an all-American under Bear Bryant who hails from Muscle Shoals. His brother Jerry, at that time, took coffee around to all of the studios. And he was very nice to drop off a few cassettes of me."

2. How does she describe the life-changing conversation she had with Rick Hall soon after her arrival?

"It was pretty intimidating... He listened to my material and he said, 'This is good. This is really good. But so what?' I didn't have a thought in my brain as to what to say... He said, 'Because are you writing? You know, what's your plan? How hard are you willing to work?' You know, he just started... firing some very good questions at me that I didn't have the answers for. And I realized that was for my good."

3. Which local studio took her "under their wing" when she was getting started in the music business?

Music Mill.

4. She experienced "some of the most musically thrilling moments" of her life at _____ Recording Studio.

Wishbone.

5. Singer-songwriter _____, with her "big, contagious laugh," was a "maternal" figure for Marie and other up-and-coming Shoals musicians.

Ava Aldridge.

6. How did Aerosmith's Stephen Tyler and members of Extreme react to hearing Marie and other vocalists during a recent Shoals recording session?

"I know there had to be just a little bit of doubt. These three women look like they just left a clerical job... to come over here and do background vocals. Me, Cindy, you know, Carla, do we look like we can bring it? I don't think so... They had to have been just, like, sweating bullets... [But] they hit the talkback mic and said, 'Yeah! Are you kidding me? Wow!' We thought, 'So you like it?' Which they did."

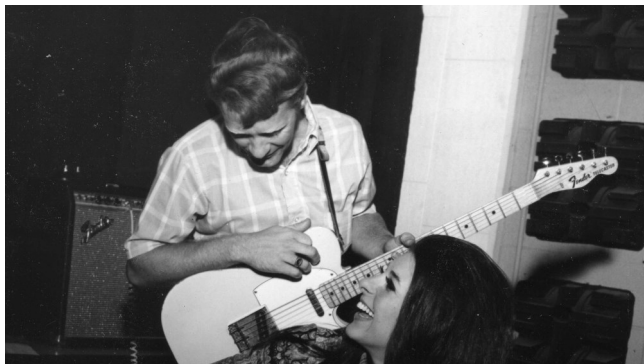


Junior Lowe

Watch the video at this link and answer the questions below:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fyNWv1auMG8>

1. Name three artists he has recorded and performed with over the years.
2. How did he get started in the music business?
3. He realized he'd made it in the music business when he and his bandmates heard _____ on an Atlanta radio station.
4. He bonded with soul singer Otis Redding over their shared love of _____.
5. He decided to leave his job at FAME Studios during a recording session for which band?
6. Which ring-wearing rock legend did he tour with after leaving FAME?
7. How does he define the "Muscle Shoals sound"?



Junior Lowe

Watch the video at this link and answer the questions below:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fyNWv1auMG8>

1. Name three artists he has recorded and performed with over the years.

Wilson Pickett, Percy Sledge, Aretha Franklin, Etta James, Otis Redding, The Osmonds and Little Richard.

2. How did he get started in the music business?

"My friend I went to school with, we got together. He could play and... I was just learning. Terry Thompson. And we formed a little group together... Eventually, Rick Hall was playing [with a band] up in Fort Campbell, Kentucky. He'd just produced Arthur Alexander and it was taking a lot of time. So he got me to play in his place in Fort Campbell. I played there for about 14 to 15 months. Then I got the job cutting some demos over at FAME, playing bass."

3. He realized he'd made it in the music business when he and his bandmates heard _____ on an Atlanta radio station.

"When a Man Loves a Woman."

4. He bonded with soul singer Otis Redding over their shared love of _____.

Horses.

5. He decided to leave his job at FAME Studios during a recording session for which band?

The Osmonds.

6. Which ring-wearing rock legend did he tour with after leaving FAME?

Little Richard.

7. How does he define the "Muscle Shoals sound"?

"It was a blend of Black music, like the old Black gospel music... It's got the country in it. You can pat your feet to it, you know... It's magic, man."



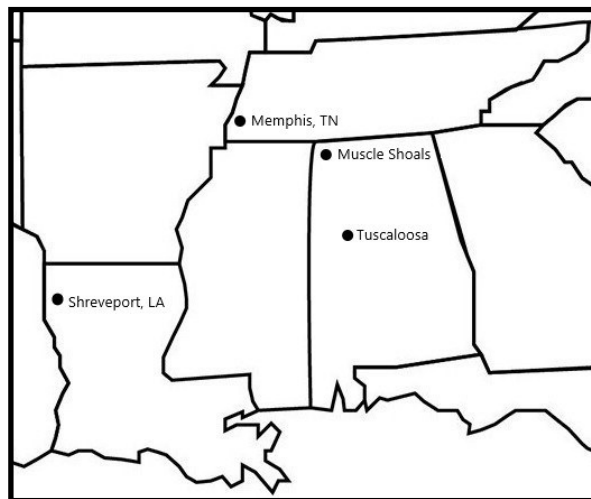
Chad Gamble

Watch the video at this link and answer the questions below:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6TroS2uPNK4>

1. How did he first become interested in playing music?

2. Trace his early musical journey, starting and ending with his birthplace in the Shoals, on the map below.



3. One of his “biggest career highlights” was performing on _____, a TV show he “would stay up every night to watch” as a child.

4. What does he say is the secret to the “Muscle Shoals sound”?

5. What advice does he give to aspiring young musicians?

Chad Gamble

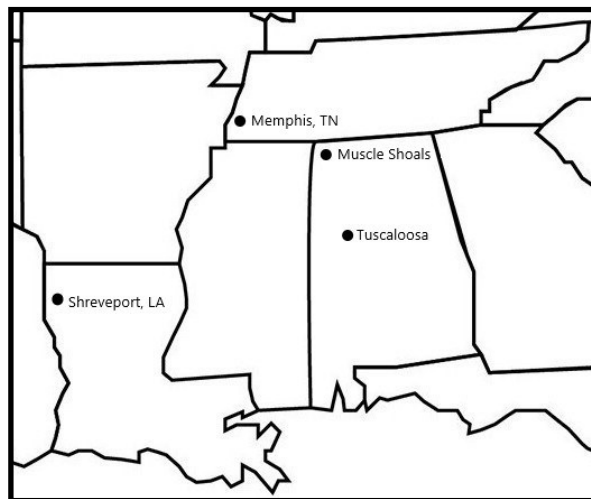
Watch the video at this link and answer the questions below:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6TroS2uPNK4>

1. How did he first become interested in playing music?

"I was probably four years old or so when I got my first drum... My brother, at about the same time, was getting interested in playing piano... We came from a musical family, from my dad's mother who was very talented... My dad had a great record collection that my brother and I would just scour over... And then eventually my brother and I started playing, just as a duo, in our basement."

2. Trace his early musical journey, starting and ending with his birthplace in the Shoals, on the map below.



Muscle Shoals → Tuscaloosa → Shreveport → Memphis → Muscle Shoals

3. One of his "biggest career highlights" was performing on _____, a TV show he "would stay up every night to watch" as a child.

David Letterman.

4. What does he say is the secret to the "Muscle Shoals sound"?

"People say it's in the water. That becomes kind of cliché but I think it's really true. What I tend to focus on more is groove... Like Roger Hawkins. There's never been a better groove drummer, in my opinion... I feel like that and the bass is pretty much where it comes from... When you find a duo of a bass player and drummer that can lock in, that makes all the difference in the world."

5. What advice does he give to aspiring young musicians?

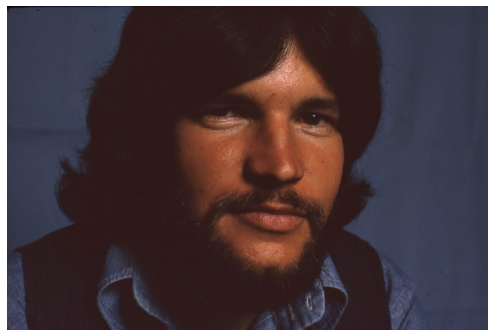
"Persistence is key. There's nothing that will take you further than pushing yourself and sticking with it... Get out and network... Go see all the live music you can, you know. That's how you get your foot in the door. And once your foot is in the door, you don't stop."

Travis Wammack

Watch the video at this link and answer the questions below:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3QWZKVVZ4n8>

1. How did he get started in the music business?
2. Name three of the Memphis studios where he recorded.
3. He recorded a hit instrumental when he was 16 years old called _____, considered “the first record, before The Beatles” to feature reverse (or backwards) audio.
4. A bass player he brought from Memphis to work on Clarence Carter’s “Patches,” _____ ended up staying in the Shoals and became an hit-making sound engineer.
5. The song “Greenwood, Mississippi,” which he co-wrote with Junior Lowe, was recorded at FAME by which two music legends?
6. How does he define the “Muscle Shoals sound”?



Travis Wammack

Watch the video at this link and answer the questions below:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3QWZKVVZ4n8>

1. How did he get started in the music business?

"My dad came in with a guitar when I was eight years old. I'd get my guitar when I'd come in from school and I'd go down [to] Broad Street... One afternoon, I was walking home with my guitar and I heard this guy walk up... So I played a couple of songs. He said, 'Well, I'm a DJ in town... I do a jamboree all over the southern states... I'd like to get you to open the shows.' So I started opening shows, and back then, there'd be eight or nine artists on the show [like] Johnny Cash and Carl Perkins... This was when I was 13 years old."

2. Name three of the Memphis studios where he recorded.

Fernwood, Sonic, Hi, American.

3. He recorded a hit instrumental when he was 16 years old called _____, considered "the first record, before The Beatles" to feature reverse (or backwards) audio.

"Scratchy."

4. A bass player he brought from Memphis to work on Clarence Carter's "Patches," _____ ended up staying in the Shoals and became a hit-making sound engineer.

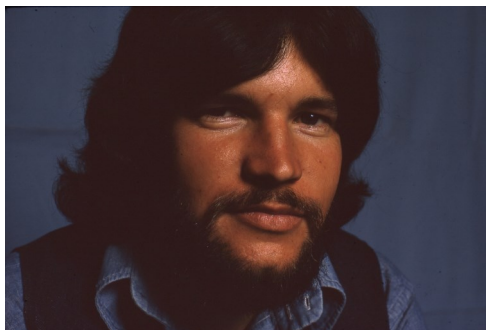
Jerry Masters.

5. The song "Greenwood, Mississippi," which he co-wrote with Junior Lowe, was recorded at FAME by which two music legends?

Tom Jones and Little Richard.

6. How does he define the "Muscle Shoals sound"?

"There was a horn player that summed it up pretty good... They asked him, 'What is the difference between the Muscle Shoals sound and the Memphis sound?' And he said, '150 miles.' Basically, that's what it is. It's poor people... We didn't have the money to go to college. We're self-taught. From the heart, not the chart... It's just southern players. They play different. It's just low down and nasty. You can't get that from going to school and college. It's just one of them things."



Lenny LeBlanc

Watch the video at this link and answer the questions below:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qucYdEXSgWI>

1. Trace his journey from childhood to Muscle Shoals on the map below.



2. How did he get started in the music business, and what was his first instrument?

3. He moved to Muscle Shoals at the suggestion of _____, a mutual friend of the Allman brothers and lead guitarist at Muscle Shoals Sound Studio.

4. His first session gig in the Shoals was at _____ Sound Studio in Sheffield.

5. What does he say is the secret to the "Muscle Shoals sound"?

Lenny LeBlanc

Watch the video at this link and answer the questions below:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qucYdEXSgWI>

1. Trace his journey from childhood to Muscle Shoals on the map below.



Daytona → Cincinnati → Macon → Muscle Shoals

2. How did he get started in the music business, and what was his first instrument?

“A buddy of mine and I went to his house... And his little brother and several of his friends were sitting around in the living room with their three electric guitars... They said, ‘Hey, why don’t you guys come over here... and one of y’all sing?’ I looked at my friend and he said no way... They said, ‘Wow, you sound really good!’ They got excited and said, ‘Let’s put a band together and enter the talent show at school.’ So it was junior high. I thought, okay... And, oddly enough, we won the talent show... So they said, ‘You need to buy a bass.’ And I thought, what’s a bass? I had no idea what it was... And I went down to the music store and bought myself a Fender bass.”

3. He moved to Muscle Shoals at the suggestion of _____, a mutual friend of the Allman brothers and lead guitarist at Muscle Shoals Sound Studio.

Pete Carr.

4. His first session gig in the Shoals was at _____ Sound Studio in Sheffield.

Broadway.

5. What does he say is the secret to the “Muscle Shoals sound”?

“We call it meat and potatoes. It’s a very simple kick drum pattern with a very simple bass line. Because the kick drum and the bass, that’s the foundation of your band. And there was a real focus on that. Because when that’s right, everything else just falls into place.”

COMING
In Person
The Godfather of Soul



JAMES BROWN
The world's greatest entertainer with his all star REVUE.
FLORENCE COLISEUM
MAY 27, 1973
8:30 PM

PLAN NOW TO HEAR AND SEE

GEORGE JONES
and the
JONES BOYS
Coming
SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 22
to
BRADSHAW HIGH SCHOOL
GYMNASIUM

HEART OF DIXIE MUSIC CENTER, INC.

PROUDLY PRESENTS THEIR WEEKLY

COUNTRY MUSIC SHOW

EVERY SATURDAY NIGHT BEGINNING

8:00 P.M.

THIS WEEK
HEAR

TERRY HAMILTON
JAMES JOINER

& THE COUNTRY
CARAVELLS
& THE FALLEN
STARS

FROM NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE
RCA RECORDING ARTIST

JOHNNY RUSSELL

PLAN TO ATTEND

ADMISSION
ADULTS \$1.50
STUDENTS 75c

LOCATED—HWY. 72 E., FLORENCE
ACROSS CRESTVIEW MOBILE
HOMES



CARPENTERS

IN CONCERT
Special Guest Stars
SKILES AND HENDERSON
Florence State University
Flowers Hall—Florence, Alabama
Tuesday—November 20—7:30 P.M.
Tickets: \$6.00, \$5.00, \$4.00
Tickets NOW on sale at Student Union Box Office/
Anderson's Bookland, Florence; Sound City, Muscle
Shoals.
MAIL ORDERS FILLED PROMPTLY
Send a check or money order payable to Yarnell
Enterprise to CARPENTERS, Box 528 Florence
State University, Florence, Alabama 36630
Enclose a self-addressed stamped envelope

CONCERTS WEST PRESENTS THE

EAGLES

IN CONCERT

WITH SPECIAL GUEST
"POCO"
HUNTSVILLE, ALA.
THUR., AUG. 7th
8:00 P.M.
TICKETS: \$5.00 In ADVANCE
TICKETS ON SALE AT:
CIVIC CENTER BOX OFFICE MONROE STREET
BELK'S—Haysland Square
NEWSOM'S MUSIC—The Mall

DOWN THE HATCH

4055 HATCH BLVD. SHEFFIELD
"Behind Gateway Lincoln Mercury"
Phone for Reservation 381 8275

HOLLIS DIXON
Every Thurs.-Fri.-Sat.

MON. & TUES.
ASH RIDGE
GANG

Elegant Dining
At It's Best

LADIES' NIGHT
THURSDAY



LINDA RONSTADT

IN CONCERT with GOOSE CREEK SYMPHONY



OCTOBER 21

8:00 p.m.

Flowers Hall

UNIVERSITY of NORTH ALABAMA

COMING TO FLORENCE LAUDERDALE
COLISEUM - SATURDAY MAY 15, 1971
GREAT SHOWS!
2 7:30 P.M. - 9:30 P.M. 2

CONWAY TWITTY
COUNTRY SPECTACULAR!

★ STARRING ★
Conway Twitty

The World's Most Quality Singing
Solo Singing "The Country" and All
His Other Smash Hits!

ALSO APPEARING ON THIS GREAT SHOW

★ BARBARA MANDRELL ★
A GREAT PERFORMER, SINGER
AND BEAUTIFUL MUSICIAN
HER PERFORMANCE WILL
KNOCK YOU OUT!

★ ANTHONY ARMSTRONG
JONES ★

Continued For Another Wonderful Singing
"Sweet Home", "The Gambler" and
"The Gambler" - "Take A Letter Maria!"

TICKETS

ADVANCE SALE: \$10.00 - \$15.00 - \$20.00
AT THE DOOR: \$10.00 - \$15.00 - \$20.00

ON SALE AT:
W. T. GRANT - BIG POPPER
BOOKS - FLORENCE MOBILE STORE
A MACK GUSTY PRODUCTION

Curriculum Standards

4th Grade: Social Studies (2010)

Students will:

6. Describe cultural, economic, and political aspects of the lifestyles of early nineteenth-century farmers, plantation owners, slaves and townspeople.
10. Analyze social and educational changes during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries for their impact on Alabama.
12. Explain the impact the 1920s and Great Depression had on different socioeconomic groups in Alabama.
16. Determine the impact of population growth on cities, major road systems, demographics, natural resources, and the natural environment of Alabama during the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries.

3rd Grade: Media Arts (2017)

Students can:

13. Determine the purposes and meanings of media arts productions while describing their context.
16. Identify and show how media arts productions form meanings, situations and/or culture.

4th Grade: Media Arts (2017)

Students can:

13. Determine and explain reactions and interpretations to a variety of media arts productions, considering both purpose and context.
16. Examine and show how media arts productions create meanings, situations and/or cultural experiences.

5th Grade: Media Arts (2017)

Students can:

8. Examine how tools and techniques could be used in standard and experimental ways in constructing media arts productions.
17. Research and show how media arts productions and ideas relate to personal, social and community life.

6th Grade: Media Arts (2017)

Students can:

14. Determine and apply specific criteria to evaluate production processes in various media artworks, considering context and practicing constructive feedback.

17. Research and show how media arts productions and ideas relate to personal life and social, community and cultural situations.

7th Grade: Media Arts (2017)

Students can:

15. Access, evaluate and use internal and external resources through experiences, interests, research and exemplary works to influence the creation of media arts productions.

16. Explain and demonstrate how media arts productions form new meanings and knowledge, situations and cultural experiences.

17. Research and demonstrate how media arts productions and ideas relate to various situations, purposes and values through community, careers and social media.

8th Grade: Media Arts (2017)

Students can:

11. Compare, contrast and analyze the qualities of an relationships between the components and style in media arts productions.

15. Access, evaluate and use internal and external resources through cultural and societal knowledge, research and exemplary works to influence the creation of media arts productions.

16. Explain and demonstrate how media arts productions expand meaning and knowledge and create cultural experiences through local and global events.



Glossary

“Cutting a Record”-the cut recording process is an early method of audio recording by which a stylus cuts a vertical groove into a vinyl record

Hit single- a recorded song or instrumental released as a single that has become very popular. Though it sometimes means any widely played or big-selling song, the term “hit” usually refers to a single that has appeared in an official music chart through repeated radio airplay or significant commercial sales

Mixing- the process of combining several recordings into a single track so that these tracks are blended together

Producer- oversees and manages the sound recording and production of a band or performer’s music, which may range from recording one song to recording an entire album

Recording sessions- a period of time devoted to recording music in a studio

Session Players- highly skilled professionals who are hired to perform in recording sessions as well as live performances. Many session musicians specialize in playing rhythm section instruments such as guitar, piano, bass, or drums.

Sound engineers- a technician dealing with acoustics for a broadcast or musical performance

Studio- a specialized facility for sound recording, mixing, and audio production of instrumental or vocal musical performances, spoken words, and other sounds

Tracks- one of the several songs or pieces of music on a CD or other musical recording

Vinyl Record- a sound storage medium in the form of a flat vinyl disc with an inscribed spiral groove. This medium was popular for most of the 20th century

Bibliography

- Betts, Stephen L. "Donnie Fritts, Songwriter and Kris Kristofferson Sideman, Dead at 76." *Rolling Stone*, August 28, 2019.
- <https://www.rollingstone.com/music/music-country/donnie-fritts-songwriter-dead-obit-877617/>
- Fuqua, Christopher S. *Music Fell on Alabama*. Huntsville: Honeysuckle Imprint, 1991.
- Guralnick, Peter. *Sweet Soul Music: Rhythm and Blues and the Southern Dream of Freedom*. New York: Little, Brown and Company, 2015.
- Hall, Rick. *The Man from Muscle Shoals*. Monterey: Heritage Builders, 2015.
- Hughes, Charles L. *Country Soul: Making Music and Making Race in the American South*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015.
- Pruitt, Daphne. "The Making of a Blues Legend: W.C. Handy." *Alabama Heritage*, Summer 2009.
- Olson, Peter B. "Dan Penn." Encyclopedia of Alabama. January 25, 2010.
- <https://encyclopediaofalabama.org/article/dan-penn/>
- Olson, Peter B. "Percy Sledge," Encyclopedia of Alabama. October 18, 2016.
- <https://encyclopediaofalabama.org/article/percy-sledge/>
- Olson, Peter B. "Eddie Hinton," Encyclopedia of Alabama. September 4, 2009.
- <https://encyclopediaofalabama.org/article/eddie-hinton/>
- Putnam, Norbert. *Music Lessons: A Musical Memoir*. Atlanta: Whitman Publishing, 2017.
- Reali, Christopher. "Helping Pave the Road to FAME: Behind the Music of Muscle Shoals." *Southern Cultures* 21, no. 3 (Fall 2015).
- Reali, Christopher. *Music and Mystique in Muscle Shoals*. Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2022.
- _____. "Sam Phillips: The Sound and Legacy of Sun Records." National Public Radio, November 28, 2001.
- <https://legacy.npr.org/programs/morning/features/2001/nov/phillips/011128.sam.phillips.html>
- Whitley, Carla Jean. *Muscle Shoals Sound Studio*. Charleston: The History Press, 2014.
- Younger, Richard. *Get a Shot of Rhythm and Blues: The Arthur Alexander Story*. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2000.

Photo Credits

Page 2

- Welcome to Muscle Shoals: Jimmy Johnson

Page 3

- Wilson Dam: Muscle Shoals National Heritage Area (MSNHA)
- Tom Hendrix: MSNHA

Page 4

- W.C. Handy: Wikipedia
- Sam Phillips: Dick Cooper
- Buddy Killen: FAME Studios

Page 5

- Singing River Sculpture: Brian Corrigan
- The Blue Seal Pals: Alabama Music Hall of Fame (AMHOF)
- Dexter Johnson: Jimmy Johnson

Page 6

- Bobby Denton: AMHOF
- Rick Hall, Charlie Senn, Randy Allen and Billy Sherrill: FAME Studios
- Barry Beckett: Jimmy Johnson

Page 7

- WLAY: Kevin Self
- James Mitchell, Jimmy Johnson, Aaron Varnell, Mickey Buckins, Barry Beckett and Bow Legs Miller: FAME Studios

Page 8

- Junior Lowe, Roger Hawkins, Barry Beckett, Jimmy Johnson and David Hood: David Hood

Page 9

- W.C. Handy: Wikipedia
- Sam Phillips: Dick Cooper

Page 10

- Dexter Johnson: Jimmy Johnson
- Rick Hall: Dick Cooper
- Arthur Alexander: Dick Cooper

Page 11

- Percy Sledge: Dick Cooper
- Donna Jean Godchaux: AMHOF

Page 12

- Donnie Fritts: Dick Cooper
- Spooner Oldham: Abraham Rowe

Page 13

- Ava Aldridge: Rhonda Ballew Smith
- Travis Wammack: FAME Studios

Page 15

- Tom Stafford: AMHOF
- Rick Hall: FAME Studios
- Jerry Wexler and Rick Hall: Jimmy Johnson

Page 16

- Percy Sledge: Jimmy Johnson
- Quin Ivy and David Johnson: Dick Cooper

Page 17

- Paul Simon: Muscle Shoals Sound Studio (MSSS)
- The Swampers: MSSS

Page 18

- Terry Woodford and Clayton Ivey: Dick Cooper
- George Soule, Al Cartee and others: FAME Studios

Page 19

- Ron Ballew and Debbi Shirley: Rhonda Ballew Smith
- The Swampers: Dick Cooper

Page 21-24

- Various: Dick Cooper

Page 20

- The Osmonds: FAME Studios
- Norala Sound Studio: Brian Corrigan
- Swamp Dogg, Ruth Brown and David Johnson: Dick Cooper
- Cypress Moon Studios: Jimmy Johnson
- Wishbone Recording Studio: Terry Woodford

Page 25

- Travis Wammack: FAME Studios

Page 32

- Bobbie Gentry: FAME Studios

Page 33

- Harvey Thompson and Ronnie Eades: Dick Cooper

Page 34-35

- Jimmy Johnson, Gregg Hamm and others: Jimmy Johnson

Page 36-37

- Cindy Richardson Walker and Marie Tomlinson Lewey: Jimmy Nutt

Page 38-39

- Junior Lowe and Bobby Gentry: FAME Studios

Page 42-43

- Travis Wammack: FAME Studios

Page 48

- Barry Beckett, Bob Dylan and Jerry Wexler: Dick Cooper

Page 53

- Welcome to Muscle Shoals: Dick Cooper

Special Thanks

Carolyn Barske Crawford

Lori Reynolds

Tori Hinshaw

Christopher Reali

Dick Cooper

David Hood

Rhonda Ballew Smith

Muscle Shoals Sound Studio

FAME Studios

Alabama Music Hall of Fame

UNA Archives and Special Collections

