

DEAN DILLON

B I O G R A P H Y



THERE ARE SONGWRITERS AND THEN THERE ARE POETS-ARTISTS WHO MAGICALLY WEAVE MELODIES AND WORDS INTO THREE-AND-A-HALF-MINUTE MASTERPIECES THAT OUTSHINE THE PAINT-BY-NUMBERS-SONGS THAT OFTEN CLOG UP THE AIRWAVES. DEAN DILLON IS THE LATER.

Dean Dillon was born on March 26, 1955, in Lake City, TN and started playing guitar at the age of 7. At the age of 15 he appeared in a local Knoxville, TN Variety Show called JIM CLAYTON'S STARTIME as a songwriter and performer; by the end of high school, Dean Dillon had his mind set on Nashville.

After hitchhiking to Music City in the early 70's, it wasn't long before he caught the watchful eye of Shelby Singleton of SUN RECORDS. After a short recording stint that produced one record, Dean was once again walking the streets of a town he barely knew. In 1976 Dillon landed the role of Hank Williams in Opryland's Country Music Show, USA. The theme park gig indirectly helped Dillon secure his first publishing deal

In 2002, he was inducted into the Nashville Songwriters Hall of Fame (along with Bob Dylan and Shel Silverstein). Early the following year Dillon signed a songwriting contract with Sony/A TV Tree, which came after his fifteen year relationship with Rose Acuff, a publishing company Sony acquired in July 2002.

Dean Dillon's songwriting has thrived. He has recently written songs for famous faces like Kenny Chesney, Toby Keith and Lee Ann Womack. His association with George Strait over the years has brought him to an ICON STATUS in country music. It's the relationship with Strait that has, to a large extent, defined both of their careers. And in a genre built on great songwriters writing for great singers, there has never been another

with Nashville producer, publisher Tom Collins. Three weeks later Barbara Mandrell recorded three of Dillon's songs. In 1979 Jim Ed Brown and Helen Cornelius had a number 1 hit with Dillon's "Lying Here In Love with You" a song he co-wrote with fellow tunesmith Gary Harrison of "Strawberry Wine" fame. It was both writers first number 1 hit record.

Although it was writing songs for others where Dillon's future lay, the young singer was hell bent on making it as a recording artist. Between 1979 and 1981 Dillon released 12 singles for RCA Records. Three of the songs reached the Top 30 on the country charts, including "Nobody in His Right Mind Would've Left Her," which climbed all the way to number 25 (and later became a number 1 hit for George Strait). Between 1979 and 1983, as an artist Dillon charted eight times and broke the Top 30 with "I'm into the Bottle (To Get You out of My Mind)." He also wrote hits for other country stars like the 1983 George Jones number 1 hit "Tennessee Whiskey". These successes established Dillon as a performer and as a songwriter. It wasn't long until Dillon was paired by RCA Record head, Jerry Bradley, with Gary Stewart, the "King of the Honky Tonkers." The vices of the two men fed off of each other and while their two bleary, good-timing albums were successful and looked like hard-living prototypes to Brooks & Dunn, (especially 1982's Brotherly Love), the partnership had little use for the straight and narrow. After "Those were the Days", Dillon took a five year hiatus from recording, cleaned up his personal life and concentrated on songwriting. He wrote or co-wrote a number of hits during this period and had considerable success with George Strait, who took five of his songs to the charts between 1981 & 1988. The exposure landed Dillon a new contract with CAPITOL RECORDS, who released two Ricky Scroggs produced albums, Slick Nickel and I've Learned to Live. The later featured a Tanya Tucker duet "Don't You Even Think About Leaving." Dillon next signed with ATLANTIC, where he issued his most successful album. It was 1991's Out of Your Mind which referenced the hard country of Dillon's heroes, but it also flirted with pop. The LP was lauded as a throwback, an answer to Nashville's penchant for vapidty.

team like it. Dillon has composed or co-written 55 songs for Strait, including 19 singles, 11 which went to number 1. Even in a career like Strait's, the Dillon titles stand out: "Marina del Rey", "The Chair", "I've Come to Expect it From You", "Easy Come, Easy Go", "She Let Herself Go", and "The Best Day." His songs all pair instantly catchy melodies with gutbucket country lyrics, signature qualities of a Dillon composition that would also become hallmarks of Strait's own style and sound.

As producer Tony Brown explained "they are the elements that allow Strait to sound traditional without sounding old-timey.

At his ranch home in Gunnison, Colorado, Dean Dillon's walls display an array of timely photographs and awards consisting of: 1985 Billboard Country Music Artist Of The Year Award; 1986 Nashville Song Writers Award; 1995, 1996, 1998 CMA TRIPLE PLAY AWARD ; Three Time Grammy Nominee; Lee Iacocca Award (American Automotive Division); Twenty Six (26) Number 1 Records Award; and the coveted 2013 BMI Icon Award.