

# 1949



TIME  
LIFE  
MUSIC

*Coeds whoop it up at their own hit parade,  
part of the annual rites of Spring Weekend at  
Syracuse University.*



From an international perspective, the final year of the tumultuous 1940s was a time of strife. The cold war between "free world" and "iron curtain" countries raged on in 1949 as the Russians exploded their first atomic bomb, contributing greatly to worldwide anxiety. The civil war in China persisted, and the United States Senate ratified the treaty that created the European defense force known as NATO.

But as saber-rattling around the world increased, a prosperous postwar America spent more money on leisure activities. Television sales boomed and broadcast schedules expanded on the four networks (CBS, NBC, Dumont and the fledgling ABC). *The Lone Ranger* moved from radio to TV, and *Texaco Star Theater*, starring Milton Berle, was fast becoming our national Wednesday night pastime.

The harsh, realistic American style of crime movie known as film noir remained popular, resulting in such genre classics as *White Heat*, which paired James Cagney and Virginia Mayo. Among the year's most hard-hitting films was *All the King's Men*, an adaptation of Robert Penn Warren's novel. Broderick Crawford's portrayal of Willie Stark, a ruthless Southern politician modeled on Huey Long, the flamboyant Louisiana governor and U.S. senator, earned him an Oscar.

But Hollywood in 1949 left plenty of room for escape and glamour. Gene Kelly and Frank Sinatra starred in *On the Town*; Bing Crosby headed the cast of the time-travel musical *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*. *The Barkleys of Broadway* featured

the durable team of Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers. Larry Parks repeated his starring role in *Jolson Sings Again*, with Jolson himself singing on the sound track. Dean Martin and Jerry Lewis made their film debut in *My Friend Irma*.

In 1949, James Dean left his home in rural Fairmount, Indiana, for Santa Monica, California, where he planned to attend college and launch his acting career. That November, 14-year-old Jerry Lee Lewis made an impromptu public appearance playing boogie-woogie piano at a Ford dealership in his hometown of Ferriday, Louisiana, and took home a hatful of money. This was also the year that gaunt Alabama singer-songwriter Hank Williams earned a spot on the Grand Ole Opry singing *Lovesick Blues*, a 1920s pop ditty.

By the end of the '40s, the big-band era had passed. Modern jazz was dominated by bebop innovators such as Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie and a handful of progressive jazz orchestras like Woody Herman's Second Herd. Though some bandleaders continued to sell records, solo vocalists, many of them big-band veterans, were coming on stronger than ever. The orchestras that prospered weren't the jazz-oriented units popular earlier in the decade, but conservative, pop-oriented groups like those led by Blue Barron and Sammy Kaye.

With millions of youthful World War II veterans around, many of whom had served in the Pacific theater of war, another type of theater beckoned. On April 7, the romantic musical *South Pacific*, based on three

stories from James A. Michener's novel *Tales of the South Pacific*, premiered on Broadway. The show featured Mary Martin and Ezio Pinza in the lead roles and yielded a number of Rodgers and Hammerstein tunes that became pop standards. Two songs from the show entered the charts in 1949, both as hits for Perry Como (backed by the lush, atmospheric sounds of the Mitchell Ayres Orchestra): **Bali Ha'i** and **Some Enchanted Evening**. That wasn't the end of Como's string; he had his second No. 1 record of the year with "A"—**You're Adorable**, on which he was joined by the Fontane Sisters.

Former Chicago choirboy Frankie Laine had come to the jazz haunts of New York's 52nd Street in the '40s, but was largely ignored because his unbridled singing style was ahead of its time. Tastes had changed considerably by 1949, when two of his records topped the charts. **That Lucky Old Sun**, by Nashville jazz pianist and bandleader Beasley Smith and Haven Gillespie, was later covered by everyone from Ray Charles to Willie Nelson. The Western-flavored **Mule Train**, complete with whip-snapping effects, stood out from the more conventional music of the day.

Country music's growing influence on pop artists was perhaps most obvious in **Slipping Around**, one of the earliest songs to tackle the taboo subject of adultery. Texas singer and writer Floyd Tillman got the idea for it after he stopped at a diner and overheard a woman in a phone booth telling someone to call her, adding, "If a man answers, hang up." It occurred to Tillman that the woman was "slippin' around" on her husband. His own recording of the song was a big country hit in 1949. Capitol Records paired two of its stars, pop vocalist Margaret Whiting and singing cowboy Jimmy Wakely, for a version that topped both the country and pop charts despite the song's controversial subject matter. On this recording, steel guitar was balanced with organ accompaniment in order to appeal to both audiences.

*Slipping Around* was Whiting's second hit duet of 1949. Her first one was Frank Loesser's **Baby, It's Cold Outside** (used in the film *Neptune's Daughter*, starring Esther Williams, Ricardo Montalban and Red Skelton), cut with Johnny Mercer, who was also part owner of Capitol Records. The song's popularity inspired a country parody by Homer and Jethro, with June Carter. Whiting also did well that year by herself with the wistful ballad **Far Away Places**, backed by the Crew Chiefs vocal group.

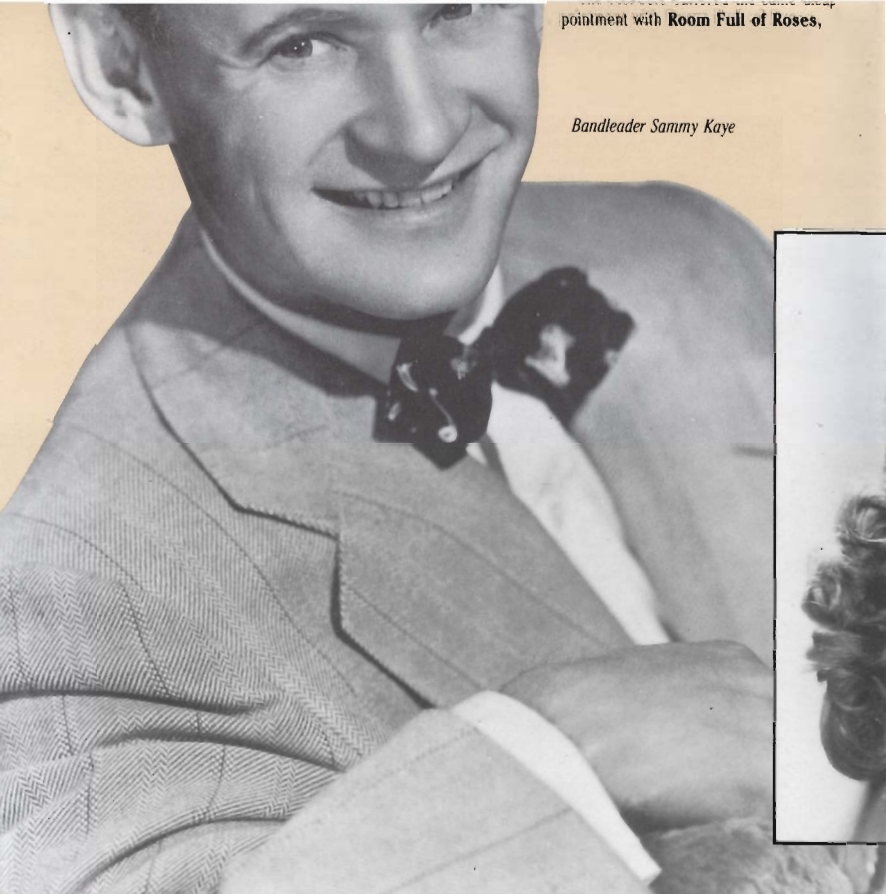
The haunting Western number **Riders in the Sky (A Cowboy Legend)** further reflected country music's impact on pop singers. Composer and park ranger Stan Jones gave the song to Bob Nolan of the Western vocal group the Sons of the Pioneers in 1948. Nolan was initially skeptical, citing the melody's similarity to the Civil War anthem *When Johnny Comes Marching Home*. The Pioneers cut *Riders* for RCA Victor in 1949, but the record didn't catch on. Labelmate Vaughn Monroe's more dramatic rendering, however, reached No. 1 on the pop charts.

The Pioneers suffered the same disap-



pointment with **Room Full of Roses,**

*Bandleader Sammy Kaye*



written by group member Tim Spencer, and cut at the same session as *Riders in the Sky*. Their version went nowhere, but bandleader Sammy Kaye (also an RCA artist) had a hit with his recording sung by Don Cornell and the Kaydets. Kaye and his vocalists did almost as well on the charts with Larry Morey and Eliot Daniel's **Lavender Blue (Dilly Dilly)**, used in the Walt Disney picture *So Dear to My Heart*. This traditional English folk song lent itself easily to a rock 'n' roll treatment a decade later when Sammy Turner scored a top-10 hit in 1959 with his soulful cover version.

Teaming singers with vocal groups also brought Dick Haymes massive success with the ballad **Maybe It's Because**, a Johnnie Scott-Harry Ruby number composed for the Broadway musical *Along Fifth Avenue*. Haymes crooned with the lush support of the Gordon Jenkins Orchestra and the equally lush harmonies of the Tattlers behind him.

In 1949, 24-year-old Mel Tormé had already been making records for five years, both as leader of his vocal group the Mel-Tones and as a solo act. He was still a few years away from the fame he acquired as a jazz singer in the '50s, but **Careless Hands**, his first Capitol release, sat solidly within the pop-jazz style he had pursued since his Mel-Tone days. The hand-clapping hook in a restrained orchestral accompaniment, provided by longtime associate Sonny Burke, helped make *Careless Hands* Tormé's first No. 1 record.

Hand clapping figured in another smash that year: Evelyn Knight's invigorating, gospel-flavored **A Little Bird Told Me**, featuring the call-and-response vocals of the Stardusters. Knight and the Stardusters topped the hit parade a second time in 1949 with the upbeat **Powder Your Face with Sunshine (Smile! Smile! Smile!)**, written by Guy Lombardo's brother Carmen and Stanley Rochinski.

Doris Day and Les Brown, who had worked together earlier in the '40s, both enjoyed individual success in 1949—especially Day. She starred in two films, *It's a Great Feeling* and *My Dream Is Yours*, and just missed

## DISCOGRAPHY

\*Indicates highest chart position

1. **Mule Train** Frankie Lane • Music and lyrics by Johnny Lange, Hy Heath and Fred Glickman. Mercury 5345. Under license from PolyGram Special Products, a Division of PolyGram Records, Inc. No. 1\*
2. **Careless Hands** Mel Tormé • Music and lyrics by Bob Hilliard and Carl Sigman. Capitol 15379. Courtesy of Capitol Records, Inc. No. 1\*
3. **Again** Doris Day • Music by Lionel Newman, lyrics by Dorcas Cochran. Columbia 38467. Courtesy of CBS Special Products. No. 2\*
4. **Room Full of Roses** Swing and Sway with Sammy Kaye • Music and lyrics by Tim Spencer. RCA Victor 78-3441. No. 2\*
5. **Baby, It's Cold Outside** Margaret Whiting and Johnny Mercer • Music and lyrics by Frank Loesser. Capitol 567. Courtesy of Capitol Records, Inc. No. 3\*
6. **Some Enchanted Evening** Perry Como • Music by Richard Rodgers, lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein II. RCA Victor 2896. No. 1\*
7. **A Little Bird Told Me** Evelyn Knight and the Stardusters • Music and lyrics by Harvey O. Brooks. Decca 24514. Courtesy of MCA Records, Inc. No. 1\*
8. **Forever and Ever** Russ Morgan • Music by Franz Winkler, lyrics by Malia Rosa. Decca 24569. Courtesy of MCA Records, Inc. No. 1\*
9. **Galway Bay** Bing Crosby • Music and lyrics by Arthur Colahan. Decca 24295. Courtesy of MCA Records, Inc. No. 3\*
10. **My Darling, My Darling** Jo Stafford and Gordon MacRae • Music and lyrics by Frank Loesser. Capitol 15270. Courtesy of Capitol Records, Inc. No. 1\*
11. **Don't Cry Joe (Let Her Go, Let Her Go, Let Her Go)** Gordon Jenkins and His Orchestra • Music and lyrics by Joe Marsala. Decca 24720. Courtesy of MCA Records, Inc. No. 3\*
12. **Riders in the Sky (A Cowboy Legend)** Vaughn Monroe • Music and lyrics by Stan Jones. RCA Victor 3411. No. 1\*
13. **I've Got My Love to Keep Me Warm** Les Brown • Music by Irving Berlin. Columbia 38324. Courtesy of CBS Special Products. No. 1\*
14. **Slipping Around** Margaret Whiting and Jimmy Wakely • Music and lyrics by Floyd Tillman. Capitol 40224. Courtesy of Capitol Records, Inc. No. 1\*

topping the charts with the sentimental ballad **Again**. With the close harmonies of the Mellomen and a combo led by John Rarig, Day's recording reflects the intimate style used by many female vocalists in the late '40s. Les Brown's instrumental version of Irving Berlin's **I've Got My Love to Keep Me Warm**, orchestrated by saxophonist and former Count Basie arranger Skip Martin, stood as a last gasp of the big-band era and Brown's last No. 1 hit.

—Rich Kienzle



Doris Day

15. **Bali Ha'i** Perry Como • Music by Richard Rodgers, lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein II. RCA Victor 2896. No. 5\*
16. **That Lucky Old Sun (Just Rolls Around Heaven All Day)** Frankie Laine • Music by Beasley Smith, lyrics by Haven Gillespie. Mercury 5316. Under license from PolyGram Special Products, a Division of PolyGram Records, Inc. No. 1\*
17. **Maybe It's Because** Dick Haymes • Music by Johnnie Scott, lyrics by Harry Ruby. Decca 24650. Courtesy of MCA Records, Inc. No. 5\*
18. **So Tired** Russ Morgan • Music and lyrics by Russ Morgan and Jack Stuart. Decca 24521. Courtesy of MCA Records, Inc. No. 3\*
19. **Lavender Blue (Dilly Dilly)** Swing and Sway with Sammy Kaye • Music by Eliot Daniel, lyrics by Larry Morey. RCA Victor 3100. No. 4\*
20. **Powder Your Face with Sunshine (Smile! Smile! Smile!)** Evelyn Knight and the Stardusters • Music and lyrics by Carmen Lombardo and Stanley Rochinski. Decca 24530. Courtesy of MCA Records, Inc. No. 1\*
21. **Someday** Vaughn Monroe • Music and lyrics by Jimmie Hodges. RCA Victor 78-3510. No. 1\*
22. **"A"—You're Adorable** Perry Como with the Fontane Sisters • Music and lyrics by Buddy Kaye, Fred Wise and Sidney Lippman. RCA Victor 2899. No. 1\*
23. **Cruising down the River** Blue Barron • Music and lyrics by Eily Beadell and Nell Tollerton. MGM 10346. Under license from PolyGram Special Products, a Division of PolyGram Records, Inc. No. 1\*
24. **Far Away Places** Margaret Whiting • Music and lyrics by Joan Whitney and Alex Kramer. Capitol 15278. Courtesy of Capitol Records, Inc. No. 2\*

# 1949

- 1 **Mule Train** Frankie Laine
- 2 **Careless Hands** Mel Tormé
- 3 **Again** Doris Day
- 4 **Room Full of Roses** Swing and Sway with Sammy Kaye
- 5 **Baby, It's Cold Outside**  
Margaret Whiting and Johnny Mercer
- 6 **Some Enchanted Evening** Perry Como
- 7 **A Little Bird Told Me** Evelyn Knight and the Stardusters
- 8 **Forever and Ever** Russ Morgan
- 9 **Galway Bay** Bing Crosby
- 10 **My Darling, My Darling** Jo Stafford and Gordon MacRae
- 11 **Don't Cry Joe (Let Her Go, Let Her Go, Let Her Go)** Gordon Jenkins and His Orchestra
- 12 **Riders in the Sky (A Cowboy Legend)** Vaughn Monroe
- 13 **I've Got My Love to Keep Me Warm** Les Brown
- 14 **Slipping Around** Margaret Whiting and Jimmy Wakely
- 15 **Bali Ha'i** Perry Como
- 16 **That Lucky Old Sun (Just Rolls around Heaven All Day)** Frankie Laine
- 17 **Maybe It's Because** Dick Haymes
- 18 **So Tired** Russ Morgan
- 19 **Lavender Blue (Dilly Dilly)**  
Swing and Sway with Sammy Kaye
- 20 **Powder Your Face with Sunshine (Smile! Smile! Smile!)** Evelyn Knight and the Stardusters
- 21 **Someday** Vaughn Monroe
- 22 **"A"—You're Adorable**  
Perry Como with the Fontane Sisters
- 23 **Cruising down the River** Blue Barron
- 24 **Far Away Places** Margaret Whiting



**President:** Paul R. Stewart  
**Vice Presidents:** Terence J. Furlong, Carol Kaplan  
**Executive Producer:** Charles McCardell  
**Recording Producer:** Bill Inglot  
**Series Consultant:** Charles K. Wolfe  
**Creative Director:** Don Sheldon  
**Art Director:** Robin Bray  
**Associate Producer:** Brian Miller  
**Assistant Producer:** Robert Hull  
**Art Studio:** Nina Bridges  
**Chief Financial Officer:** Eric R. Eaton  
**Production Director:** Fernando Pargas  
**Production Manager:** Karen Hill

1949 was produced by Time-Life Music in cooperation with BMG Music. Digitally remastered at K-Disc, Hollywood, Calif.; Ken Perry, engineer.

**The Author:** Rich Kienzle is the author of *Great Guitarists*, a collection of essays devoted to the most influential jazz, country and rock players. He is also a contributing editor to *Country Music* magazine and *Rock & Roll Disc*.

Time-Life Music wishes to thank William L. Schurk of the Music Library and Sound Recordings Archives, Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green, Ohio, for providing valuable reference material.

TIME-LIFE MUSIC is a division of Time-Life Books Inc. © 1989 Time-Life Books Inc. All rights reserved. Printed in U.S.A. TIME-LIFE is a trademark of Time Incorporated U.S.A.

**Picture Credits:** Cover art by John Maggard © 1988, 1989 Time-Life Books Inc. Opening spread: Lisa Larsen for *Life*. Center spread: Courtesy Michael Ochs Archives, Venice, Calif. (2)

Manufactured for Time-Life Music by BMG Music.  
© 1989 BMG Music.