

HANK

WILLIAMS TRAIL



MONTGOMERY
KOWALICA
ANDALUSIA
GEORGIANA
MOUNT OLIVE
GREENVILLE

Welcome to Alabama's

You are invited to spend several days (and nights) in Alabama experiencing the **Hank Williams Trail**. He was born in rural Butler County in 1923. See the small **Mount Olive** church where he learned to sing. His Georgiana **Boyhood Home** is a popular museum that hosts a music festival each June.

Hank Jr. poses with the statue he donated in honor of his father.

Stroll the streets of **Greenville** where his mentor "Tee Tot" lived, and visit downtown **Andalusia**, where Hank married Audrey Sheppard in 1944.

Some 55 miles north of **Georgiana** on "**The Lost Highway**," the **Hank Williams Museum** is the perfect place to begin a tour of many **Montgomery** landmarks. View the powder-blue Cadillac inside.

Peggy Collins



Russ Baxley



Visitors can have their picture made with a replica of "Poor Ol' Kawiaga" and view Hank's famous Cadillac at the Hank Williams Museum in Montgomery.

Hank Williams Trail

Enjoy Hank's favorite meal of a chili dog and bottled Coca-Cola at **Chris' Hot Dogs**, open since 1917. Take in some nightlife at **Nobles**, where Hank gave his last public performance. Walk to the site of his funeral and photograph the life-size **Hank Williams Statue** that Hank Williams, Jr. donated.

Visit the graves of Hank and Audrey at the **Oakwood Cemetery Annex**. Pilgrims gather each New Year's on the anniversary of his death in 1953.

Less than an hour north of **Montgomery**, arrange to stay in the **Hank Williams Cabin**, where he wrote "Kaw-liga" and "Your Cheatin' Heart."



Chris' Hot Dogs



Nobles

You can also spend the night at **Birmingham's** historic **Redmont Hotel** where Hank began his final journey.



The Hank Williams Cabin at Kowaliga

You will long remember your own travels along **"The Lost Highway."**

This sign designates the stretch of I-65 between Georgiana and Montgomery as "The Lost Highway".



The Trail



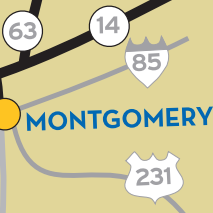
Birmingham
Hank spent the night at the Redmont Hotel before leaving for the New Year's Day show in Canton, Ohio.



KOWALIGA

Kowaliga Beach
Hank retreated to a vacation cabin here in the summer of 1952.

Montgomery
Hank lived here from 1937-48. He is buried here.



Hank Williams memorial Lost Highway

Highway 31
The highway that Hank traveled

GREENVILLE

Greenville
Hank's home from 1934-37

MOUNT OLIVE/GRACE

Mount Olive
Hank was born on September 17, 1923 at Mount Olive

GEORGIANA
Georgiana
Hank's boyhood home 1930-34

ANDALUSIA

Andalusia
Hank married Audrey - 1944



Mount Olive



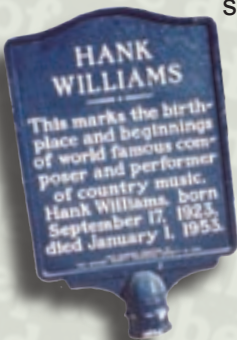
Baptist church at right



This old well was all that remained at the site of Hank's birth, according to Lillie Williams' book, "Our Hank Williams."

Hiram Williams was born in a double-pen log house on a hill southwest of Georgiana, Alabama on September 17, 1923. Today a red barn occupies the location (private property.) It is a half-mile beyond Mount Olive West Baptist Church.

He attended services with his mother and developed a love of gospel music that he would later feature in live performances, radio shows and recordings.



According to Lillie Williams, this house was identical to the house that stood at the Mount Olive site.

Directions: Take the I-65 Grace/Garland exit 107 and turn west on Hank Williams Memorial Road. Go 4 miles. Services at the church are on the second and fourth Sunday mornings at 11. Fans of Hank are welcome. The birthplace marker and organ stool are displayed in the Georgiana Museum (Hankmuseum.com).

Georgiana



Boyhood Home & Museum

Lillie Williams moved her family to 127 Rose Street, where they lived from 1930-34. During these years, Hiram Williams got his first guitar and met black street performer Rufus “Tee-Tot” Payne who taught him his first chords. The City of Georgiana purchased the house and opened the **Hank Williams Boyhood Home & Museum** in 1992. Photos,

records and clothing are displayed. A portion of Thigpen’s Log Cabin dance hall where Hank played for years has been relocated here. The Hank Williams Festival is held on the grounds the first Saturday each June. Hank’s

daughter **Jett Williams** performs regularly at this festival.



Jett Williams



Boyhood Home & Museum

Directions: From I-65 Exit #114 (Georgiana/Star-lington), travel east on AL 106 two miles. Turn right on Meeting Ave. and go 0.4 miles. Turn left on Rose St. The boyhood home is 0.1 miles on the right.

Fred McClendon opened the **GA-ANA Theater** on January 31, 1939. Eight months later, 16-year-old Hank returned to perform here with his Drifting Cowboys band. The theater is three blocks from the Hank Williams Boyhood Home & Museum. Check the web at Georgianatheater.com for upcoming live performances.

Directions: I-65 Exit #114 (Georgiana/Starlington). Travel east on AL 106 approximately 2.1 miles. Turn Right onto Miranda Ave., go 0.6 miles. Turn left onto County Rd. 16 and travel 0.1 mile. Turn right onto E. Railroad Avenue, go 0.1 mile. GA-ANA Theater is on the left.



The GA-ANA Theater



This photo commemorates Hank's inaugural performance at the theater.

Greenville



As a boy of 11, he sold peanuts and shined shoes near the Butler County Courthouse in Greenville. While in his

teens, his band performed occasionally at the Ritz Theater on Commerce Street. On Aug. 15, 1952, the singer performed two concerts at Tiger Stadium during his "Greenville Homecoming" sponsored by the Rotary Club. He and his mother rode in a convertible in a parade past the Ritz. He died four months later. The theater interior, now restored, hosts community performances.

Directions: Take I-65 Exit 130.

Andalusia

Nineteen-year-old Hank Williams was singing in a medicine show in Banks near Troy in the summer of 1943 when he met and began dating **Audrey Sheppard**. She was estranged from her husband, with whom she had a daughter **Lycrecia**, age 2. Hank and Audrey lived in a trailer in Andalusia in late 1944 while his Drifting Cowboys band performed at the Riverside Inn on the east bank of the Conecuh River near River Falls.



Audrey and Hank

Hank Williams Museum



The Andalusia garage in the 1940s

Ten days after her divorce was final, Justice of the Peace M.A. Boyett married Hank and Audrey on Dec. 15, at John G. Wright, Sr.'s automotive garage at 120 East Three Notch Road, a block east of the courthouse square.

Directions: From Georgiana, travel U.S. 31 to State 55 and go south. Go east on U.S. 82 to South Three Notch into downtown. Pirate Graphics is located in the former garage.

Hank and Family



Hank and Hank Jr.

The highs and lows of the marriage provided inspiration for many of Hank's most popular songs.

Randall Hank Williams Jr. was born to the couple on May 26, 1949.

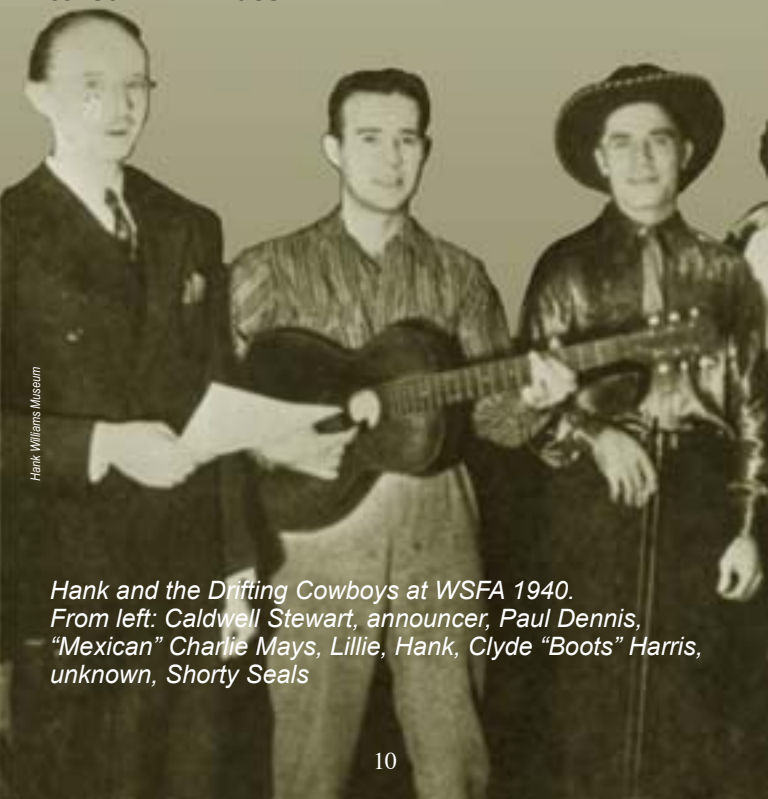


Montgomery

Lillie Williams moved her family to Montgomery on July 10, 1937, where she operated a succession of downtown boarding houses. The first was north of the Governor's Mansion at 114 South Perry Street. The one at 236 Catoma Street was next to the **Jefferson Davis Hotel** where studios for radio station WSFA were housed. Son Hiram renamed himself "Hank" and by age 14 was singing on WSFA. (The WSFA call letters stood for the "South's Finest Airport," where the station began, and whose nighttime beacon would later inspire "I Saw the Light.")



He won his first talent contest at age 14 in the Empire Theater in 1937 with a ditty he wrote called "WPA Blues."



Hank Williams Museum

*Hank and the Drifting Cowboys at WSFA 1940.
From left: Caldwell Stewart, announcer, Paul Dennis,
"Mexican" Charlie Mays, Lillie, Hank, Clyde "Boots" Harris,
unknown, Shorty Seals*

He dropped out of Sidney Lanier High School on South Court Street in the 10th grade at 16 to concentrate on his Drifting Cowboys band and his music career. Meanwhile, Lillie drove the band to live performances at schools and roadhouses in south Alabama.

Chris' Hot Dogs, young Hank's favorite place to eat while living in Montgomery, is still open for business at 138 Dexter Avenue.

The Elite Café, a block down the street from the Empire Theater, was the venue of his final performance.



Russ Baxley

Chris' Hot Dogs has been family-owned since 1917. Theo Katechis is joined by his nephew Gregory (left) and son Chris (right).



Hank Williams

Hank Williams Museum



Hank Williams Museum

The Hank Williams Museum is the best place to begin a visit to Hank's beloved hometown.

The largest collection of Hank Williams clothing, records, paintings and personal items – many on loan from son Randall Hank Williams, Jr. – is at 118 Commerce Street. More than a dozen of his famous handmade Nudie suits, as well as hats and boots, are on display.





Russ Baxley

The most memorable exhibit is the powder-blue Cadillac convertible in which the singer died in the early morning of January 1, 1953.

Hank Williams' Montgomery

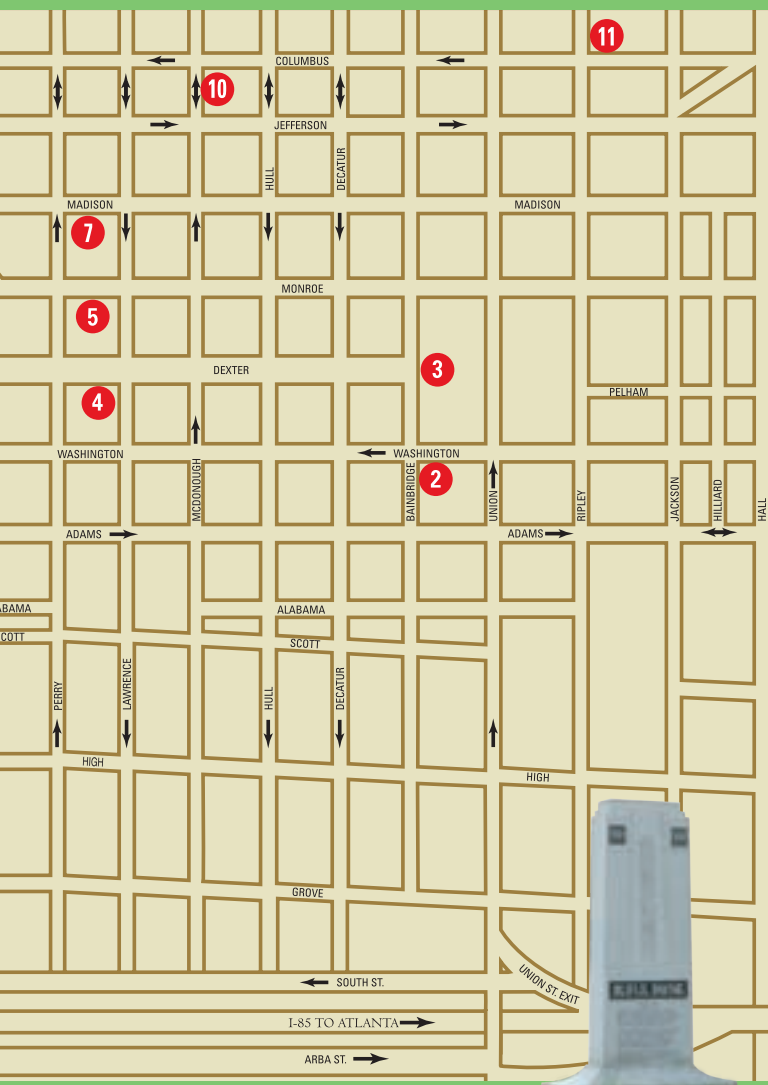


- 1 Montgomery Area Visitor Center**
300 Water St., Historic Union Station, 262-0013
Where Hank boarded trains.
- 2 Alabama Department of Archives & History**
624 Washington Ave., 242-4363
Hank Williams items on display.
- 3 Alabama State Capitol Building**
624 Washington Ave., 242-4363
- 4 Chris' Hot Dogs**
138 Dexter Ave., Open Mon.-Sat.
Hank's favorite eatery opened 1917.
- 5 City Auditorium**
Perry at Monroe St.
Where Hank's funeral was held on Jan. 4, 1953
- 6 Elite Cafe Site (Now Nobles)**
119 Montgomery St.
Where Hank had his last performance.



Russ Baxley

The Alabama Department of Archives and History at 624 Washington Avenue displays costumes and documents pertaining to his life and career.



- 7 Hank Williams Statue**
1 1/2 blocks north of Dexter on Perry Street.
- 8 Jeff Davis Hotel where WFSA was housed (now private)**
344 Montgomery St.
- 9 Site of Lillie's Rooming House 1940-46 near Jeff Davis Hotel**
236 Catoma St.

- 10 Site of Lillie's Rooming House where Hank laid in state (Center of block, south of Tucker Pecans)**
350 N. McDonough St.
- 11 Oakwood Cemetery**
Upper Wetumpka Rd., go east on Jefferson St. Follow signs. Where Hank and Audrey Williams are buried.

- 12 Empire Theater Site (Now Rosa Parks Museum)**
252 Montgomery St.

- 13 Hank Williams Museum**
118 Commerce St., 262-3600. Open daily.

A monument to Rufus "Tee-Tot" Payne, who taught young Hank his first chords on the guitar, stands in Lincoln Cemetery on Lincoln Road, north of I-85.



Peggy Collins

Kowaliga

Hank spent weekends with girlfriend **Bobbie Jett** at Kowaliga on Lake Martin in summer 1952. They frequented a cafe where guests were greeted by a carved statue of an Indian. Producer Fred Rose and Hank wrote a song about a lovesick wooden Indian: *"Pore ol' Kaw-liga. He never got a kiss...he don't know what he missed."* A daughter, Cathy, (renamed Jett Williams) was born in St. Margaret's Hospital two days after Hank's funeral.



Peggy Collins

The Hank Williams Cabin
at Children's Harbor

The white frame cabin where Hank also wrote "Your Cheatin' Heart" was restored by the

nonprofit retreat Children's Harbor. The cabin is not open for tours, but can be reserved for an overnight stay. *Call 334-857-2133 or visit childrensharbor.com for availability and directions.*



A replica statue of **Kowaliga** welcomes guests to **Sinclair's** Restaurant, which sits on the site of the cafe where Hank ate. *For restaurant hours and directions, call 334-857-2889 or visit sinclairsrestaurants.com*

The Final Performance

You can enjoy cocktails at **Nobles**, formerly the Elite Café, where Hank Williams last sang in public four days before he died. The frail singer attended a Christmas benefit for musicians in the lounge of the Elite. He sang “Jambalaya,” “Cold, Cold Heart,” “You Win Again,” and “Lovesick Blues.”

Call 334-262-3326. noblesandoliveroom.com



The Elite Cafe (now Nobles) as it looked in Hank's day.

Birmingham

You can stay overnight on the second floor of the historic **Redmont Hotel**, where Hank and his young driver slept enroute to out-of-state concerts. At dawn on New Year's Day, 1953, Hank Williams was pronounced dead near Oak Hill, W.Va.

2101 5th Ave. N. in Birmingham. Call 205-324-2101



Alabama's Largest Funeral



Hank's casket being placed in the hearse

On Sunday, January 4, 1953, family members viewed the body at his mother's boarding house at 217 McDonough Street (now demolished) before the casket

was carried 4 blocks to the **Municipal Auditorium** on Perry Street. Some 2,750 mourners crowded inside for the service while an estimated 20,000 stood vigil outside in the cold. The funeral was one week after his last performance. Mourners then walked a mile along Jefferson Street to **Oakwood Cemetery** for the burial.



Mourners fill the street outside Municipal Auditorium on Perry Street. The auditorium has been converted to office space for the City of Montgomery.



The life-sized statue of Hank faces the auditorium from across Perry Street.



End of the Lost Highway



Hank and Audrey are buried at Oakwood Cemetery



Hank's death inspired many tribute records

A major highlight of your visit along the Hank Williams Trail is paying respects at Hank and Audrey's final resting place. On any given day, **Oakwood Cemetery Annex** is visited by people from all over the world. On New Year's Day, join the memorial celebration at the gravesite, with other Hank fans and **Drifting Cowboys** who sing Hank's songs, pay respects and lay wreaths.

Annual Events

New Year's Day

Hank Williams Memorial, Oakwood Cemetery Annex, Montgomery. 10:00 a.m. Wreath-laying ceremony, followed by music and refreshments at the museum.

Second Sunday in February

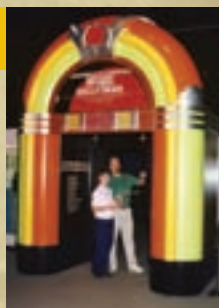
Hank Williams Museum Open House, Montgomery. Free admission.

First weekend in June

Hank Williams Festival, Boyhood Home & Museum, Georgiana.

September 17

*Hank Williams Birthday
Hank Williams Museum,
Montgomery, celebration held week-
end nearest to September 17.*



*The **Alabama Music Hall of Fame** in **Tuscumbia** boasts a wax figure of Hank in one of his original suits. Visit them on the web at alamhof.org or call 800-239-AMHF*

HANK WILLIAMS TRAIL



Peggy Collins

*The Hank Williams Museum (Montgomery)
118 Commerce St., Montgomery, AL 36104
334-262-3600*

thehankwilliamsmuseum.com

*The Hank Williams Boyhood Home & Museum
(Georgiana) P.O. Box 310, Georgiana, AL 36033
334-376-2396*

hankmuseum.com

*For information about historic markers, visit
hankwilliamstrail.com*

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