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# The Rhinestone Cowboy

More than two hours of performances by the beloved musician's classic hits are captured on the timely *Glen Campbell-Live Anthology 1972-2001*

BY HARVEY KUBERNIK

**A** WEEK BEFORE GLEN CAMPBELL'S death at age 81 of Alzheimer's in Nashville Tennessee, MVD Entertainment Group released *Glen Campbell-Live Anthology 1972-2001*.

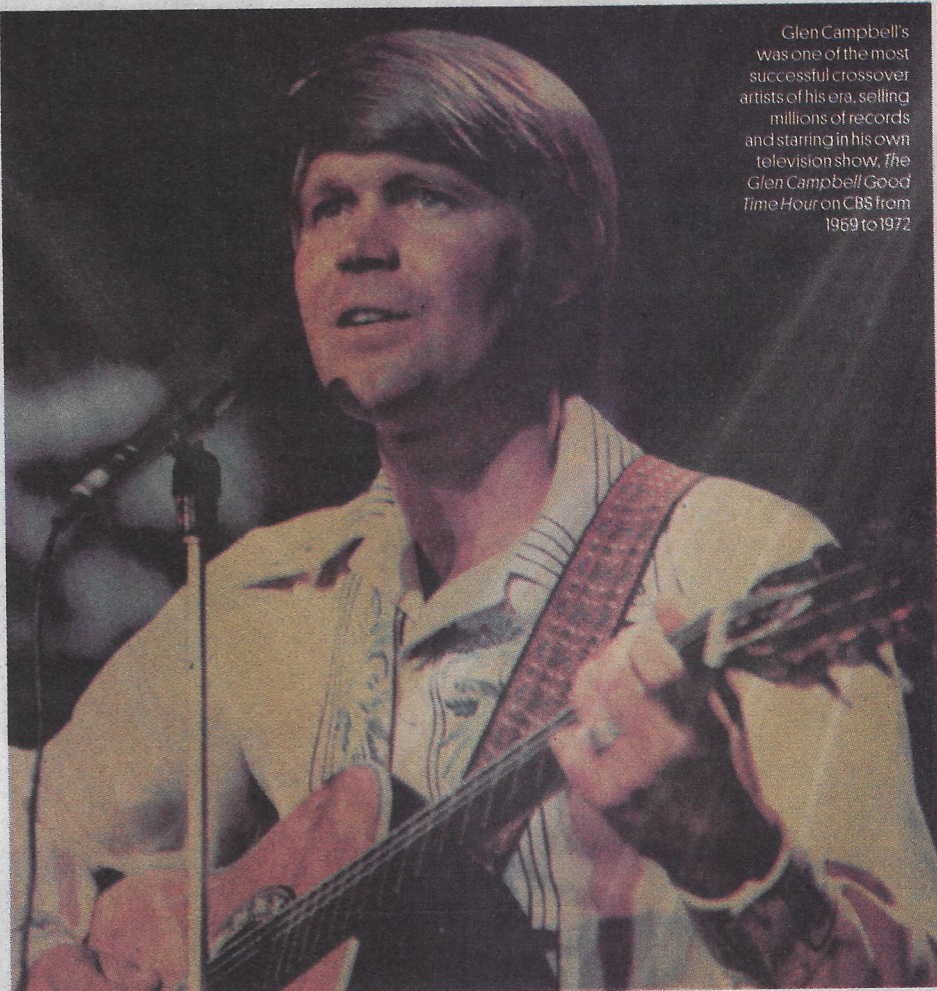
This definitive collection of Campbell's work on DVD/CD from the Goldenlane label is two hours and twenty minutes of live Campbell performances captured in the 1972-2001 time period and incorporates versions of all his classic hits, as well as bonus tracks of Campbell duets with Wayne Newton, Anne Murray, Seals & Croft, Helen Reddy, and others.

Fans will delight in this DVD/CD anthology of live recordings chronicling Glen Campbell at the height of his popularity. This 70-minute concert video anthology features performances of every major Campbell classic including "Rhinestone Cowboy," "Wichita Lineman," "Galveston," "Gentle On My Mind," "By The Time I Get To Phoenix" and more.

*Glen Campbell-Live Anthology 1972-2001* underscores his landmark achievements as one of the best-selling male artists in U.S. chart history. Campbell released more than 70 albums, selling 50 million copies with more than 80 songs charting.

Campbell's vast commercial success enabled him to cross over into a new arena — television. *The Glen Campbell Good Time Hour* was initially shown from 1969-72. The episodes were broadcast in Great Britain, Australia and Singapore by the BBC along with five specials for the network, making Glen Campbell a truly international presence and catapulting the singer to worldwide stardom.

"When I did the TV show I wanted to make sure I could get everybody I knew who was a good singer," Campbell told me in a 2009 interview inside the green room of *The Tonight Show with Jay Leno*. "Johnny Cash, Cher, Ray Charles, Roger Miller, Willie Nelson, Linda Ronstadt, Bobbie Gentry, Rick Nelson, and Anne Murray. I give all the credit to Tommy Smothers. He saw me guest on *The*



Glen Campbell's was one of the most successful crossover artists of his era, selling millions of records and starring in his own television show, *The Glen Campbell Good Time Hour* on CBS from 1969 to 1972.

COURTESY MVD VISUAL

*Joey Bishop Show* and called the next day.

"The people at CBS TV then said there's too much country stuff in the show. 'Which country?' I must have pissed them off a little bit, though," he laughed.

Campbell would conquer pop music again in the mid-1970s when he scored with his best-selling hit, "Rhinestone Cowboy," a signature song that became his theme in many ways. The 1975 record which has sold more than five million copies remains a standard of the era. And in 1977 Glen released "Southern Nights," a remake of Allen Toussaint's classic. The

song reached No. 1 in three categories and was the most-played jukebox track of 1977.

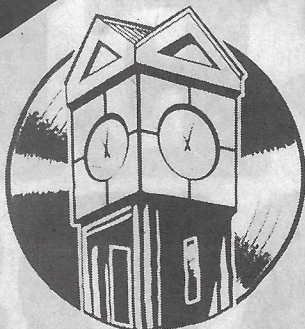
In 1994 Campbell penned his autobiography *Rhinestone Cowboy*. In 2008 *Meet Glen Campbell* shipped, followed by the extremely personal song cycle *Ghost on the Canvas* in 2011 at age 75. After recording that album, Campbell was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease, a debilitating brain disorder that slowly drained Campbell of his memories and abilities.

He nevertheless launched *The Glen*

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Campbell Goodbye Tour, with his children becoming key members of his band. A film crew led by director James Keach followed Campbell for a portion of the 151 sold-out shows as he navigated the disease.

The resulting documentary, *Glen Campbell: I'll Be Me*, was praised by critics and yielded the singer one last Grammy, Best Country Song for his final release, "I'm Not Gonna Miss You," and a second Academy Award nomination.

On June 9, 2017, Glen Campbell released his 64th and final album, *Adios*, recorded in Nashville between 2012 and 2013.

With *Glen Campbell-Live Anthology 1972-2001*, we are reminded once again of his seminal recordings and live shows created during the last few decades of the 20th century.

GLEN CAMPBELL WAS BORN IN Billstown, Arkansas on April 22, 1936. His father purchased a \$5 guitar for him from Sears & Roebuck at age four. In 1960 bandleader Glen relocated to Los Angeles, California from Albuquerque, New Mexico. His initial recording date was a Jerry Fuller song that Sam Cooke cut.

Campbell then inked to a publishing company, American Music that DJ and music publisher Cliffie Stone operated for Gene Autry. Campbell eventually issued his own 45, "Turn Around, Look At Me in 1962," and appeared on Dick Clark's *American Bandstand*. Campbell became a Capitol Records recording artist with a Brian Wilson and Russ Titelman song, "Guess I'm Dumb," produced by Nik Venet.

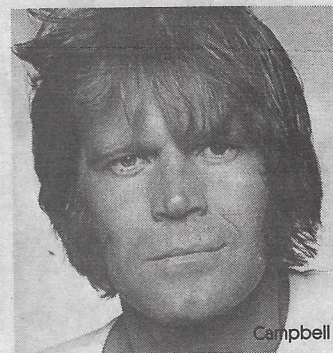
Glen was consequently booked on musical variety shows such as *Shindig!* and *Hollywood Jamboree*. His Capitol label efforts included a cover of Buffy Sainte-Marie's "Universal Soldier."

It was Campbell's demo gigs that led him to his job as a guitarist in a group of studio musicians later to be known as the Wrecking Crew, who worked with Lee Hazelwood, Lou Adler,

Jack Nitzsche, Phil Spector, Brian Wilson and Jan Berry to create influential production styles.

Glen's session work during this period would have been enough to secure his place in rock history. Alongside musicians like keyboardists Leon Russell and Don Randi, guitarists Barney Kessel and Don Peake, drummers Hal Blaine and Earl Palmer, bassists Ray Pohlman, and Carol Kay, along with many others, Glen played on 586 dates in 1963 alone.

During our 2009 interview, Campbell recalled, "I didn't do sessions very long. The Wrecking



Campbell

Crew could play anything. You could cut with Jan & Dean. Jan Berry had all the chords written out."

As a first-call session musician, Campbell is also heard on Frank Sinatra's "Strangers in the Night," the Righteous Brothers' "You've Lost That Lovin' Feeling" and the Monkees' "I'm a Believer," and "Mary, Mary," not to mention hit singles by Nat King Cole, Elvis Presley, Bobby Darin, Lou Rawls, Ricky Nelson, Merle Haggard and Bobby Vee.

Campbell did some unforgettable guitar parts on the Beach Boys' landmark *Pet Sounds* album.

In a 2007 lunch interview I conducted with Brian Wilson the producer volunteered, "On 'Wouldn't It Be Nice,' Barney [Kessel] did the introduction to the song and Glen Campbell was also there. And, I said to myself, 'I'm going to have these guys play directly into the board instead of going out into the studio.' And they plugged their instruments into the recording console direct. That's how we got that sound."

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Campbell was Brian Wilson's road replacement on the Beach Boys tours, playing bass in the band after Brian suffered a nervous breakdown in '64. "Being a touring Beach Boy in 1965 was fun," remarked Glen. "Brian...boy, he was a genius writer. He knew what he wanted."

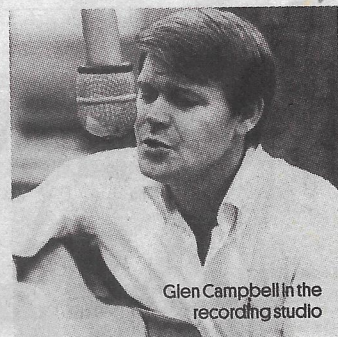
In a 1988 interview, arranger/producer and composer, Jack Nitzsche confessed to me, "I was amazed how big Glen Campbell made it as a total entertainer. I

knew he was a great guitarist. I never knew he would show up as a singer later."

Capitol Records paired Glen with producer/arranger Al De Lory in 1967 and the duo forged a commercial run of hits that steered Campbell to the global arena. "Gentle on My Mind," released later that year, and "By the Time I Get to Phoenix" were hits and the album, *By the Time I Get to Phoenix* became the first country album to garner top honor Album of the Year at the

10th Annual Grammy ceremony in 1968. "Wichita Lineman" and "Galveston," which like "Phoenix" were composed by Jimmy Webb, also were huge multi-genre chart items in the late 1960s.

"I had a previous relationship with Jimmy Webb's 'By the Time I Get to Phoenix,'" Campbell remembered in our 2009 conversation. "There was a record out on it by Pat Boone already and I think I played on it as well. Johnny Rivers cut it and was



Glen Campbell in the recording studio

*By the Time I Get to Phoenix became the first country album to win Album of the Year at the 10th Annual Grammy Awards in 1968.*

the publisher. Also, when I was doing the TV show, Don Ho said, 'here's a record you might like. It didn't do nothing for me.' It was 'Galveston.' It blew me away.

"I knew Jimmy when he was living near Sunset and La Brea. I had done early sessions with Al De Lory and then he got a gig producing for Capitol. United was a good studio. I was at Jimmy's when he was working on 'Wichita Lineman.' Al De Lory called for a song. It wasn't done yet, but Al said to 'bring over what you have.' So there was a hole in the middle of the song and I filled it up with a guitar lick," he revealed.

"Glen Campbell became my voice," explained Jimmy Webb in 2014 at the Herb Alpert UCLA School of Music in Professor David Leaf's course, Songwriters on Songwriting: Killer Hooks, Essential Songs and Songwriters of the Rock Era.

"I first heard him a transistor radio while I was riding a tractor in Oklahoma. I was fourteen years old. Ten years later, I'm in a Hollywood recording studio, and he's singing 'Wichita Lineman.' Go figure. I was one lucky bastard."

Harvey Kubernik is the author of 12 books, including Leonard Cohen, Everybody Knows, and Neil Young, Heart of Gold. In April 2017, Sterling published Kubernik's 1967 A Complete Rock Music History of the Summer of Love.

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