

Country superstar Randy Travis is celebrating the 25th anniversary of his award-studded career with a stellar cast of collaborators.

Joining him on his Anniversary Celebration CD are such members of the Country Music Hall of Fame as Willie Nelson, Kris Kristofferson, George Jones and Ray Price. Current Nashville hit makers Zac Brown Band, Carrie Underwood, Kenny Chesney, Tim McGraw, Josh Turner and Brad Paisley are also singing with him on the collection. Rock 'n' Roll Hall of Fame member Don Henley is on board, as are such up-and-comers as country's James Otto and Jamey Johnson, pop's Kristin Chenoweth and Irish tenor Eamonn McCrystal.

Randy's fellow country superstar Alan Jackson has written several songs with him, so his presence is a natural. Revered vocal stylists such as Shelby Lynne, John Anderson, Gene Watson and Joe Stampley participate, as do Randy's fellow Grand Ole Opry cast members Lorrie Morgan and Connie Smith.

The event that inspired this gathering of greats is singular and significant. The 1986 release of the Randy Travis LP Storms of Life was a watershed moment in American music history. The album, which has sold nearly four million copies, was a cornerstone of the "new traditionalist" movement in Nashville. Jackson, Paisley, Chesney, McGraw, Turner and Underwood were all inspired by it.

"It doesn't seem possible that it has been 25 years," Randy comments wistfully. "Time flies.

"Our conversation about this [anniversary] started a little over a year ago. It was between me and [Warner Music Nashville VP of A&R] Cris Lacy, [producer] Kyle Lehning and [manager] Lib Travis. We all talked about who we would like to have involved in the record. And we were all pretty much on the same page.

"Most of the people we called just said, 'Yes. I'd be happy to. What do you want me to do?' We told them we'd like to re-record some of the old stuff with guests and also find some new material. We said, 'Y'all just do what you want to do.' And it worked out just fine.

"It was all fun, to be honest with you. It's one thing to listen to songs for yourself, but then when you're listening and imagining this other voice singing with you, that's another addition to the mix. But I approached this the way I always have. Years ago when we started working together, Kyle said, 'At the end of the day, it's you singing these songs. So if you don't love them, don't do them.' I can honestly say that I have always followed that advice."

It shows in the extraordinary repertoire that he brought to the Anniversary Celebration sessions. For his Josh Turner duet, Randy chose the rollicking, delightfully light hearted, rapid-fire tongue-tripper "T.I.M.E." Kristin Chenoweth joins him on the lovely ballad "Love Looks Good on You." Randy found the forceful mid-tempo rocker "Can't Hurt a Man" for his collaboration with Tim McGraw. "Someone You Never Knew" is a ballad of regret with Eamonn McCrystal.

The lively, spirited "Everything and All" has a live-while-you-can message that both Randy and duet partner Brad Paisley sing with gusto. Randy readily approved of the funky, groove-soaked "Too Much," which James Otto brought to him. The sublimely wistful "Didn't We Shine" is perfect for Randy with his all-star grouping of George Jones, Lorrie Morgan, Ray Price, Connie Smith, Joe Stampley and Gene Watson.

Two of the set's outstanding ballads are masterpieces of song craftsmanship. Randy is particularly proud of discovering the deeply moving "More Life" for his Don Henley collaboration. "Road to Surrender" is a hushed, soul-deep prayer that Randy brought to Willie Nelson and Kris Kristofferson. Both songwriting masters recognized what a special lyric it possessed.

Kyle Lehning's song-suggesting advice 25 years ago served Randy Travis well. The star is one of the few whose entire hit catalog has stood the test of time. His collaboration with Kenny Chesney on 1990's "He Walked on Water" brings new luster to its heart-tugging lyric. Carrie Underwood revived Randy's self-penned "I Told You So" in 2009, and on Anniversary Celebration she rips into an upbeat, western-swing flavored take on 1989's "Is It Still Over" with him.

Zac Brown Band came up with a zippy new arrangement for 1987's "Forever and Ever, Amen" for Randy to try, and the result is a highlight of the set. In 1990, Randy teamed up with George Jones on "A Few Ole Country Boys." On the new remake, Randy sings George's old lines, while Jamey Johnson takes Randy's old part. The shimmering

voice of Shelby Lynne joins Randy on a revival of his self-penned 1989 hit "Promises." John Anderson joins Randy to remind us of the wry wit of 1986's "Diggin' Up Bones." Randy and Alan Jackson co-wrote several songs together in the early 1990s. Two of them are revived in a honky-tonk duet medley on Anniversary Celebration -- "Better Class of Losers," which Randy originally recorded solo, and "She's Got the Rhythm," which Alan originally recorded solo.

With lifetime sales in excess of 20 million, Randy Travis is one of the biggest country record sellers of all time. His honors include seven Grammy Awards, 10 Academy of Country Music statuettes, 10 American Music Awards, two People's Choice awards, seven Music City News awards, eight Dove Awards from the Gospel Music Association and five Country Music Association honors. In addition, three of his performances earned CMA Song of the Year honors, "On the Other Hand" (1986), "Forever and Ever Amen" (1987) and "Three Wooden Crosses" (2003).

To date, he has 18 No. 1 singles, 29 top-10 smashes and more than 40 appearances in feature films and television shows to his credit. Ten of his albums are Gold Records. Eight are Platinum. Two have gone Double Platinum. One is Triple Platinum and another is Quintuple Platinum. In 2004, Randy was honored with his own star in the Hollywood Walk of Fame. He has been a member of the cast of the Grand Ole Opry since 1986.

Through it all, he has retained his humility, politeness and graciousness. His gentle dignity and low-key sense of humor have also remained with him.

"When I look at the group of people that are on this record, it's very humbling," says Randy Travis softly. "I'm very honored that they all agreed to do this, both the ones who did the remakes and the ones who sang new songs with me.

"I'm real happy with this album. I really am. The record business has changed a lot. But a good song is still a good song."

RANDY TRAVIS**DISCOGRAPHY**

- 2011: Anniversary Celebration
- 2009: I Told You So: The Ultimate Hits of Randy Travis
 “Turn it Around”
 “You Ain’t Right”
 “Love’s Alive and Well”
- 2008: Around the Bend Grammy nominated
 “Faith in You”
 “Dig Two Graves”
 “Turn it Around”
- 2005: Glory Train Grammy Award, GMA Award
- 2004: Passing Through GMA Award
 “Four Walls”
 “Angels”
- The Very Best of Randy Travis
- 2003: Worship & Faith Grammy Award, GMA Award
- 2002: Rise and Shine Grammy Award, GMA Award
 “Three Wooden Crosses” #1 CMA Award, ACM Award
- “Pray for the Fish”
Anthology
- 2001: Randy Travis Live
- 2000: Inspirational Journey GMA Award
 “Baptism” GMA Award
- 1999: A Man Ain’t Made of Stone
 “A Man Ain’t Made of Stone” #16
 “Where Can I Surrender”
 “A Little Left of Center”
 “I’ll Be Right Here Loving You”
- 1998: Tribute to Tradition (track)
 “Same Old Train” Grammy Award
- You and You Alone
 “Out of My Bones” #2
 “The Hole” #9
 “Spirit of a Boy, Wisdom of a Man” #2
 “Stranger in My Mirror” #1
- Randy Travis Greatest #1 Hits
- 1996: Full Circle
 “King of the Road”
 “Are We in Trouble Now” #24
 “Would I” #25
 “Price to Pay”
- 1994: This Is Me Gold Record

	“Before You Kill Us All”	#2	
	“Whisper My Name”	#1	
	“This Is Me”	#5	
	“The Box”	#7	
1993:	<u>Wind in the Wire</u>		
	“Cowboy Boogie”		
	“Wind in the Wire”		
1992:	<u>Greatest Hits Volume One</u>		Platinum Record
	“An Old Pair of Shoes”	#21	
	<u>Greatest Hits Volume Two</u>		Platinum Record
	“If I Didn’t Have You”	#1	
	“Look Heart, No Hands”	#1	
1991:	<u>High Lonesome</u>		Platinum Record
	“Point of Light”	#3	
	“Forever Together”	#1	
	“Better Class of Losers”	#2	
	“I’d Surrender All”	#20	
1990:	<u>Heroes and Friends</u>		Platinum Record
	“A Few Ole Country Boys”	#8	
	“Heroes and Friends”	#3	
	“We’re Strangers Again”		
1989:	<u>No Holdin’ Back</u>		Double Platinum Record
	“It’s Just a Matter of Time”	#1	
	“Hard Rock Bottom of Your Heart”	#1	
	“He Walked on Water”	#2	
	<u>An Old Time Christmas</u>		Gold Record
1988:	<u>Old 8x10</u>		Grammy Award, AMA Award, Double Platinum Record
	“Honky Tonk Moon”	#1	
	“Deeper Than the Holler”	#1	AMA Award
	“Is It Still Over”	#1	
	“Promises”	#17	
1987:	<u>Always and Forever</u>		Grammy, CMA, AMA awards, Quintuple Platinum Record
	“Forever and Ever, Amen”	#1	Grammy, CMA, ACM awards
	“I Won’t Need You Anymore”	#1	
	“Too Gone Too Long”	#1	
	“I Told You So”	#1	AMA Award
1986:	<u>Storms of Life</u>		ACM Award, Triple Platinum Record
	“On the Other Hand”	#1	ACM
Award			
	“1982”	#6	
	“Diggin’ Up Bones”	#1	
	“No Place Like Home”	#2	
1983:	<u>Randy Ray Live at the Nashville Palace</u>		
1979:	“She’s My Woman”		
	“I’ll Take Any Willing Woman”		

