

# Bristol



1927 Advertisement for the Bristol Sessions

In 1927 the Victor Talking Machine Company sent a portable studio to Bristol, and music publisher Ralph Peer advertised for traditional musicians wishing to try their hand at recording. The test pressings of the resulting "Bristol Sessions" involved mountain string bands, gospel singers, blues artists, and vaudeville performers. Among those that sold best were recordings by Jimmie Rodgers and the Carter Family. In the 1940s and 1950s the live radio broadcast "Farm and Fun Time" originating on a Bristol station and heard in five states was linked to the development of bluegrass music. Among those on the program were: the Stanley Brothers, Flatt and Scruggs, Jim and Jesse, and Mac Wiseman. But the most popular band was Curly King and the Tennessee Hilltoppers, led by local singer Cecil Crusenberry, who used King as a stage name.



Curly King and The Tennessee Hilltoppers

This rich history is well kept by the Birthplace of Country Music Alliance, which has its offices near fabled State Street, where Virginia and Tennessee meet in the middle of a street. For the past 50 years musicians have gathered at the Star Barbershop on State Street for a weekly jam session. State Street is also the location of the Paramount Center for the Arts, a historic theater that presents a variety of cultural events and performances.



Rhythm and Roots Festival

# The Crooked Road

## Virginia's Heritage Music Trail

From the Blue Ridge Mountains to the Coalfields region, Southwest Virginia is blessed with historic and contemporary music venues, musicians, and fretted instrument makers. Historically isolated, the region retained its strong musical legacy by passing traditions down through musical families to an appreciative community.

Old time mountain music, bluegrass, and gospel can be enjoyed all year long and several museums are devoted to showcasing the area's rich musical heritage.

The Crooked Road winds through the ruggedly beautiful Appalachian Mountains and leads you to the major hotspots of old time mountain music, country music, and bluegrass. Alive and kickin' for today's fans, these venues preserve and celebrate musical traditions passed down through generations. Annual festivals, weekly concerts, radio shows, and jam sessions ring out to large audiences and intimate gatherings. Please visit the Crooked Road website to plan your trip to coincide with the current entertainment events.



The Carter Family



Dr. Ralph Stanley

[www.thecrookedroad.org](http://www.thecrookedroad.org)



### MAJOR VENUES

- ★ Blue Ridge Institute & Museum
- ★ The Floyd Country Store & County Sales
- ★ Blue Ridge Music Center
- ★ Rex Theater & Old Fiddlers Convention
- ★ Heartwood
- ★ Birthplace of Country Music
- ★ Carter Family Fold
- ★ Country Cabin II
- ★ Ralph Stanley Museum

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