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BARBARA MANDRELL INDUCTED INTO THE COUNTRY MUSIC HALL OF FAME

*Louise Mandrell, Alison Krauss, Michael McDonald,
Reba McEntire and George Jones Pay Tribute*

Nashville, Tenn.--May 18, 2009-- With over 75 major awards and 38 years in show business under her belt, Barbara Mandrell was welcomed into the Country Music Hall of Fame during the prestigious Medallion ceremony last night at the Country Music Hall of Fame® and Museum. Known as the "Sweetheart of the Steel," Mandrell was a multi-instrumentalist by the time she was 10. She was on tour with *The Johnny Cash Show* by age 13 and had her first *Billboard* chart record at age 21. Her NBC variety show, "Barbara Mandrell and the Mandrell Sisters" drew nearly 40 million viewers weekly and introduced a nation to country music. Now, Barbara joins fellow inductees, Roy Clark and Charlie McCoy, as one of the newest members of the coveted Country Music Hall of Fame.



Pictured: Mandrell with fellow Hall of Fame inductees Charlie McCoy and Roy Clark

The ceremony was packed with musical performances to honor the three inductees. Performers included Garth Brooks, Alison Krauss, Reba McEntire, George Jones, Michael McDonald, Rodney Crowell, Josh Turner, Jelly Roll Johnson, Louise Mandrell and more. Barbara's musical tribute began with GRAMMY winner Alison Krauss singing Barbara's 1973 No. 1 hit, "The Midnight Oil." Her sister, Louise Mandrell, who claimed to be "the first Barbara Mandrell fan," sang "Sleeping Single in a Double Bed." The night took a soulful turn when Michael McDonald performed his rendition of her No. 1 song "(If Loving You is Wrong) I Don't Want to be Right." Of course, the night wouldn't have been complete without the performance that came from Reba McEntire and George Jones of Barbara's chart topping signature number, "I Was Country When Country Wasn't Cool." It was during this song that inductee Charlie McCoy honored Mandrell when he stepped in to play harmonica.

As she addressed the audience in the Country Music Hall of Fame® and Museum's Ford Theater, Mandrell remarked, "Irby Mandrell was my manager as well as my Daddy over my 38-year career. He taught me, guided me and directed me. It is his name, Mandrell, that I am blessed to have, and it's the gracious loving public and fans that made our name known and popular. So tonight I thank you with my entire being for putting the Mandrell name into the Hall of Fame."

Barbara was officially inducted by her longtime friend Ralph Emery, who said to Mandrell, "You've done country music proud in every way." The induction ceremony culminated as Mandrell, Clark and McCoy were joined by other Country Music Hall of Fame members in attendance as they sang "Will the Circle Be Unbroken." Membership in the Country Music Hall of Fame has now increased from 105 to 108 inductees.

As the song says, Barbara was "Country When Country Wasn't Cool." She learned to read music before she could read words. Over the years, she added steel guitar, alto saxophone, bass, banjo, mandolin and Dobro to her arsenal of instruments. At age 11, her father took her to a music trade show in Chicago where she performed and caught the attention of legendary country guitarists, Chet Atkins and "Uncle" Joe Maphis. Maphis invited Barbara to join his show at the Showboat Hotel in Las Vegas, which became one of the single greatest influences on her musicianship. By the time Barbara was a teenager, she was touring with *The Johnny Cash Show*, which included- Cash, Patsy Cline, George Jones and June Carter.

Throughout her career she earned over 75 major awards, including two consecutive CMA Entertainer of the Year awards (1980 & 1981, making her the first artist ever to win two years in a row), CMA Female Vocalist of the Year (1979 and 1981), ACM Top Female Country Music Vocalist (1980 and 1986), NARAS Grammy Award for the Best Inspirational Performance (1983), Grammy Award for Best Soul Gospel Performance (1984), Dove Award for Gospel Album of the Year (1983) and nine People's Choice Awards (1983-1987). She is one of only six artists to have received the "Triple Crown" by winning all three of the most coveted awards, Top New Female, Top Female and Entertainer of the Year. Her autobiography, "Get to the Heart: My Story" debuted on *The New York Times* Best Sellers list and remained there for six months.

When she retired in 1997, her final concert was filmed at the Grand Ole Opry House for a highly-rated TNN concert special, "Barbara Mandrell and the Do-Rites: The Last Dance." In 1999, Mandrell was inducted into the Country Gospel Music Hall of Fame. The next year, the Academy of Country Music honored Barbara with their most prestigious award, The Pioneer Award.

BNA Records paid homage to Mandrell in 2006 with *She Was Country When Country Wasn't Cool: A Tribute to Barbara Mandrell*. The album featured many of today's top artists performing her classic hits, including Dierks Bentley, Terri Clark, Sara Evans, Reba McEntire and Kenny Chesney, Willie Nelson and Shelby Lynne, Lorrie Morgan, Randy Owen, Brad Paisley, Leann Rimes, Gretchen Wilson, and gospel singer Cece Winans. She was inducted into Nashville's Music City Walk of Fame in 2007. *People* ranked her among its "100 Most Beautiful" list in 2007 and "100 Most Beautiful at Any Age" list in 2008 and 2009.

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