

**THE
ROCK
AND
ROLL
ALMANAC**

by

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This book is based on extensive research from various sources, and every effort has been made to ensure accuracy. However, due to the nature of historical events, music industry lore, and differing accounts, some details may be subject to interpretation or contain inadvertent errors. The author has strived to present the information as accurately and authentically as possible. If any discrepancies exist, they are purely unintentional. This book is intended for informational and entertainment purposes only.

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*To my father, whose vinyl collection is, sadly, now mine.
To my sons, who one day, hopefully, will cherish said collection.*

About the book:

This almanac is a carefully curated collection of rock and roll history, organized in a chronological, day-by-day format. It serves as both a reference and a celebration of the moments, music, and milestones that have shaped the genre from the past 70 years.

Each entry marks a significant event that occurred on a particular date, whether it be a groundbreaking album release, an iconic single hitting the airwaves, or a pivotal moment in an artist's career.

Single of the Day – The featured single was released on this exact date unless otherwise noted. These selections highlight songs that had a lasting impact on music and culture, from chart-topping hits to cult classics. Some of these songs were not just musical milestones but were also the breakthrough tracks that catapulted an artist or band into mainstream recognition, defining their place in rock history.

Album of the Day – The album chosen for each day was released on that date. The focus is primarily on first releases, landmark albums, or pivotal records that defined an artist's career or an era in rock history. In some cases, debut EPs are featured instead of full-length albums.

Beyond just a collection of dates and facts, this book aims to tell the story of rock and roll's evolution, showcasing the artists, movements, and cultural shifts that made it one of the most influential and enduring musical genres. Whether you're a dedicated fan, a historian, or just someone looking to explore the legacy of rock, this almanac provides a daily dose of music history, one page at a time.

Foreword

The idea for this book came to me during a night out with my bandmates back in 2008. It was the 10th anniversary of the death of *Snot's* frontman, *James Lynn Strait*. Earlier that day, I had stumbled upon that fact and decided to bring along *Get Some*, the band's first and only album, to play for them. As we listened, we talked about the band, their energy, and what could have been if Lynn were still alive.

That conversation sparked something in me. I realized that every day in rock and roll history is filled with moments just like that—somebody was born, somebody died, a band formed, an album was released, or a single hit the airwaves for the first time. These moments, both tragic and triumphant, have shaped the music we love. I knew there was something in this idea.

Years passed, but I never let go of it—an almanac dedicated entirely to rock and roll, chronicling its beginnings, milestones, and stories. At one point, I thought about making an app, since everyone seemed to have one back then. But the more I considered it, the more I wanted something tangible—something that could sit on a coffee table, ready to be picked up every day to celebrate the artists, relive the wild years, and rediscover the music that has stood the test of time.

And now, here it is. It's been about 70 years since rock and roll burst into the mainstream. By 1955, everyone knew what rock was. Even in an era dominated by electronic music, millions still find joy in the foundation laid by generations of rock artists.

I knew I would enjoy writing this book, but it turned out to be so much more than I expected. I've uncovered countless details about songs I thought I already knew. And I certainly didn't expect to laugh as much as I have over the past months. You truly can't underestimate the ingenuity of people with too much money, too much time, and too many drugs.

Digging through the decades and all this incredible music has been an absolute blast. I hope you have just as much fun flipping through these pages.

Andrew Craneman



January

1 January

Single

Carl Perkins
Blue Suede Shoes (1956)

Album

The Everly Brothers
Instant Party! (1962)

1959

Johnny Cash takes his outlaw country act to a fitting venue—San Quentin Prison in San Rafael, California. Among the inmates soaking in the performance? A 19-year-old Merle Haggard, who's doing time for grand theft auto and armed robbery. He later credits Cash as an inspiration to turn his life around and become a country music legend himself.

1962

The Beatles audition for Decca Records in London, but A&R boss Dick Rowe famously turns them down, making one of the worst calls in music history. Instead, he signs The Tremeloes, believing "guitar groups are on the way out." Oops.

1967

The Doors make their TV debut on *Shwabang*, lip-synching *Break on Through*. The song lives up to its name, but the performance is pretty tame compared to the chaos Jim Morrison would later unleash on live television.

1968

The Golliwogs, a Berkeley, California swamp-rock band formerly known as The Blue Velvets, rebrand as Creedence Clearwater Revival. A wise move, as the name upgrade precedes their rise to rock royalty.

1977

After Elvis Presley's New Year's Eve concert at Pittsburgh's Civic Arena, his private jet, *Lisa Marie*, is forced to turn around due to a bomb threat. When told of the scare, Elvis—cool as ever—shrugs it off. His bodyguard tells the pilots to proceed, saying, "We've been getting bomb scares since 1955. It's probably just a jealous husband or wife. Don't worry about it." And they don't.

1977

The Clash help christen the UK's first dedicated punk venue, The Roxy Club in London, headlining its opening night party. The energy, the rebellion, the ripped clothes—it's a fitting way to launch a punk revolution.

1989

A little-known grunge band named Nirvana signs a one-year deal with Seattle's Sub Pop Records. The result? Their raw, heavy debut album *Bleach*, which later becomes a grunge classic.

2005

In most of Europe, songs recorded in 1954 and earlier lose copyright protection. Among them? Bill Haley's *Rock Around the Clock*, often cited as the biggest-selling vinyl rock & roll single ever, with over 25 million copies sold.

2010

Chris Cornell sends the grunge world into a frenzy when he tweets that Soundgarden, split since 1997, are reuniting. Fans rejoice—louder than an overdriven Superunknown riff.

BORN Ω

1950 Morgan Fisher (keyboardist for Mott The Hoople)

1956 Andy Gill (guitarist for Gang Of Four)

1980 Richie Faulkner (guitarist for Judas Priest)

DEAD ✝

2021 Mick Bolton (keyboardist for Mott The Hoople) at age 72

2025 Wayne Osmond (guitarist for The Osmonds) at age 73

January 2

Creedence Clearwater Revival
Travelin' Band (1970)

Single

Syd Barrett
The Madcap Laughs (1968)

Album

1969

John Lennon and Yoko Ono's album *Two Virgins* is seized at Newark Airport after authorities deem its naked cover pornographic. Over the years, the album earns the title "the most talked-about album never played."

1969

The Beatles begin work on what will become *Let It Be*, both an album and a documentary. The sessions are fraught with tension as the band clashes over creative direction. By the time both are released, The Beatles have officially split.

1969

Led Zeppelin kick off four nights at Whisky A Go-Go in Los Angeles on their first North American tour. Opening for them? A little-known band called Alice Cooper.

1972

Elvis Presley drops \$10,000 on a custom robe inscribed "The People's Champion" and gifts it to Muhammad Ali.

BORN Ω

1946 Chick Churchill (keyboardist for Ten Years After)

1975 Doug Robb (vocalist for Hoobastank)

DEAD†

1997 Randy California (guitarist for Spirit) at age 45

2012 Larry Reinhardt (guitarist for Iron Butterfly) at age 63

1975

Suzi Quatro graces the cover of *Rolling Stone* with the headline "Suzi Quatro flexes her leather." Though a UK rock sensation, she struggles to break into the U.S. market. However, the cover gets the attention of *Happy Days* producers, landing her the role of Leather Tuscadero.

1978

Just two months after quitting, Ozzy Osbourne reclaims his spot as Black Sabbath's frontman.

1979

Sid Vicious of the Sex Pistols stands trial in New York, accused of murdering his girlfriend, Nancy Spungen. Released on bail, he dies of a drug overdose exactly one month later, cementing one of punk's most tragic and infamous stories.

1997

Randy California, guitarist for Spirit and composer of Taurus (the song Led Zeppelin allegedly borrowed for *Stairway to Heaven*'s intro), drowns in Molokai, Hawaii, at 45 while heroically saving his 12-year-old son from a rip current.

2008

With rumors swirling about a Kinks reunion, guitarist Dave Davies shoots them down online, stating, "It would be like a poor remake of *Night of the Living Dead*."

2009

AC/DC dominate U.S. album sales for 2008, moving over 3.4 million copies. To promote *Black Ice*, Columbia Records rolls out "Rock Again AC/DC" pop-up stores and dispatches *Black Ice* trucks across New York and Los Angeles, blaring AC/DC tunes while selling merch on the streets.

31 January

Single

Shadows Of Knight
Gloria (1966)

Album

Golden Earring
To The Hilt (1976)

1963

Neil Young, just 17, takes the stage for the first time, performing at a country club in Winnipeg. A modest start for the future rock legend.

1963

The Beach Boys record *Surfin' USA*, which will ride the waves to #3 in the US charts by mid-April. Initially credited to Brian Wilson, the song is an unmistakable note-for-note cover of Chuck Berry's *Sweet Little Sixteen*. A lawsuit soon follows, and Berry is rightfully awarded writing credit and royalties.

1967

While wandering through Sevenoaks, Kent, John Lennon stumbles upon an antique shop and picks up an 1843 circus poster. That dusty relic inspires The Beatles' kaleidoscopic classic, *Being for the Benefit of Mr. Kite!*

1970

Whole Lotta Love peaks at #4 on the US charts, making it Led Zeppelin's highest-charting song ever on the Hot 100. Despite their legendary status, Zep never chases singles success—*Stairway to Heaven* isn't even released as a single.

1970

In New Orleans, The Grateful Dead are arrested for LSD and barbiturate possession. The incident is immortalized in their classic road-weary anthem, *Truckin'*, where they famously sing: "Busted... down on Bourbon Street."

1970

Slim Harpo, blues legend and harmonica master, dies of a heart attack at just 46 while recording in London. His swampy blues sound influenced The Rolling Stones, The Yardbirds, and The Kinks, proving that even in death, his music would still be shaking that thing.

1985

John Fogerty ends his years-long live performance hiatus with a show at A&M Soundstage in Hollywood, joined by Albert Lee and Booker T. Jones. His return follows the release of *Centerfield*, his first album in a decade.

1989

Roy Orbison's final album, *Mystery Girl*, is released two months after his death. Featuring contributions from Tom Petty, Jeff Lynne, Bono, and George Harrison, the album gives Orbison a long-overdue comeback. Lead single *You Got It* becomes his first US Top 10 hit since *Oh, Pretty Woman* in 1964.

1998

Bruce Springsteen's *Come Together* benefit concert, organized for the family of a fallen New Jersey police officer, turns into an E Street Band reunion. Southside Johnny and other Jersey rockers join in, making it a night to remember.

BORN Ω

1956 Johnny Rotten (vocalist for Sex Pistols)

1987 Marcus Mumford (vocalist for Mumford & Sons)

DEAD†

1970 Slim Harpo at age 46

1978 Greg Herbert (saxophonist for Blood, Sweat, Tears) at age 30

2009 Dewey Martin (drummer for Buffalo Springfield) at age 68

“Guitar groups are on the way out”

Decca Records A&R boss Dick Rowe on turning down The Beatles.
1 January 1962.



June

1 June

Single

Soundgarden
Hunted Down (1987)

Album

Iggy Pop
Party (1981)

1967

David Bowie launches his self-titled debut album, and the world collectively shrugs. A far cry from the intergalactic glam rock that would make him a legend, David Bowie leans into Baroque pop, earning polite nods from the handful of critics who actually listened to it. The album, however, struggles to find an audience, proving that even Ziggy Stardust had to start somewhere—just not here.

1973

Former Soft Machine drummer Robert Wyatt finds out the hard way that drainpipes aren't ladders. Attempting to leave a party with what must have seemed like the most logical exit strategy, Wyatt climbs down a drainpipe, plummets three stories, and suffers a spinal injury that leaves him paralyzed. Though wheelchair-bound from that moment on, he refuses to let it stop him, continuing to make music that influences generations to come.

1975

Happy birthday, Ronnie Wood! Your present? A gig with The Rolling Stones. On the day he turns 28, Wood makes his debut with the Stones as they launch their Tour of the Americas in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. It's a fitting start for the future full-fledged member of rock's most enduring band.

1976

The Runaways hit the scene, proving that girls can rock just as hard—if not harder. The all-female band drops their self-titled debut album, though their success in the US is lukewarm at best, barely scraping #194 on the charts. Japan, however, gets the memo: the band rockets to stardom there, with their signature track "Cherry Bomb" exploding to the top of the charts.

1985

Dire Straits cash in on the MTV era with a song literally about wanting their MTV. The groundbreaking, computer-animated music video for "Money For Nothing" makes its debut on MTV, a network the song directly references ("I want my MTV"—sung by Sting, no less). The track shoots to #1 in the US, and the video cleans up at the VMAs, proving that self-referential marketing works like a charm.

1987

A grunge revolution begins: Soundgarden releases their first-ever single. Sub Pop Records puts out "Hunted Down" / "Nothing to Say," marking the official arrival of the Seattle scene's soon-to-be rulers. The single might not have set the world on fire yet, but the fuse has been lit.

1999

Blink-182 turns arrested development into a chart-topping formula with *Enema of the State*. Pop-punk's reigning pranksters strike gold (and platinum) with their third album, unleashing hits like "What's My Age Again?" and "All The Small Things." Just when listeners assume it's all jokes and streaking through music videos, they throw in "Adam's Song," an introspective track inspired by a teenage suicide note. It's the first real sign that Blink-182 has more depth than their immaturity suggests—a depth that they'll explore further in the years to come.

BORN Ω

1947 Ronnie Wood (guitarist for The Faces, Rolling Stones)
1960 Simon Gallup (bassist for The Cure)
1963 Mike Joyce (drummer for The Smiths)
1974 Alanis Morissette

DEAD†

June 2

The Smashing Pumpkins
The End Is the Beginning Is the End (1997)

Single

Thin Lizzy
Live And Dangerous (1978)

Album

1963

The Rolling Stones prove that rock 'n' roll never takes a day off, pulling double duty with two gigs in one afternoon. Their first stop? Studio 51, Ken Colyer Club in Soho, London, where they hold their regular Sunday rhythm and blues slot from 4 to 6:30 PM. Not ones to take a break, they pack up and head to The Crawdaddy Club in Richmond, Surrey, keeping the music rolling into the night.

1964

The Rolling Stones make their US TV debut, and Keith Richards is already serving up sarcasm. Fresh off the plane for their first-ever US tour, the Stones sit down for an interview on The Les Crane Show. When asked if they're thrilled about their American TV debut, Keith delivers a dry, classic Richards response: "Yeah, it knocks me out." The tone is set for a lifetime of not playing by the rules.

1972

Pink Floyd drops *Obscured By Clouds*—the album that was recorded faster than most Floyd songs actually unfold. Their seventh studio album comes together in under two weeks while the band is in Paris, proving they can be quick when they want to be. Though not as iconic as *Dark Side of the Moon*, the album still charts respectably, peaking at No.6 in the UK and No.46 in the US.

BORN Ω

1941 Charlie Watts (drummer for The Rolling Stones)

1952 Pete Farndon (bassist for The Pretenders)

1980 Fabrizio Moretti (drummer for The Strokes)

DEAD†

2006 Vince Welnick (keyboardist for The Tubes, Grateful Dead) at age 55

1978

Bruce Springsteen finally escapes his legal limbo and unleashes *Darkness on the Edge of Town*. After being sidelined for almost three years due to a lawsuit with former manager Mike Appel, Springsteen roars back with a record brimming with grit, heartbreak, and blue-collar anthems. The Boss is back in business.

1978

Thin Lizzy proves that live albums can be both legendary and controversial with *Live and Dangerous*. Capturing some of the band's best performances from London, Philadelphia, and Toronto (with a little studio "enhancement" thrown in for good measure), the double live album storms to No.2 on the UK charts and cements its place among the greatest live albums ever. Overdubs or not, Phil Lynott and company know how to bring the heat.

2002

Paul McCartney does what every heartbroken millionaire dreams of—hurling a \$25,500 engagement ring out of a hotel window. The Turnberry Isle Resort in Miami becomes the scene of the ultimate rockstar tantrum when McCartney and fiancée Heather Mills have a heated argument. The ex-Beatle dramatically tosses the pricey sparkler out the window, sending security on a frantic metal detector search. The ring is eventually found, but the romance? Not so lucky.

2005

Franz Ferdinand's Alex Kapranos gets mistaken for a spy because of a very unfortunate last name coincidence. While attempting to board a flight out of Moscow, Kapranos (travelling under his real surname, Huntley) is detained by Russian authorities, who mistake him for a former MI6 agent accused of stealing weapons secrets in the '90s. After much confusion, he manages to clear his name by pointing out a crucial detail—the real spy was 42 years old, a full 13 years older than him. Turns out, being in a band named after an assassinated archduke doesn't help in these situations.

29 June

Single

All About Eve
Flowers in Our Hair (1987)

Album

Rush
Feedback (2004)

1967

Mick Jagger and Keith Richards get a harsh dose of British justice. Both Rolling Stones are found guilty on drug charges in a London court—Jagger is sentenced to three months, while Richards gets a full year. But rock & roll outranks the law, and soon after, an appeals court throws out Richards' conviction entirely and reduces Jagger's sentence to probation.

1967

Graham Nash takes an inspired detour. While on tour with The Hollies, he writes a song called "Marrakesh Express," but it doesn't quite fit his band's vibe. No worries—a few years later, he finds the perfect home for it with Crosby, Stills & Nash. The song becomes a hit, solidifying Nash's new musical journey.

1973

Deep Purple's classic "Mark II" lineup collapses in dramatic fashion. After a show in Osaka, Japan, Ian Gillan abruptly quits, stunning fans and bandmates alike. Bassist Roger Glover follows soon after, and just like that, Purple is in flux. Their replacements? David Coverdale and Glenn Hughes, ushering in the "Mark III" era of the legendary rock band.

1974

Rush gets a seismic upgrade. With drummer John Rutsey stepping aside, the band hires a 21-year-old Neil Peart—who will go on to completely redefine rock drumming. Alongside Geddy Lee and Alex Lifeson, Peart helps turn Rush into one of the most prolific and technically astounding trios in rock history.

1984

Bruce Springsteen takes a chance on an unknown Courteney Cox. After a failed attempt at a studio video, Springsteen films "Dancing In The Dark" live in St. Paul, Minnesota. During Clarence Clemons' sax solo, he pulls a 19-year-old Courteney Cox from the crowd, and the world gets a future TV superstar.

1998

George Harrison shares some grim news. The former Beatle announces he is undergoing chemotherapy for throat cancer, telling fans, "I'm not going to die on you folks just yet." Tragically, he loses his battle with the disease three years later.

1999

Slipknot unleash their self-titled debut album—and metal will never be the same. The masked, number-assigned Iowa maniacs are far too aggressive for radio play, but that doesn't stop them from building a rabid following through word of mouth and internet buzz. Metal Hammer magazine hails it as "the best debut of the last 25 years", and Slipknot's reign of chaos is just beginning.

2004

Rush celebrate 30 years of rock dominance with Feedback. The band's 18th studio album, released on the anniversary of their 1974 debut, features eight cover songs that inspired them as young musicians. Even after three decades, Rush still finds ways to keep things fresh.

BORN Ω

1947 Eric Wrixon (keyboardist for Them, Thin Lizzy)

1948 Ian Paice (drummer for Deep Purple)

1953 Colin Hay (vocalist for Men at Work)

DEAD \dagger

June 30

Sex Pistols
No One Is Innocent (1978)

Single

System Of A Down
System Of A Down (1998)

Album

1966

The Beatles finally land in Japan, but not without controversy. Just two months before retiring from the road, the Fab Four arrive for their long-anticipated debut in Tokyo. However, not everyone is thrilled—traditionalists decry the band's presence at the sacred Budokan arena, which was originally built for martial arts competitions. Death threats roll in, highlighting the growing culture clash between conservative Japan and the country's younger, rock-loving generation. Despite the tension, The Beatles power through five nights of sold-out shows, playing to adoring fans and curious celebrities alike. The Nippon Budokan, once a venue for judo and sumo, soon becomes one of rock's most legendary stages.

1977

KISS become superheroes—literally. In a move only they could dream up, the band collaborates with Marvel Comics to publish a larger-than-life comic book featuring their alter egos—The Demon, The Starchild, The Space-man, and The Catman. But here's where things get even more KISS-level extreme: the band mixes vials of their own blood into the ink used for printing. The storyline sees the band battling Doctor Doom, cementing their over-the-top, comic-book-come-to-life personas.

BORN Ω

1949 Andy Scott (guitarist for Sweet)
1968 Philip Anselmo (vocalist for Pantera)

DEAD

1992

A movie soundtrack sparks a musical revolution. Cameron Crowe's film *Singles* may be a cult classic, but its soundtrack is a cultural earthquake. Featuring Alice in Chains, Pearl Jam, Soundgarden, Mudhoney, and Mother Love Bone, the album brings Seattle's grunge scene to the entire US, setting the stage for Nirvana's dominance and the '90s alt-rock explosion.

1992

Kyuss drop a stoner metal masterpiece. With their second album, *Blues for the Red Sun*, the California desert rockers solidify their status as the godfathers of stoner metal. Produced by Chris Goss, the album becomes a cult classic, influencing generations of heavy, fuzzed-out riff worshippers.

1994

Pearl Jam takes on Ticketmaster—and loses. Jeff Ament and Stone Gossard testify before Congress in their high-profile battle against Ticketmaster's monopoly. The band, frustrated that ticket prices for their tour couldn't be kept under \$20 due to excessive fees, decides to cancel the tour entirely. Their testimony sheds light on corporate greed in live music, but in the end, nothing changes.

2000

Tragedy at Roskilde Festival. Nine fans are crushed to death as the crowd surges toward the stage during Pearl Jam's set at Denmark's Roskilde Festival. The band stops the show, pleads for the crowd to back up, but it's too late. Investigations rule the incident an accident, and in the aftermath, European venues start banning crowdsurfing. Pearl Jam immortalizes the tragedy in their song "Love Boat Captain", with the haunting lyric, "Lost nine friends we'll never know... two years ago today."

2009

Spinal Tap takes their parody to the next level—by actually doing it. Their *One Night Only World Tour* lives up to its name, as the legendary faux-metal band plays a single show at Wembley Arena in London.

July

29 July

Single

Metallica
Enter Sandman (1991)

Album

Little Feat
Hoy! Hoy! (1981)

1966

John Lennon's "bigger than Jesus" comment sets America on fire—literally. The US teen magazine *Datebook* republishes an interview where Lennon, in a casual observation about society's shifting priorities, says "We're bigger than Jesus now." The backlash is swift and fiery, with Christian groups staging mass burnings of Beatles records. The uproar is ironic, considering the quote had originally appeared in London's *Evening Standard* months earlier with little reaction.

1966

Bob Dylan wipes out on his motorcycle and disappears for nearly a year. Crashing his 500cc Triumph Tiger in Woodstock, New York, he suffers a cracked vertebra and various injuries—but more importantly, it gives him an excuse to exit the madness of superstardom. Rumors swirl that he's near death or permanently disabled, but in reality, he's simply enjoying some peace and quiet. He later clarifies in his autobiography: "I had been in a motorcycle accident and I'd been hurt, but I recovered. Truth was that I wanted to get out of the rat race."

1970

The Rolling Stones pull a fast one on Decca Records and their shady ex-manager, Allen Klein. With their contract up, they send Decca a farewell gift—C-Ksucer Blues (also called Schoolboy Blues), a raunchy and intentionally unreleasable track. They then form their own label, Rolling Stones Records, debuting their now-iconic tongue and lips logo. The move sets them free from Klein, but he still keeps control of their pre-1971 recordings, leading to years of legal battles.

1973

Led Zeppelin learns a hard lesson about hotel safes. After a triumphant Madison Square Garden performance, the band's cash stash—\$180,000—is stolen from a safe deposit box at the Drake Hotel. The robbery, never solved, becomes a key moment in their concert documentary *The Song Remains The Same*.

2011

Kings of Leon's Caleb Followill walks off stage in Texas... and never comes back. Mid-show in Dallas, the frontman complains about the heat, announces he's going to grab a beer and vomit, then vanishes. The official excuse? "Dehydration." But his brother and bandmate Jared later hints at deeper issues, tweeting: "There are problems in our band bigger than not drinking enough Gatorade." The band cancels the rest of the tour, and Caleb enters rehab.

2015

The Eagles say farewell to Glenn Frey with an emotional final show. Their *History of the Eagles* tour wraps up in Bossier City, Louisiana, marking Frey's last performance before his passing six months later. The setlist is packed with classics, closing with *Desperado*. In time, the band carries on with Frey's son, Deacon, stepping into his father's place—keeping the music alive for a new generation.

BORN Ω

1953 Geddy Lee (vocalist, bassist for Rush)

1959 John Sykes (guitarist for Thin Lizzy, Whitesnake)

1972 Simon Jones (bassist for The Verve)

DEAD †

July 30

Neil Diamond
Cracklin' Rosie (1970)

Single

Strokes
Is This It (2001)

Album

1955

Johnny Cash channels Folsom Prison before ever stepping inside. While stationed in Germany with the US Air Force, Cash watches the 1951 movie *Walls of Folsom Prison* and writes "Folsom Prison Blues." When he records it, the track rises to No. 4 on the Billboard country chart. But it's the electrifying live version from *At Folsom Prison* in 1968 that cements its legacy, hitting No. 1 and turning Cash into the Man in Black for generations to come.

1966

The Troggs make Billboard history with "Wild Thing." Their primal garage rock anthem not only tops the Hot 100, but also pulls off the strange feat of being released by two competing record labels at the same time. A dispute between Fontana and Atco leads both to issue the single, forcing Billboard to combine their sales figures. The result? One of the most chaotic yet legendary No. 1s in chart history.

BORNΩ

1946 Jeffrey Hammond (bassist for Jethro Tull)
1968 Sean Moore (drummer for Manic Street Preachers)

DEAD†

1968

The Beatles' Apple Boutique goes out with a psychedelic fire sale. The London clothing store, which the Fab Four envisioned as a utopian business venture, turns into a financial disaster plagued by bad management and shoplifters. With the boutique officially shutting down, the band decides on an appropriately groovy send-off: employees are told to let people in off the street and take whatever they want. By evening, the store is emptied, the doors are locked, and the dream of a Beatle-run fashion empire is over.

1996

Sublime's breakout album arrives too late for its frontman to see it. Their self-titled major-label debut drops two months after lead singer Brad Nowell dies of a heroin overdose. It's bittersweet—the album becomes a huge success, selling over five million copies, with "What I Got" and "Santeria" dominating modern rock radio. Sublime, as a band, is over. But their laid-back ska-punk sound lives on, making them an eternal staple of surf shops, college dorms, and backyard barbecues.

2001

The Strokes don't just drop an album—they revive garage rock. *Is This It* arrives like a shot of adrenaline, just as many had declared guitar-based rock dead. British indie label Rough Trade had already hyped the New York quintet after their *The Modern Age* EP, but when NME names "Last Nite" single of the week, the band becomes an overnight sensation. Meanwhile, *The New York Times* literally publishes a tombstone for guitar music. They may want to edit that.

2016

Jack White sends a vinyl record into space, because why not? To celebrate the seventh anniversary of Third Man Records, White launches a specially engineered turntable via a high-altitude balloon, sending Carl Sagan's "A Glorious Dawn" up to 94,000 feet before gravity has its way. The *Icarus Craft*, as it's called, plays the first-ever record in space before falling back to Earth. Just another day at Third Man Records.

31 July

Single

Chad & Jeremy
The Summer Song (1964)

Album

The Young Rascals
Groovin' (1967)

1969

Elvis Presley's Vegas comeback shakes up Sin City. After an eight-year hiatus from live performances, The King steps back onto the stage at the brand-new Las Vegas International Hotel. The month-long engagement, playing to 2,000 fans a night, earns him a staggering \$1.5 million and marks the beginning of his legendary Vegas years. It also reignites his career, proving that Elvis isn't just back—he's bigger than ever.

1971

A Who concert in New York turns deadly. An ex-convict, furious after being denied entry to the band's show at Forest Hills Stadium, stabs a security guard to death. The tragedy casts a dark shadow over the event, a stark contrast to the usual rowdy but harmless energy of a Who gig.

1980

The Eagles implode in Long Beach. After years of simmering tensions, Glenn Frey and Don Felder nearly come to blows onstage. The final straw? Felder's snide remark to Senator Alan Cranston before the show, which sends Frey into a rage. As they perform "Best of My Love," Frey is seething, later recalling, "Inside both of us are thinking, 'As soon as this is over, I'm gonna kill him.'" After the show, Felder smashes a guitar against the wall and speeds off in a limo, and with that, the Eagles are no more. Frey and Don Henley launch massively successful solo careers, while Felder's Airborne album in 1983 barely makes a dent.

1992

Mojo Nixon's parody comes full circle—starring Don Henley himself. While performing his irreverent song "Don Henley Must Die" at Austin's Hole in the Wall nightclub, the psychobilly singer gets a surprise guest: Henley himself. Rather than being offended, the former Eagle joins Nixon onstage to belt out the sarcastic anthem, proving he's got a better sense of humor than the lyrics suggest.

2012

Bruce Springsteen out-Bosses himself in Finland. The E Street Band delivers its longest-ever set, clocking in at a staggering four hours and six minutes at Helsinki's Olympiastadion. The record-breaking performance cements The Boss's legendary stamina. Four years later, he tries to match the feat in Philadelphia, but falls just two minutes short.

2015

Morrissey claims he was "groped" by an airport security officer. The former Smiths frontman accuses a TSA agent at San Francisco International Airport of inappropriate contact, saying he was "sexually assaulted." The TSA, however, quickly denies the claim, stating that security footage shows nothing out of the ordinary. The controversy sparks yet another heated debate among Morrissey's fiercely loyal fanbase.

2019

Woodstock 50 officially bites the dust. Plagued by legal and logistical nightmares, the would-be anniversary festival collapses despite initially booking Santana, John Fogerty, and other veterans of the original event. Rather than mourn the failed attempt, Santana and Fogerty take matters into their own hands—celebrating Woodstock's legacy with shows at the Bethel Woods Center for the Arts, the site of the 1969 festival.

BORN Ω

1953 Hugh McDowell (cellist for Electric Light Orchestra)

1958 Bill Berry (drummer for R.E.M.)

1978 Will Champion (drummer for Coldplay)

1981 M. Shadows (vocalist for Avenged Sevenfold)

DEAD†

**“It seems quite fitting
that Slash is getting a
star on the very street
Axl Rose will one day
be sleeping on.”**

Charlie Sheen on Slash getting a star in Hollywood Walk of Fame.

10 July 2012





September

1 September

Single

The Bangles
Walk Like An Egyptian (1986)

Album

Molly Hatchet
Molly Hatchet (1978)

1967

The Beatles gather at Paul McCartney's London home to figure out their next steps after the sudden death of their manager, Brian Epstein. The decision? No new manager—they'll handle business themselves, with McCartney taking the lead. It seems like a solution, but the added pressure fractures an already fragile dynamic. With tensions rising and egos clashing, the world's biggest band unravels, splitting just two years later.

1977

Rush unleash *A Farewell to Kings*, their fifth studio album and a prog-rock odyssey. The sprawling epics *Xanadu* and *Cygnus X-1 Book I: The Voyage* thrill the band's devoted fanbase, while the more accessible *Closer to the Heart* earns airplay in the US and UK. It's proof that Rush can satisfy both their prog purists and the mainstream—without compromising their intricate, otherworldly sound.

1980

Fleetwood Mac wrap up their grueling tour with a Hollywood Bowl performance—and an unexpected bombshell. From the stage, Lindsey Buckingham stuns the audience: "This is our last show for a long time." He isn't kidding. The band takes an extended break from live performances, disappearing from the stage for more than two years—an eternity in rock terms.

1983

Tom Waits reinvents himself with *Swordfishtrombones*, the first album he produces himself—and the one that pushes him into uncharted sonic territory. Encouraged by his wife, Kathleen Brennan, Waits abandons traditional structures in favor of eccentric, offbeat compositions. The result? A raw, jagged, and utterly unique masterpiece that marks a bold departure from his earlier work, reshaping his career in the process.

1988

Rock 'N' Roll Cuisine, the cookbook you never knew you needed, hits shelves, featuring 95 recipes from music legends. Yoko Ono offers up *Dream Soup* (which sounds as poetic as it does questionable), Mick Jagger serves shrimp curry, Cher delivers a boyfriend-approved macaroni salad, and Weird Al Yankovic contributes... a peanut butter and jelly sandwich. Not exactly groundbreaking, but then again, Weird Al never claimed to be a chef, even if armed with a bologna.

2012

Geoff Tate, freshly ousted from Queensrÿche, wastes no time plotting a rival version of the band. He announces plans for a "new Queensrÿche" and recruits a lineup of rock veterans, including Rudy Sarzo (Quiet Riot), Bobby Blotzer (Ratt), and Glen Drover (Megadeth). The only problem? A legal battle over the band's name is still raging, making it unclear if Tate's group can actually call itself Queensrÿche—or if they'll need a Plan B.

BORN Ω

1955 Bruce Foxton (bassist for The Jam)
1984 Joe Trohman (guitarist for Fall Out Boy)

DEAD†

September 2

Guns N' Roses
Don't Cry (1991)

Single

Thin Lizzy
Bad Reputation (1977)

Album

1965

The Doors step into World Pacific Jazz Studios in Los Angeles to record their first demos, laying down six tracks, including Hello, I Love You and Summer's Almost Gone. Still an unknown band, their name is lifted from Aldous Huxley's book *The Doors of Perception*, which itself borrows from a William Blake verse. Little do they know, they're about to open a door to rock history that will never close.

1971

Grateful Dead's former manager, Lenny Hart, finds himself in handcuffs after the band has him arrested for embezzling \$70,000 from their funds. The betrayal cuts deep—especially since Hart is drummer Mickey Hart's father. The band's laid-back, cosmic vibe only stretches so far when it comes to stolen money, and they make sure justice catches up with him.

BORN Ω

1951 Mik Kaminski (violinist for Electric Light Orchestra)
1957 Steve Porcaro (keyboardist for Toto)

DEAD†

2018 Conway Savage (keyboardist for Nick Cave and The Bad Seeds)
at age 58

1982

Fleetwood Mac launch their *Mirage* tour in Atlanta, bringing along rising Australian band Men at Work as their opening act. The timing couldn't be better—Men at Work's debut album *Business as Usual* is climbing the US charts fast. By the time Fleetwood Mac wrap up in October, their openers are big enough to headline their own tour, proving that sometimes, opening acts don't stay in the shadows for long.

1988

The Human Rights Now! world tour kicks off at Wembley Stadium, boasting a powerhouse lineup of Sting, Bruce Springsteen, Peter Dinklage, Tracy Chapman, and Youssou N'Dour. Spanning five continents and 20 shows, the tour raises funds for Amnesty International while taking over some of the world's biggest stadiums, from Barcelona's Camp Nou to Zimbabwe's National Sports Stadium. Alongside the music, the concerts include guest stars, human rights activists, and former political prisoners, making it one of the most ambitious and socially conscious rock tours in history.

1993

Pearl Jam's *Jeremy* video sweeps the MTV Video Music Awards, winning four trophies, including Video of the Year. Instead of basking in the glory, Eddie Vedder downplays the achievement. "I don't know how you can say it's the best," he shrugs. "It's just a little piece of art, and you can't put art into a competition." The band takes their frustration with the music industry a step further—refusing to make another music video for five years.

2008

Rage Against the Machine arrive in Minneapolis, ready to perform in protest of the Republican National Convention. The police, however, have other plans. Blocked from taking the stage, the band refuses to back down—so they head into the crowd and belt out two songs using just a megaphone. The moment captures their revolutionary spirit, but it also escalates tensions, and soon after, riots break out.



December

1 December

Single

Eagles
Peaceful, Easy Feeling (1972)

Album

Jimi Hendrix Experience
Axis: Bold As Love [UK] (1967)

1959

Chuck Berry's bad judgment lands him in serious legal trouble. While in Juarez, Mexico, before a gig in El Paso, he meets 14-year-old runaway Janice Escalanti and offers her a job at his St. Louis restaurant. It doesn't take long for things to go south—after their arrangement falls apart, she goes to the police, and Berry is promptly arrested for violating the law against transporting a minor across state lines. The rock pioneer fights the case but ultimately serves 20 months in jail, a chapter that shadows his career for years to come.

1964

The Who kick off a legendary 22-week residency at London's famed Marquee Club, the venue that practically serves as a rock 'n' roll proving ground. The club's history is stacked with future legends—The Rolling Stones, The Yardbirds, Led Zeppelin, Jimi Hendrix, and Pink Floyd, to name a few. For The Who, this residency helps shape their early sound and reputation for chaos.

1976

The Sex Pistols make scandalous television history. Last-minute replacements for Queen on Today, the Pistols get goaded into an on-air profanity-fest by host Bill Grundy, who mocks their punk attitude and flirts with Siouxsie Sioux. Guitarist Steve Jones doesn't hold back, calling Grundy a "f—king rotter" on live TV. The outrage that follows is instant, the media explodes, and overnight, the Sex Pistols go from underground punks to full-fledged public enemy No. 1.

1991

Jerry Cantrell proves that rock stars aren't always great at reading calendars. The Alice in Chains guitarist, thinking November has 31 days, continues his hunting trip, blissfully unaware that the band has a gig opening for Van Halen in Memphis. The show goes on—just without him.

2006

A die-hard Oasis fan gets the surprise of a lifetime when Noel Gallagher plays a private gig in his living room. Ben Hayes wins a BBC Radio 1 contest, and his tiny Cheshire home is transformed into the most exclusive concert venue in Britain. Just 15 people squeeze into the lounge for the intimate performance, while his mother, ever the good host, serves tea to Noel and the crew.

2012

San Diego honors hometown songwriter Jack Tempchin by declaring "Peaceful Easy Feeling Day." The Eagles' songwriter is celebrated at none other than a Wienerschnitzel hot dog joint, where he famously penned the final verse of the song while waiting for his order. As part of the ceremony, he's presented with a golden wiener—because nothing says rock 'n' roll legend like an honorary hot dog.

2014

AC/DC drummer Phil Rudd finds himself in deep legal trouble, pleading not guilty to charges of threatening to kill and drug possession in a New Zealand court. Originally accused of attempting to hire a hitman, that charge is later dropped—but the scandal still rocks the band.

BORN Ω

1944 Eric Bloom (vocalist for Blue Öyster Cult)
1944 John Densmore (drummer for The Doors)
1951 Jaco Pastorius (bassist for Weather Report)
1977 Brad Delpson (guitarist for Linkin Park)

DEAD†

1989 Billy Lyall (keyboardist for Bay City Rollers, Pilot, The Alan Parsons Project) at age 36

December 2

Led Zeppelin
Black Dog (1971)

Single

The Rolling Stones
Blue & Lonesome (2016)

Album

1957

Portland DJ Al Priddy becomes a Christmas controversy when he's fired from KEX radio for playing Elvis Presley's version of White Christmas—a song the station had banned for supposedly “desecrating” the holiday spirit. The story makes national headlines, but soon enough, it's revealed to be a clever publicity stunt. Letters of support pour in, and Priddy is triumphantly reinstated just two weeks later. In a final twist, Priddy had secretly recorded his own “firing” and played the tape on air before signing off.

1966

A 19-year-old David Bowie takes his first swing at mainstream success with the release of Rubber Band, his debut single on Decca's Deram label. A far cry from his later rock personas, the track is a quirky baroque-pop tune that he recorded as part of an audition package to secure his record deal. It doesn't make much of a splash, but Bowie is just getting started.

BORN

- 1941 Tom McGuinness (guitarist for Manfred Mann)
- 1942 Ted Bluechel Jr. (drummer, guitarist for The Association)
- 1960 Rick Savage (bassist for Def Leppard)
- 1968 Nate Mendel (bassist for Foo Fighters)

DEAD

- 2006 Dave Mount (drummer for Mud) at age 59

1969

Before heading to the chaos of Altamont, The Rolling Stones make a pit stop at Muscle Shoals Sound Studios in Alabama, where they lay down three legendary tracks in just three days: Brown Sugar, Wild Horses, and You Gotta Move. In what turns out to be a historic session, the band captures the gritty, bluesy essence that defines their best work.

1976

British tabloids explode in outrage after The Sex Pistols' profanity-laced appearance on live TV. Following their Today interview—where they gleefully curse and insult host Bill Grundy—the Daily Mirror dubs them “The Filth and the Fury!” in bold, front-page letters. The media frenzy only amplifies their rebellious image, cementing their place as punk rock's most notorious villains.

2012

Led Zeppelin's surviving members—Jimmy Page, Robert Plant, and John Paul Jones—receive one of America's highest cultural honors as they are celebrated at the Kennedy Center. Comedian and superfan Jack Black introduces them, boldly declaring them “the greatest rock and roll band of all time.” The night's emotional high point comes when Ann and Nancy Wilson of Heart, joined by Jason Bonham on drums, deliver a powerhouse rendition of Stairway to Heaven—leaving even the legendary rockers visibly moved.

2023

KISS take their final bow—sort of. During what is billed as their last-ever live show at Madison Square Garden, the band stuns the crowd by revealing their digital avatars, signaling that KISS will rock on in virtual form long after Paul Stanley and Gene Simmons retire. As Stanley puts it, “The band deserves to live on because the band is bigger than we are.” It's a sendoff only KISS could pull off—equal parts spectacle, marketing, and pure rock theatrics.

31 December

Single

REO Speedwagon
Can't Fight This Feeling [UK] (1984)

Album

Live
Mental Jewelry (1991)

1970

Paul McCartney files a lawsuit to officially dissolve The Beatles' partnership, finally breaking free from manager Allen Klein, whom the other three members had chosen to handle the band's affairs. The legal battle drags on for years, with the official breakup only finalized in 1975 through a private settlement.

1973

Journey makes their live debut at San Francisco's Winterland Ballroom. The band, founded by ex-Santana members Gregg Rolie and Neal Schon, begins as a progressive, jazz-fusion-influenced outfit with Rolie handling lead vocals. Steve Perry doesn't join until 1977, at which point Journey's signature arena rock sound takes shape.

1974

Fleetwood Mac, reeling from the departure of guitarist Bob Welch, reach out to Lindsey Buckingham with an offer to join the band. There's just one condition: he refuses to sign on unless his girlfriend and musical partner, Stevie Nicks, comes along too. The band agrees, unknowingly setting the stage for one of rock's greatest and most tumultuous reinventions.

1984

Def Leppard drummer Rick Allen loses his left arm in a horrific Corvette crash, an accident that would have ended most drummers' careers. Instead, Allen perseveres, learning to play using a custom-designed drum kit. He makes a triumphant return at the 1986 Monsters of Rock Festival, paving the way for the completion and release of the band's landmark album, *Hysteria*, in 1987.

1994

Rod Stewart rings in the New Year with a free concert at Copacabana Beach in Rio de Janeiro, drawing an estimated 3.5 million people. Fireworks help inflate the numbers, but it's still one of the largest concerts in rock history, earning a Guinness World Record for the biggest free rock show ever staged.

2015

Mötley Crüe play what they swear is their final show ever, a New Year's Eve blowout in Los Angeles, complete with Nikki Sixx's flamethrower bass and Tommy Lee's infamous drum roller coaster. To make it official, the band signs a legal contract stating they will never tour again as Mötley Crüe. Naturally, they find a loophole in 2019, announcing a massive 2020 stadium tour that gets postponed due to the pandemic but finally kicks off in 2022—because, in rock 'n' roll, farewell tours are rarely final.

BORN Ω

1942 Andy Summers (guitarist for The Police)


1947 Burton Cummings (vocalist, keyboardist for The Guess Who)

1951 Tom Hamilton (bassist for Aerosmith)

1959 Paul Westerberg (vocalist, guitarist for The Replacements)

DEAD \dagger

2022 Jeremiah Green (drummer for Modest House) at age 45



**“It’s hard to come
out here and
play tonight, but
there’s nothing
else to do.”**

Bruce Springsteen opens a show the day after John Lennon’s murder.
9 December 1980