



PEGGY SUE

There is a story behind every song involving the people, feelings, and events that lead up to its creation. Ever since Buddy Holly tagged Peggy Sue Gerron with the love ballad "Peggy Sue," the song became her story too. Fans the world over have sought Peggy's picture, autograph, and story. Music history archivists have taken notice and deemed her an internationally recognized celebrity. But, if you are "Peggy Sue," are you really supposed to be anything else?

People the world over are learning that Peggy Sue is much more than a song. The girl next door grew up. She became a wife, mother, grandmother, small business owner, writer, radio personality, and the list goes on. Through it all, the romantic charm and aura of being "Peggy Sue" has "not faded away." She exudes class and style as she informs, motivates, and inspires through her humour, honesty, and passion of life.

Peggy Sue Gerron was born on 15 June 1940, in Olton, Texas, and grew up in Lubbock, Texas. She was a high school senior when she was cast into the international spotlight by Buddy Holly's release of the namesake song that climbed to the top of 1957 Billboard Charts. The rest is musical history.

Even her first introduction to Buddy Holly was the thing of which fairy tales are made. Buddy actually accidentally knocked her down in a hallway at Lubbock High School while running, with guitar and amplifier in hand, to get on stage for a music assembly in the school auditorium. "I'm too late to pick you up," he said, "but you sure are pretty."

Peggy Sue and her "steady", Jerry Allison, double-dated with Buddy, hung out at the local Hi-D-Ho Drive-In, attended sock hops, and shared rhythm and blues records and plans for the future. Meantime, they watched in awe as their friend transformed himself from a small town Country singer into a giant of Rock 'n Roll.

Following graduation, Peggy Sue became a member of the Crickets "family" when she and the group's drummer, Jerry Allison, were married. She shared in the dreams and extraordinary success of Buddy Holly and the Crickets. Unfortunately, she also had to share in the ultimate tragedy—the day the music died.

After the plane crash that killed Buddy, Ritchie Valens and J. P. Richardson ("The Big Bopper") the Crickets reformed. Peggy Sue continued to travel with the group as they toured, recorded and appeared as a sustaining act with Roger Miller on his "King of the Road" television series in the 1960's.

From 1967 until 1978 Peggy Sue was basically unknown as "the Peggy Sue." Following her divorce from Jerry Allison, Peggy Sue went to Pasadena Junior College in Pasadena, California, and became a dental assistant. She then married again and had two children, a girl and a boy, and spent the majority of her life caring for her family.

Balancing home with career, she helped her new husband establish a very successful plumbing business and even became the first licensed woman plumber in California. When the San Francisco earthquake hit in 1989, her plumbing company volunteered the cameras, some of the first ones to be used in plumbing in that area, to check for blockages to go into collapsed areas to look for trapped people.

In 1978 when the Buddy Holly movie came out people began asking about whatever had happened to Peggy Sue. Magazines and TV shows were once again interested in the girl behind the song.

In 1986, Hollywood tapped into the fame of "Peggy Sue" by adapting Buddy's "Peggy Sue Got Married" song into a feature film starring Kathleen Turner. Although glaringly deficient in its depiction of actual events and places, the movie nevertheless rekindled a spirit of the 1950's and remains an audience favourite on cable and commercial television stations.

In 1995 she went to Lubbock to care for her aging and ill mother and has remained there ever since--this time balancing family with the fame of being Peggy Sue. She now has 6 grandchildren, 3 boys and 3 girls, one 6 week old great-grandson, a cantankerous deaf Siamese cat named Fancy, and a huge Blue Russian cat named Sox that was rescued from being abandoned at a cemetery.

Today, Peggy Sue is a celebrity speaker, radio host, and columnist. Because of her legendary status in the annals of Rock 'n Roll, she is in demand for public appearances, television and radio shows, documentaries, print media interviews and celebrity Internet chat sessions. Vivacious and charming, her infectious personality captivates audiences at conventions, trade shows, auto shows, collector's shows, music festivals, universities and corporate functions with her behind-the-scenes stories and vignettes of the music and musicians of that magical era.

In the summer of 2001, when she appeared on the Oxygen Network's "I've Got a Secret," panel members and the studio audience began dancing in the aisles when they learned her true identity and the song was piped over the studio monitors.

When Buddy Holly was posthumously awarded a Grammy for Lifetime Achievement, the presenter proclaimed "Peggy Sue" as "the first international rock anthem." The Rock 'n Roll Hall of Fame honoured the song as "one of the most popular and influential Rock classics."

Peggy Sue's tireless efforts "to keep the music and memory alive" helped lead to the development of the Buddy Holly Centre in Lubbock, Texas, that drew thousands of fans from around the world. Working with the City of Lubbock, she was also instrumental in the successful promotion of "The Crossroads of Texas" music festival in Lubbock.

Peggy Sue has written a memoir, "Whatever Happened to Peggy Sue?", and is a member of The 7th Street Legends, a vocal backup group for George Tomsco of the Fireballs. She can be heard on "Everybody Should Have Lived in the 50's" and "Most All of the Time."

She also maintains an active interest in the awareness and prevention of domestic violence and drug abuse, and in July 2008 Peggy Sue was named a spokesperson for the U.S. National Coalition Against Domestic Violence. .

The girl next door grew up and took on responsibilities. But, she is still in the heart of every young man and in the spirit of every girl's daydreams. Buddy Holly, the kid with black-rimmed glasses began the world's fairy tale romance with Peggy Sue when he recorded the song with her name. That fairy tale remains eternally young.

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