

Musicians Hall of Fame

COME SEE
WHAT YOU'VE HEARD

By Melonee Hurt

Several years ago, Nashville musician and entrepreneur Joe Chambers had an idea to save the house on Jefferson Street where a kid named Jimi Hendrix lived, before he became a guitar legend.

What came of that idea is now a full-blown Musicians Hall of Fame and Museum, complete with a new 9,000-square-foot Grammy Museum Gallery that educates visitors about the creative process behind making records.

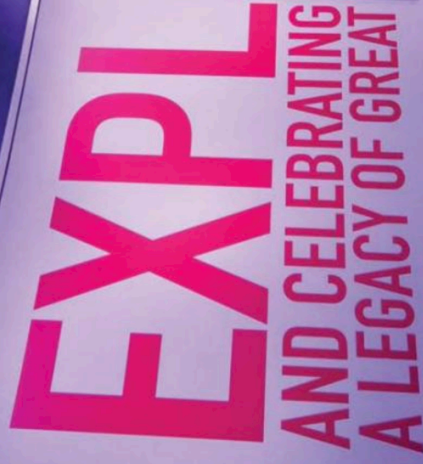
Chambers remembers thinking that if people would travel to Washington state to trace Hendrix's headstone, surely they would come to Nashville to see the house he lived in during his twenties.

"At that point, I thought that if there was anything left like that, I am going to do my best to try to save it," Chambers says. "The idea went from being a Hendrix thing to a guitar players thing, to 'Well, why leave out the bass players and keyboard players?' It turned into the Musicians Hall of Fame."

Calling several venues home before landing 60,000 square feet on the first floor of Nashville's Municipal Auditorium, the Hall of Fame is the only one of its kind in the world, paying tribute to the musicians behind the world's greatest records. Dozens of legendary players, along with their gear and their stories, line the walls, and Chambers hasn't stopped collecting memorabilia since that day he began dreaming about Hendrix.

He saved the stage from the Jolly Roger in Nashville's Printers Alley, where Hendrix and Billy Cox used to play: It's in the museum. He found—and saved—the vocal booth from American Studios in Memphis, which had been stored in a tractor-trailer in a field outside Memphis for 30 years. It's here as well.

"That vocal booth is where Elvis stood



and recorded *Suspicious Minds*," Chambers says. "Dusty Springfield recorded *Son of a Preacher Man* in there. Neil Diamond did *Sweet Caroline*, and now this place is standing in the museum."

Boasting the slogan "Come see what you've heard," the museum takes what might seem like junk but, when combined with its background story, becomes treasure—an invaluable part in the evolution of popular music. The memorabilia also represents the ever-growing list of inductees

to the Hall of Fame, including the likes of Peter Frampton, Buddy Guy, Roy Orbison and a host of other amazing players.

Legendary guitarist Duane Eddy was inducted into the Musicians Hall of Fame several years ago and is also a member of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum in Cleveland, OH.

"It's great to be in the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, but I can say in a way, it's more important to me to be recognized for being a musician

than it is to be considered a star," Eddy says. "I am happy to be in both of them, but I never expected to be lauded for being a musician."

Having performed for decades with many of these acclaimed players, Eddy says he knows they all feel the same way about being included in this exhibit. "I have so much respect for the musicians that are in the Hall of Fame," he says. "I respect their abilities, their skills and their talent. It's just an unbelievable honor for me to be in there amongst them."