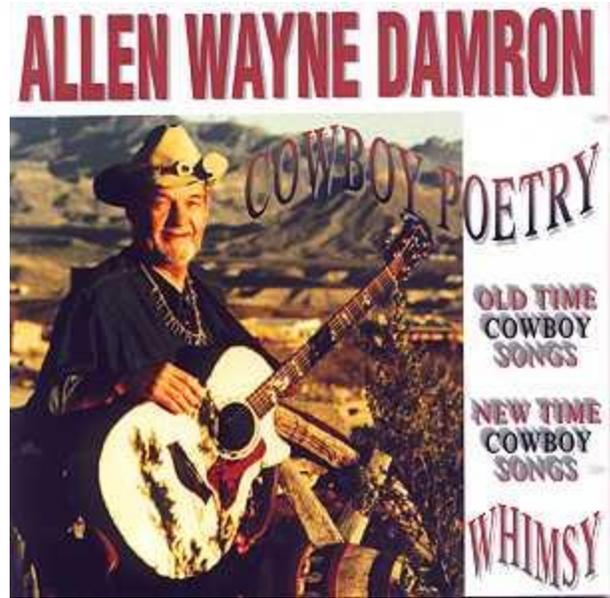


Allen Wayne Damron

Damron, Allen Wayne: Folksinger, poet, and storyteller, Allen Wayne Damron was born to Clarence Allen “Jack” Damron and Jane Bevans Damron on March 1, 1939, near Raymondville, Texas. Allen’s parents divorced when he was still a child, so he went to live with his grandmother, Vora Lee Bevans, on the family farm near Raymondville. His grandmother, who also raised Allen Damron’s cousin, Texas writer Mona Sizer, played piano and encouraged the children to learn piano, sing, and take dance lessons. Damron eventually would teach himself to play the guitar, as well.



Damron went to public school in Raymondville, where he became interested in drama and participated in a number of plays and musicals. He won a drama scholarship to attend Lon Morris College in Jacksonville, Texas, where he helped form a singing trio, Los Bandidos. After earning an Associates Degree in Drama, he enrolled at the University of Texas at Austin, where he studied Psychology.

After leaving the University of Texas, Damron spent some time in Washington, D.C., where he performed at local clubs. In collaboration with his musical partner, Carol Hedin, Damron also recorded several singles, including “The Partisan Song/Come Go With Me” and “Nancy Whiskey/Requiem for a Balloon,” along with an album, *Carol Hedin and Allen Damron: Two for the Show*, on Franc Records in 1962. Damron also performed at the Newport Folk Festival in 1962 and in 1963, the same year that Bob Dylan debuted there.

By 1966, Damron had returned to Texas. He was performing at Austin’s 11th Door Club when he met music producer Rod Kennedy, with whom he would form a life-long personal and professional relationship. Kennedy invited Damron to join another Texas folksinger, Carolyn Hester, for a state-wide tour publicizing Kennedy’s New Longhorn Jazz Festival. From 1967 to 1970, Damron also managed Kennedy’s Chequered Flag folk club in Austin, where a number of singers, including Kathie Morrison, Richard Dean, Big Bill Moss, Jim Schulman, Kenneth Threadgill, Janis Joplin, Nanci Griffith, Jerry Jeff Walker, and others performed. During this period, Damron also played several festivals around Austin and hosted a 22-week television series on KMFI-AM-FM-TV called “The Younger Set,” which was produced by Rod Kennedy.

Following his years at the Chequered Flag, Damron went on to manage the Rubiyat Club in Dallas, where the popular Texas folksinger B.W. Stevenson began his career. Damron also performed at Poor David’s Pub in Dallas for many years and appeared with Steven Fromholz and Lyle Lovett on the PBS series *Austin City Limits*. In addition, Damron was one of the original organizers and performers at the Kerrville Folk Festival, where he appeared annually from 1972

until 2003. He also was director of the non-profit Kerrville Music Foundation, and, along with Peter Yarrow, helped establish the New Folk Competition for emerging songwriters.

During the 1970s, Damron began performing as a storyteller and cowboy poet, and, in 1995, he published the book *The Best Stories from the Texas Storytelling Festivals*. He also performed at public schools throughout the state using music to instill an appreciation of history to a younger generation of Texans. Damron made several recordings during his career, including *Storytelling Tape 1 or El Rancho Cultural* (1995), *Cowboy Poetry: Old Time Cowboy songs, New Time Cowboy Songs, Whimsy* (1999), and *Songs for Kids (of all ages)* (1986). He also appeared as an extra in several movies, most notably, the IMAX production of *The Alamo*.

Damron died on August 13, 2005, at his home in Terlingua, Texas. His cremated remains were scattered over the Chisos Mountains in far west Texas.

Tamara King