



Cleveland Crochet

Cleveland Crochet was born on January 30, 1919 in Hathaway, Louisiana.

A single mother raised him on a farm with 9 siblings. When he was 12 years old, his mother decided to host barn dances on Saturday nights to raise extra money. She charged 25 cents for admission. Everyone in the family played an instrument. Cleveland built his violin out of a wooden cigar box and wire from the screen door of their home. For a bow, he cut hair from the tail of the family horse and attached it to a tree branch.

He married Mable Ewing and had two daughters, Betty Jean Bruney and Gloria Ann Thibodeaux.

He began his music career in 1950 forming a band known as “Cleveland Crochet and the Hillbilly Ramblers.” The original band members were Cleveland, Charlie Babineaux, Tilford McCullan, Sidney Brown and Eddie Benoit.

In early 1961, the band consisted of Verris “Shorty” LeBlanc, Jessie Stutes, Charlie Babineaux, and Cliff Newman and was called “Cleveland Crochet and the Sugar Bees.” Their record “Sugar Bee” became the first Cajun song to reach the “Billboard Hot 10” peaking at number 8. It sold over one million copies. On the opposite side was “Drunkard's Dream,” a song by Jessie Stutes.

Later, band members included LeRoy Broussard, Elce Broussard, Edison “Red” Lopez, Newton “Red” Saltzman, John Crochet, “Pee Wee” Broussard, Robert Thibodeaux, Rufus Thibodeaux, Jo-el Sonnier and Eugene Thibodeaux. This Group recorded “*La Veuve de la Coule*, sung by Robert Thibodeaux.