



2002 Induction Class



Merle Travis

Guitar Stylist, Singer, Songwriter. The son of a tobacco farmer and coal miner, he got his start in 1935 when he joined the Tennessee Tomcats and from there the Georgia Wildcats and the Drifting Pioneers. He and Grandpa Jones did many radio shows together and recorded as the Shepard Brothers.

He co-wrote Capitol's first million-seller, *Smoke, Smoke, Smoke That Cigarette* with Tex Williams, and his eight-song *Folk Songs of Our Hills* included *Nine Pound Hammer*, *Dark As A Dungeon* and *Sixteen Tons*. He won acclaim for his portrayal of a young GI in the 1954 film *From Here To Eternity*, in which he sang *Re-enlistment Blues*. He was also one of the Texas Playboys in the Clint Eastwood Film, *Honkytonk Man*. Travis's *Walkin' The Strings* is a highly-regarded album of acoustic guitar solos. In 1948 he developed the solid-body guitar. He was elected to the Country Music Hall of Fame in 1977.