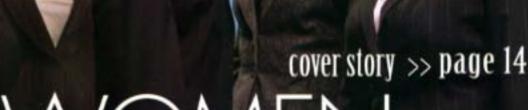
Society Life

VILLIAMSON COUNTY AND SURROUNDING

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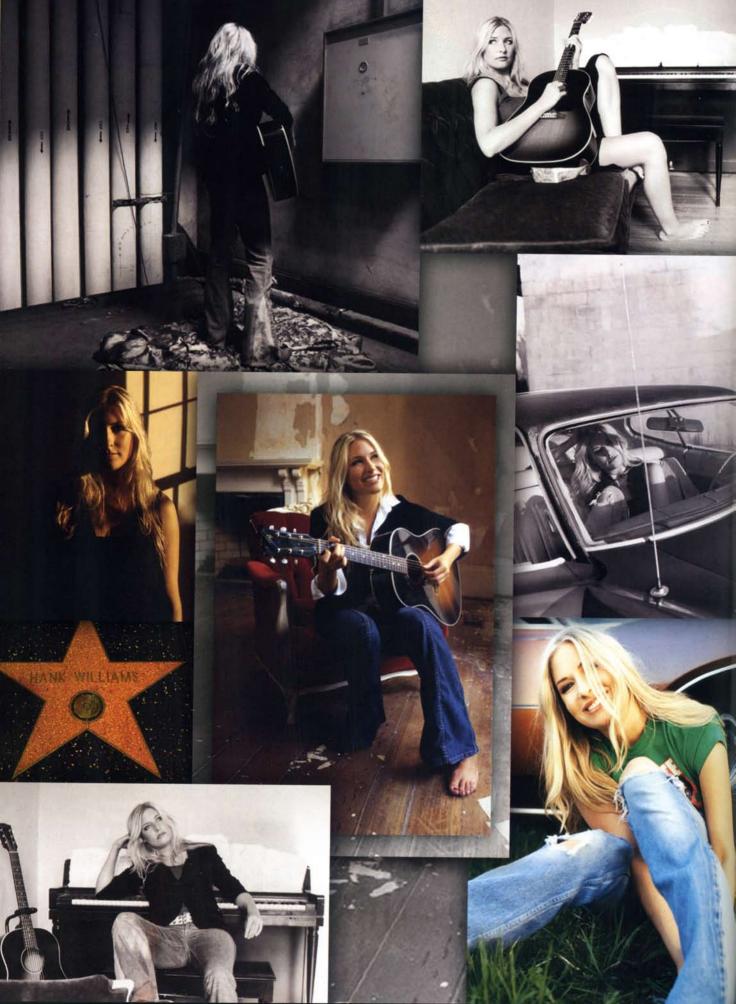
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Inspiring FEMALE PROFESSIONALS

Profiles of Grace with DR. HOWARD OLDS

Holly Williams SL exclusive



Article by Kristina Cornell





It would have been easy for Holly Williams to have lived out her life as simply the grand-daughter of the legendary Hank Williams and the daughter of famous country music star, Hank Williams Jr. However, life called Holly on her own distinctive journey. As you might assume, because of her family tree, music is a driving force in her life—but her style is all her own.

At the tender age of eight, Holly wrote songs she kept dear in "Holly's Song Folder." She tucked her song folder away until many years later. When Holly was 17 years old, she picked up a guitar, wrote three songs in one day and hasn't stopped since.

Holly has been fortunate enough to meet and spend time with some of her heroes, Bob Dylan, among them. She recalls, "I remember being at a Dylan show in Birmingham. We were standing beside the bus talking and Bob told me that, 'all I needed were good words and a guitar,' it was that simple." After spending years on the road, suitcase and guitar in hand, gritting it out in music halls across the world, Holly began work on her debut album, *The Ones We Never Knew* 2005 was a whirlwind year, releasing her album and touring worldwide. By 2006, Holly had settled back home and was beginning to write for her follow-up album. Her magical time would come to a crashing halt, literally. Holly and her sister were involved in a serious car accident in March of 2006, resulting in life-threatening injuries to both women. By the grace of God, they survived. Facing a year in a cast, when Holly wasn't caring for her recovering sister, she set her sights on exploring her passion for fashion. Holly realized a need for a designer boutique in Nashville and after much preparation and planning, in the fall of 2007, H. Audrey opened its doors in Green Hills. (Audrey is Holly's middle name—after her paternal grandmother.) The shop is fascinating, a wonderful blend of art and fashion. With the release of her sophomore album scheduled for later this year, Holly is having the time of her life. So here she is, Holly Williams—third generation musician, entrepreneur and survivor.

HOLLY WILLIAMS



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Holly, you write all of the songs on your albums. If you had to choose between singing and writing, which would you choose?

Holly: It's an impossible choice because for me one doesn't come without the other. The second I write it, I can't help but start singing it! I will say that my heart lies in writing. There is nothing I love more than forming a story with words.

SL: Can you tell us more about *Holly's* Song Folder?

Holly: Ha ha! I began this folder when I was eight. It's full of lyrics and stories that were rolling around my brain at the time.

I definitely wrote some serious, sad things down. But, also some funny pop songs that I wanted Debbie Gibson to sing. It's full of songs from an eight year old, but there are some subjects in there which were way beyond my years. Every now and then I look back at it and love to read it.

SL: You have had the opportunity to meet a lot of your heroes. What was the coolest meeting ever?

Holly: Bob Dylan definitely. He is such a sweet guy and I was so impressed with his extensive knowledge of my family's music. He is a huge inspiration to me. Stevie Wonder was also amazing. Neil Young was telling me about how he has one of my



HOLLYWILLIAMS

grandfather's guitars. I need to become best friends with him so he puts the guitar in his will for me one day!

SL: Your career was really taking off when suddenly, everything changed. Will you tell us how your car accident has influenced your life?

Holly: You completely change your way of thinking. You are extra careful to always try to keep peace with everyone around you, not to let little things bother you and get in the way of peace. It's like the Bob Dylan song, *Every Grain of Ssand*. You start to see God in every little thing.

SL: Your father was severely injured in a

mountain climbing accident and endured a very long recovery. Do you feel an extra connection to him because of some of the hardships that you have faced, like your car accident?

Holly: I definitely feel like I understand what it is to go through tragedy, the kind of tragedy he faced and that my sister and I faced. I am completely recovered. My sister just had her 20th surgery. She has been through so much, but she has been soooooo strong—it amazes me. My dad was also unbelievably strong during his mountain fall. All three of us have had quite a learning experience through these tragedies.

SL: What made you decide to start your own boutique, H. Audrey?

Holly: After the wreck, I had so much

downtime because I couldn't play guitar. My arm was in a cast. I had always wanted to do something like this, but I could never find the time. To make it simple, I turned my shopping addiction into a job!

SL: It must be exciting to finally release your sophomore album. Tell us more about it!

Holly: It comes out in September. I can't wait! I am so ready. I have been writing these songs for three years now. It is definitely more country, but in a roots way. I have been through a great deal and I've had so much to say. I am looking forward to everyone hearing it and playing these songs.

SL: Where do you see yourself in one year from now? How about ten years?

Holly: I hope to be making music that I



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love at both of those points in my life... singing the songs to people who find something meaningful in those words. There is nothing I love more than playing to a crowd who sings the words back to me. That means so much to a writer. Hopefully, I will also have a fabulous wardrobe from H. Audrey.

SL: If you could spend an entire day with anybody, who would it be?

Holly: Jack Kerouac, I am absolutely obsessed with him as an author. We also were born on the same day and have many similarities. I completely understand who he was and what he was trying to accomplish. His free spirit reminds me a lot of myself. After I read his book, *On the Road*, I hopped in my Tahoe and drove to L.A. on two-lane roads all the way with a girlfriend. It was paradise. I have been known to hop on a train to random countries with the locals. I love stuff like that.

SL: What's your favorite quote?

Holly: "He not busy being born is busy dying" (BOB DYLAN) and 'Always in the mistake, never in the doubt" (UNKNOWN).

SL: A person's public image doesn't always convey their true personality. What would you like people to know about you?

Holly: I have a very outgoing, light-everything-is-funny kind of personality. It is very different from my music. People are surprised when they see me in work mode at the store or when writing. I would hope that people see that I try to keep a healthy balance of everything. It is easy for me to flow with any conversation or situation. That probably came from so much traveling. I hope people see that side of me... c'est la vie!

SL: That's life alright! Holly, best wishes with your new album and continued success for H. Audrey. You are an inspiration to us all. ★