

Janis Martin

Janis Martin was a Danville resident, who was known nationally as well as internationally. Today she is known worldwide as “The Rockabilly Queen” and “The Female Elvis”

Martin was born in Sutherlin, Virginia, and at the age of eleven she began her musical career as a member of the WDVA Barndance in Danville, VA. She was spotted performing at the Tobacco Festival in South Boston at the age of thirteen and soon became a regular on the Old Dominion Barn Dance in Wheeling, West Virginia. She had her own radio show on WHEE in Martinsville, VA. In March of 1956, at the age of fifteen, she cut her first RCA session and became known as “The Female Elvis.” She was voted the “Most Promising Female Artist of 1956” by the annual disc jockey convention for the *Billboard Magazine* Award. Janis performed on the Ozark Jubilee and the Grand Old Opry. She also became known through television media as a guest of the “Tonight Show,” the “Today Show,” the “Grand Old Opry” and “American Bandstand.”

Janis was living in Danville when Rockabilly became popular once again in the 1970s. Having raised her son, she went back on the road, and her son accompanied her on drums. In the 1980s her popularity was revived in Europe. On March 27, 1982, Janis celebrated her forty-second birthday with ten thousand fans in Holland. Janis died from cancer on September 3, 2007.