



present — patinaed photos of Jackdaw, a picture of his former cat, a ukulele and a bumper sticker that says “Make Tea, Not War” — hang on the wall behind Drury’s head.

“You invented alt-country,” says Vollstedt, smiling. “They didn’t have that term back in the old days. I think it came about because of people like you.” Drury laughs and snorts, shaking his head.

“I’m serious,” says Vollstedt. “Because at the time, the term didn’t exist. There was country, there was rock, there was rhythm and blues, there was blues and there was folk and it was pretty compartmentalized. And then groups like The Byrds came along and they took folk music and electrified it. So then they had to come up with a term so they came up with folk rock ... Then as things went on a little further it wasn’t really rock ‘n’ roll but it wasn’t country like Hank Williams. At that time country was pretty strictly defined ... Country was Nashville and so then they came up with this term ‘alt-country,’ which if they had had that term while Wayne was writing songs they probably would have said, this is alt-country, but they didn’t have that term because Wayne was busy inventing it.”

GAS STATION GIRL

Drury’s musical journey begins in White Plains, N.Y., where he was born in 1947. His mother bought him a harmony ukulele and a Mel Bay chord book when he was five after noticing his enthusiasm for ’50s TV personality and ukulele player Arthur Godfrey. By the time he was nine, Drury had saved up enough money (\$29) to buy his first guitar.

“It was called the Carmencita,” Drury says, his cool blue eyes twinkling behind black frames and his once long, corn-silk mane buzzed closely to his head. By the time he was old enough to legally drink, Drury had been “asked to leave” Syracuse University, where he was studying painting and sculpture, because he “didn’t have the money.” He moved with friends into an apartment in the city, five blocks away from rock ‘n’ roll pantheon, the Fillmore East. By day he worked Brentano’s (the same bookstore where Patti Smith worked), and by night he walked to the Fillmore.

“For five bucks I could see Ten Years After, Canned Heat, Janis Joplin, Chuck Berry, The Who, Cream,” Drury says. One afternoon in the dog days of summer, Drury was sitting in his apartment with roommates. “It was hot as hell. My apartment was four floors up. We were sitting around saying ‘It’s hot, let’s get out of this city.’ One friend says, ‘I’ve been to Eugene, Oregon. It’s *real* nice there.’”

By 1969, Drury had arrived in Eugene after hitching

north from L.A. He had done a drive-away from New York to L.A. in a ’65 Bonneville convertible with four friends and his cat, Mona. Drury quickly settled into the Odyssey Coffee House as a regular, becoming another member of the counterculture, bohemian family.

“Not the Jack Kerouac kind of bohemian,” says Cynthia Wooten, co-owner of the Odyssey with her late husband Bill. “It was the dawn of a new culture and new politics and a new way of being.” The Odyssey was not only the center of Eugene’s counterculture movement, it was the center of Jackdaw’s musical universe at the time — it’s where Drury, Anderson and Crawford met, performed, hung out and worked. It’s also where Vollstedt, accompanied by his teenage buddies, came to watch Jackdaw and rubbed shoulders with university students, hippies, wanderers, *Rolling Stone* freelancers and the Merry Pranksters in a cloud of cigarette smoke and coffee steam.



Wooten even commissioned the artistically-inclined Drury to create the first poster for the Oregon Country Fair (then known as the Renaissance Faire) and several more after that, and he also could be found washing dishes between sets. Wooten remembers Drury as soft-spoken and extremely bright. “His view of the world is just fascinating. He’s cryptic and I wouldn’t say cynical, but questioning all the time, but with this enormous heart,” she says.

Before long, Wooten recognized the burgeoning music scene and helped start the *Farmer’s Almanac On the Air*, an open mic that broadcast from the Odyssey live every Sunday night. Drury, Anderson and Randy Crawford frequently played the live show. “Everybody loved them,” Wooten says. “I don’t know why none of us had the skills or whatever to figure out a way to promote them, get them agents, create a broader audience for them, but anyway, that didn’t happen at the time.”

It was about this time that Drury wrote his first song at his house on Ferry Street. Drury could not stop thinking about a woman he’d briefly met while driving cross-country — she served him sandwiches at a turnpike restaurant in Colorado. Strumming a Gibson guitar in his tiled bathroom (because the acoustics “killed”), Drury wrote “Gas Station Girl,” which soon became one of their signature songs, covered by local bands like Wheatfield and broadcasted by local radio stations. After that, the songs came “fast and furious” and soon he had written “New York Central Line,” “Cimarron Rose,” “Country Song,” “New York Phoenix” and more too numerous to list here.

“Wayne wrote the music,” Anderson says. “He would show up in the afternoon and he would have a new song ... It was kind of like the sun coming up, ‘Oh here’s Wayne with a new song.’ To me, it seemed effortless to Wayne.”

Anderson, who has called Drury the most creative person he’s ever met, says Jackdaw was together for only “a few intense years” before the members parted ways for myriad reasons: marriage, moving away, the closure of the Odyssey in 1972 because of an urban renewal project and health reasons. At this point, Drury already had a catalogue of songs, mostly unrecorded, but by the mid-’70s, Drury was having bouts of numbness and paralysis due to MS. Managing the autoimmune disease through medical supervision, diet, swimming and cycling, Drury continued to walk, bike and write music until 2009 when he had a kidney removed.

“My kidney died and I couldn’t play anymore. I went to the hospital and they took it out and that’s that,” says Drury, sitting in his wheelchair under a tree in the nursing center’s