



REMEMBERING  
**ELVIS**

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Looking Back At

**40**

**Years**

Of Influence

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# 40 Years of Impact

Forty years ago, the world lost one of its most beloved rock 'n' roll stars of all time. A true legend in the entertainment business with an adoring fan base across the globe, Elvis Presley died at the age of 42 on August 16, 1977 in Memphis.

The disheartening anniversary has been marked by fans making the ultimate pilgrimage into Elvis' famous former home at Graceland in Memphis. Every year, Elvis Week draws people from all corners of the world, and the event slated for August 2017 was expected to be the most heavily attended event in its history.

## THE FIRST AMERICAN ROCK 'N' ROLL STAR

Elvis was a show-business legend before the age of 25. At 30, he was the highest-paid performer in the history of the business, with 45 gold records that sold more than one million copies each. His early hit songs included the teenage anthems "Hound Dog," "Heartbreak Hotel" and "Blue Suede Shoes."

Compared to Frank Sinatra in the decade before and the Beatles a decade later, Elvis' popularity was tied to more than his skills on stage or in the recording booth. His personality and presence fueled his status as an elite performer, singer, actor and overall entertainer.

## TRANSCENDING MUSIC

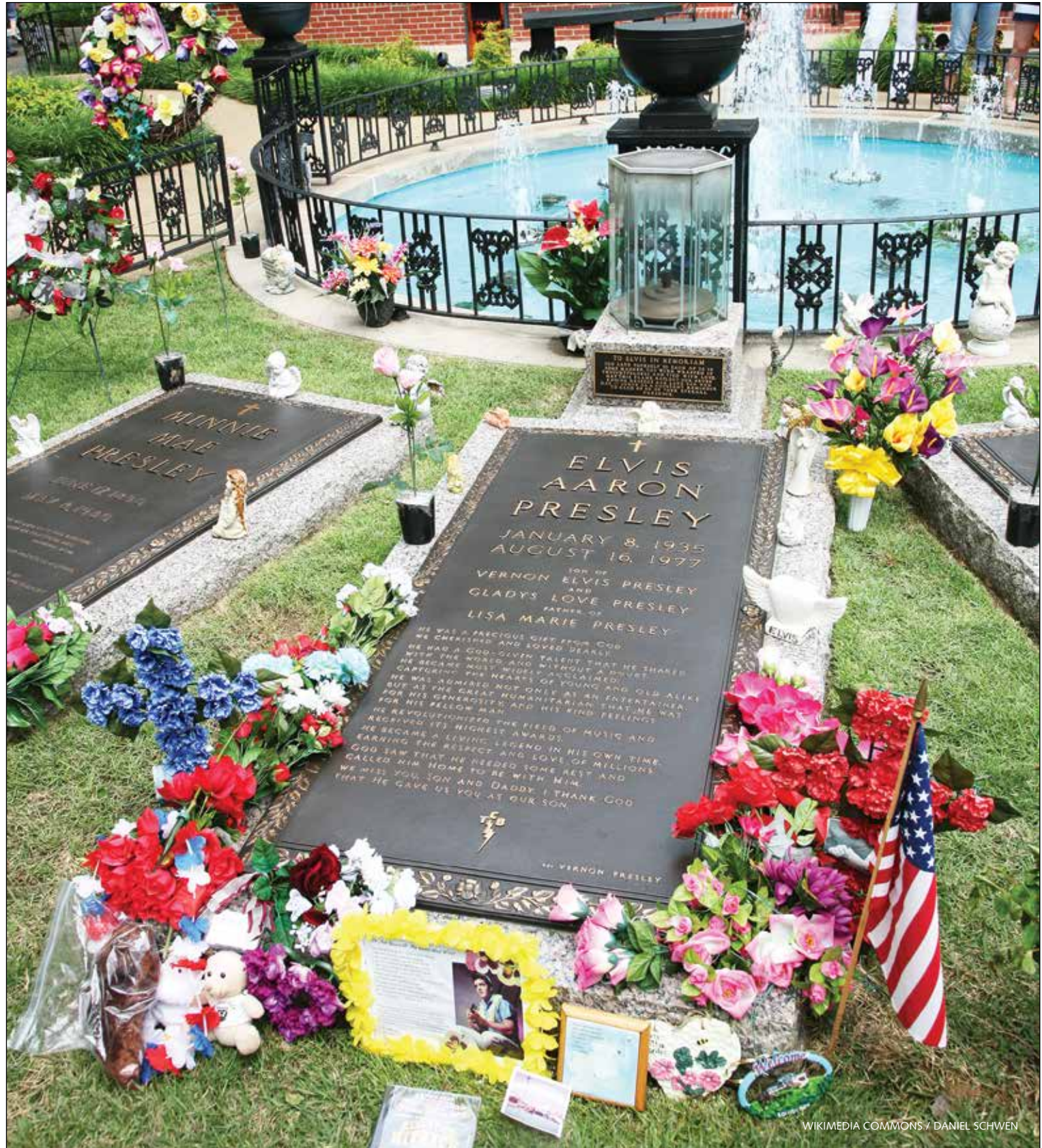
Elvis' international stardom expanded beyond the stage into film and television. Drawing the ire of conservative parents and religious figures, Elvis was a controversial figure due to what were considered provocative, suggestive dance moves for the time.

In his first television appearance on the Ed Sullivan show, his hip-wiggling act was considered by broadcasters to be so scandalous that cameras showed him only from the waist up. Along with highly anticipated TV performances and dozens of top musical singles, Elvis made 28 films that grossed millions of dollars.

## AN UNTIMELY DEATH

Elvis was found unconscious in the bedroom of Graceland and later pronounced dead at Baptist Memorial Hospital in Memphis after doctors failed to revive him.

A two-hour examination of Elvis' body indicated that the cause of death was cardiac arrhythmia – in other words, a heart attack. It was an abrupt end of life for one of the most revered musical and acting stars in the world.



# The Magic Behind Elvis' Wardrobe

Not only was Elvis Presley a trend-setter in the recording booth and on the big screen, he was wardrobe visionary emulated to this day by hipsters and fashionistas across the world.

His style transformed in dramatic ways as his success skyrocketed. His early wardrobe could be considered laid back and tame, with trousers and penny loafers inspiring a new generation of style-hungry youth.

Then the 1970s happened. Elvis' style shifted from button-downs and high-waist jeans to bedazzled jumpsuits and larger-than-life sideburns.

No matter what he wore, Elvis was one of the most fashion-forward icons in the history of the entertainment industry.

## BLUE SUEDE SHOES (AND JACKET)

Elvis didn't merely sing his hit song, "Blue Suede Shoes," he lived it out. He also donned a custom-made blue suede jacket that recently sold for thousands of dollars at a fan auction.

The jacket featured a zipper pocket and front tie through two grommets. It was an overstated wardrobe piece that showed off Elvis' eccentric style. He wore it over dress shirts with popped collars, creating a cool combination that was considered fun, wild and unique at the time.



## CUBAN-COLLARED SHIRTS & FUNKY PRINTS

Polyester fabric and bold patterns in abstract themes, Elvis' closet at Graceland was full of a wide range of button-downs that featured explosions of color – and usually a large Cuban collar.

His shirts in the 1950s and 60s could be considered conservative in comparison to the psychedelic-disco themes he later incorporated into his wardrobe. Fans watched

Elvis' shirt style shift from Hawaiian prints and simple stripes into rainfall patterns and shiny sequins through the years.

## A COLORFUL MAN

Elvis was never afraid of integrating color into his wardrobe – and he wasn't picky about his hues. He helped men's clothing break out of drab, boring prints in the 1950s by introducing colorful shirts, jackets and pants

to the masses.

Elvis' dark, slicked down hair helped complement his color button-downs, as did his ability to perfectly match pants, belts and shoes.

Speaking of color, remember when his sparkling jumpsuits made their appearance?

While the jumpsuit craze couldn't escape being classified as a passing fad, Elvis' early casual, colorful style lives on today.

# From Humble Beginnings

Elvis Presley's life story began in a humble setting and ended in tragic circumstances. Born to Vernon and Gladys Presley in a two-room house in Tupelo, Miss., on Jan. 8, 1935, Elvis grew up as an only child and moved with his family to Memphis in 1948.

Described as a fan of music from a young age, Elvis was influenced by the gospel music he heard in church. He frequented all-night gospel sings and as a teenager, began to be inspired by the R&B he heard on historic Beale Street.

## SINGING CAREER

In 1954, Elvis began his singing career with the Sun Records label in Memphis. One year later, RCA Victor acquired his recording contract and set him on the path for international stardom.

Elvis fashion style and musical sound made him a controversial figure with many in conservative America. He created a new era of American music and popular culture while challenging the staunch social and racial barriers of the 1950s, being hailed as a hero by many young adults starved for a new breed of role model.

## FILM, TV & LIVE PERFORMANCES

Elvis starred in 33 successful films, many of which are still well-regarded by fans today. He also made history with his television appearances and specials, becoming one of the first American entertainers to blur the lines between radio, TV and film.

Elvis' concert performances on tour and in Las Vegas set



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him apart from the competition. Early Elvis fans describe his on-stage presence as magical and enthralling, especially during the 1950s and '60s when he was focused on challenging the status quo.

His live performances helped fuel record sales. He

has sold over one billion records globally, more than any other artist. His American sales have earned him gold, platinum or multi-platinum awards along the way.

## AWARDS & ACCOLADES

Elvis was nominated for 14

Grammys and won three from the National Academy of Recording Arts & Sciences. He also won the Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award at age 36 and was named One of the Ten Outstanding Young Men of the Nation for 1970 by the United States Jaycees.

Recognized across the world as a trend-setting entertainment phenomenon, Elvis is regarded as one of the most important figures of 20th century popular culture. He died at his Memphis home, Graceland, on Aug. 16, 1977.

# Elvis In the Army

On Dec. 20, 1957, Elvis Presley received his draft notice for the United States Army. Nearing the peak of his stardom and living in his newly purchased Graceland mansion, Elvis was willingly sworn in as an Army private in Memphis on March 24, 1958.

His decision to serve his country is regarded by many as one of his most honorable achievements, especially considering what he had to lose. At the time, Elvis had already created the hit movie, “Love Me Tender,” and recorded multiple gold records, including “Heartbreak Hotel,” “Blue Suede Shoes,” “Hound Dog” and “Don’t Be Cruel.”

## ENHANCING HIS STARDOM

A role model for Americans young and old alike, Elvis influenced his country in dramatic ways during his military service. After he got his polio shot from an army doctor on national TV, vaccine rates among the American population shot from two percent to 85 percent by the time of his discharge on March 2, 1960, according to the U.S. Army.

While he was overseas, Elvis’ manager, Colonel Tom Parker, continued to release singles recorded before his departure. This helped build Elvis’ fan base even stronger by the time he was discharged in 1964.



## ELVIS IN THE ARMY: A TIMELINE

Here is a breakdown of Elvis’ military service.

- **March 24, 1958:** Elvis enters the Army and spends three days at the Fort Chaffee,

Ark., reception station.

- **Between March 28 and Sept. 17, 1958:** Elvis belongs to Company A, 2d Medium Tank Battalion, 37th Armor, stationed at Fort Hood, Texas (basic and advanced military

training). During this time period, Elvis executed an emergency leave to see his mother, Gladys, before she died in August 1958.

- **Oct. 1, 1958 to March 2, 1960:** Elvis serves overseas as

a member of the 1st Medium Tank Battalion, 32d Armor in Friedberg, Germany. For the first five days of that period he belonged to Company D of the battalion, and thereafter to the battalion’s

Headquarters Company at Friedberg.

- **March 5, 1960:** Elvis leaves active duty at Fort Dix, N.J.

- **March 23, 1964:** Elvis receives his discharge from the Army Reserve.

# Stay and Play At The Guest House

**W**ant to live like “The King?” Graceland’s world-class, 450-room resort should be on the bucket list of any diehard Elvis fan. The Guest House at Graceland welcomes visitors from across the world looking for an authentic Elvis lodging experience.

Priscilla Presley joined Graceland executives to cut the “blue suede ribbon” in October 2016 to officially open the \$92 million luxury property. Since the opening, guests have flocked into Memphis to enjoy special amenities, events and packages that include VIP tours of Graceland and relaxing spa services.

## INSPIRED BY ELVIS

Influenced by the personal style of Elvis and the iconic Graceland mansion, The Guest House at Graceland is the most significant enhancement to the property since it opened to the public in 1982.

It was also the largest hotel project in Memphis in nearly a century. Featuring 430 guest rooms and 20 specialty suites with design and décor supervised by Priscilla Presley, the property is located just steps from the Graceland mansion.

## LUXURY DEFINED

So what’s inside The Guest House at Graceland? Multiple guest rooms, five dining options, a 464-seat theater, outdoor pool and conference, event and catering facilities, to start.

Here is a look at some of the suites available at the property:

- **The King’s Suites:** Unique, luxurious two-bedroom suites featuring a living room, dining room, kitchen and bar



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area. Styled with rich, luxurious colors and extravagant furnishings, The Guest House at Graceland states that these specialty suites draw inspiration from Elvis’ master bedroom at Graceland and feature rich red and black tones with metallic gold and silver finishes and a custom-draped canopy bed.

- **TCB:** Named after the King’s personal motto, “Taking Care of Business,” the

TCB suites feature a dining area and living room. These Southern-style, one-bedroom suites are among the most popular with guests.

- **Living Room Suites:** Inspired by Elvis’ TV room at Graceland, these open-plan suites include metallic accents and custom headboards. These suites are only available on higher floors, allowing for an amazing view of the Graceland property.



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# Elvis On the Big Screen

Elvis Presley was lauded for his diverse skill set and handsome looks. This combination quickly netted him acting opportunities in films and popular TV shows, allowing “The King” to display his chops in front of international audiences.

His 33 films generated millions of dollars in box office revenue and helped enhance Elvis’ level of stardom that has arguably been unmatched by any entertainer since.

Legacy.com, a provider of online obituaries, recently compiled the top 10 grossing films in Elvis career, along with box office numbers both at the time and adjusted for inflation. Read the list below and spend some time in your local video rental store to track down these gems.

• **10. King Creole – 1958:** **\$2.64 million in 1958 or \$34.9 million adjusted for inflation.** Directed by Michael Curtiz of Casablanca, King Creole included supporting actors Walter Matthau and Vic Morrow. Regarded by Elvis as one of the best films of his career, the soundtrack produced the No. 1 hit, “Hard-Headed Woman.”

• **9. Flaming Star – 1960,** **\$4.13 million in 1960, \$47.6 million adjusted for inflation.** One of Elvis’ most intense performances, Flaming Star was released a month after the wildly successful G.I. Blues. Considered one of Elvis’ first and only dramatic roles.

• **8. Girl Happy – 1965:** **\$6.98 million in 1965, \$53.9 million adjusted for inflation.** Elvis’ 18th movie, featuring the song, “Puppet on a String,” which reached No. 14



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on the Billboard Hot 100 and was certified gold. Girl Happy starred Shelley Fabares as Elvis’ love interest, who appeared opposite the King in three movies.

• **7. Follow That Dream – 1962:** **\$5.94 million in 1962, \$62.6 million adjusted for inflation.** Filmed largely on location in Florida rather than California, this film was famous for fostering a chance meeting between Elvis and a

future star of Southern rock, Tom Petty (11 years old at the time). Petty was inspired by Elvis, bought a collection of his records and set out on his own path for music stardom.

• **6. Viva Las Vegas – 1964:** **\$11.33 million in 1964, \$96 million adjusted for inflation.** Viva Las Vegas is arguably the most beloved and best-known Elvis’ movies of all time. Starred leading lady Ann-Margret, rumored to be a

tabloid-worthy point of conflict between Elvis and then-girlfriend Priscilla Beaulieu.

• **5. G.I. Blues – 1960:** **\$9.46 million in 1960, \$108.6 million adjusted for inflation.** Released on the heels of Elvis’ return from military service in Germany, the film led to fans rioting during a screening in Mexico City. All Elvis films were then banned by the Mexican government.

• **4. Blue Hawaii – 1961:** **\$10.34 million in 1961-62, \$111 million adjusted for inflation.** The first of three Elvis features to be filmed in Hawaii, this soundtrack included the classic songs, “Blue Hawaii” and the timeless “Can’t Help Falling in Love.”

• **3. Loving You – 1957:** **\$8.14 million in 1957, \$115 million adjusted for inflation.** Elvis’ first starring role – one that reportedly inspired Elvis to dye his hair black to improve his appearance on Technicolor. Loving You also featured his parents, Gladys and Vernon, as extras.

• **2. Jailhouse Rock – 1957:** **\$8.58 million in 1957, \$121.3 million adjusted for inflation.** Jailhouse Rock featured some of Elvis’ most provocative, legendary dance moves choreographed by Alex Romero. In 2004, Jailhouse Rock was selected for inclusion in the Library of Congress’ National Film Registry.

• **1. Love Me Tender – 1956:** **\$9.24 million in 1956, \$133.2 million adjusted for inflation.** Elvis’ first film was considered a gritty, violent Western and was the 23rd highest-grossing film of 1956 despite opening just five weeks before the end of the year. The title song sold more than one million copies – the first time in the history of the recording industry.

# All About Graceland

**M**uch like Elvis Presley's stardom, the history of Graceland in Memphis has transformed over the years. Once part of a 500-acre farm owned by the S.E. Toof family, Graceland is now considered one of the most important and beloved landmarks in the history of entertainment.

In the spring of 1957, when Elvis Presley was 22, he purchased the home and grounds for just over \$100,000. Elvis' purchase came on the heels of major music and film success.

The year prior marked Elvis' first year of super-stardom that included historic network television appearances, record-breaking live performances and numerous gold record awards.

## FIT FOR THE KING

At the time he bought Graceland, Elvis was working on his second motion picture, "Loving You," with "Jailhouse Rock" to follow – only the beginning of a long, successful film career for the international star.

Elvis quickly turned Graceland into a home, routinely inviting house guests that included family members, friends and celebrities throughout the year. Although Elvis had various homes in the Los Angeles area and spent a large portion of his career on the road, Graceland remained a sanctuary of peace and quiet for the busy superstar.

In 2015, Graceland was named the world's "Best Musical Attraction" and "Best Historic Southern Attraction" in the USA Today 10 Best Reader's Choice Awards. In 2013, it was voted the No. 1 "Iconic American Attraction"



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in the same poll.

## "ELVIS PRESLEY'S MEMPHIS"

Ownership recently added a 200,000-square-foot, state-of-the-art entertainment and exhibit complex to the Graceland grounds.

The addition features the Elvis The Entertainer Career Museum that spotlights hundreds of artifacts and photos, as well as Elvis' most famous jumpsuits, movie memorabilia and a collection of his gold and platinum records.

Also on site are the Presley

Motors Automobile Museum featuring his iconic Pink Cadillac, Stutz Blackhawk, 1956 Cadillac Eldorado, Dino Ferrari, Mercedes Benz limousine, Rolls Royce sedans and more.

Hundreds of thousands of Elvis fans flock to Graceland

every year to celebrate the life and times of Elvis. Plenty of shopping and dining experiences are available on the grounds. House and complex tours are available, and the Graceland Archives are full of Graceland history and information about the life of Elvis.