

# About The Coachmen

Rich in family harmony, original instrumentation, and innovative songwriting, the Coachmen, a family-based quartet from the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia, have built up a sizeable following with their down-home melodies. Armed with a roster of talent with roots in southern gospel, country, and pop, the group refers to its sound as a country/Americana influenced style of gospel and positive, middle-of-the-road music. The sound of the Coachmen is one that was developed through decades of family music, and their story is indeed one for the record.



The Coachmen name has been associated with quality music and entertainment for many years. The group originally formed in the 1968 as a Country/Western show band, and toured as an opening act for many popular Nashville acts of the era, including Jack Green, Freddie Hart, Connie Smith, Mac Wiseman and Jerry Lee Lewis. They gained regional popularity through the Wheeling Jamboree in West Virginia, then a “minor league” show for the Grand Ole Opry. Frustrated with their inability to break through the Nashville door, the seventies marked the end of the show band.

While numerous off-springs from the original group continued to operate over the next two decades, in 1994, the original group reunited for the 25th and last Happy Birthday USA Celebration hosted by the Statler Brothers in Staunton, VA. The original cast was joined by a second generation of Coachmen. Four members from the reunion decided to keep the Coachmen name alive and comprise the quartet as it is known today; namely the original harmony trio of Pete Campbell, Bob Campbell, and John Lane, along with Pete’s son Chris Campbell. It is the current foursome that has brought the “Coachmen” brand name to an expanded market and a new generation of listeners. While their vocal style is unquestionably original, what is truly unique about the Coachmen, especially in the southern gospel market, is that they serve as their own band. The tight piano and guitar background of Chris Campbell and John Lane provide the perfect compliment to the sound that has become their trademark. The group is also often known for their sometimes “off-the-wall” humor, and their personal stories that leave audiences with more information than they needed!

In 2004, The Coachmen released their first CD as a four-man enterprise, *This Old House*. Led by original songs “I Pledge My Allegiance to the Cross”, “Home Sweet Home Virginia”, “When He Died We Were Born”, and “Take Time For Jesus On Your Way”, *This Old House* introduced them as a relevant family quartet, and gained them access to independent gospel radio.

In 2005, the group released *Going Home*. Led by original songs, “When the Eagle Flies”, “I’ll be Thankful Lord”, and their most popular single to-date “Three Roses”, *Going Home* helped to spread awareness of the group, and provided them with a grass roots touring schedule that positioned them as a legitimate gospel entertainment act in their region and category.

2007 brought about their third release, *Arise*. While all of their recordings are reminiscent of their gospel heritage and small town roots, *Arise* is their most original and diverse to date. From classic country gospel, American folk and 50's "doo-wop", to contemporary Christian and more recent family-oriented material, *Arise* is indeed one for the record. As always, the group includes samples of their original material, and this collection is specifically highlighted by its title track penned by Chris Campbell, in addition to Bob Campbell's "Sandlot Hero", depicting the life of an American child who dies fighting for his country.

December is always a big month for The Coachmen as they perform a series of shows comprised solely of their sacred and secular Christmas favorites, culminating with their annual Christmas show in their hometown of Staunton, VA. To make their dedication to Christmas music official, in 2007, the group released their fourth CD, "Christmas with the Coachmen"; a collection of material that is reminiscent of their live Christmas shows.

In 2008, The Coachmen released their first live concert DVD. The concert was recorded at one of their favorite VA churches, namely Clifford Baptist Church in Amherst, VA. The recorded show provided the footage for a promotional video and a full concert DVD. The concert DVD predominantly includes their original material, following their Americana gospel format along with a brief Christmas segment.

Bob Campbell and Chris Campbell are the songwriters for The Coachmen; 9 songs from the group's first 3 CD's were penned by them. Bob's style of songwriting lends itself to a more traditional country sound, while Chris' style lends itself to a more contemporary sound. That type of diversity is representative of all of their music. If you listen to a Coachmen CD or come to a Coachmen concert, you will hear a variety of material; anything from traditional southern gospel, country gospel, or contemporary Christian, to material from Pat Boone, John Denver, or the Kingston Trio. You just never know. The group says their approach to song selection is analogous to making a Brunswick stew; just through anything you have on hand into the soup pot, and see what turns out. The approach to providing a variety of music has served them well by not limiting them to traditional gospel venues. While their mission is always the same; to share the gospel and provide audiences with uplifting, family-oriented music and entertainment; they are often able to take their program to places that cross over the typical gospel quartet territory; from the local churches, county fairs, and summer festivals, to political events, cruise ships, and conventions.

Currently, the group is focused on growth. While they have been very blessed as a Virginia-based regional group, they feel there is still so much more to accomplish. They have an explicit purpose in what they do, and have a unique approach to delivering the gospel through positive, uplifting, family-oriented music and entertainment. They want to take that as far as they can in the time they have. Throughout the story of the Coachmen, three themes have always been present: a belief in original music, a dedication to the family band, and a focus on quality entertainment for all ages. The current quartet represents yet another chapter of the story. Whether you're a gospel fan or just a fan of good, down-home music, you are bound to be moved by this group. Be part of the Coachmen experience!

## **BOOKINGS, PRODUCT/GENERAL INFORMATION**

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