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Steve Wariner

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Wariner said getting discovered like that is seldom nowadays because stars rarely venture into small clubs.

"What happened with me was more of an old-school thing," said Wariner. "Stuff like that you never hear about anymore. Artists today are so much more removed. You can go on tour with somebody and never see them. You go straight from the stage to the bus or the plane and you're gone. It's not like it used to be."

After playing bass for Dottie West at age 17, Wariner joined the band of legendary guitarist Chet Atkins at age 24. It was

Atkins who was key in getting Wariner signed with RCA Records in 1977 and it didn't take long for him to produce his first No. 1 hit, "All Roads Lead to You."

Wariner would crank out hits for more than two decades, but says the 1990s is when his career had the most twang.

"The '90s was my best period on a personal level," said Wariner. "In addition to what I was doing for myself, I was writing songs for Keith Urban, Garth Brooks and Clint Black. In 1998, I had song of the year so I was hitting on some good cylinders in the '90s."

The 1990s is also when Wariner joined the Grand Ole Opry. That honor came in 1996, fulfilling a lifelong dream.

Wariner said not all music executives hear songs with the same ear. He said one of his record labels didn't even want to release "Holes in the Floor of Heaven," saying it wasn't catchy enough. "They didn't feel like it was something radio would play," said Wariner.

Upon signing with Capital Records, Wariner said that company was quick to release the song and enjoy the profits of its commercial success. "Everybody doesn't hear it the same way," said Wariner.

Wariner said writing inspiration can strike as fast as a guitar solo. He remembers writing one of his No. 1 hits while on tour with Reba McEntire.

"I had just got done playing in front of Reba and I went straight to the bus," said Wariner. "I started playing a riff and when I was done I had written 'Where Did I Go Wrong?' I wrote it by myself in about 10 minutes and it ended up being a No. 1 song."

Wariner continues to record music today, often from the studio in his home outside of Nashville.

The Warren County High School choir will open for Wariner during his Park Theater performance.



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