

# **Connie Curtis Crayton (Pee Wee Crayton)**

By: Alondra Moreno Lepe

# Carrer

In 1948, Crayton signed a recording contract with Modern records. One of his first recordings was the instrumental "Blues After Hours", which reached number 1 on the *Billboard* R&B chart late that year. Its B-side, the pop ballad "I'm Still in Love with You", and the quicker "Texas Hop" are good examples of his work.



In 1950, Crayton and his Orchestra performed at the sixth Cavalcade of Jazz concert, held at Wrigley Field in Los Angeles and produced by Leon Hefflin, Sr. on June 25. Featured on the same day were Lionel Hampton, Roy Milton's Orchestra, Dinah Washington, Tiny Davis and Her Hell Divers, and other artists. 16,000 were reported to be in attendance. The concert ended early because of a fracas while Lionel Hampton played "Flying High".



Crayton went on to many other record labels in the 1950s, including Imperial in New Orleans, Vee-Jay in Chicago and Jamie in Philadelphia. It is thought he was the first blues guitarist to use a Fender Stratocaster, playing one given to him by Leo Fender.



His opening guitar riff on the 1954 single "Do Unto Others" was "quoted" by John Lennon in the beginning of the B-side single version of "Revolution" released by The Beatles on Apple Records in 1968. Crayton's album *Things I Used to Do* was released by Vanguard Records in 1971. He continued to tour and record in the following years. A longtime resident of Los Angeles, California, Crayton died there of a heart attack in 1985. He was interred in the Inglewood Park Cemetery.



# Legacy

On May 8, 2019, Crayton was posthumously inducted into the Blues Hall of Fame by long-time friend Doug MacLeod in a ceremony held in Memphis, Tennessee by the Blues Foundation.



# Timeline

