

= Brothers and Sisters ( album ) =

Brothers and Sisters is the fourth studio album by American rock band the Allman Brothers Band . Produced by Johnny Sandlin and the band themselves , the album was released in August 1973 in the United States by Capricorn Records . Following the death of group leader Duane Allman in 1971 , the Allman Brothers Band released Eat a Peach ( 1972 ) , a hybrid studio / live album that became their biggest yet . Afterwards , the group purchased a farm in Juliette , Georgia to become a " group hangout . " However , bassist Berry Oakley was visibly suffering from the death of Duane : he excessively drank and consumed drugs . After nearly a year of severe depression , Oakley was killed in a motorcycle accident not dissimilar from his friend 's in November 1972 .

The band carried on , adding new members Chuck Leavell on piano and Lamar Williams on bass . Brothers and Sisters was largely recorded over a period of three months at Capricorn Sound Studios in Macon , Georgia . Lead guitarist Dickey Betts assumed the role of band leader , and many of his compositions reflected a more country @-@ inspired sound . Session musicians Les Dudek and Tommy Talton sat in to play guitar on several songs . The album was being produced at the same time as vocalist / organist Gregg Allman 's solo debut , Laid Back , and features many of the same musicians and engineers . The front album cover features a photograph of Vaylor Trucks , the son of drummer Butch Trucks and his wife Linda . The back cover features a photograph of Oakley 's daughter Brittany and his wife Linda .

The album represented the Allmans ' commercial peak : it has sold over seven million copies worldwide , landing it at the time atop of the Top 200 Pop Albums for five weeks . " Ramblin ' Man " became the band 's first and only hit single , peaking at number two on the Billboard Hot 100 in 1973 . The album was followed by a tour of arenas and stadiums , but marred by drug problems , strained friendships and miscommunication between the group members .

= = Background = =

Shortly following their leader Duane Allman 's death in 1971 , the Allman Brothers Band released Eat a Peach , a hybrid studio / live album that became their biggest release yet ; it peaked at number four on the Billboard charts . The band performed nearly 90 shows in the following year , touring as a five @-@ piece . The band also purchased 432 acres of land in Juliette , Georgia for \$ 160 @,@ 000 and nicknamed it " the Farm " ; it soon became a " group hangout " and fulfilled bassist Berry Oakley 's communal dreams . Oakley , however , was visibly suffering from the death of Duane : he excessively drank and consumed drugs , and was losing weight quickly . According to friends and family , he appeared to have lost " all hope , his heart , his drive , his ambition , [ and ] his direction " following Duane 's death . " Everything Berry had envisioned for everybody ? including the crew , the women and children ? was shattered on the day Duane died , and he didn 't care after that , " said roadie Kim Payne .

During recording sessions for their upcoming album , vocalist Gregg Allman was also working on his solo album , Laid Back , and the sessions occasionally overlapped . Chuck Leavell was asked to play piano for Allman 's solo album , and gradually found himself contributing to the Allman Brothers as well . Allman and Betts took turns caring for Oakley , taking him outdoors to places like the zoo to keep him from drinking as much . " Time and time again , I have sat and wondered , ' God , what in the hell could I have done , what could have anybody have done , to help him ? ' " said Allman . Upon Leavell 's entry into the group , Oakley went out of his way to make the new member comfortable . On November 11 , 1972 , overjoyed at the prospect of leading a jam session later that night , Oakley crashed his motorcycle into the side of a bus , just three blocks from where Duane had been killed in a bike accident . He declined hospital treatment and went home , but gradually grew delirious . He was taken to the hospital shortly thereafter and died of cerebral swelling caused by a fractured skull . Oakley was buried directly beside Duane at Rose Hill Cemetery in Macon , Georgia .

The band unanimously decided to carry on and arrange auditions for new bassists , with a renewed fervor and determination . Several bassists auditioned , but the band picked Lamar Williams , an old

friend of drummer Jai Johanny Johanson 's from Gulfport , Mississippi . The band immediately recognized that Williams represented the best of both Oakley 's style and his own style , and they were pleased with his easygoing demeanor . The addition of Leavell and Williams to the band brought about renewed passion and uplifted spirits within the group .

= = Recording and production = =

The band began recording Brothers and Sisters in the autumn of 1972 at Capricorn Studios in Macon , Georgia , prior to Oakley 's death . The band had previously started rehearsals for the album in the summer . Allman brought a song he had worked on for a year , titled " Queen of Hearts " , but he was drunk and none of the members of the band would listen to him . This was the catalyst that led to Allman beginning work on Laid Back , his debut solo album . After Williams helped record the album 's third track , " Come and Go Blues " , the rest of the recording process was smooth .

Betts became the group 's de facto leader during the recording process . " It 's not like Dickey came in and said , ' I 'm taking over . I 'm the boss . Do this and that . ' It wasn 't overt ; it was still supposedly a democracy but Dickey started doing more and more of the songwriting , " said road manager Willie Perkins . The band first recorded " Wasted Words " and " Ramblin ' Man , " the latter showcasing a more country @-@ infused sound . The entire group were initially reluctant to record " Ramblin ' Man " ? " We knew it was a good song but it didn 't sound like us , " said drummer Butch Trucks ? but the band gradually headed in a more country direction , as that was Betts ' background . Betts was very serious about his songwriting , sitting down each afternoon to write .

The band were adamant about not replacing Duane 's position in the band . Les Dudek , the guitarist who would eventually record " Jessica " and " Ramblin ' Man , " had entered the sessions when he was asked to jam with Betts through mutual friends . The band enjoyed how Dudek played and Phil Walden , the band 's manager , seemed set on Dudek being in the band . Word of mouth , propagated by Dudek himself , was that he " got the gig " and had become the Allman Brothers ' new co @-@ lead guitarist . " We went looking for this dude to kick his ass . Nobody was going to replace Duane and the very thought of it was infuriating to us , " said Trucks . After recording completed , Dudek went on the road with Boz Scaggs and the Steve Miller Band . He wanted to end his contract with Phil Walden at Capricorn , and part of his release granted him no part of the publishing deal for Brothers and Sisters , including a songwriting credit for " Jessica " , as he had no written contract .

= = Composition = =

" Ramblin ' Man " pre @-@ dates the album considerably , and was first created during songwriting sessions for Eat a Peach . An embryonic version , referring to a " ramblin ' country man , " can be heard on the bootleg The Gatlinburg Tapes , featuring the band jamming on an off @-@ day in April 1971 in Gatlinburg , Tennessee .

" Jessica " was co @-@ written by Betts and Dudek , although only Betts receives credit . Betts first created the song as an experiment , to test whether or not he could write a song that could be played with just two fingers , in honor of Gypsy jazz guitar virtuoso Django Reinhardt , who played with two left fingers due to severe burns . When his baby daughter Jessica entered the room and began bouncing around to the melody , Betts attempted to capture her mood with the song . Dudek created the song 's bridge when Betts became frustrated with the piece . Dudek was disappointed when he was told he would only be recording the acoustic guitar opening , as Betts felt Dudek performing the harmonies to both " Ramblin ' Man " and " Jessica " would lead critics to assume he was a member of the band . Leavell also contributed heavily to " Jessica " , mostly on the arrangement .

" Jelly Jelly " was the final song recorded for Brothers and Sisters , credited to Gregg Allman . The song actually contained lyrics from Bobby Bland 's song of the same name , albeit with a very different melody and arrangement . Brothers and Sisters concludes with another country @-@ inspired track , " Pony Boy , " which showcases Betts ' acoustic slide playing . The song was heavily

inspired by Robert Johnson in its building rhythm , and Blind Willie McTell influenced its humor . The song was based on a true story involving his uncle , who would take his horse out to avoid driving under the influence ( DUI ) charges , as the horse knew the direction home . Williams played upright bass on the track to keep it an all @-@ acoustic affair , and Trucks played percussion by banging a piece of plywood on the floor .

= = Artwork = =

The album 's artwork was taken at " the Farm " in Juliette , Georgia . The cover art features Trucks ' son Vaylor , while the back cover featured Oakley 's daughter Brittany . The gatefold spread reveals a photo of the band and their extended families . " " I have an almost dreamlike memory of the way things were ? parties , people giving the horses beer , various people in and out , " said Brittany Oakley in 1996 . She noted that despite the good memories , " it was painful " following her father 's death , which is when the photo was taken . Vaylor Trucks later went on to study at Florida State University , where he formed a band . To promote a concert , they printed covers of the Brothers and Sisters album cover with the caption " Have you seen me lately ? " , which led to a sold @-@ out crowd .

A description from " Red Dog ? Campbell ~ ABB ? Roadie -- " Somebody asked me to name the people on the inside of Brothers and Sisters . I will give it a go . Everybody knows I cannot spell good so you will have to do the best you can in picking up on the names , plus there are a couple that I cannot remember . I should but thirty years is a long time . Standing left to right ( back row ) : First is a friend of Jaimoe ? s , you will have to get him to tell you the name . I know he is a friend of Ella May Avery who is standing next to him ( Ella is the wife of Jackie Avery , a song writer and very good friend of Jaimoe ? s ) . Next to her is Brother Lamar Williams , then Mike Arts ( Butch ? s brother @-@ in @-@ law at that time ) , Joan Calahan with Rachel , Mike Calahan , Mike ? s dog , Jaimoe and Charles Binyoun ( not sure of the spelling ) . Next row : Brother Butch with Valor , Scott Boyer , Linda Trucks with Melody , I can 't remember the next lady ? s name , but Butch can tell you . Brother Chuck Leavel , My god child Brittany Oakley , standing between Chuck and Linda Oakley , Linda is sitting next to Chuck , between her and brother Twiggs is Judy Petty , she was going with brother Twiggs at that time . Candy Oakley , Brother Kim Payne , in front of Kim is Kay Phillips holding Tuffys daughter , sitting next to Brother Tuffy Phillips , behind Tuffy and next to Kim is Buffalo Evans lady at that time ( I should remember her name but it just will not come to me ) . Next to her is The Buffalo , sitting next to Tuffy is Brother Gregg , then my wife Bunkie , Brother Willy Perkins is next to Buffalo , I am next with Sandra Perkins between me and Brother Dickie , then Brother Joe Dan Petty . In front of Gregg is Janis Allman with her daughter . Sitting dead center is Deering Howe . Deering is a good friend of Gregg ? s . Dickies dog is in front of Dareing . Hope this helps . "

? Red Dog ? Campbell ~ ABB ? Roadie ?

= = Release = =

= = = Commercial performance = = =

Brothers and Sisters was an enormous success with near @-@ immediacy ; the record went gold in retail sales within 48 hours after shipping began . Capricorn estimated that these early sales were due to hardcore fans of the group . The album sold 760 @,@ 000 copies in its first three weeks , making it one of the fastest @-@ starting albums in Warner / Elektra / Atlantic Records ' history . Billboard called it the " success story of the summer , " noting that there was no " sustained merchandising promotion effort needed " on the LP . Record stores credited the album with bringing business back to their stores in a lagging season . Brothers and Sisters was the band 's best @-@ performing album on the charts : it logged five weeks as the number one album in the country on the Billboard Top LP 's & Tape chart .

Capricorn executives were split between issuing " Wasted Words " or " Ramblin ' Man " as the lead single . National promotion director Dick Wooley sent advance tapes of " Ramblin ' Man " to Atlanta and Boston radio stations and " listener phone @-@ in reaction was near @-@ phenomenal . " " Ramblin ' Man " became a rare rock hit on AM stations nationwide , and it rose to number two on the Billboard Hot 100 . Although " Jessica " rose no higher than number 65 on the Hot 100 , it later became a staple of classic rock radio . It was later employed as the theme song to the television program Top Gear in the UK .

Brothers and Sisters has since sold over seven million copies worldwide .

= = = Critical reception = = =

Reviews of Brothers and Sisters in 1973 were mostly positive . Bud Scoppa of Rolling Stone deemed the album " no masterpiece , but the new band has shown that it can carry on the work of the old , and add the appropriate new twists when necessary . They 've finally discovered a form that feels as natural in the studio as it does in front of their people . It 's heartening to see a group of this commercial and critical stature still working so hard at getting even better . " Janis Schacht of Circus was very positive , writing , " Never , even in the face of adversity , do the Allman Brothers quit making strong , hard @-@ driving rock / blues albums . ... This is another in the continuing line of quality products from The Allman Brothers Band . " Billboard called it " A fine blues / rock set from this fine band , featuring top lead vocals from Gregg Allman and Dickey Betts , and the excellent instrumental fusion for which they are particularly well known . "

Subsequent reviews have remained positive . Bruce Eder of Allmusic called Brothers and Sisters " not quite a classic album , especially in the wake of the four that had appeared previously , but it served as a template for some killer stage performances , and it proved that the band could survive the deaths of two key members . " Andrew Mueller of Uncut deemed it their " indisputable commercial peak and arguable creative apogee . " Robert Christgau , in Christgau 's Record Guide , wrote that " Gregg Allman is a predictable singer who never has an unpredictable lyric to work with anyway , and the jams do roll on , but at their best ? " Ramblin ' Man , " a miraculous revitalization of rock 's earliest conceit ? they just may be the best , and on this album Dickey Betts 's melodious spirituality provides unity and renewal . "

A 2013 four @-@ disc reissue of the album received very positive reviews as well . David Fricke of Rolling Stone gave it four stars , writing , " The road to that symmetry is caught in this four @-@ CD set by a disc of rehearsals and outtakes that sounds like the work of a more brawny , Southern Grateful Dead . " Walter Tunis of the Lexington Herald @-@ Leader wrote that " The larger set is costlier , about \$ 65 , but the edition 's two live discs chronicle the Chuck Leavell / Lamar Williams @-@ era Allmans as exquisitely as Fillmore East did the groundbreaking Duane Allman / Berry Oakley lineup . "

= = Touring = =

After completing Brothers and Sisters , the Allman Brothers Band returned to touring , playing larger venues , receiving more profit and dealing with less friendship , miscommunication and spiraling drug problems . This culminated in a backstage brawl when the band played with the Grateful Dead at Washington 's RFK Stadium in June 1973 . The roadies of the Dead dosed the food and drinks of as many people as possible with LSD , holding no compunction about the practice as they felt " evangelical " about the substance . The stage was very crowded with the Dead 's entourage , and roadie Kim Payne instructed driver Tuffy Phillips to let no one onstage . When Capricorn promotional chief Dick Wooley attempted to get onstage , Phillips punched Wooley in the nose . Wooley competed in martial arts and began punching back . When all three roadies engaged in the fight , the Dead 's security ( the Hell 's Angels ) assumed Wooley a " bad guy " and they joined . Soon , the Grateful Dead 's roadies realized the situation at hand and they pulled Wooley from the pile .

Walden demanded that whoever was responsible be terminated ; as a result , Kim Payne , Mike Callahan , and Tuffy Phillips all were fired . " That was a culmination of everything falling apart . ...

They were a symptom of the problem ? not the problem itself , " said Perkins . The band again joined the Grateful Dead and the Band in July at Watkins Glen Speedway in New York 's Finger Lakes region , for what was then deemed the largest rock concert ever . 150 @,@ 000 tickets were sold , but the crowd expanded to nearly 600 @,@ 000 , causing it to be declared a disaster area . People abandoned their cars and walked up to ten miles to attend the concert . The jam between the three bands was later called " garbage " by Trucks , as all involved were under the influence of various substances , including alcohol , cocaine , and LSD . To promote the release of the album , Don Kirshner 's Rock Concert program staged an episode set in Macon , taping performances from the Allman Brothers Band and the Marshall Tucker Band . Betts walked offstage midway through the performance , with Walden chasing him down the street and urging him to return . " Walking off the stage was a first for me . It was like , ' Dude , what are you doing ? We 're all brothers here . If there 's a problem , let 's talk about it , ' " said Leavell .

The band concentrated on playing arenas and stadiums as their drug use escalated . In 1974 , the band were regularly making \$ 100 @,@ 000 per show , and were renting the Starship , a customized Boeing 720B used by Led Zeppelin and the Rolling Stones .

= = Track listing = =

#### Side one

" Wasted Words " ( Gregg Allman ) - 4 : 20

Gregg Allman - lead vocals , rhythm guitar

Dickie Betts - slide guitar

Chuck Leavell - piano

Berry Oakley - bass

Butch Trucks - drums

Jaimoe - drums

" Ramblin ' Man " ( Dickey Betts ) - 4 : 48

Dickie Betts - lead guitar , lead vocals

Les Dudek - lead guitar

Gregg Allman - organ , backing vocals

Chuck Leavell - piano , backing vocals

Berry Oakley - bass

Butch Trucks - drums , percussion

Jaimoe - drums , congas

" Come and Go Blues " ( Allman ) - 4 : 54

Dickie Betts - lead guitar

Gregg Allman - organ , lead vocals

Chuck Leavell - electric and acoustic pianos

Lamar Williams - bass

Butch Trucks - drums , congas , percussion

Jaimoe - drums

" Jelly Jelly " ( Billy Eckstine , Earl Hines ) - 5 : 46

Dickie Betts - lead guitar

Gregg Allman - organ , lead vocals

Chuck Leavell - piano

Lamar Williams - bass

Butch Trucks - drums , congas , percussion

Jaimoe - drums

#### Side two

" Southbound " ( Betts ) - 5 : 11

Dickie Betts - lead guitar

Gregg Allman - organ , lead vocals

Chuck Leavell - piano

Lamar Williams - bass  
Butch Trucks - drums , percussion  
Jaimoe - drums  
" Jessica " ( Betts ) - 7 : 31  
Dickie Betts - lead guitar  
Les Dudek - acoustic guitar  
Gregg Allman - organ  
Chuck Leavell - electric and acoustic pianos  
Lamar Williams - bass  
Butch Trucks - drums , timpani , percussion  
Jaimoe - drums , congas  
" Pony Boy " ( Betts ) - 5 : 51  
Dickie Betts - Dobro , lead vocals  
Tommy Talton - acoustic guitar  
Chuck Leavell - piano  
Lamar Williams - acoustic bass  
Butch Trucks - drums

= = Personnel = =

All credits adapted from liner notes .

= = Charts = =