

COUNTRY MUSIC

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MARTY ROBBINS

Made A Deal With God

MARY LOU TURNER

Did She Ruin Bill Anderson?

JOHNNY PAYCHECK

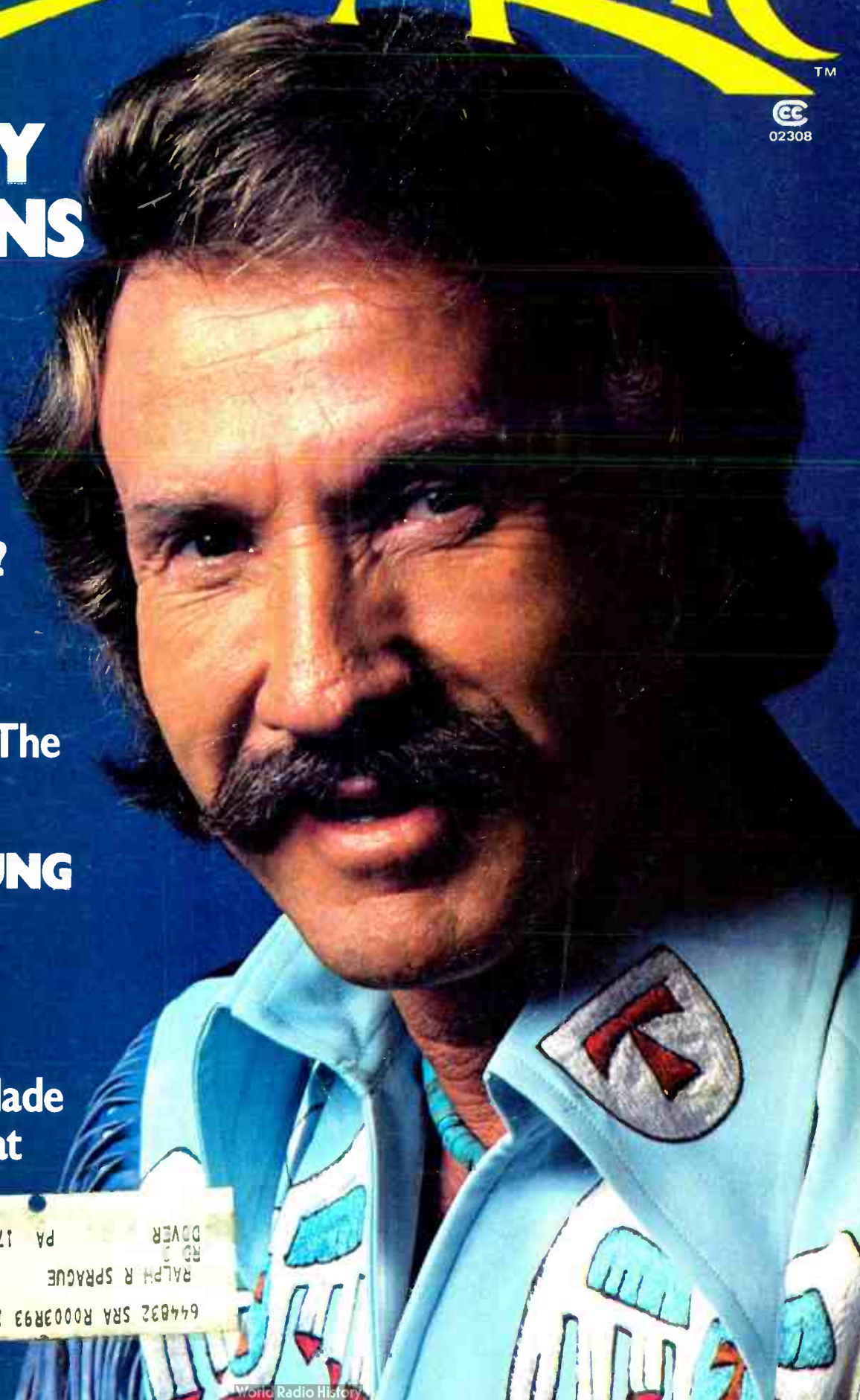
Hellraiser On The Way Up

STEVE YOUNG

Did He Live Once Before?

PICKERS

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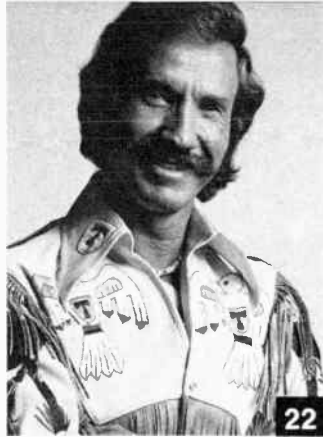
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COUNTRY MUSIC

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COVER PHOTO AND CENTERFOLD:
LEONARD KAMSLER

Letters

What can you tell me about the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band? Many many years ago my husband taught Bill McEuen to pick the guitar. We would like to have a mailing address so we can write them.

MR. & MRS. RAY WHITE
SANMATEO, CALIF.

*You can write to the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band
c/o Stone County, Inc., 2104 Glenarm Pl.,
Denver, Colo. 80205. Ed.*

I would like to join Donna Fargo's fan club, and I haven't been able to find out where to join.

LELIA JEFFERSON
FREDERICKSBURG, VA. 22401

*You can write to Linda Culp, President,
Donna Fargo Fan Club, P.O. Box 15881,
Nashville, Tenn. 37215. Ed.*

Why is it adults squabble over what and who is or is not country music? So much energy has been wasted over this trivial topic. Did the 1950's rockers carry on over the Beatles as their music changed those current pop styles? Are today's rock groups "screaming" as the Disco groups change a 10-year-running rock scene? Perhaps we should follow their example.

Jimmie Rodgers and Hank Williams could be considered the first generation of Country Music. Performers such as Tammy Wynette, Loretta Lynn, Conway Twitty, Faron Young, Hank Thompson, Roy Clark, etc. could be considered second generation. Today a third generation is born with the advent of Willie and Waylon's style. Our new 3rd generation performers are super: Don Williams, Asleep at the Wheel, Dave and Sugar, Larry Gatlin, Dotts, Johnny Rodriguez, Ronnie Milsap, Rusty Weir, Tom T. Hall and many others. The "Austin Sound" is a pace-setter today. Why should we carry on this Country Music civil war? If the South Is Gonna Rise Again, we'll need everyone we've got.

You know Waylon, I'm sure Hank Didn't Do It This-A-Way!

BARRY ROBB
TULSA OKLA.

Many special thanks to your fine magazine and to Peter Guralnik for his most sensitive article "Silver Fox at Bay" (June Country Music). It did my heart good to read such an interview with Char-

lie and Margaret Ann Rich amid all the rumors and pressures that surround them.

Yes it is difficult for most of us to feel sorry for superstars, but even superstars have their own private frustrations and limitations midst all the excitement of fame and success. But for all of us loyal Rich fans, you could take away all the fancy promotions and the like and just give Charlie a piano. I'm sure there would be quite a crowd around enjoying every last talented note.

MARLENE MCKAY
CENTERBURG, OHIO

I would very much appreciate someone from Country Music Magazine or an interested reader letting me know exactly what happened to Ersel Hickey after his 1957 hit record, "Bluebirds Over the Mountain" (Epic Records). I never heard much of Ersel after that record.

WILLIAM R. JENKINS III
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If any of you can help Mr. Jenkins let us hear from you.—Ed.

Regarding the letter by Karen Oakley of Rockford, Ill. (May Country Music), she stated "You Hank Williams fans don't own the copyright to the term 'Country-Western.'" For your information, Hank Williams Sr. never was known as a Country-Western singer. He was always referred to as a "Hillbilly" singer. In fact, the man responsible for the term "Country Music" is Ernest Tubb. Quoting Mr. Tubb, "Don't let's call it 'Hillbilly,' let's call it something else. Why not Country since we all come from the country?" After a while, that name stuck. . . .

JOHN D. McFADDEN
HICKORY RIDGE, ARK.

In October, 1973, we went to the Jamboree at the Wheeling Capitol Theatre. The stage band was Jerry Taylor, steel; Dwight Puckett, drums; Buddy Griffin, fiddle & banjo; Rick Erickson, bass; Roger Hoard, lead guitar. The best "Country Roads" band ever. We were told they were cutting an album. Would so like to know if they finished it and if it is available anywhere. Have watched country magazines and record stores to no avail. Would also like to know where the players are now and why they left the "Country Roads" band. Is there any

chance a reader could send information?

GLEN H. & FLORENCE W. BUTLER
RICHMONDVILLE, N.Y.

We think it is a shame that the officials in charge of organizing the annual Fan Fair in Nashville don't sell daily tickets to Fan Fair. There were a lot of people that could not afford the \$25.00 for the three days.

The time you travel 3 or 4 hundred miles and rent a lot for a trailer, and spend money running back and forth to different places, the bills run up. Why should the little fan have to pay the big price for one or two days of enjoyment?

CHARLES BROTHERS
ELIZABETHTOWN, KY. 42701

. . . I wish you would do a lot more on the western performers. Western performers tell of the pain and heartache they've endured. . . I love people who sing it and who listen to it.

Country Music is here to stay, and someday rock music is going to fail. So keep your magazine rollin'. You people tell it like it is.

CARL GIBSON
REYNOLDSBURG, OHIO

In your July issue of Country Music Magazine, a Mr. John Morthland, took it upon himself to pick the All-Time All Star Parade. I didn't think too much about it till I received your August issue. I thought he would have some more in that issue. He didn't. Mr. Morthland left out a lot of the great artists, among them the late Red Foley, Eddie Arnold, Faron Young, Hank Snow, Minnie Pearl, Tammy Wynette and Kitty Wells, just to name a few.

We feel it is very unfair to slight these great entertainers. . . .

MR. & MRS. K. McCOLLUM
ENGLEWOOD, COLO.

I would like to comment on the article you did on Stoney Edwards, the number two black country singer.

I had the opportunity to see and hear Stoney Edwards perform several times when he was appearing here in the Northwest and I find it difficult to understand why he is not rated with the so-called superstars of country music. He is pure dynamite on stage. Also, he's one of the friendliest guys anyone could ever meet and so are the members of his band.

AARON BEAVINS
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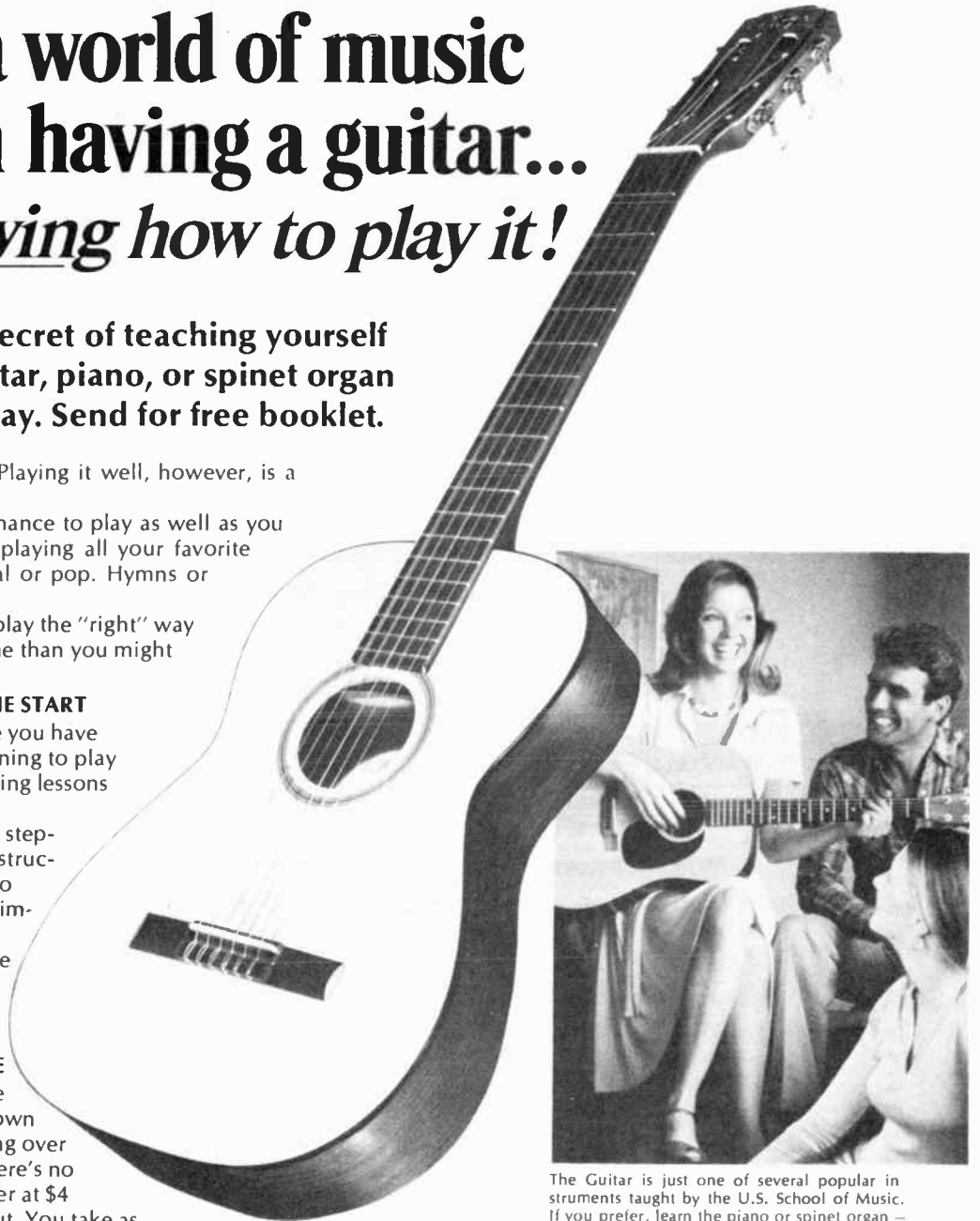
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People on the Scene

Report On Tammy's Wedding David Allen Coe Gets Married, Skeeter Davis Recording Again

by AUDREY WINTERS

When **Tammy Wynette** said "I do" and married real estate exec **Michael Tomlin** of Nashville, she wore a long white gown with a white hat covered in lace. Ex-bachelor Tomlin wore a lei around his neck with his dark business suit. The garden wedding site was on the grounds of Tammy's house on Franklin road. A recording of her singing *Hawaiian Wedding Song* was piped out of the house throughout the grounds. Three of her four daughters were her attendants and the fourth, five-year-old Georgette, was her flower girl. Tammy had told reporters earlier she wanted a small private wedding "and then we will throw the biggest party in town."

Bride and groom left for Washington, D.C., where Tammy sang for the first family, and later honeymooned there.

George Jones wasn't in town at the time of the wedding. He was attending the CBS Convention in Los Angeles, where close friends report he was very despondent. As of late he has been dating singer Diane Sherrill.

George and Tammy's five-year-old daughter, Georgette, who is as bright as a penny, asked an associate of George's "Does Daddy know Mama's married?" The associate said, "Yes I told him." Georgette said, "Oh good, I didn't want to hurt his feelings."

Loretta Lynn is gaining weight, finally. She now weighs 135 lbs. and she's feeling well physically.

Hank Locklin, who owns an oil well, described it as "... similar to a nice royalty check." He also is a collector of old parking meters, and owns all the stained glass from an old church built in the 1920's.

Hank is quite a handyman, too. Right now, he's putting the finishing touches on a dining room suite for his and wife Anita's sixth wedding anniversary.

The Locklins live on a 350-acre farm in McClellan, Florida. When he isn't commuting to Nashville for the Grand Ole Opry or making records, he can be found watching the meter on his oil well.

Skeeter Davis is back on the recording scene after a long absence. She is recording for Mercury Records and appearing on the Grand Ole Opry again. During her 20 years with RCA Records, she made over 60 singles and 30 albums.



Tammy, a picture of loveliness in her gown, before saying, "I do," with J. Michael Tomlin

Five of her recordings were Grammy nominations.

Linda Hargrove, who is becoming quite popular in Texas, is an up-and-coming songwriter. She has had songs recorded

by **Johnny Rodriguez**, **Oliva Newton-John**, **Diana Trask**, **Tanya Tucker** and others.

Country music night clubs are booming in Nashville. **Faron Young** and **Waylon Jennings** are each connected with two of them. Waylon's is the *Ramblin Man* club and Faron's is called the *Jailhouse*. They join **George Jones** in the night club business. His successful club is called *George Jones' Possum Holler*. They all are located within a few blocks of each other.

Jimmy C. Newman's son, Gary, is making music his career. He is a member of a Country Cajun group called **Coteau**. They have appeared at Nashville's *Ole Time Pickin' Parlor*.

Tommy McClain, RCA, Ltd. artist, toured with **Freddy Fender** in Canada recently. Freddy's manager, **Huey Meaux**, reports, "Tommy just about stole the show, but it was healthy, it made Freddy work even harder. The crowds won't forget the shows they did for them."

Kenny Starr said motorcycling is his hobby now when he wants to relax from being on the road.

David Allen Coe married a couple of days prior to the **Willie Nelson Picnic**. The wedding was a bit unusual, but that's the way David Allen does most things—unique. The wedding site was the *Electric Club* in Dallas. **Willie Nelson** was best man. **Shelby Singleton** bought turquoise matching bands (David had forgotten), **John Singleton** helped out with the license and **Jimmy C. Newman** and **Rufus Thibodeaux** sang and played fiddle. Willie sang the opening song, *Hands At The Wheel*. The second selection was *Jole Blon* by Jimmy C. and Rufus. **Father Angelo**, a member of the motorcycle gang *Outlaws*, performed the ceremony. David Allen recited his vows to **Debbie Cole** with the lyrics to **Tanya Tucker's** hit, *Would You Lay With Me (In A Field of Stone)* which are the vows he wrote for his brother's wedding. Willie wrote Debbie's vows while sitting in a swimming pool. Debbie carried black roses and the closing number was *Will The Circle Be Unbroken*. The two honeymooned at the 4th of July Picnic where David was one
(Continued on page 64)

Photo: M. Fallwell, Jr.

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The Texas Scene

Willie Buys Some Giant TV Sets
Delbert McClinton Used To Throw Rocks at John Denver
The Armadillo's Living Billboard

by NELSON ALLEN



Photo: Charlyn Zlotnik

Asleep At The Wheel during taping for *Austin City Limits*.

Willie Nelson is back after an extended vacation in Hawaii following his 4th (and some say last) Fourth of July celebration and festival held this year in Gonzales, Texas. **Willie** recently purchased three six-foot screen televisions. One of them went into **Willie's** Pool Hall in Austin managed by his parents, **Mom** and **Pop Nelson**. A recent visit to that establishment found a group of good ole boys sitting around a domino table drinking beer and watching larger-than-life wrestling.

Rockabilly **Ray Campi** is spending some time in Austin and performing regularly with his new band. He's become a common sight around town driving his '66 yellow Cadillac convertible. Songwriter **Kevin Blackie Farrell** has moved to Austin and is hanging out with Campi. **Blackie** says he likes the heat in Texas and advises all singers to avoid air-conditioning because according to **Blackie** it destroys the voice. His song, *The Trouble With Lovin' Today*, received definitive treatment from **Ray Benson** and **Chris O'Connell of Asleep At The Wheel**. You can hear it on their new album *Wheelin' and Dealin'*. Why is it that people in Texas refer to them as *Asleep* while people from other parts of the country tend to call them *The Wheel*?

The aforementioned **Ray Benson** has just bought a brand new Harley-Davidson hog and when I say hog I know what I'm

talking about. It features saddlebags, mud-flaps, two rear view mirrors that would look tacky on a limo, a custom saddle, and in short, everything but the kitchen sink. **Ray** plans to use it traveling to the shorter distanced gigs around Texas and avoid the crowded bus rides.

Debbie Lynn Cole had only to drop the L from her last name when she and long-time friend **David Allan Coe** were officially wed in Dallas. **Willie Nelson** was best man. **Coe** has been at work on his autobiography called *Penitentiary Blues* and the Paris I've seen are tough and surprisingly honest. **David Allan** also acquired a new tattoo—a death's head with wings.

The best tattoo I ever heard of was invented one night by KOKE-FM's **Joe Gracey**. It was a winged heart with one teardrop falling from the tip. Written on banners across the top were the words *Hello Walls*. **Gracey** never actually got that tattoo though because "you'd have to go and show it to **Willie** and then what could you do with it?" he asked. **Joe** took over as program director for award-winning KOKE-FM when **Rusty Bell** left to do an all-night show on WOAI in San Antonio. It's the first *progressive country* show to reach that large an audience from Mexico to Canada. Reports seem to indicate it's a great success. And speaking of radio, **Augie Meyers** is doing a show

twice a week on KMAC in San Antonio. People are saying it's the funkier radio show since producer **Huey Meaux** hung up his earphones more than a decade ago. **Huey**, just returned from Nova Scotia with **Freddy Fender**, says he's looking for a chicana singer to be the female counterpart to **Freddy**.

Also on vacation is **Townes Van Zandt** who has been in the Colorado Rockies for the last few months. His new manager **John Lomax** hopes to get **Townes** to make the move to Nashville and get his recording career back in order. But the last time anyone saw **Townes** he was planning on riding his horse from Colorado back to Texas, a project which would take anyone a long time but which might take **Townes** forever.

And now for the sports—Soap Creek Saloon came in second in the last softball tournament of the year losing to Gordo's Pool Hall 16 to 1. Some of Soap Creek's players attributed the loss, in part, to the absence of their pitcher, **Doug Sahm**, who is on tour after releasing a new album called, *Texas Rock For Country Rollers*.

Jimmy Buffett and Fort Worth's **Delbert McClinton** were the first two artists to tape shows this year for the popular PBS program *Austin City Limits*.

Delbert McClinton claims he used to throw rocks at **John Denver** when they were both school kids in Fort Worth and the latter was still known as **John Dusseldorf**. **Delbert's** new release *Genuine Cowhide* features an album cover that will be instantly recognizable to anyone who lived through the fifties. And while we're at it, **Delbert**, what is the real story about **Sweaty Betty** from Memphis?

Flaco Jimenez, perhaps the greatest conjunto accordionist alive, recently completed recording with slide-guitar wizard **Ry Cooder** and took his band on tour with **Ry** and three gospel singers starting in later September.

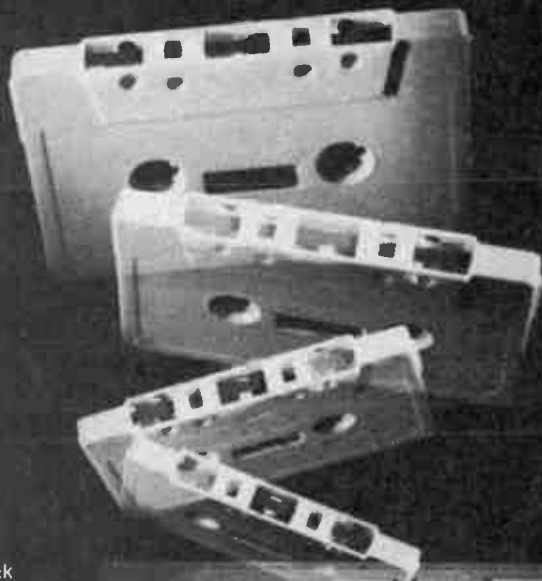
And speaking of accordions—**Link Davis, Jr.** has taken a leave of absence from **Asleep At The Wheel** to study accordion with virtuoso **Nathan Abshire**.

Meanwhile, **Andy Stein**, formerly with **Commander Cody** has taken over **Link's** duties on sax and fiddle with **Asleep**.

Solid rumor has it that **Willie** and **Way**
(Continued on page 70)

The Exceptionals

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KX-720 Stereo Cassette Deck



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Hank Williams, Jr. Hosts CB Festival Keith Carradine a Hit in Nashville "Teddy Bear" Takes His Last Ride

by HAZEL SMITH

Was privileged to be backstage at the Opry when **Red Sovine** performed *Teddy Bear*, and the crowd was enthralled with his immaculate performance. To the delight of the 4,000 and more, **Sovine** encoored doing *Giddy Up Go* by request, loud and lively. All of Music City is happy for **Red**, and wish him many, many more *Teddy Bears*.

Jack Greene and **Jeannie Seely** are no longer on MCA Records. The Grammy winners are in pursuit of what they want to do, and are in the process of a new recording contract with a new label, **Jeannie** said, "I've written no. 1 songs, have recorded no. 1 songs, am a member of the Grand Ole Opry. All these things I wanted, and got. All my life, in my career, I've done what someone else has told me to do. Not any more. For the first time in my career want to be myself."

Visiting with she, **Jack**, and their new producer, **Chuck Glaser** in the recording studio, I got a clear-cut picture in music of what **Jeannie** meant. Unlike the **Greenel Seely** of yesterday, the music has more drive, more freedom, and less Music Row. I liked what I heard. Like the clothes they were wearing, it fitted them comfortably. Call it outlaw, progressive, renegade, or human, for the first time in their career, **Jack** and **Jeannie** are being themselves.

Tompall has just signed with a new label, and by this reading he should have a new single and LP, and the extended *Outlaw out west* tour with **Tompall**, **Waylon**, **Willie** and **Jessi** should be in full swing. This takes the famed four to the Hollywood Bowl.

Pretty **Connie Eaton** called to tell me that she for sure and for certain was not getting married, as I reported a couple issues ago. **Connie** said that the item didn't bother her, but it bothered her boy friends!

Alex Harvey was visiting his friend, songwriter **Billy Edd Wheeler**, in the Carolina mountains, and gave me a call to say all was beautiful in his God-made wonderland. Really got a thrill talking with **Billy Edd** 'bout this and that.

Former Waylor, **Billy Ray Reynolds** showcased his show at the Old Time Picking Parlor. He performed self-penned songs like *It'll Be Her*, *Don't Believe My Heart Can Stand Another You* (a single hit by **Tanya Tucker**) and others.

Hank Williams, Jr. hosted the first CB Radio Festival with **Willie Nelson**, **Tanya Tucker**, **Merle Kilgore**, and other friends of **Bosephus**.

Keith Carradine, who wrote the song *I'm Easy* for the movie *Nashville*, and had a major role in the flick, was in Nashville to perform at the Exit/In and so many chicks turned out the Nashville star had to be held over.

Super songwriter **Johnny Duncan** has a hit record titled, *Stranger*. Like his Columbia records compadre, **Willie Nelson**, who is a super songwriter, and had a hit with *Blue Eyes Crying In the Rain*, he didn't pen the song.

Did you know that **Katy Moffatt** wanted to be a blues singer like **Muddy Waters**?? Can't you imagine how thrilled she was to appear on the same bill at the Great South East Music Hall in Atlanta with her hero? A sister of songwriter **Hugh Moffatt**, the petite Texas lady has great potential with producer **Billy Sherrill** at the wheel.

It was destined to happen, and did! *Teddy Bear's Last Ride* by **Diana Williams** is on Capitol. I heard that **Red Sovine** was offered the song, but declined because he wanted the hum of the engines in the semi to bring *Teddy Bear* back around!

Wonder why someone didn't record *Teddy Bear Rides Again* before they killed him off???

Jack Routh's new RCA single *Your Love Is My Refuge* was written by **Wayland Holyfield**. "Who's the Cinnamon Hill Singers that back you on this excellent single?" I asked **Jack**.

Jack grinned and said, *John*.

John is, of course, **Johnny Cash**, who is married to **June Carter Cash**, who is the mother of **Carlene Smith Routh**, who is the wife of **Jack Routh**.

Got word from Austin that the King of the City, **Willie Nelson**, dropped in, watched and enjoyed **Dr. Hook**, as the group began its tour following SRO engagements all over Europe. **Dr. Hook's A Little Bit More** a smash in the pop area, while *Couple More Years* climbs the country charts for my friends.

Monique Peer Nash, widow of the late **Ralph Peer** who discovered **Jimmie Rodgers** and the **Carter Family** in Bristol, Te. was in Nashville with husband **Gene Nash**. **Gene** worked with the Country Music Association Show that took place in October. Working in several aspects of show business, **Nash** will be remembered as the former manager of **LeRoy Van Dyke**.

Even Stevens, who has co-written several songs with **Eddie Rabbitt**, as well as soloed a bunch, will appear on a forthcoming **Tony Orlando** and **Dawn TV** show.

If you wonder why you didn't see **Harlan Howard** on the Nashville streets last summer it's because he was fishing up at **Percy Priest** 'bout all summer.

Mrs. Red Steagall recuperating after being in intensive care following a horse on their farm kicking her in the stomach. Hubby **Red** flew in from Texas when he heard of the accident that occurred on their farm outside Nashville.

The word I got from the RCA seminar in Los Angeles was there was a bunch of folks there with sort of stiffened necks who usually don't get into the hoop 'n holering situation. But when **Waylon Jennings** stepped to the mike to sing for this usually reserved crowd they just forgot their proper manners.

Jeannie C. Riley and hubby **Mickey** have a new pig named **Arnold**. I understand that the **Riley's** live the life of **Riley** since they remarried each other. Another remarriage is **Justin** and **Carolyn Tubb**. A remarriage is when folks have been married, divorce, then get it back together and get married again. Let's face it. Not all divorces work out. ■

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Country News

Is It Goodbye To Willie's Picnics?

Willie Nelson's fourth annual 4th of July picnic started early Sunday morning and ended in a torrent of rain shortly before noon on Monday. It was, perhaps, the most successful picnic thus far as more than 80,000 fans flocked to a cow pasture

near Gonzales in South Texas for the progressive country music festival. Many of them came from as far away as Canada and California to see a list of performers which included George Jones, Bobby Bare, Linda Hargrove, Kris Kristofferson

and Rita Coolidge, Billy Joe Shaver, Doug Sahm, David Allan Coe, and Leon and Mary Russell.

Waylon Jennings and Willie, himself, canceled their performances Monday morning when heavy rains destroyed the stage and sent most of the remaining fans scurrying for their cars. It was a rather sudden ending for the beleaguered festival which had been limited to 24 hours by court order after having won a bitter fight with C.L.O.D. (Citizens' League of Decency) an organization led by a local preacher which had sought to prevent the picnic.

This year's Picnic seemed to be characterized by disorganization and suffered one death (one youth drowned while swimming in a stock tank) and several reported rapes, stabbings and thefts. However, since the picnic has grown rapidly out of proportion in the last few years, beyond what even Willie himself feels comfortable with, and into what one promoter called a temporary city, most agreed the event passed smoothly. Some fans said they would never come again and some vowed to return, leaving the only question to remain since this year's 4th of July celebration is over—will they do it again next year?

NELSON ALLEN



Willie



Billy Joe



Kris



Waylon and Rich Allbright

Photos: Charlyn Zlotnik

Here We Go Again, Hank

Paul Schrader, one of Hollywood's highest paid script writers, has made a deal with Warner Bros. to write and direct *The Hank Williams Story*. Hank Jr. is serving as executive producer.

While already researching the film, Schrader has yet to choose a cast or write the screenplay. He is waiting on the latest in a long series of court fights over who owns what in the Williams estate. This matter has been in litigation since Hank's death on January 1, 1953, but Schrader is confident that a solution will be reached soon. "Getting rights sorted out is a Herculean task," he says. "Lots of people have very strong feelings. But everybody wants to see the picture made.

"Hank was an extremely American phenomenon—a native genius who destroyed himself through ignorance. But it

wasn't just his ignorance so much as it was the ignorance of the culture he came out of," Schrader believes. "He had a complete lack of knowledge about health, both mental and physical, for example.



Hank and Executive Producer

Photo: Courtesy of Country Music Foundation

This is just the way people were in that time and place, and he was no exception.

"Also, Hank was a real hustler. He came out of that poor Alabama depression environment. He was aggressive and very ambitious. But he was also morbid and reclusive, though he did come alive onstage. Everyone I've talked to says he was a great writer and singer, but he was greatest as a performer. That was apparently the only time he was really comfortable, when he was onstage for an audience.

"So essentially this film will be about three things. It will be an historical record about the life of Hank Williams. It will be an accurate re-creation of a time and place, the South at the end of the Forties: the Louisiana Hayride, the Hada-col Caravan, the Opry, the honky tonks. That's never really been done in the movies before. Finally, it will be a psychological study of patterns of self-destructive behavior."

JOHN MORTHLAND

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WE FETE THE RABBITT



Eddie Rabbitt, Elektra Records artist, received a surprise visit from Art Maher, editor of *Country Music Magazine*, who presented him with the magazine's first *Rising Star Award*. Shown, (l. to r.): Paul Lovelace, Elektra/Asylum national sales and promotion manager; Steve Wax, executive V.P. of Elektra/Asylum; Art Maher; Eddie Rabbitt; Joe Smith, chairman of the board of Elektra/Asylum; Mike Suttle,

the firm's director of marketing; and Jim Malloy, A&R director of country.

Country Music Magazine also recently presented a plaque to Willard Barr, publisher of the trucker's magazine *Open Road*, for that publication's outstanding contribution to the growth of country music. The award was made by editor Maher at the annual Truckers Convention in Chicago, during Truck Week.

Sovine Truckin' on Teddy

By now everybody knows who *Teddy Bear* is, but nobody knows better than Red Sovine. This is Red's biggest hit to date and his usual performance schedule and personal appearances have skyrocketed.

A very warm song, *Teddy* has all the qualifications for a super record. It gives you a lump in your throat, brings tears to your eyes, and chills to your flesh. A natural country record, it has surprised a lot of people by being a frequently programmed record on pop stations.



Hey, Red. Is that an 18-wheeler?

Billy Joe Burnette and Dale Royal are the two writers that made *Teddy Bear* a reality. Billy Joe is first to say the record was a true team effort and goes on to explain how the record came to be. "I work for Cedarwood Publishing in Nashville. I listen to a great deal of material and when Dale Royal, a trucker who covers over 2,000 miles per week, sent me the lyric I knew it was a natural. I made what I considered to be a few minor professional changes and knew that Red Sovine would be the perfect star to record the song. But still, I just didn't expect this much. I just didn't expect it."

The communication between Billy Joe and Dale is all done by mail—so please Mr. Postman, keep those letters moving. The follow-up record to *Teddy Bear* is called *Teddy Bear's Last Ride*, and was recorded by Capitol artist Diana Williams. Billy Joe describes it as, "Teddy Bear dyin' a natural death, and by God this is gettin' to be like a soap opera." There also may be a movie on the *Teddy Bear* theme. Is there only one *Teddy Bear*? Let's wait and see.

Bill Monroe and Tom T?



Father of Bluegrass



The Storyteller

It all started when songwriter Harlan Howard said Tom T. Hall was recording a bluegrass album and that Bill Monroe was to pick mandolin on the album. It seems Tom was a bit apprehensive to ask Bill to play on his LP, because he felt that Monroe was too *dyed in bluegrass, never wavering for man nor beast*, and he was simply convinced that Monroe would never consent to do it. Being well acquainted with Hillman Hall, Tom's brother, I remember how he used to say that at their Kentucky home it was the bible, the flag, mama, and Bill Monroe, and sometimes Bill Monroe was first. Bill got wind of this and soon called Hall saying, "Tom, I'd be glad to help you out."

Tom T. was at the microphone, the studio filled with the finest bluegrass

pickers that money could buy. While they were picking their hearts out Tom said, "Bill Monroe wrote this song about a horse from Ireland that came over here . . ." and he broke into singing the classic, *Molly and Tenbrooks*. Standing at Tom's immediate left was Bill Monroe picking his Kentucky heart out. Finishing the verse and chorus, Tom said, "Bill Monroe," and Monroe picked his mandolin break with his usual expertise.

In almost 40 years, Bill Monroe had never gone into the studio with a country/pop performer, and it seems that this was the first time that he and Tom T. had performed together. After the playback of the tune Monroe said, "Tom, that's powerful. I'm thrilled you asked me to do this." Tom just grinned from ear to ear. HAZEL SMITH

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BIG DAY FOR THE HAG IN ARK.

Arkansans claimed California native Merle Haggard as their own—if only for a day. July 13th was “Merle Haggard Day” in the state by gubernatorial proclamation. Acknowledging the importance of country music as a part of the state’s heritage, the announcement cited Haggard as “one of the all time great names in this field.”

The occasion was a Benton, Ark. Bicentennial Celebration provided by Tom Cook Productions with support from the Saline County Sheriff’s Department. The place was the *How Now Brown Cow Pasture*, a 200 acre tract of just what the name implies, one mile south of Benton.

Saline County’s singing sheriff, Joe Richards, in western shirt and cowboy hat, his official shootin’ iron still strapped to his hip, climbed off his spirited steed to open the show with a good, positive treatment of *Swinging Doors*.

Opening acts included Jimmy Doyle and his Arkansas River Bottom Band, featuring Patsy Gayle, Dick Vandegriff, and nine-year-old Theresa Wilson. Also featured was a former Benton singer, Pat Charles, who is now based in Nashville.

Lt. Governor Joe Purcell, also a Benton native, presented Haggard with the official proclamation and an Arkansas Traveler’s Certificate.

Technical difficulties delayed the second half of the show, but the renowned “Strangers” finally took the stage and comedian Bobby Smith got things underway, followed by Ronnie Reno and Leona Williams.

A relaxed Haggard took the honors and the problems in stride. He said the humid, night air, “. . . makes these guitar strings feel like rubber bands.” Then he told the crowd, “There’s still a buzz in this system, but we’ll just sing louder than the buzz—and if the chiggers bite just reach out and scratch ‘em!”

Eleven-year-old fiddling marvel, Tigar



Bell, joined Hag and the Strangers for some old-time breakdowns; and the presence of Eldon Shamblin and Tiny Moore gave some old Bob Wills tunes the touch of the master himself.

But it was Haggard the crowd had come to hear, and his songs that turned

them on. *Swinging Doors*, *Mama Tried*, *Silver Wings*, *Branded Man*. “You weren’t planning on going home tonight, were you?” he asked the fan who shouted “. . .sing all night!” And even with the heat, humidity and the insects, no one would have minded if he had.

NELLE PHELAN

The Diggers Dig Us

Country music is booming in Australia. And much of the credit belongs to Australian country star Tom Bodkin of Tamworth, New South Wales. That town has suddenly become the Southern Hemisphere center of country music recording, broadcasting and festival activity. It is now known locally as *Nashville Down Under*.

Emergence of country music as an important entertainment force and of the little Northern Australian country town as the

center of a new industry was highlighted by a recent event that brought thousands of fans to town for a three-day weekend hoe-down. Billed as the Fourth Annual Australasian Country Awards Festival, the event drew musicians and enthusiasts from all over the subcontinent.

Tamworth’s 1,700 hotel and motel beds were booked up two months before opening show time. Tamworth city public relations officer, Bob Belford, stated that

“you couldn’t put a stick between the people staying in the caravan parks and camp grounds.” So determined to reach this new center of country music activity was one group of musicians from Queensland that they rebuilt a washed out highway section themselves.

The pedal steel guitar has become especially popular with Australian country groups. Bodkin chaired a special seminar on this instrument during the festival. He has also formed an organization, *Steel Guitar Australia*, an adjunct of the Nashville Steel Guitar Club and of the Pedal Steel Guitar Association of New York.

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Kentucky Rain; Fever; It's Impossible; Jailhouse Rock; Don't Be Cruel; I Got A Woman; All Shook Up; Loving You; In The Ghetto; Love Me Tender.

ELVIS PRESLEY - ANLI-1319 - SPECIAL \$2.98
His Hand In Mine; I'm Gonna Walk Dem Golden Stairs; In My Father's House (Are Many Mansions); Milky White Fit; I Believe In The Man In The Sky; Joshua Fit The Battle; He Knows Just What I Need; Swing Down Sweet Chariot; Mansion Over The Hilltop; If We Never Meet Again; Working On The Building; Known Only To Him.

MAC WISEMAN - ANLI-1208 - SPECIAL \$2.98
Eight More Miles To Louisville; Keep On The Sunny Side; It Rains Just The Same In Missouri; Mama, Put My Little Shoes Away; City Of New Orleans; Will The Circle Be Unbroken; Sunny Side Of The Mountain; A Tragic Romance; Catfish Johu; Let's Til Go Down To The River.

RAY PRICE'S GREATEST HITS - CS-8866 \$2.98
Crazy Arms; You Done Me Wrong; City Lights; Invitation To The Blues; I've Got A New Heartache; Who'll Be The First; Heartaches By The Number; The Same Old Me; Release Me; One More Time; My Shoes Keep Walking Back To You; I'll Be There.

CHARLEY PRIDE - ANLI-0996 - SPECIAL \$2.98
Intro By Bo Powell; The Last Thing On My Mind; Just Between You And Me; I Know One; Dialogue; Lovesick Blues; The Image Of Me; Kaw-Liga; Shut-ters And Boards; Six Days On The Road; Streets Of Baltimore; Got Leavin' On Her Mind; Crystal Chandeliers; Cotton Fields.

TEX RITTER - SM 1623 - SPECIAL \$2.98
I Dreamed Of A Hillbilly Heaven; Green Grow The Lilacs; Love Me Now; High Moon; The Deck Of Cards; Jealous Heart; Have I Stayed Away Too Long; Ol' Sharty; We Live In Two Different Worlds; There's A New Moon Over My Shoulder; Jingle Jangle Jingle; The Pledge Of Allegiance.

MARTY ROBBIN'S HITS - CS-8639 - SPECIAL \$2.98
A White Sport Coat; The Story Of My Life; Ain't I The Lucky One; The Last Time I Saw My Heart; Long Tall Sally; The Blues Country Style; The Hang-ing Tree; Sittin' In A Tee House; She Was Only Seventeen; Singing The Blues; Knee Deep In The Blues; Aloha-Oe.

MARTY ROBBIN HITS - CS-8435 SPECIAL \$2.98
El Paso; Don't Worry; Ballad Of The Alamo; Like All The Other Times; Is There Any Chance; Ride, Cowboy, Ride; A Time And A Place For Everything; Streets Of Laredo; Saddle Tramp; I Told My Heart; Red River Valley; Big Iron.

JIMMIE RODGERS - ANLI-1209 - SPECIAL \$2.98
Jimmie Rodgers; Last Blue Yodel; Mississippi Moon; My Rough And Rowdy Ways; Blue Yodel No. 9; My Blue Eyed Jane; The One Rose; Southern Cannonball; Long Tall Mama Blues; In The Jailhouse Now No. 2; Peach Pickin' Time Down In Georgia; Blue Yodel No. 1; Travellin' Blues; Mule Skinner Blues; My Carolina Sunshine Girl; The Brakeman's Blues; Away Out On The Mountain.

ROY ROGERS AND DALE EVANS - SM-1745 \$2.98
The Bible; Tell Me So; Whispering Hope; Just A Closer Walk With Thee; In The Sweet By And By; There'll Be Peace In The Valley; Pass Me Not; It Is No Secret; Amazing Grace; Take My Hand Precious Lord; The Love Of God; I'd Rather Have Jesus; How Great Thou Art.

SONS OF THE PIONEERS - ANLI-1092 - \$2.98
Cool Water; Wind; Cowboy's Dream; The Last Round-Up; Ridin' Home; Twilight On The Trail; Red River Valley; Wagon Wheels; Riders In The Sky; Blue Prairie; Way Out There; Empty Saddles; Tears-drops In My Heart; Blue Shadows On The Trail; Ridin' Down The Canyon; Timber Trail; Tumbling Tumbleweeds; Whoopie-Ti-Yi-Yo.

CARL SMITH - CS 8737 - SPECIAL \$2.98
Hey Joe; She Goes; Old Lonesome Times; Are You Teasing Me; I Feel Like Crying; Doorstep To Heaven; Let Old Mother Nature Have Her Way; The Little Girl In My Hometown; If You Saw Her Through My Eyes; You're Free To Go; Gettin' Even; I Overlooked An Orchid.

KATE SMITH - ANLI-1135 SPECIAL \$2.98
When The Moon Comes Over The Mountain; That's Life; Born Free; The Impossible Dream (The Quest); Climb Ev'ry Mountain; I Left My Heart In San Francisco; You're Nobody Till Somebody Loves You; Medley; Somebody Else; Is Taking My Place; That Old Feeling; There Goes That Song Again; Theme From "The Sand Pebbles" (And We Were Lovers); How Great Thou Art; God Bless America.

KAY STAR - SM 11323 - SPECIAL \$2.98
Bonaparte's Retreat; Crazy; Side By Side; Oh, Lonesome Me; The Man Upstairs; Wheel Of Fortune; Never Dreamed I Could Love Someone New; Make The World Go Away; Angry; Just For A Thrill.

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THE FAN CLUB SCENE: LORETTA LYNN



Loretta Lynn and Coal Miners entertain in pasture near her home.

The Loretta Lynn International Fan Club, under the co-presidency of Loudilla, Loretta and Kay Johnson, was established (at Loretta's request) in August, 1963.

Loretta is a performer who has a real

need to meet and mix with her fans. This is the basis on which she formed her career and on which she has progressed to the ranks of superstardom. Consequently, many of our activities have been

with that personal contact in mind.

We have supported projects such as raising money for the Red Cloud Indian School in South Dakota. Loretta once traveled from Nashville to Rapid City to stage a benefit show for the school to raise funds to build a gymnasium. We sent hundreds of gifts to the students and, at Christmas-time, Loretta personally sent pounds and pounds of candy so that each child could have a sackful.

Other efforts on the part of the fan club have promoted Loretta in a more general way, such as our current Help Hospitalized Veterans campaign through which our membership contributes regularly to the purchase of Craft Kits for our men and women in Veterans' hospitals.

Loretta was a founder and prime mover in the formation of the International Fan Club Organization which annually presents a dinner and show in Nashville. On June 8, 1977, IFCO will present its 10th annual celebration. Loretta has participated in each of those shows.

Our membership privileges include: four journals per year issued in March, June, September and December, an autographed 8x10 photo of Loretta, membership card, fan club badge, plus all club contests and fan club fun throughout the year. The membership dues are \$4.00 in U.S. and Canada, \$4.00 overseas if mailed by sea and \$8.00 overseas if mailed by air. No foreign currency can be accepted. Please send International Money Orders. Canadian postal money orders are accepted by U.S. post offices and banks. Address correspondence to:

Loretta Lynn International Fan Club
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MCA RECORDS

Why does Nashville have to change?

Nashville's Tally Ho Tavern stood at the corner of 16th Avenue, South Street—An unpretentious, funky place where people hung out in the form of boozers, losers, winners, and potential winners. They rubbed elbows, hobnobbed, laughed, lied, cried, and dreamed.

Today, the Tally Ho Tavern has been renamed *The Country Corner*. Basically, it is frequented by the same crowd. Though the decor remains the same as before, the faces have changed; save a few who never saw the rainbow for the rain, and without rhyme or reason shared a story with someone else who wrote about it. A good example is *Silver Tongued Devil*, a Kristofferson-penned tune about one of these characters.

Another major change of Nashville's face to confuse tourists and infuriate local residents is that 16th Avenue South is no longer. The street has been renamed Music Square West, and 17th Avenue South is now called Music Square East.

Of course you are all aware of the Opry moving out beside the Cumberland River. The architects didn't figure on the mighty river overflowing its banks, not only flooding the new Grand Ole Opry House, but doing in excess of one million dollars damage to the modern Opryland Park. The old timers that hung around the Lower Broadway area near the old Ryman, Linebaugh's Restaurant, etc. that used to be the in-places, snickered at the flooding. They had previously scoffed at the very idea of the Opry moving to new quarters.

Without a new face, but with doors barred, is Chambers Restaurant located on Commerce Street, a couple of blocks away from the Ryman. I recall coming to Music City from Caswell County, N.C., to

visit some eight years ago and dined on a T-bone steak there for \$1.69. The aroma was out of this world, and at that time, I knew there wasn't a better steak on the top side of the earth. It is a mortal sin that the restaurant was forced to close.

Is this progress for the betterment of the community? There's the yea's and nay's. However, the Grand Ole Opry is still grand, and always will be. But the nostalgia, the uncanny glamour, the crowded backstage, the stars' closeness because of lack of space isn't apparent at the new building.

Ernest Tubb, in keeping with the times, moved his Saturday Night Jamboree from his Lower Broadway location to off Music Row on Demonbruen. The new operation is nice, modern, and unlike the old shop has a stage. But like the old Opry, the vibes aren't quite the same.

The buildings, like the music, go through major changes. Progressive and other terminology is used to describe something new, exciting, and different. Terms to me aren't as important as quality. With the terms, the music and locales changing faces, it is my hope that none of us forget from whence we came, and have the common sense to maintain a bond with our fellowmen for the betterment of tomorrow, the tomorrow's to come, and tomorrow's music. After all, today's music, the terms used, the faces that make it, and the structures that house us will be tomorrow's musical history.

Like Hank Williams, Jimmie Rodgers, and the Grand Ole Opry before us, we should strive to leave the best for those who follow. After all, we got the best, didn't we?

HAZEL SMITH

WANTED: YOUR OPINION

Each month, the editors of Country Music try to bring you the kind of magazine you want to read. To get a better handle on your likes and dislikes, we have devised this short questionnaire. Please take the time to fill it out, and send it to Survey, Country Music Magazine, 475 Park Avenue South, New York, N.Y. 10016, along with any other ideas you might have for making *Country Music* your kind of magazine. We look forward to hearing from you.

1. Are you a subscriber?
2. Your age _____.
3. Which artists would you like to see featured in upcoming issues?

A. _____
 B. _____
 C. _____

4. How would you rate the following departments?

	Like	Undecided	Dislike
People on the Scene	___	___	___
Hillbilly Central	___	___	___
Country News	___	___	___
Fan Club Scene	___	___	___
Country Hearth	___	___	___
Record Reviews	___	___	___
Letters	___	___	___

5. What other magazines do you read besides *Country Music* (music and non-music publications) _____

6. Which article did you enjoy most in this issue? _____

7. What kinds of articles do you like to see in *Country Music*? _____

Get Out Your Wigs, Gals

Last month, we started a monthly look-alike contest. We were looking for someone resembling Willie Nelson.

This month we're looking for a Dolly Parton look-alike. If people say you resemble her, send in a snapshot or two of yourself. If you're the one we feel most resembles Dolly, we will publish your picture. In addition, we'll send you a selection of her albums, plus an autographed picture.

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MARTY ROBBINS Made A Deal With God

by JOAN DEW

In Nashville, people love talking about it as much as they love doing it. It, in this case, might be making a deal, making a record, making money or making out. Whatever it is, people *tell* on one another. But nobody really minds because it's all sort of a game, anyway. The gossip is rarely malicious, and the tale tellers are as quick to talk about their own embarrassing moments as someone else's.

So when you start asking about a big country music star, and nobody seems to know much about him except that he's a "nice man", you start to wonder. "Marty Robbins? Oh, he's real nice. Great singer. Fine writer. Yeah, he's a good ole boy."

No yarn about the time he got drunk and tore up some hotel? No tales about his ladies on the road? No ex-wives taking him to the cleaners? No problems with dope? Not even *one* nervous breakdown?

"Marty keeps pretty much to himself in Nashville. He's a family man," was the explanation repeated more than once.

The first insight came from Mel Tillis: "Marty used to be just as much of a hell-raiser as any of us. Then his son, who was just a little toddler at the time, got very sick and they didn't think he was going to make it. Marty got on his knees and told the Lord if He'd let the boy live, he'd give up drinking and raising hell and live a clean life. That was about 20 years ago, I guess, and as far as I know Marty Robbins hasn't had a drink since. You sure gotta respect a man with that kind of will-power!"

But the real insight came from Marty himself. We met at the building just off Music Row that houses Marty Robbins Enterprises. He led the way down the hall to his executive office—a large, masculine room with chairs, a sofa, a desk big enough to sleep two, award-covered walls, and on that particular day, positioned near the

doorway, a lifelike, lifesize cardboard cutout of Marty Robbins.

"Walked in here this morning and saw that thing. Scared me to death," he laughed. "Thought I'd died and they stuffed me. Put that in a record store and they gonna clear the place out *quick!* But he's a hand-some devil, ain't he?" he grinned, eyeballing his smiling facsimile.

"I used to be afraid to loosen up with audiences," he admitted easily. "I thought the people would expect me to be serious since most of my songs are ballads or sad songs. Then about ten years ago I was doing the 11:30 Opry show—I had to do the late show in order to have time to race cars in the afternoon—and I figured everybody out there was half asleep anyway. So after I finished a song I stood away from the mike and said, 'Hey Marty that was *great!*' and I started whistling and cheering. The live audience laughed and the radio audience didn't know it was me doing it. Well, it got to be a thing with the late Opry audiences. The minute I walked on stage they'd start cheering and whistling, like I'd trained them. So I just got looser and looser until finally I was doing the same kind of fooling around on my road shows and now everybody expects it. Someone said to me last week, 'One good thing . . . if you ever lose your voice you could always become a comedian.'"

"But I don't make an effort to be funny as much as I have fun. There's eight of us all together in my show and we all have fun. We don't have a girl singer, but one of the guys dresses like a girl all the time, so . . ." he chuckled, lowering his head to his desk like a naughty schoolboy.

"What about his 'deal' with God?" "That's a true story." He becomes serious for a few moments. "But that's not all of it. I wasn't just a hell-raiser. I was crazy.

I was a mean drunk. I wanted to fight everything that moved. In fact I had done some boxing in high school and had about 70 amateur fights while I was in the Navy. My grandmother was $\frac{3}{4}$ Indian and $\frac{1}{4}$ Mexican and maybe that's why I couldn't handle liquor, but whatever it was . . . I used to weigh 185 pounds when I was working those clubs in Phoenix when all this happened, and I would take on anything, I mean *anything*.

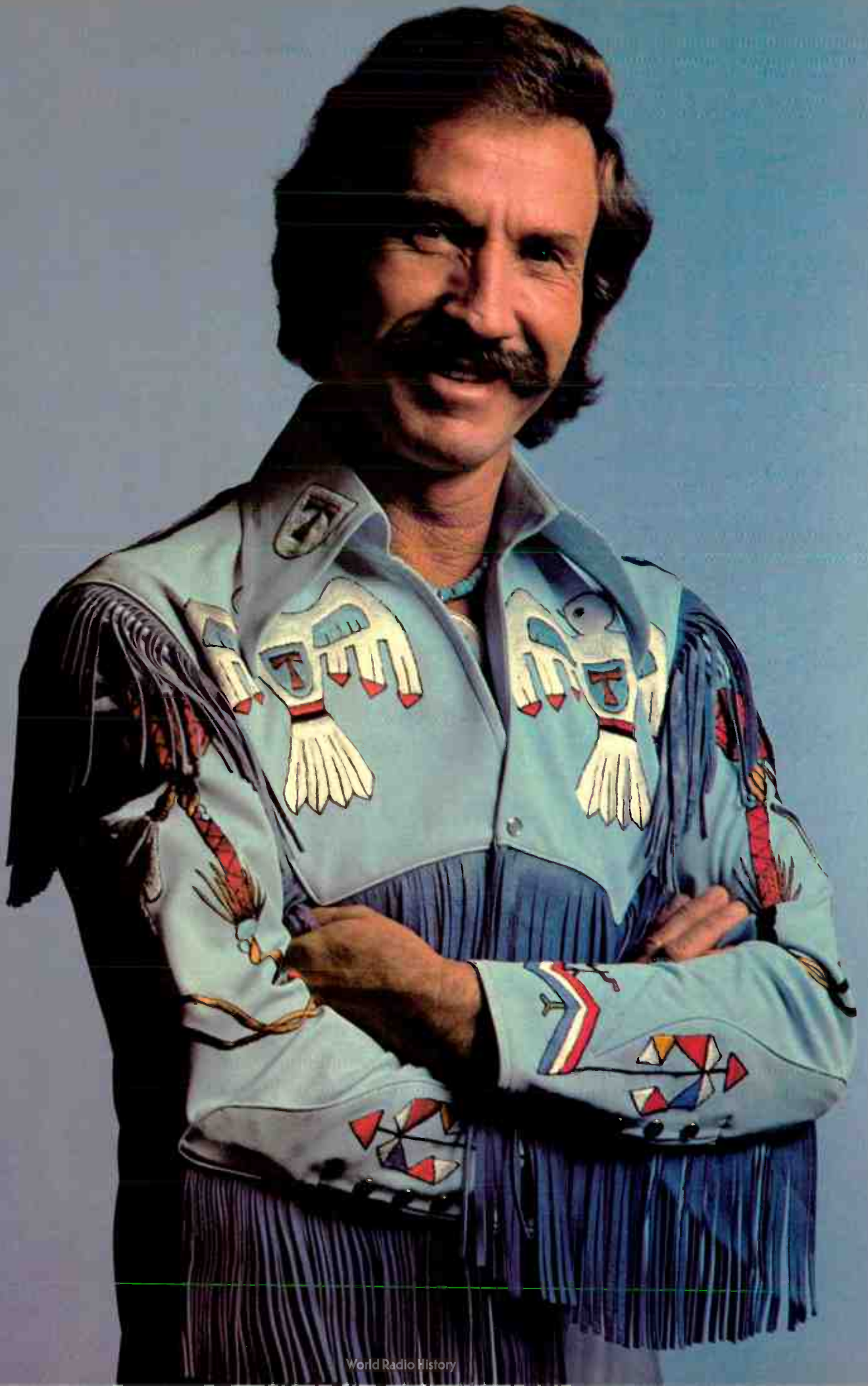
"Well, when Ronny got sick it sobered me up and I made a deal with the Lord. It's true. That's been over 25 years ago and I haven't had one drop to drink since . . . not even a beer.

"Oh, yeah, there have been times when I've missed it, times when I'd like to have a beer. But I know I couldn't handle it. It's never been a strong battle of will power because once I made up my mind I wasn't going to do it anymore, that was it.

"I don't want to get into a whole religion thing . . . everybody has their own beliefs, but I've thought about it a lot and mine make sense to me. God saved my son. I *do* believe it, and if you do, then you can't see it another way, so you've got to live by what makes you feel best about yourself.

"But I'll tell you something. I've been higher since I stopped drinking than I ever was in those days. I was a *low* drunk," he laughed. "Now I stay high most of the time. It's like I'm high on life. I don't know why exactly, but I *love* it.

"Maybe if I didn't find life as exciting as I do I would be tempted to look for 'highs' somewhere else. But I've never used drugs of any kind and never felt I needed any. Time is passing so quickly and I'm always afraid I won't get everything I want out of life . . . I don't mean material things. I've got enough there—



'cept a million or two to throw away on racing would be nice," he added, smiling.

Marty doesn't race as much as he used to because he had three crack-ups in a row, which cost him about \$100,000 in automobiles, not to mention some ugly aches and pains. After the most serious accident, where he hit a brick wall doing 140 mph, sports writers and disc jockeys praised his courage. He smashed into the wall to avoid hitting a stalled car.

"Oh, I'm not fearless by any means," he emphasized with a grin. "I'm scared to death of snakes—even little bitty things that long," he measured a few inches between his thumb and forefinger. "I never fear death, but I am afraid of getting hurt when I race. I chose to hit the wall because I could see it and thought I was prepared for it. What I wasn't prepared for was the stretch. Ever heard of a stretch job?" his eyes twinkled mischievously and his mustache appeared to twitch in mock villainy. "Now I'm not kidding. When I hit that wall it stretched my body at least a foot, because those shoulder straps don't give and the steering wheel was at least a foot away, and they found my face and bones buried in it.

"Boy, but I love to race. I've heard and read all about the theories of 'defying death', but for me the thrill is the speed and competing against the world's best. I've come in as high as fifth against the best drivers and I've only had 22 Grand National races. Those guys have raced more in one year than I have in my entire life. I don't care if I never win. In fact when I was working my way up, racing different cars, as soon as I'd win in my division the thrill would be gone. Still . . . I would like to win a Grand National just one time. . . ."

Marizona, Marty's wife of 27 years, deplored his enthusiasm for car racing. "I don't tell her when I'm going to race," Marty said, grinning. "I just call her afterwards to let her know I'm okay. Once when I had an accident it had already been on the radio before I could get to a phone. When she answered she said, 'What hospital are you in this time?'"

"I keep telling her . . . look at all the free publicity I get out of this racing . . . But then of course, smashing up \$30,000 cars isn't exactly free, is it?" he broke into laughter. "I remember one time after I cracked up in a race I had four broken ribs, a broken tailbone, two black eyes and 37 stitches in my head and two days later I played a convention date before 250 of the world's leading surgeons. They thought I was a very courageous man. Can you imagine if I'd passed out on stage and somebody had yelled, 'Is there a doctor in the house?'"

"Now my son Ronny has gotten into drag racing. He's got a lot of talent as a singer, but he can't get serious about the music for his racing. I keep telling him to leave it alone, but, well . . .," he shrugged, admitting that this is one instance where he doesn't practice what he preaches.

The Robbins' also have a daughter, Janet, 17. Marty arranges his schedule to be home at least a part of every week thereby spending more time with his son and daughter than many fathers who have nine-to-five jobs.

"We go out to the farm—I raise cattle on 250 acres outside of Nashville—and ride, fool around, plow, mend fences," he laughed at some secret joke, as though maybe he watches somebody else mend fences.

Although as a kid Marty had been singing around home as long as he could remember, it wasn't until he saw Gene Autry movies that he began to fantasize about being a singing cowboy.

"My grandfather was my first audience. He was a great old character—"Texas" Bob Heckle—and he could tell the best stories and biggest lies of any man I ever knew." He pointed to an aged tintype on the wall showing an old man with a beautiful, strong face and long, flowing white hair. "He was a real medicine man. Had

“. . . after I cracked up in a race I had four broken ribs, a broken tailbone, two black eyes and 37 stitches in my head and two days later I played a convention date.”

his own show. They ran him out of Texas for stealing horses. Oh, he told me he was a Texas Ranger; that was just one of his big lies. But they were all great stories. So we had a deal. He'd tell me a tale of the old West, and I'd sing him a song. I did that from the time I was three or four until he died when I was six.

"Then when I was older and started seeing Autry in movies, I thought, 'What a perfect life—riding the open range, singing cowboy songs.' I didn't want to play the parts. I wanted to live them. But since I couldn't live those days, I've done the next best thing. I sing about them."

No one expects to meet a singer who hates his work but there are those who say they could take it or leave it. Not Marty. The man loves it so much, you get the feeling he'd break into song on his way to the gallows.

Marty's talent for telling a story in song has become legendary, sometimes against all odds. When *El Paso* was released by Columbia in 1959 "experts"

said a single running four minutes and 37 seconds (three minutes was average) would never get on the air. It made number one on both the country and pop charts, staying on the country charts for 14 months. It won Marty his first Grammy, a gold record and a gold album.

Now, 17 years later, Marty has done it again—with a four-minute, 13-second single on the same label about the same town.

"*El Paso City* was never intended to be the song it turned out to be," Marty revealed. "I was gonna write a song about an airline pilot and his wife, a stewardess, who flew different runs. He'd look down over El Paso where he knew she was laying over, and in his mind he would see her taking off her wedding ring, and he'd think about the song *El Paso* and how the cowboy had loved the girl enough to come back and die just to get to see her again. I had no thoughts of it becoming a story about a guy seeing himself as having lived in the Old West in another life. I've never thought much at all about reincarnation. I think it's an interesting idea, like men from Mars, but I sure didn't set out to write a song about it.

When Marty and Marizona married he had no idea he would make singing his profession, much less that it would make him wealthy and famous. "I didn't know what I wanted to do, except that I didn't want to work," he laughed. "I married Marizona because I couldn't spell her name . . . couldn't even pronounce it. But I don't know why she married me. I sure didn't have much of a future." She was still in high school when we started dating. I was living in Phoenix, getting a singing job when I could at small clubs, driving a truck, working construction jobs when I couldn't."

On one truck run from Glendale to Phoenix, Marty heard a local cowboy singer on radio station KPHO. He thought he could do better, went to the program director and told him so. After a quick audition the man agreed, and Marty has worked full time in show business ever since.

"It hasn't always been an easy life for my wife, but marriage is not easy, no matter what business you're in. In a way, my being in the music business gives us an advantage. You're gone just enough so that everybody's glad to see one another when you get home again."

How Marty Robbins feels about his wife is obvious in the words of the song he wrote for her, one of his most requested hits, *My Woman, My Woman, My Wife*, which earned him his second Grammy.

Suppose Marty's son had never come close to death many years ago. Suppose there had never been a reason for Marty to make a deal with God. Would he have become a success anyway?

"Are you kidding?" Marty threw back his head and roared with laughter. "Why I would have never made it out of Arizona!" ■

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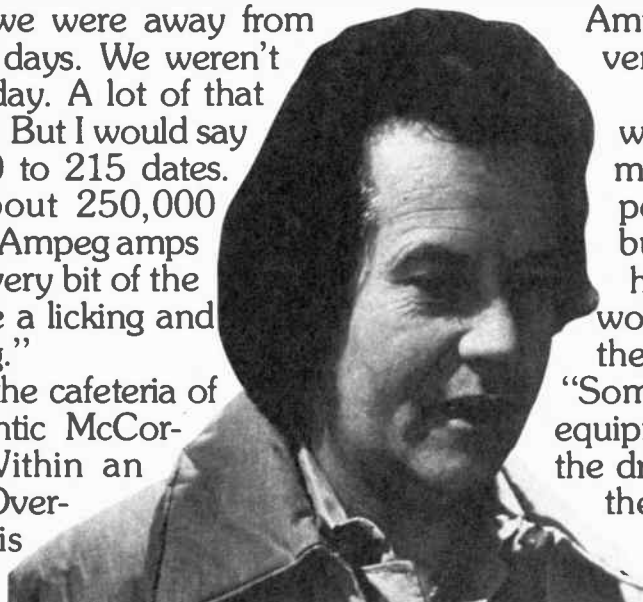
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We were in the cafeteria of Chicago's gigantic McCormick Place. Within an hour, Tommy Overstreet and his Nashville Express band were to perform in the Arle Crown Theatre along with Roy Clark and Barbara Fairchild. Tommy lit up a cigarette, took a slug of coffee, and in-between signing autographs, told us why he prefers Ampeg over any other amplifier.



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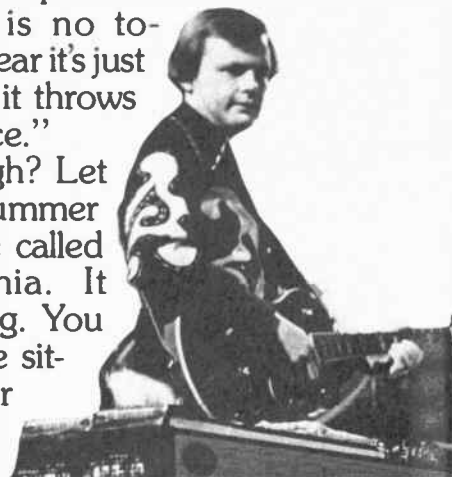
"Sometimes we're forced to use other equipment. We've played in clubs where the drums were actually nailed down to the floor. No way we could set up our own equipment. That's when you learn there is a difference in amps. The band sounds

different. There is no togetherness. To my ear it's just not the same and it throws off the performance."

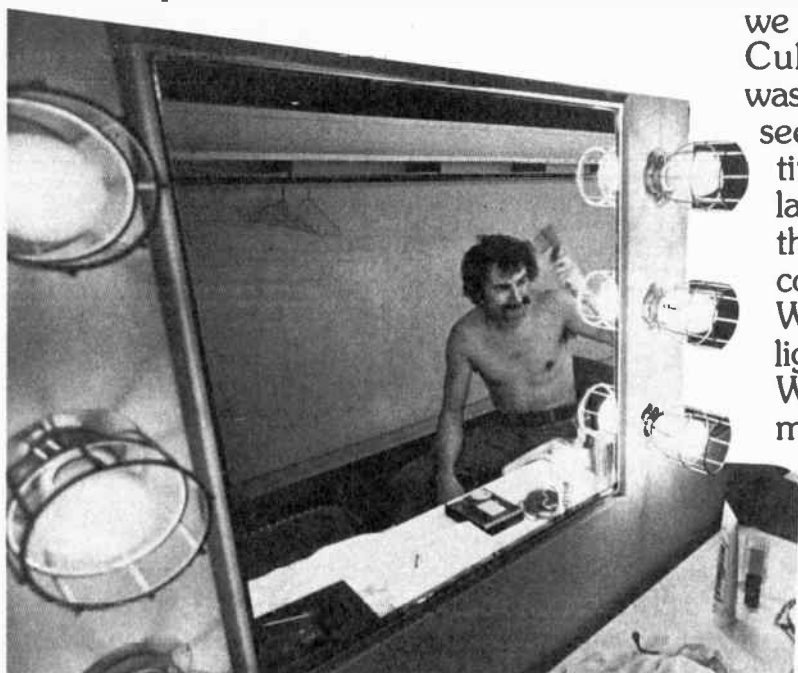
"Is Ampeg tough? Let me tell you. Last summer we played a place called Culpeper, Virginia. It was an outdoor gig. You see all the people sitting out in their lawn chairs and they're digging country music.

Well, I was on stage and all of a sudden lightning started dancing across the sky. Within minutes there was a cloudburst. I mean it rained like somebody unzipped the heavens. Our electrical equipment was totally, absolutely soaked. We didn't have time to dry it off. The next gig we just plugged them in and they worked perfectly."

Bob Rippy, the lead guitarist, strolled up to the table. Smiley Roberts who plays the steel guitar was with him. Rip added another war story. "One time we flew up to Canada and when the airlines people were unloading the baggage section they dropped one of our Ampegs. All



"Bob Rippy has already cleaned up his."



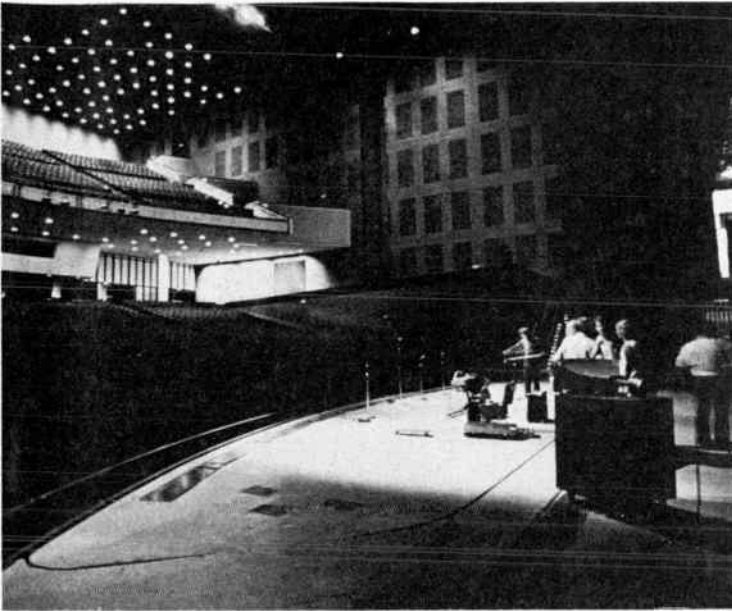
"Smiley Roberts cleans up his act."

"Today we play in front of 4,400 people. Next week we'll be in a small club which seats only 300. Everywhere we go it's a different acoustic setting. One day it's chicken, next day it's feathers. But

t sound we've ever had."

Tommy Overstreet
The Nashville Express

me all the highs I want. And a lot of bottom. It's not a booming bass bottom, not a thud like another amp I could name. I use a heavy reverb for a violin effect. I use it in combination with the fuzz tone and it gives me a kind of simulated eight or nine violins playing. If I didn't have Ampeg to give me that desired tone or sound it would affect my playing. Because you know, when it doesn't sound right you don't put your whole heart and soul in your playing."

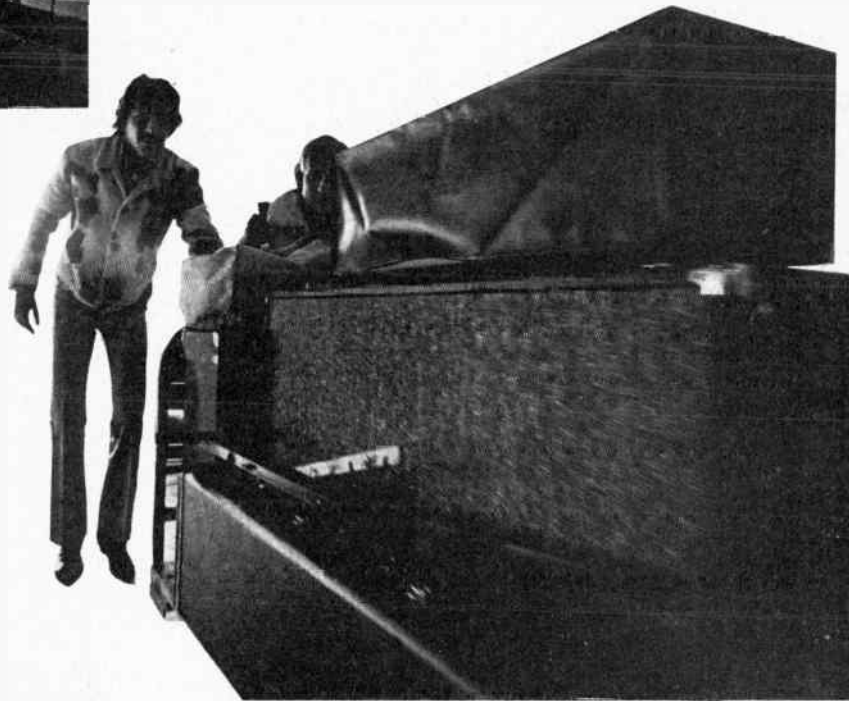


"One day it's chicken, next day it's feathers."

115 pounds of it fell from the belly of the plane clear to the ground. Two of the supports broke but it worked fine that night."

Smiley is the one who puts Ampeg to the acid test. His steel guitar has two necks, each with a set of ten strings. There are tremendous highs and lows. "Ampeg gives a ballsier sound. That's the only way I can describe it. I've played through other equipment but when I'd punch it up a little the sound would start breaking up. Ampeg gives

"We logged 250,000 land miles last year."

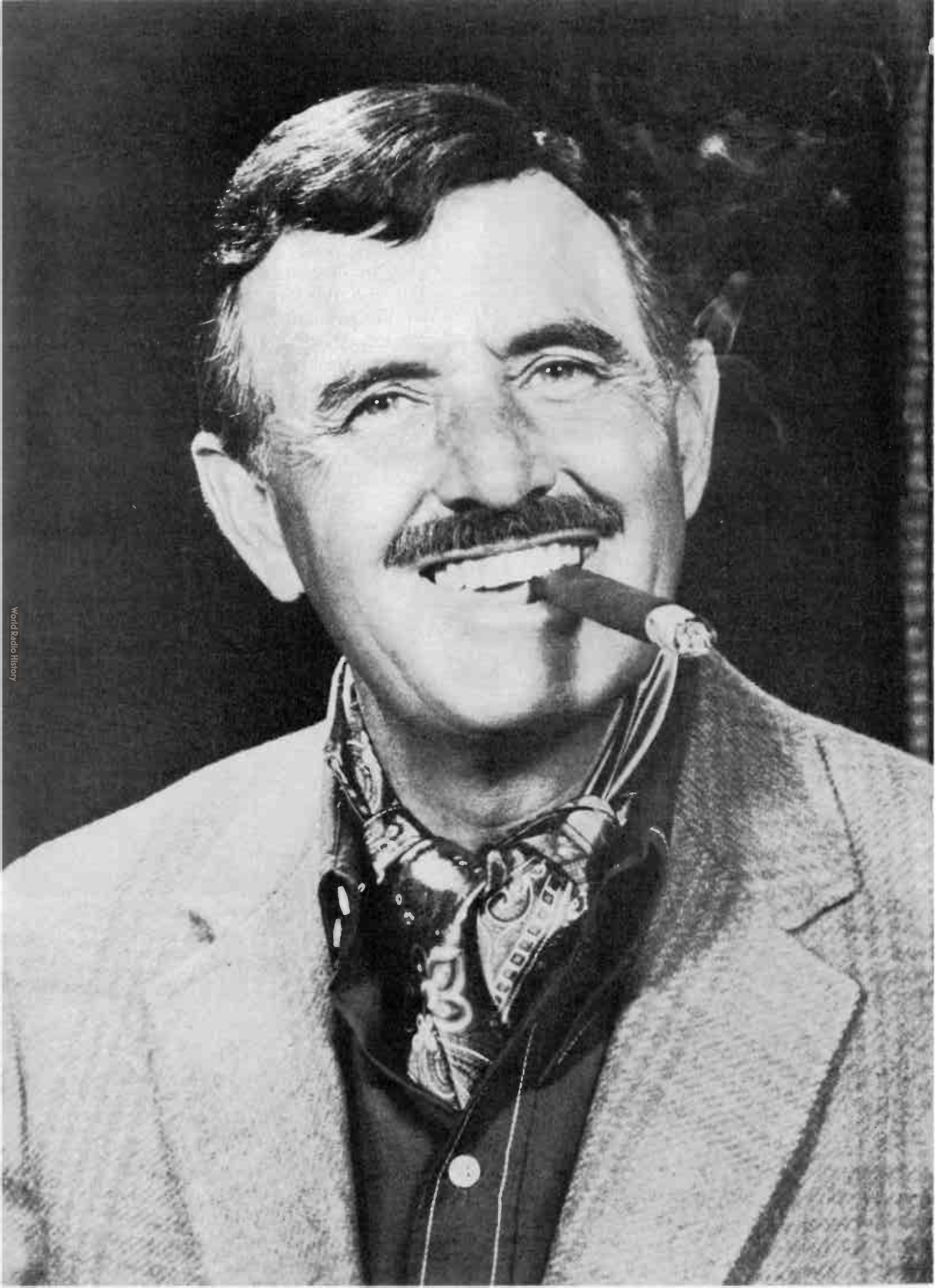


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ARCHIE CAMPBELL IS CORNY AND PROUD OF IT

by MICHAEL DAVID

Funnyman Archie Campbell of *Hee Haw*, sits across from me while Jim Malloy, Campbell's producer for his debut Elektra LP looks on with subdued reflection. We sit in one of Nashville's finest steak houses waiting for dinner and the easy flow of conversation between Campbell and myself serves as just the right appetizer. Sincere, and unaffectedly affable, Archie shows a vitality as bright as his love for life.

Archie, I ask, is *Hee Haw* ready to acknowledge its debt to Rowan and Martin's *Laugh In* for inspiration and structural format of the show? "Sh-", he responds. "Did we borrow, no. *Hee Haw* is an outright ripoff from *Laugh In*. But we intended that *Hee Haw* be corny and therein lies the charm. We wanted to capitalize on the dumb country bumpkin image!"

Although a comic in *Hee Haw*'s sketch-like vignette tradition, Campbell has a diversity that makes him quite comfortable as an after dinner speaker. As a matter of fact, his debut album for Elektra (released in August) was taped live before an after-dinner audience in Gatlinburg, Te. which appears to be one of his favorite haunts. As far as Campbell is concerned after-dinner speaking is, "The chance to really do your thing. Television limits you and the intimacy of a dinner performance makes me feel more comfortable." But watching Archie in any situation always makes him look comfortable.

Campbell's preparation for any given dinner is both planned and spontaneous. The planned parts are the innumerable bits and pieces he has planted and filed in his mind and the spontanelty comes into

play during the course of the dinner. "The material always has to be strong," he says. "And during the course of the dinner I get the best vantage point of the situation and then proceed to incorporate my strongest material." Asked how he felt about the kind of humor Don Rickles does he piped up, "He has a basic format catalogued in his mind. I coordinate old stuff but I steal just like any other comedian does."

That is what makes Campbell different from most. A frank, candid, upfront appraisal of the situation that makes talking to Archie as fresh and untainted as the Tennessee countryside. He is an easygoing individual who flows along with a marked sense of internal satisfaction.

He feels that the people he meets and the audiences he performs for are basically the same and that, "You have to do what you do, regardless of where you do it." Interestingly enough, Campbell's captivated audiences in Gatlinburg, Te. are just as rapt as those in New York City, where he appeared at the famous concert with Buck Owens in Carnegie Hall a few years back.

Although he is the first to admit that what he does is regional humor, it definitely has a national appeal. Regional and ethnic humor like Freddy Prinze of *Chico And The Man*, or the Black comedies such as *Sanford And Son* and *The Jeffersons* is just as appealing to the members of that particular group as to those outside of it. This is not a new phenomenon. After all, remember *The Beverly Hillbillies*? The same holds true with Campbell's comedy. The people in the southern United States may get a more identified charge out of what he is doing,

but people in the more urbanized and congested areas of the country can appreciate what he is doing.

The fact is, Archie deals with many situations that we all experience, and uses this as a common denominator, putting his touch of corn in just the right places. For example, he does a routine on his new album about flying. He says, "I get into the plane and sit down in my seat. I look down and I tell you those people looked like ants." In another voice he picks it up and says, "They are ants stupid, we didn't take off yet!" Then the stewardess says, "Is there anything you would like," and straps him in his seat. "I couldn't get to it even if she'd let me."

Continuing in this vein, Campbell's ability to capitalize on everyday situations is at the core of his talent. A sporting event takes on an entirely different perspective when Archie tells it. "I walked into an arena and it said 'Hockey Here Tonight.' I saw these guys scootin' around on skates, and there was these two fellers that had baskets (goalies). Somebody

dropped this thing (puck) and they all started bangin' their sticks and says you ain't puttin' that in my basket. I don't blame them. You ain't puttin' that in my basket" he says again. "What's that? The puck. Well, let's get the puck outa there."

Playing with spoonerisms (switching consonant sounds), Campbell juggles a cute bit called *Mrs. Pitts And Her Pet Snake Petey*. "Pitt was full of hiss. Hiss in your own Pitt, when she doesn't have a pit to hiss in," and so on. Such contortions with words and ideas give Archie the edge he calls his own.

. . .

Overallled, bright eyed and bushy-tailed he steps into the limelight on the *Hee Haw* stage and does his thing. He is perfectly suited to the material he presents because he writes most of it. In fact, he is a chief writer of *Hee Haw*. He is not into satire and only the lightest shade of parody touches his work. Campbell is more an escapist kind of comedian. "The people I appeal to just don't want to think." This

simple kind of relaxed humor is his trademark and carries over into his private life.

At one time Archie's primary ambition was to be an artist. His major in college was art and he devoted himself entirely to this pursuit. He found the therapeutic and relaxing qualities of painting very gratifying and has exhibited his work in downtown Nashville. He gives paintings to close friends and says, "My art is like my comedy, and that's real simple!" Again, unpretentious Archie pulls no punches. His primary artistic mode is landscapes and portraits. There have been numerous accolades of Campbell's work by noted professionals. Now he pursues painting as a hobby, and it helps him to unwind from the tension of show business. He is keenly interested in Surrealist art and the more contemporary aesthetic movements, and holds Salvador Dali as one of his favorites. Above all Archie is very in touch with the now of art and also appreciates the *old masters*.

A long-time friend of Mr. Guitar, Campbell says, "I've known Chet Atkins since he was 17. We're real good friends and we always have been. We play golf all the time." And golf is one of Archie's favorite pastimes. In fact, he built the third lighted golf course in the United States, at Knoxville, Tn. He explains the sticky situation of putting a night course together because of the illumination. If it is off then the player will be blinded by the lights. The angles of the lights are of great importance and require a great deal of experimentation and testing before they are correct. Archie's *Musc City Pro Celebrity Golf Tournament* has been raising money for charities since 1966.

Minnie Pearl is an old friend of Archie's. "She's the first lady of comedy. She always picks her moments and throws a hell of a party. Most people involved in comedy are good friends."

In 1958, Campbell moved from Knoxville to Nashville and joined the Grand Ole Opry as a writer, comic and singer. Soon after, he signed a contract with RCA and has done radio, albums, television and movies. He says there are plans underway to have the entire *Hee Haw* cast film a movie. Sounds exciting.

The LP *Have A Laff On Me* was the record that brought enough attention to Archie for the *Hee Haw* people to recognize him. He said, "Record albums best convey my comedy. Television can burn you out much quicker. I don't need oversaturation, I want to feel it out naturally."

Will success spoil Archie Campbell? I doubt it, he's just too natural and real a person. "I'm not money crazy and I appreciate the really simple things. I like to listen to the birds, work in my garden, paint, play golf and most of all play it straight."

Archie Campbell is best summed up by his friend Chet Atkins. Atkins terms Campbell, "Not only a humorist but a humanist." ■

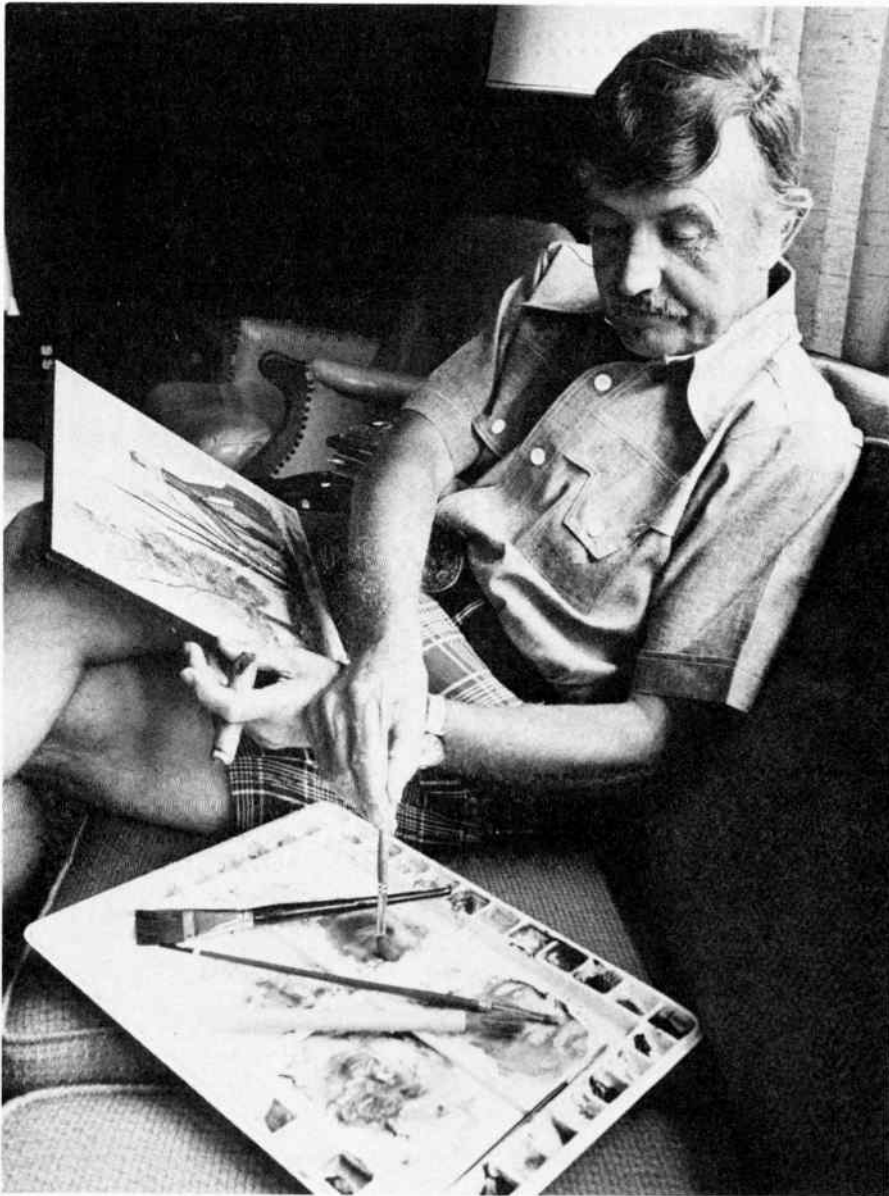


Photo: Mike Borum

Among Archie's many talents is painting — and he's really good.

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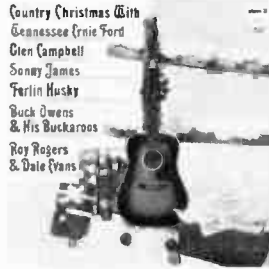
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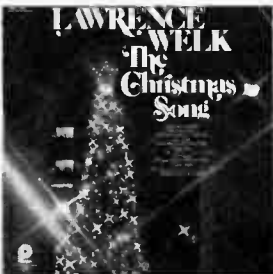
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MO116

MARY LOU TURNER:

Did she ruin Bill Anderson?

by ALANNA NASH



Photos: Michael Borum

Sitting in the kitchen of her white brick colonial, high on a Goodlettsville hill overlooking Nashville, Mary Lou Turner doesn't look much like the awful, sinful woman all those letter writers say she is. True, part of her body is uncovered—she's going barefoot today—but no one can say she's combed her long, brown hair in a seductive style, because what few chestnut locks are visible underneath a red kerchief are tightly wound around

the pink and green rollers she's borrowed from her neighbor.

As she lounges at the breakfast table in a denim jumpsuit and apologizes for her appearance, saying the beauty shop couldn't fit her in before a photographer was scheduled to arrive that afternoon, she does not seem like your basic corrupter of morals. But that's what they call her, these shocked and furious letter writers who declared, "It is such people as

Bill Anderson and Mary Lou Turner who have caused the wave of adultery and immorality that has all but destroyed America."

Anybody having trouble following the above has obviously not been near a radio since before November, 1975—the month Anderson and Mary Lou released their duet, *Sometimes*, a song that eavesdrops on a man and woman weighing the pros and cons of turning to each other in solace



Mary Lou with neighbor's dog.



Tending a plant



Left, with her dog, Candy. At top center she listens to some demo tape home. Above, in her car with step son, John Thomas David, and daughter, Leslie.

for their dissatisfactory marriages. Both *Sometimes* and its follow-up duet, *That's What Made Me Love You*, which mentions "a motel in Dallas," zoomed to first place on the country charts, but not before they raised the eyebrows if not the ire of many hard-core Anderson fans. And who do these outraged listeners think is to blame for debasing their once-wholesome, upstanding hero? None other than "Lulu," as Anderson calls her, who has continued the theme of love between experienced partners with her popular single, *It's Different With You*—also written by Bill Anderson.

"Well, I guess I've spoiled his image," Mary Lou says with a broad smile, her speech pattern hinting of Hazard, Ky., where she was born and lived as a small child before her family moved to Dayton, Ohio. Then, she exaggerates her accent and is transformed into one of Anderson's former followers. "He's hired that girl from Kentucky, boy, and she's just went wild and ruined that clean-cut Bill Anderson!," she mocks.

What is, of course, ironic about all of this, is that it was Anderson, not Mary Lou, who conceived and wrote *Sometimes*, and who didn't offer to demo it with her until six months after he wrote it. All in all, it was three years from the time Mary Lou joined Anderson's show until they recorded together.

What kept their voices apart for so long was twofold: They weren't sure they could sing together, for one reason, and eventually it was the song, and not the desire to sing with each other, that brought it all about. And secondly, since becoming a member of the Anderson

troupe in January of 1973 upon Jan Howard's departure, Mary Lou had recorded four singles for MCA—*Poor Sweet Baby* (later a hit for Jean Shepard), *All That Keeps Me Going*, *Come On Home*, and *The World Needs Country Music*—none of which did anything spectacular. For her to have recorded a duet with Anderson at the outset of their association might have meant that any recognition Mary Lou achieved would have been because of Anderson's popularity. Both she and Anderson hoped and thought she could be successful on her own.

"We didn't want anybody to say, 'She rode in on his shirttail,'" Mary Lou explains. "But then after my singles didn't do anything, even with pretty good airplay, MCA started thinking, 'Maybe she is gonna have to ride on his shirttail.'"

About the same time, Anderson discovered several producers in Nashville wanted the song for their own artists. Realizing it could be a hit and wanting to record it himself, he looked for someone to sing it with him. Since Mary Lou was part of his show, it was only natural that they record it together.

Relaxing after working hours in his award-decorated office on Nashville's Division Street, Anderson, dressed in blue jeans, a printed western shirt and his familiar white shoes, admitted that the success of *Sometimes* might have encouraged him to record similar material in an attempt to counteract his "country square" image. "That goody-two-shoes thing has bothered me," he said. "It's nice to be well thought of, and I appreciate that, but people have put this goody-goody label on me. If they'll go back and

really listen to a lot of things I've done in the past, they'll find out that some of it wasn't what they thought it was."

Ask Mary Lou what she thinks of the songs, and you'll get a different response. "We really didn't say we were gonna go out and change Bill Anderson's image," the 29-year-old singer says. "We did *Sometimes* because we thought it was a hit song. Some people say it's dirty. But the times have changed, and if you don't change with 'em, you get lost and left behind. This is why Bill was a hit 15 years ago and still is today. He's changed. And it just happened to be at the time I joined the show that the music started turning over and he started turning with it.

"Besides," she continues, "most of the songs on the *Sometimes* album are husband and wife types of things, having to do with things that happen to couples, married, divorced or running around."

* * *

Surely, there are no utopian marriages, but from what both Anderson and Mary Lou say, her own comes close to being ideal. (It is also said there is probably no happier couple than Bill and his wife, Becky.) A happy marriage is a genuine rarity in the music business, and Mary Lou's is doubly unique in that her husband, David Byrd, is also in the industry. A musician and independent producer, Byrd has, with Anderson, just formed a production company, aptly called *Whisper Byrd Productions*. Anderson says any story about Mary Lou is not complete without a great deal of mention about her husband, who helped Mary Lou and Bill learn to sing together, trimming Mary

(Continued on page 68)



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Pickers: The Hands That Made Nashville Great

by VALERIE RIDENOUR

Tell them what you want—hot licks that make your hair stand on end, lonesome sounds that bring a tear to your eye, sprightly tempos that set your feet to tapping and your fingers to snapping. You name it and Nashville's pickers have it.

And when we say "have it" we really mean "have it." Because these fantastic musicians always have an extra something to give—their own ideas, their own feel for the music, their souls. And they do it without a lot of rehearsal—an important factor when one city alone has to turn out some \$300 million worth of records a year.

So we've interviewed some of the best pickers in Nashville, just to give you some idea of what these men are like and what kind of instruments they play. A lot of men we would have liked to talk to weren't available when we were because of their incredibly busy schedules. But it almost doesn't matter which ones you meet. They're all great. They are the backbone of Nashville's recording industry. Their hands made Nashville great.

Photos: Steven Boyd



JOHNNY GIMBLE

It wouldn't be country music without the fiddle. And Johnny Gimble is one of those rare virtuoso fiddlers who can get right down under your skin.

What kind of instrument does a great fiddler play? Johnny bought an old four-string fiddle in Vienna, Austria, when in the service. "It wasn't a very good four-string fiddle, so I had the late W.T. (Tom) Coburn add a fifth key. He added a little wider finger board and a heavier bass bar and made a five-string fiddle out of it. "I used it without a pickup until I backed over it with a car in 1969," Gimble says with a grin. After the instrument was rebuilt, Johnny started using a Barcus-Berry pickup.

Gimble also plays a Gibson mandolin with Fender electric pickup, has an old hockshop banjo he's specially proud of, an old Gibson mandola, a Japanese Lincoln mandolin and an Ariana flat-top guitar that he uses while songwriting.

Johnny Gimble tends to talk about how well others play when you ask him about his own playing. But no matter what he may tell you, Johnny will go down in musical history as one of the all-time great fiddlers.



BUDDY EMMONS

One of the giants among steel players, Buddy Emmons designed the double-neck ten-string stock model Emmons guitar he uses for record sessions. With eight floor pedals and seven knee levers to contend with, one can readily see that it is not the easiest instrument to learn.

Possessed of creative genius, Buddy is always improving his playing while developing inventions. His newest instrument is a twelve-string double-neck which uses three pick-ups rather than one. He says, "It has two pick-ups on the right hand for stereo effect. It's stereo wired completely through, and you can use it in either two amps or in both circuits of one amp."

Outside the country field, Emmons is considered one of the nation's finest jazz steel guitarists, having played with such memorable jazz artists as Johnny Smith, Jimmy Bryant, Hank Garland, and Nashville's own Billy Byrd.

Buddy also plays other instruments. His Dobro is the Rose design, completely chrome plated with beautiful etched designs.

Around the house, Buddy uses his nylon-string acoustic Fender to write songs and to work out chords. "Steel is set up a certain way, and you can only get so many chords. I can figure things out easier on a guitar than I can on a steel."



HENRY STRZELECKI

Can any of you pickers out there imagine walking into a Nashville studio to play your first session at age sixteen as an equal to Hank Garland and Grady Martin? That's just what Henry Strzelecki did, with only one previous session under his belt, and that cut in his home town of Birmingham, Alabama. It was terrifying for young Henry, but the tension was eased when Hank realized how scared the young bassist was, and began smiling and nodding when Henry played a good lick.

Henry has played with the best of them from Chet Atkins, Eddy Arnold, George Jones, Tammy Wynette, Bobby Bare, to the pop and jazz stars like Patti Page, Bob Dylan, Perry Como, Fats Domino, Gordon Lightfoot and Louis Armstrong.

Gibson is Henry Strzelecki's choice for an electric bass. He owns two, a Ripper and a G 3. "Although they are basically the same," he says, "I prefer the G 3. It has an extra pick-up that gives it an extra tonal range." Strzelecki has four upright basses. All of them are very old, three probably of German origin. Although bass claims most of Henry's time, he does play guitar. Which guitar? "Anybody's I can get away with!" Once on a Bobby Bare session Henry wanted to play guitar. The renowned guitarist Grady Martin told him, "Here. Play mine and I'll play bass." Henry laughs, saying, "And you know, that song went to number one."



BUDDY SPICHER

Buddy Spicher has been fiddling since he was 12. Except for some instruction from his brother, he is self-taught. In 1954, he began playing the Wheeling, W. Va., Jamboree, where he was discovered three years later by Audrey Williams, Hank, Sr.'s widow. She brought him to Nashville, but he had to put in several years on the road with stars like Hank Snow, Kitty Wells and Ray Price before he made it as a studio musician in about 1966. Other names he's recorded with include Joan Baez, Henry Mancini, Elvis Presley, Johnny Cash and many, many more.

Buddy did his share of starving while on the way up, working at repairing instruments and such. "I even tried selling vacuum cleaners and cookware." Now, however, he has more session calls than he has time for.

The fiddle we first heard Buddy playing at a recording session was a Stringvision with electric pickup. He also owns two old Italian violins, a viola, a cello, and a highly prized Amati violin which experts consider the equal of the famed Stradivarius violins.



RAY EDENTON

Ray Edenton has played rhythm guitar on some of the most memorable sessions to come out of Nashville, like the first duet between Red Foley and Kitty Wells. His fellow pickers hereabouts call him Mr. Rhythm Guitar. He calls himself an old Hillbilly. Ray played on all but one of the late Patsy Cline's records.

Ray Edenton played on the Everly Brothers' records, which set a new trend. "It was the start of the high-string guitar. I used to tune up one string an octave higher. It became known as the high third. Grady Martin, as far as I can remember was the first to tune the last four strings up an octave." With a smile Ray joked, "That was just before rock and roll put us out of business." That was hardly the case. Ray played on all but one of Conway Twitty's famous rock and roll releases. Ray still records with Conway today. "What we called rock and roll then was just funky country."

All of the instruments pictured with Ray Edenton were made during the thirties. He frequently plays his flat-top guitar and enjoys its clear, ringing sound. The arch-top Gibson was played before drums were used on country sessions. Ray used to slap the strings to simulate a drum sound. The high-string guitar (two regular strings and four raised strings), plus the flat-top are the guitars Ray uses most on the records he cuts today. Ray owns two hand-made Stromberg guitars and a cherished electric guitar given him by Chet Atkins. Ray also owns two Fenders. "I used an old Gretsch back when I was chinking (playing rhythm on muted strings). It gave me a bigger sound than the Fender, not quite as raunchy. If they want something raunchy, I play the Fender."



BOBBY DYSON

Playing bass guitar on record sessions is Bobby's greatest love, others being C.B. and his funky Log Cabin Recording Studio. The bass he uses in most sessions is a Fender mongrel—it has a Jazz body with a Precision neck. Any paint that might have once covered it has long since worn off. "Whenever this (neck) warps, I'll put the jazz neck back on it," says Bobby. "I'll soak this one in water 'till it straightens back out."

It would be impossible to list the artists Bobby Dyson has played with over the years, but we will mention a few. Sonny James, Ivory Joe Hunter, Dave Dudley, and Porter Wagoner appear among the early records Bobby played on. Pop and rock producers call on Dyson often, for folks like the Monkees, and J.J. Cale, who cut at Bobby's Log Cabin Studio. Playboy records producer Eddie Kilroy, called a radical by some of the old guard, asked Bobby to be leader on sessions for his new artist, Mickey Gilley. Radicalism paid off with records crossing over into the pop charts. Dyson's playing also enhanced Dolly Parton's hits, like *Bargain Store*, *Love Is Like a Butterfly*, and the cooking *Jolene*.

In addition to his regular session work, he is participating in the development of Republic Records, Gene Autry's new label, working with producer Dave Burgess to find and develop new young talent.



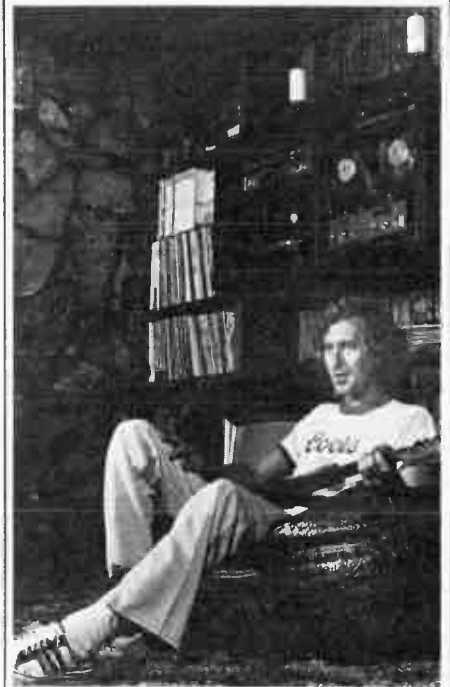
HAROLD BRADLEY

Many in the know consider Harold the most gifted sessions guitarist around. He has played behind just about everyone—Boots Randolph, Roger Miller, Perry Como, Henry Mancini, the Nashville Brass, Ray Price, Jerry Lee Lewis, Tom T. Hall, Johnny Rodriguez, Leon Russell, Conway and Loretta, and so on and on.

Harold sports a hand-made D'Angelico of which he is very proud and which he uses when he needs "... a nice, big, fat note—a nice mellow round sound." For normal lead work, he uses a black Les Paul Gibson, vintage 1967, with Humbucking pickups. He also has a Fender Telecaster and a Ramirez Flamenco nylon-string guitar.

There's also a Danelectro Bass, which the great Hank Garland put him onto. He points out the difference between an electric bass, which has only four strings, and a true bass guitar, which has four bass strings, plus two strings up above in the guitar range. "Everybody keeps saying bass guitar for electric bass," he says.

There's almost no way to summarize this man's fabulous career. Suffice it to say that he's respected by everyone in music city for his great influence on the field of country music, for his fine musicianship, and for his fine personality.



MIKE LEECH

Just as every picker has different tastes in music, resulting in licks only he can play, every musician has his own way of thinking about the instrument he plays. Mike says, "I play an old Fender Precision bass. It's about a 1957 model, and you can't find it any more. They're very rare. It's been on a lot of hit records, although I didn't play on all of them." Mike shares his treasured Fender with close buddy Tommy Cogbill, who plays many of Music City's pop sessions. "I acquired it from Tommy. It's a good old ax; it's been around a long time."

Bass was not his first musical experience. He played trumpet through high school and college, which helped later when he became an arranger. "At Memphis State University they started a stage band, but they didn't have a bass player. I said I'd try, but I didn't know anything about bass. I learned on a big upright bass, but not too much. I could read, and that was about it. I had a guitar and played in some rock and roll bands."

Mike's special talent turns up in all kinds of music. From country-pop hits like B.J. Thomas' *Somebody Done Somebody Wrong Song* on which he both played bass and arranged strings, Mike turned to Cal Smith's 1974 Country Song of the Year, *Country Bumpkin*. Dobie Gray's *Drift Away*, and Billy Swan's *I Can Help* complete the picture, disclosing the magnitude of Mike's virtuosity.



DALE SELLERS

They call it chicken pickin'. It's the kind of country music juke boxes are loaded with, the kind cowboys and their ladies love to dance to. It's country music heavily laden with the beat of rock 'n roll, with perhaps a touch of western influence. And it's southpaw picker Dale Sellers' specialty.

Dale brought two of his 18 guitars to our interview. "One's a Fender and the other is an Ibanez," he said. "... it usually takes six months to get a left-handed guitar. I have a Gibson that took me 11 months to get."

Asked if he can read music, Dale said, "Not enough to hurt my playing. Ninety nine percent of the world is ignorant," he laughed.

Dale plays many gospel sessions, which he says can get wild. "The closest thing to rock around—some screaming stuff."

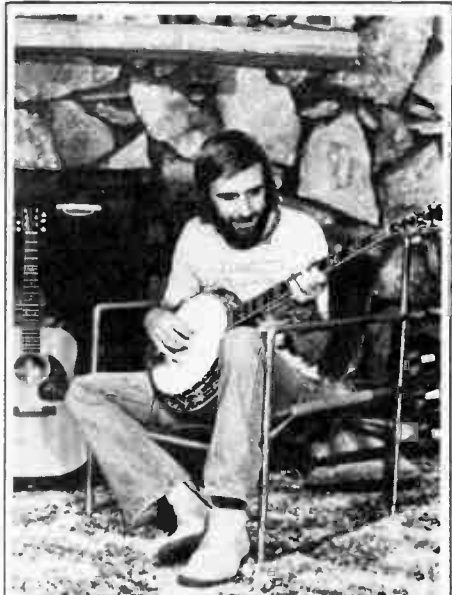
He also can boogie with the best. To put it in his own words, "I'm the funkiest cat in the world."



BOB MOORE

According to the Nashville local of the American Federation of Musicians, Bob Moore has more recording sessions under his belt than any picker in the history of Music City. One of his first big records was *Supertime*, sung by Jimmy Davis, followed by Bobby Helms' *Special Angel* and the Brenda Lee hits like *Jingle Bell Rock*. He played on all of Jim Reeves' discs, and those of Chet Atkins. Then there's disks by Faron Young, Ferlin Huskey, Tom T. Hall, Tammy Wynette, Billie Jo Spears, and many, many others. Jerry Lee Lewis says he won't cut unless Bob Moore is there.

Bob's sessions work is divided about equally between electric and stand-up bass. He has five stand-up instruments, one an Italian job made about 1667. He got it from an old symphony bassist in Chicago. The other instruments are French, German, Czechoslovakian and American. For electric work, Bob prefers his Fender Jazzman. He had an inexpensive Japanese Tiesco bass which he liked very much until someone who also liked it lifted it from his car.



BOBBY THOMPSON

Although other session men play banjo, and very well, we believe Bobby Thompson has no peer. His artistry has delighted record buyers and TV watchers alike. You have undoubtedly seen him on *Hee Haw*.

Bobby's choice of instruments begins with his beautiful Baldwin banjo. "I reckon I play it because the neck just feels better than any I've ever played. The tone is good; about anywhere on the neck it's gonna be about equal." The instrument has a rosewood back and appears to be inlaid with a rich golden stripe.

Bobby also has an old Martin D-18 guitar (1956), a Yamaha guitar, which he has strung up with a high string.

Although the famous Thompson banjo has backed up vocals and instrumentals by virtually every country star, from Ray Stevens to Danny Davis' Nashville Brass and Johnny Cash, his picking also backs up such fine pop stars as Olivia Newton-John.



PETE WADE

Although music city's producers hire Pete for mostly country sessions, he plays all types of music. Describing his favorite guitar, Pete disclosed, "I play a 355 Gibson. It's got some hand pedals on it that another guitar player put on there for me. I use that one for a certain type of song, slow songs, ballads, and then we use a telecaster and a standard Dobro. I play rhythm on a lot of things. For that I use a Martin D-28 guitar."

Every picker has memorable sessions.

Pete says, "I worked with Conway Twitty for a couple of years, played on his records. I enjoyed that. He's really a gas to play with." On the subject of other players Pete mentioned the great Hank Garland. "He was one of my biggest inspirations."

After our photographing was over Pete showed off his 355. "I've got it wired different," he explained. "It don't sound like any 355 you've ever heard."

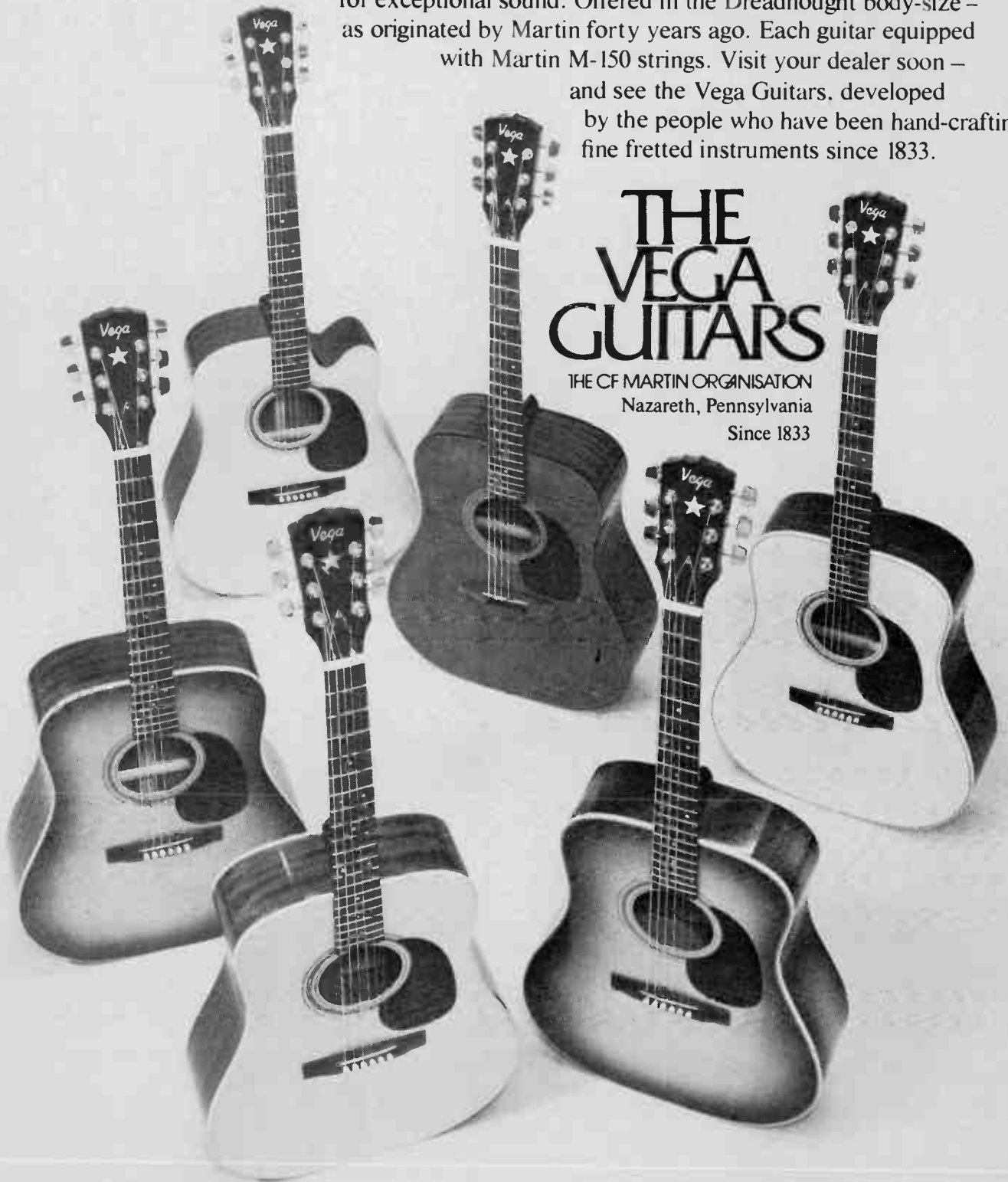
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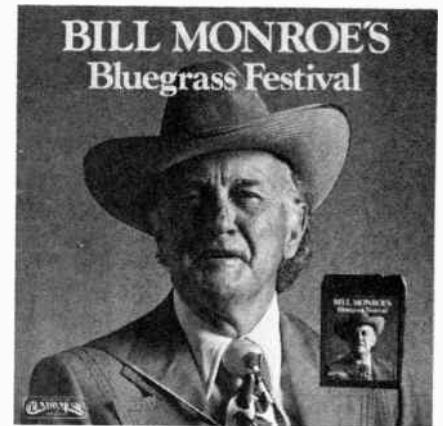


Hank Williams On Stage

RECORD ONE: Rovin' Cowboy/Wedding Bells/Lovesick Blues/I'll Have A New Body/Lost Highway/Joe Clark/I'm A Long Gone Daddy/Where The Soul Of Man Never Dies/I'm Tellin' You/Bill Cheatham/When God Comes And Gathers His Jewels/The Blues Come Around/I Wanna Live And Love Always RECORD TWO: Happy Rovin' Cowboy/You're Gonna Change (Or I'm Gonna Leave)/Settin' The Woods On Fire/There's A Bluebird On Your Windowsill/Fire On The Mountain/I Saw The Light/The Tramp On The Street/Help Me Understand/Fingers On Fire

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RECORD ONE: Mule Skinner Blues/Nine Pound Hammer/Uncle Pen/Blue Moon Of Kentucky/Precious Memories/I Am A Pilgrim/Old Joe Clark/Lonesome Road Blues/Cripple Creek/Long Black Veil RECORD TWO: Kentucky Mandolin/Time Changes Everything/Peach Pickin' Time In Georgia/New John Henry Blues/Farther Along/Kentucky Waltz/Sitting On Top Of The World/Banks Of The Ohio/Foggy River/Blue Ridge Mountain Blues



Good Old Country Gospel

RECORD ONE: Loretta Lynn/In The Sweet Bye & Bye; Jimmie Davis/How Great Thou Art; Red Foley/One Step More; Bill Monroe/I Am A Pilgrim; Ernest Tubb/I Saw The Light; Bill Anderson/Reverend Mr. Black; Loretta Lynn/I'd Rather Have Jesus; Webb Pierce/Far Away; Kitty Wells/Dust On The Bible/Jimmie Davis/Old Rugged Cross RECORD TWO: Red Foley/Amazing Grace; Wilburn Bros./I've Got That Old Time Religion In My Heart; Bill Monroe/Jesus, Hold My Hand; Jimmy Martin/Lift Your Eyes To Jesus; Ernest Tubb/Wings Of A Dove; Jimmie Davis/Highway To Heaven; Red Foley/Peace In The Valley; Ernest Tubb/great Speckled Bird; Kitty Wells/I Heard My Savior Call; Red Foley/Just A Closer Walk With Thee

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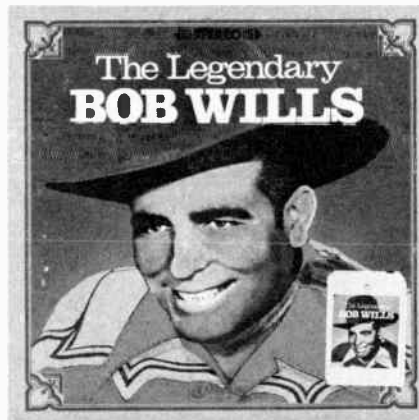
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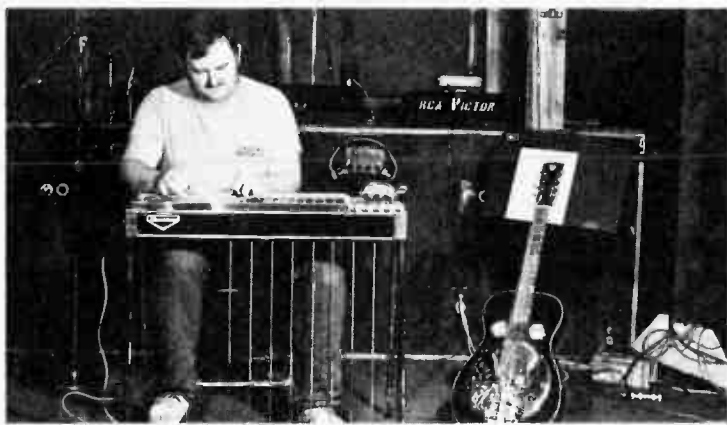
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WELDON MYRICK

One of Texas' finest gifts to Nashville is Weldon Myrick, the gentle giant of the pedal steel.

Weldon sometimes uses gadgets other players haven't gotten around to trying. "There's a ring modulator that's similar to the Emmons Fuzz Tone that adds a high octave to the note that you actually play. There's a distortion device that's different from an ordinary fuzz tone." His steel is an Emmons.

At the beginning of his career Weldon moved to Big Springs, Tex. when the pedal sound came out. "Bud Isaacs played a lick on a tune called *Slowly*, by Webb Pierce. It changed the whole world of the steel guitar. Gibson manufactured a pedal steel called a multichord, that had three spoon-like pedals coming off the left leg. That's what Bud Isaacs used, maybe Alvino Rey too, though he played a totally different style."

Now, Myrick is in constant demand, not only among fellow Nashvillians but out of town producers as well, pop as well as country. Weldon says about playing record sessions: "There's a fellowship in getting that feeling when the artist is singing and everybody's picking. It makes it nicer when you get an idea and somebody plays it with you. It's communication."



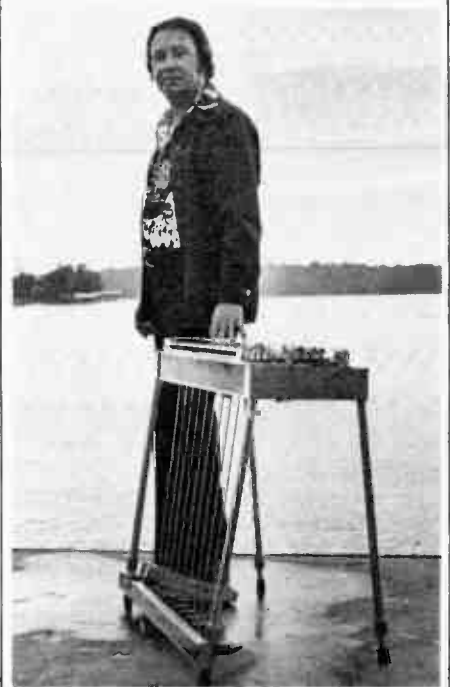
PETE BORDONALI

"I learned to play mandolin before I ever touched the guitar," Pete recalls. "My father and grandfather were both mandolin players."

Pete plays an Aria mandolin, made in Japan. "I buy my instruments for the way they play and the way they sound. I've got a 1924 Martin guitar . . . and a new D-18. A lot of people have the misconception that an instrument has to be old to sound good, but that's not true."

Pete does not spend all his time in the studio playing mandolin. One of the foremost classical guitarists in the session world, he plays many acoustic tracks. His nylon-string guitar, a Japanese Conrad, has the old wooden pegs in it. "I use a Martin D-18 for rhythm. I have two of those, one is high third, one's just a regular. I use a five-string Mastertone banjo."

Although he also plays electric guitar, Pete enjoys playing acoustic instruments and is glad to see music coming back to pure sound, turning away from the gadget-laden electric school of thought. Pete's contributions to recent discs from Perry Como to Andy Williams state his point very well.



CURLEY CHALKER

Curley Chalker plays an MSA steel guitar, made by the Micro-MSA Company. It was designed by a fine steel guitarist and long time friend of Chalker's, Maurice Anderson. It has double ten string necks, eleven floor pedals and eight knee levers. One lever works both necks at once.

Chalker's first session was in Dallas with Lefty Frizzell, whom Curley's own band had turned down as a singer and front man. Lefty had a record cut, but the band didn't expect it to do much. Curley recalls how wrong they were: "After a few weeks *If You've Got the Money, Honey, I've Got the Time* was all you could hear." When Lefty chose his road band, one Curley Chalker was playing steel guitar.

Curley's first Nashville session was with Skeeter Davis. The rest is recording history. Chalker is shy about naming stars he's played with but says, "I recorded a few things with Leon Russell; did a couple of TV things with him." We checked. There were sessions with Simon and Garfunkel, Bill Haley, and most all of the country stars.

Curley doesn't limit his session work to steel. He plays rhythm guitar, lead, and even bass. For rhythm Curley uses an Alvarez, and for lead, a Gibson 355. He plays a Fender Jazz bass. Chalker's choice of Peavey amplifiers is no surprise since he had a hand in designing their Session 400 model.

When he isn't cutting records with Charlie Rich, Webb Pierce, Hank Thompson, Ray Price, Gunilla Hutton, or Marie Osmond, you might find him playing guitar at Opryland. Weekends find him playing fine jazz in a local nitery.

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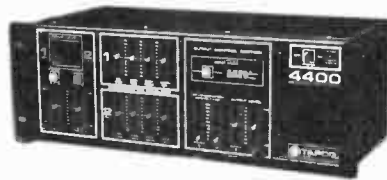
spruce. Bodies will be dreadnought size. Finishes will include stained, natural and shaded. One instrument will be a cutaway. All to come with either hard or soft case.



The brass saddle of Ovation's new Deacon 12-string solid-body electric guitar features individual string placement for all twelve strings. Gives superior sustain for each string, lets each string sound clearly and distinctly to overcome the muddy sound and poor intonation that can be a problem with 12-string electrics. For superior strength, the neck is reinforced with three strips of lightweight, but strong graphite. The sound circuit includes a built-in preamplifier to eliminate volume loss when changing tone settings and increases range of tone possibilities. Comes in red, sunburst and natural, at \$595.



New amps from Kustom include the Kustom V bass amplifier, with 35 watts RMS, using a 12-inch speaker and retailing for \$149. It is a small portable, equipped with line output capability allowing the signal to be fed into a recording studio board or into a sound reinforcement mixer. The Kustom V public address amp features four channels and 130 watts RMS. It has individual gain, high & low EQ-reverb, and master volume and reverb controls and is compatible with most Kustom PA system columns currently available. The unit also includes an inter-connect for coupling. Retail price is \$289.



Since you can't adjust the size, shape and sound reverberation characteristics of every room you play in, electric instruments can use the help of fully adjustable reverb units like the Tapco Model 4400. Gives you the right sound whether you play in a studio or on-stage, small room or large, with hard walls or soft. In fact, you can create the illusion of playing in any type of room, regardless of where you are. Built to withstand hard knocks of studio and road work, and priced economically at \$389.

One of the newest from Guild is a Florentine cutaway version of the D-40 flat-top. This hand-made model (D-40C) has spruce top, mahogany sides and back, slim mahogany neck with adjustable truss rod, rosewood fingerboard, headplate and bridge, mother-of-pearl position dots, chrome-plated fully enclosed machines, and tortoise pickguard. In sunburst or natural.



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If You Were A Country Star, Would You Travel In A Bread Truck?

NARVEL FELTS DOES

by RUSSEL SHAW

January in Canada, says Narvel Felts, ain't the warmest time or place, especially when your car's been smacked by a semi-truck and the heater on the bread truck—the Felts' equivalent of a tour bus—is on the blitz again.

"We had nothing but trouble," says Narvel the Marvel. "We were scheduled for a number of Canadian appearances, and we completed our trek shivering to the bone."

Nothing but trouble indeed. Five straight top-ten smashes. The best selling country song—"Reconsider Me"—in the year-end trade mags last year. A sure-fire concert draw and a favorite of the autograph hounds at this year's Fan Fair in Nashville. In short, a star.

So what's a celebrity like Narvel doing criss-crossing the wintery Canadian wilderness in a cramped bread truck with a busted heater?

Maybe it's a reflection of his sincere, modest and somewhat unassuming personality, a combination of character and inner resolve that has managed to give him strength during 25 years of closed doors, near-hits, bankrupt record companies and the like. Only the last two years of the past quarter century have seen Narvel in the limelight, so it's understandable that, relaxing in his dressing room after a sold-out Nashville gig, he reveals himself as a performer not totally convinced of the permanence of his lofty standing.

While he could certainly afford a tour bus in lieu of cattle-like transport, he

preaches frugality. The royalty checks are big; the gate receipts pour in, but according to those who've been with him during the leaner times, Narvel hasn't changed a bit.

Anyone who spends twenty-five years in any business would be rich in recollections. For an entertainer, this is the time to experience life from a unique standpoint. As Felts describes them, those years take on a sparkle of human interest.

"It was in 1956 before I ever sang in public. I was only 17 then, and kind of shy. At that time, rockabilly had just come along. Elvis had already been popular in the Mid-South area where I was living (Malden, Missouri to be exact) and Carl Perkins was also coming on big. So I entered this talent contest back in Birney, Missouri and sang *Blue Suede Shoes* and *Baby, Let's Play House*.

That inauspicious beginning led to his first paying gig. "The first time I ever earned money to perform was at Blytheville, Ark., singing on the back of a truck at a drive-in restaurant. This local talent promoter named Pop Schnitzers heard about that talent contest and hired a band led by Jerry Murcer to play there. I had gotten to practicing with Jerry, so eventually the thing got arranged where I was to be paid six dollars for singing.

Narvel was still only 17, but the pocket money helped him decide on music as a career. Six dollars may not seem like much, but anyone can relate to the initial thrill of that first paper route, that first baby-sitting job, the first Little League

home run. The exquisitely euphoric conquests of adolescence. "I was hooked," says Narvel.

With that six-dollar payment, Felts was, in the loosest possible definition of the word, a professional. But there are plenty of drive-in restaurants where aspiring stars stand on the back of pickups and flatbeds and warble to the crowd. Narvel wanted something more; the permanence of vinyl.

"After I graduated from high school, I had gone over to Sun Records in Memphis and done a little work there. I managed to record a little bit, but there was nothing either they or I wanted to release. I then decided to go up to Chicago where I managed to record a tune called *Kiss-A-Me Baby*. It was rockabilly all the way."

It was also a flop all the way. Crash went his dreams of instant success.

"Not knowing that much about the record business, at that time I didn't think about records not being hits. I thought that all records that were released were hits—but found out that it doesn't usually turn out that way. It took 17 more years and 29 records for it to happen."

The intervening years were spent trying to tie loose ends together. Felts crossed paths with several name entertainers, some on their way up, some on their way down. Harold Jenkins (soon to become Conway Twitty) was an early associate with Felts an opening act at several Twitty dates. Both Twitty and Narvel spent the early sixties on the Canadian circuit, a locale that proved beneficial to both of





Narvel The Marvel relaxes at local eatery with his son, Narvel Jr.; manager Johnny Morris; wife Loretta The Marvel; and daughter Estacia.

their careers. To this day, they are good friends.

Despite the profitable associations, success was not immediately forthcoming for the lanky Missourian. Uncle Sam, that looming presence who nipped many promising careers in the bud, had to be squarely faced. When a career was finally starting to get off the ground, a three year service commitment was not considered a helpful input.

"I knew that this draft thing was coming up, so in 1961 I chose to take the six-year National Guard route," explains Narvel. "It was something I had to do, but for this period, I felt quite confined. It confined me to my local area for several years."

Most of Felts' appearances were strictly rent-paying engagements—grand designs deferred till later. There was, however, one tangible benefit that came out of those years in uniform. Narvel tells the story with a proud, beaming look on his face.

"We were playing the Twin Gables Club in Blytheville, Ark. when I noticed this girl. She caught my eye immediately. I guess I caught hers, too. She'd come in every Wednesday night and do nothing but stare at me. One night, she got up the nerve to walk up to the stand and request a tune that was popular at the time. It was titled *You Don't Know Me*.

"A short time later, I was at home and got a phone call. It was her. I was kind of tickled about the whole thing. Anyway, we got together, and seven weeks later, we were married. Her name's Loretta; she's from Steele, Missouri."

For the next dozen years, Loretta stood behind him during all the hard times. There were some minor regional hits on several fly-by-night record labels; a moderately successful sojourn with Memphis' Hi Records and a brief stab at television in Jonesboro, Ark. No poverty, just anon-

ymity. A bunch of fizzled rockets of success that failed to orbit from the launching pad.

His big break came in a most unlikely place—Poplar Bluff, Ark, to be exact.

"Around 1972, I was hanging around in Poplar Bluff. My booking agent, Ted Floyd, lived there at the time and was good friends with a local disk jockey named Johnny Morris of KWOC. Somehow, Johnny had always been good to me. He was one of the few people in radio to constantly play my records, even when they weren't selling worth beans. So Ted got Johnny and me together, and we had some long talks about where I was heading. At the time I was thirty-three, wasn't going anywhere, so to say the least, I was open to suggestions.

"I liked the ideas he had. Johnny always had the desire to produce records. Eventually we came to an agreement. After quitting the radio station, he got some backers and formed his own label, Cinnamon Records. We then went to Nashville and did *Drift Away*."

The song, of course, was a top hit. Unfortunately, Cinnamon, due to a distinct lack of money, began to waver and in 1974 sold Narvel's contract to ABC-Dot Records. Under the auspices of a major record label, Narvel's career finally skyrocketed. The hits have followed in rapid succession. *Reconsider Me*, *Funny (How Time Slips Away)*, *Somebody Holds Me*, *Lonely Teardrops* and *My Prayer* have been his biggest. A superb five-piece band called the Driftaways accompanies him on stage, and, yes, on those long jaunts through those Canadian winters.

Ever since his early days on the back of a flatbed truck, Narvel Felts has stuck with rockabilly like an often-jilted but ever faithful lover. His fascination with the offspring of mountain country and city blues goes back to the very beginnings of his time on stage.

His tenacity is not staidness though. It is more a reflection of both the quiet, grim determination and an unswerving self-confidence. Now it's paying off. Rather than the dusty bars on the fringes of the Ozarks, the venue is more likely to be the cushioned stateliness of Opryland. But any way you analyze it, it's still long, lanky Narvel, cashing in on a rockabilly dream.

"I like the road," says Narvel, "But there's nothing like home."

His base is still Malden, Missouri. That girl who once requested *You Don't Know Me* is now Felts' wife of 14 years. They're the proud parents of two children: Stacia, 13, and Narvel Jr., 12.

"My son has a natural talent for drums. If and when he gets serious about it he'll be really good."

Does the proud father intend to encourage his offspring to pursue music? "I'd encourage it if that's what they wanted. Right now, they haven't made up their minds. Of course, if they wanted some advice, my years in the business would make me qualified to give them some direction. But I'm not going to push them; I'll let them choose their own profession."

"Sometimes, the road really does get to me," admits the affable Missourian. "For that reason, when I am home, I mostly just relax, take it easy, maybe go to a movie with Loretta and the kids. I used to hunt and fish when I was a kid, but I don't do any of that now."

"Basically for me, home is a place to count my blessings. Sometimes when I'm off the road, I think back to where I've been and where I am now. At one time, I thought that it would be impossible to achieve. But it's like the impossible dream coming true. I'm very thankful, and appreciate my fans and friends more than anyone could say."

Oh, yes. Narvel and band are still tooling around in that old bread truck. ■

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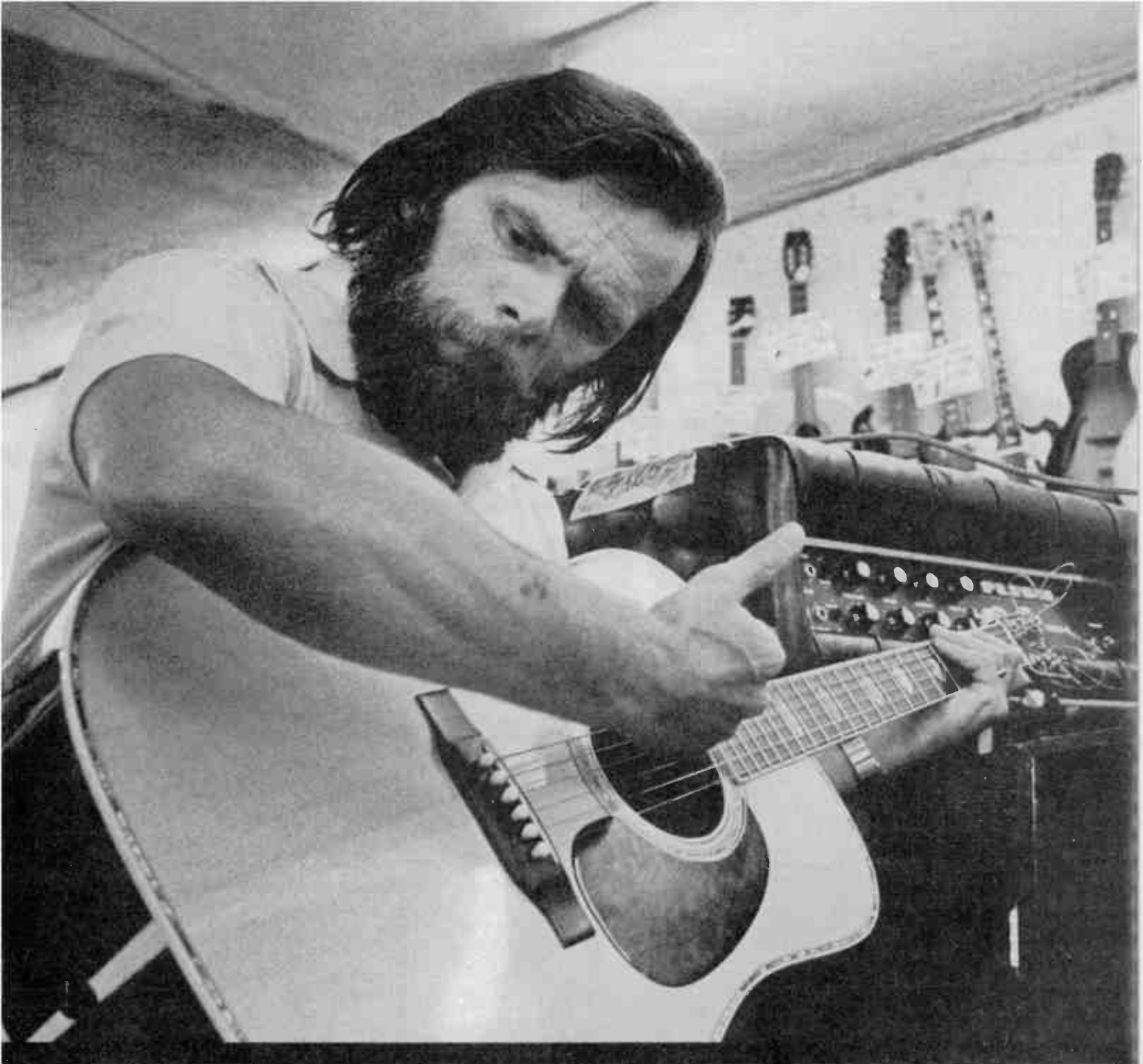
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Johnny, in New York for a gig, tries out guitar at We Buy Guitars on 48th Street.

JOHNNY PAYCHECK: Hellraiser On The Way Up

by JOHN MORTHLAND

Wait just a minute here. Am I in the right place? I came down to the Other End, a club in New York's Greenwich Village, to see Johnny Paycheck. And the last time I saw him—admittedly, in 1972, when he was riding high with *Someone To Give My Love To*—he had a full band and was wearing a suit and tie. So who's the bearded guy in the western shirt, Levi pants and jacket, and cowboy

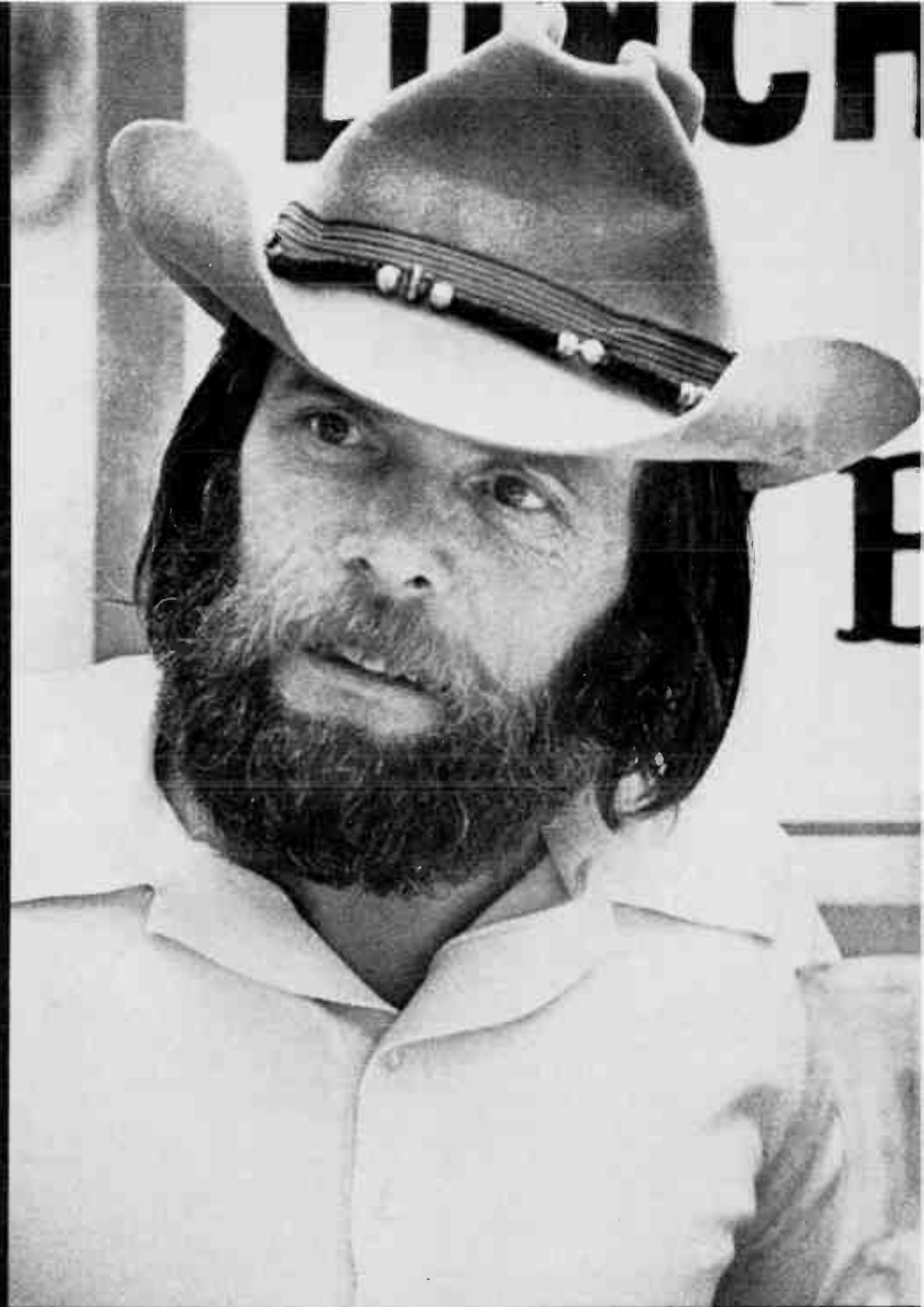
hat who's bounding onstage to sing with just a bass, drums, steel and his own guitar?

John Austin Paycheck, that's who. Same guy, only different. Just before coming here to New York he'd released *11 Months and 29 Days*, a prison blues number that sounds quite unlike anything in country music right now. With sales slipping drastically in the last year or so,

he's trying on a whole new image and style.

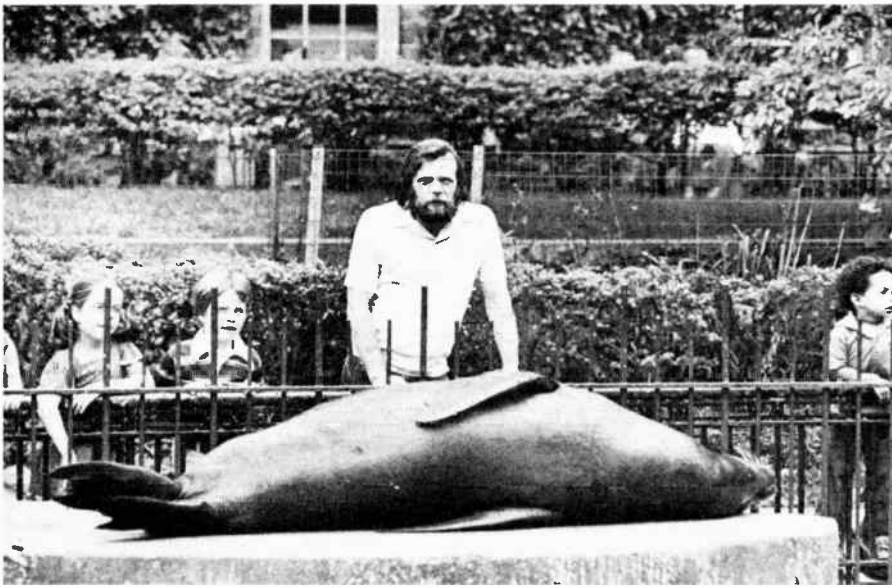
"We wanted to go progressive, underground so to speak, instead of the regular straight country," he explains a couple days later as he wipes sleep from his eyes and sips coffee at three in the afternoon. "I couldn't think of a better way to do it than with a blues thing."

"We," in this case, refers to Paycheck



Above, Johnny just hangs around an hour or two before his show. At bottom left he eyes some curiosities outside city's famed Central Park. And at left of this text, he buys a cup of Italian ice at the Central Park Zoo.

Photos: Allen Whitman



Johnny waits for the Central Park seals to act up.

and his producer, Billy Sherrill, who was also starting to feel a little antsy about Paycheck's inability to crack the Top 10 after a good string of hits that began when they joined forces in 1971 for *She's All I Got*. And if Paycheck makes this latest collaboration sound like an attempt to start his career over again, it's because he readily admits there's a certain amount of desperation behind it.

"I had 16 hits in a row, but only 10 or 11 were Top 10; the rest was Top 40, Top 50. All of a sudden I found myself . . . we was doing the same style of stuff, and I thought it was good stuff, but all of a sudden the public didn't seem to be wanting that particular thing," he winces. "I kept thinking, 'Well, if this one doesn't do it, I don't know what will.' And then it would come out and not do it. It'd go half-way up the charts and stop. I kept watching the business and the people that were coming up and making it big, like Waylon and Willie. So I went into Billy's office and said, 'We gotta change, man, or you're gonna see the day where you have to drop me because I've quit selling.'"

The idea of Johnny Paycheck, *Mr. Lovemaker*, as *Outlaw* is not all that incongruous. As a young sailor, he returned to his carrier one night when it was in dry dock in Brooklyn, got in a row over salutes, and proceeded to fracture an officer's skull. For this he got 18 years in the brig, which review boards later reduced to two years. Before that time was up, though, he escaped twice. The first time, he was a fugitive for six months. After he was re-captured and put in maximum security, he fled again, by sawing his way through the roof of a shower. He was picked up five hours later. In 1971, he was sentenced to—you guessed it—11 and 29 for a bad check; this was related to the demise of *Little Darlin'*, the record company he co-owned in the Sixties. The sentence was suspended when *She's All I Got* broke big and it looked as though

Paycheck would be able to clear his debts. He almost did, too, but earlier this year he filed for bankruptcy, to ease the pressure on his finances.

Paycheck knows a thing or two about starting a career over again. Eleven years ago, after fronting bands for Faron Young, Ray Price and George Jones, as Donnie Young, he went out on his own. As Johnny Paycheck, he was one of the leading honky tonk singers of that time, racking up hits like *A-11*, *Lovin' Machine* and *Jukebox Charlie*, and writing and singing some unusual, morbid songs like *I've Got Someone to Kill* and *You'll Recover In Time*.

He was living those songs, too, he says, indulging heavily in liquor and pills. When *Little Darlin'* collapsed in 1967, his career fell apart. He fled to Los Angeles, where he worked infrequently and nearly drank himself to death. There were no records during that period.

You can still see the toll those years have taken when you look at him up close. From a distance, Paycheck, who is a short man to begin with, looks younger than his 39 years. But up close, the lines under his eyes give it away. He looks old, experienced.

Sherrill rescued him with an Epic contract late in 1970 and Johnny got that comeback hit single on his first try. He's been working steadily ever since.

As he talks, it becomes clear that in his own eyes, at least, Johnny Paycheck has always been an *Outlaw*. He talks about the politics of the CMA awards, the new country audience, and the conflicts that situation presents—how it's natural for one group to seek to protect its own interests, but how in doing so it blocks progress. His words are harsh, but his line of argument remains consistent, so I ask him to compare the Nashville of his early career with what he finds there today.

"I don't think you can compare it," he replies quickly. "Except to say there's still

a lot of traditionalists in the town. You know, it took years just to get a set of drums on the stage of the Grand Ole Opry. They used 'em on records, they used 'em on tours, people love it, and yet they wouldn't let 'em on the Opry. And then when they did it was just a snare drum! They just recently let 'em use full sets.

"I used to bitch and preach about that years ago. Back then we didn't have a chance, though. There was too many of them. There wasn't enough rebels, there wasn't enough people to tell 'em off, so those that did automatically got shut down. The only thing I regret is I compromised to a certain degree, because I felt in my case it was the only way I could get my foot in."

But that's all in the past, and right now Johnny Paycheck wants to talk about the future, too, mostly because he feels his is bright. Without putting down his previous work at all, he points to his new album as his best ever, and to his new direction as the most healthy step yet.

Having bounced around as much as he has, Paycheck has the kind of resilience that will serve him well in his latest endeavors. He also has one of the finest natural country voices around, and knows how to use it. Nor does it hurt that he has always maintained one of the hottest bands on the circuit, including the current edition.

Whatever difficulties have stymied Paycheck in the past—crippling business mistakes, his personal recklessness, you name it—each time he has entered a new phase, he has thrown himself into it with confidence and enthusiasm. Johnny has his work cut out for him in forging the new audience he wants, but with the bell ringing for Round Three, he's coming out swinging.

"In this business you have to stay a little bit ahead of everyone else if you can. If you get some insight into what the trend is before it turns, then you can go with it," he figures. "I have been very fortunate, in that I can go in just about any direction I need to. But if you don't do it careful, you can kill it both ways; you can lose what you got and not get anything new either.

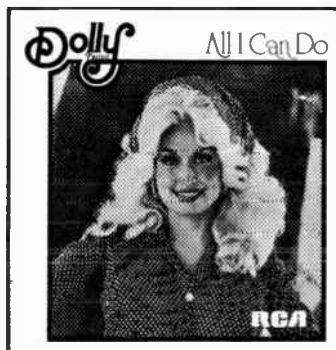
"Willie and Waylon are the leaders right now, and I think people are in for a big shock. I go around the country and I hear someone say, 'Well, this is alright, but it's not gonna last.' They said that about rock 'n' roll and now it's been—what?—21 years or so.

"Country music's always been about life, but I think this underground stuff is even closer. You can write about things now that they useta wouldn't even talk about. I think it's more music of the land than country was, and I think it will become even more so. But I think it's gonna take a lot of good artists to do it."

And it's obvious as he speaks that Johnny Paycheck has no doubt he's one of the good ones on the way up. ■

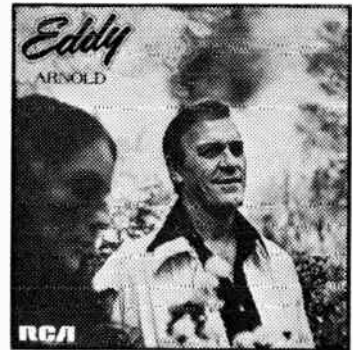
Some Faces Always Stand Out In A Crowd.

Dolly Parton



Features: All I Can Do
Boulder To Birmingham

Eddy Arnold



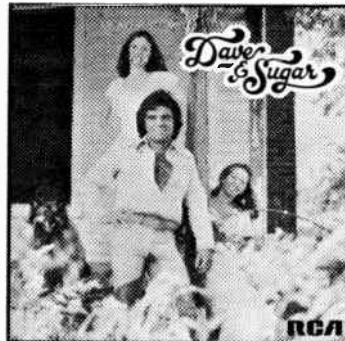
Features: Cowboy
Put Me Back Into Your World

Steve Young



Features: Renegade Picker
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RCA Records

RISING STAR AWARD

This month, our new Rising Star Award goes to Steve Young. This award is a recognition of outstanding talent and potential. Steve has both. For years, he has written songs for artists like Waylon Jennings, turning out material an outlaw can sing with feeling. Steve's own *Seven Bridges Road* album is an underground classic, and his new RCA *Renegade Picker* album is a more-than-minor masterpiece.

STEVE YOUNG

Did he live once before?

by NICK TOSCHES

Ask, and Steve Young will tell you about sitting on Hank Williams' grave, writin' songs and watchin' moonlight filter through the trees. He'll tell you how each of his songs came to be, or, if you'd rather, how his career didn't come to be.

Ask about what it's like to be called the hottest new artist in Nashville these days, and Steve Young will just smile. He's been there before, and he knows how fast those words can fade.

As the outlaw mystique dims, its music sinking under its own weight, you might want to get down and thank Hank Williams that underneath the fads and the comings and goings of country music, there's still the bedrock of artists like Steve Young.

Steve's music has changed very little over the years. It has consistently been country music, possessed of a strong and singular Southern energy.

"I was always fascinated with the kind of music peculiar to the South, like the blues, country, folk and all that," he says, watching his band rehearse backstage at Nashville's Exit/In. "The South was always into music. I think the Southerner has a mystical awe about music more than a lot of other parts of the country."

For the most part, that Southern energy has been misunderstood by the record companies. His first album, *Rock Salt and Nails*, released by A&M in 1969, was so ill-distributed that it is now a collectors' item. *Seven Bridges Road*, his second al-

bum, released by Reprise in 1972 (and reissued in somewhat altered form in 1975 by Blue Canyon Records), is only slightly less rare. Earlier this year, Mountain Railroad Records, a small Wisconsin label, issued Steve's *Honky-Tonk Man* album, a record that reached only the hard-core Young fans. Now, however, Steve has signed with RCA, and that company has gotten behind him and *Renegade Picker*, his first album for the label.

If he's in the right mood, Steve might tell you a story about his first trip to California; about how he and the musicians he was traveling with stopped at Joan Baez's house to attend the late Richard Farina's wedding and about how Joan Baez, famed butterfly of brotherhood, was very upset at their presence, so great was her distaste of white Southern men.

Later on, Steve wrote a song called *Lonesome, On'ry and Mean*. He recorded it in his *Seven Bridges Road* album, and Waylon Jennings covered it the following year. The song is a celebration of those things that repulsed Joan Baez years before, a celebration of the alienation forced upon the White South's soul by the attitudes of too many non-Southerners. More importantly, it's a great song, full of riot and neon and point-blank guitar. Steve recorded it again in his new album, louder and stronger and ornerier than ever.

"I was listening to some of my old records," he says, laughing a little. "And I liked the song so much I decided to record it again."

If the Baezes of the world are not Steve's audience, neither are the blue-jean outlaws, for, as he more than hints at, there's a lot more to country music than shag haircuts and Lone Star Beer.

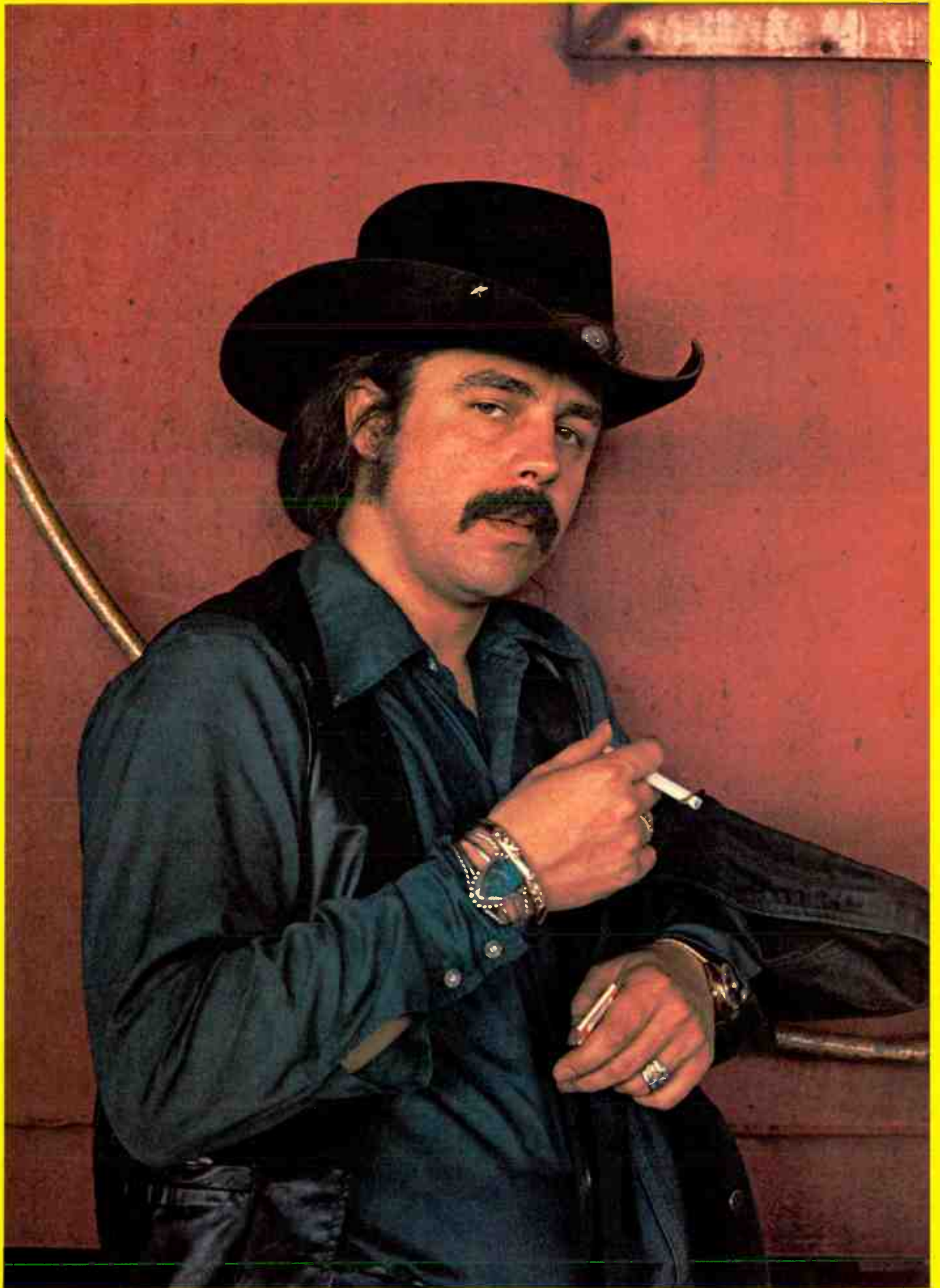
"Those kids down in Texas," he says, smiling, "Man, they're a weird audience. I mean, it doesn't matter what your music sounds like, just so long as you mention Texas or Willie to them. They'll yell and cheer for an hour like a bunch of lunatics. I like audiences who are a bit more aware; people who can get into a good country song, whether they're sittin' at a bar, sittin' at home, whatever."

Steve had the right start for a prospective Texas outlaw—he graduated from the same Beaumont, Tex., high school class as hard rocker Johnny Winter. But time in Nashville and Montgomery, Ala., began his love affair with the deep South, and soon his music began to reflect the amalgam of influences that are Dixie.

"When you look at it, all the music in this country basically has come from the South—jazz, Dixieland, blues, country," he says. "My music is really a conglomeration. I'm a funny mixture—I love country music . . . I just love music. I guess I'm real hard to categorize, but it's too bad you have to be categorized."

As Steve Young's fame spreads, so does his audience, for his music is just as he describes it—good country songs. There are few who can write them as well and as consistently as Young. His visions of

(Continued on page 66)



RECORDS

HOW WE RATE THE ALBUMS: 5 STARS ALBUM OF THE MONTH 2 STARS GOOD
 4 STARS EXCELLENT 1 STAR FAIR
 3 STARS VERY GOOD 0 STARS POOR

ALBUM OF THE MONTH

Delbert McClinton

Genuine Cowhide
 ABC ABCD-959 \$6.98
 ABCD-8-959 (tape) \$7.95
 Star rating: ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Last year, ABC released Delbert McClinton's first solo album, *Victim of Life's Circumstances*. It was an almost secretive release. There was no promotion, no advertisements, nothing. The album soon went out of print. But *Victim of Life's Circumstances* was too good a record to die, and slowly but truculently its reputation spread by word-of-mouth. Reviews and articles about the album began to appear, some of them declaring it the finest album of the year.

Delbert's new album, *Genuine Cowhide*, is as awesome and

important as his first. There are some surface differences: Delbert's writing talents are represented here only briefly, and Chip Young's arrangements, devoid of fiddle and steel guitar, are even more jarringly courageous than in *Victim of Life's Circumstances*.

Aside from a pair of original compositions—*I'm Dyin'*, *Fast as I Can* and *Special Love Song*—*Genuine Cowhide* is a whorl of classic songs born anew at the hand of Delbert. *Lovey Dovey*, *Blue Monday*, *Lipstick, Powder, and Paint*, *Pledging My Love*, *Let the Good Times Roll*, and other such songs are here done as never before.

I believe that Delbert McClinton is the most exciting, most important singer to come out of Texas since George Jones.

Hank Williams, Jr.

Fourteen Greatest Hits
 MGM MG-1-5020 \$6.98
 8T-1-5020 (tape) \$7.98
 Star rating: ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

It's often too easy to overlook Hank Williams, Jr. The fact remains, however, that he is one of the finest country singers and



songwriters around today. He would have made it without his father.

Fourteen Greatest Hits is a compendium of Hank's best work from the years 1966-1974: *Eleven Roses*, his biggest hit, is here, as are *All For the Love of Sunshine*, *Hank*, *Rainin' in My Heart*, *Pride's Not Hard To Swallow*, *Ain't That a Shame*, and the great autobiography, *Standing in the Shadows*.

Hank Williams, Jr. is a lot more than the son of Hank Williams. *Fourteen Greatest Hits* attests to that in a strong way.

Steve Young

Renegade Picker
 RCA APL1-1759 \$6.95
 APS1-1759 (tape) \$7.95
 Star rating: ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

This is the album that will break Steve Young as a star. If you like your music straight, your lyrics strong, this stuff is for you.

Steve is a songwriter of the

highest caliber, plus a gifted interpreter of others' work. The title cut here is a gale-force definition of not only Steve Young, but also of the future of country music. *Light of My Life* is a rough, eerie love song that mixes undertones of Lefty Frizzell and Jim Morrison. Rodney Crowell's *Home Sweet Home (Revisited)*, maybe the strongest cut on the album, is an X-ray of Tennessee's soul that'll blow you away.

Steve Young is one of the most valuable young men in country music. There is very little false

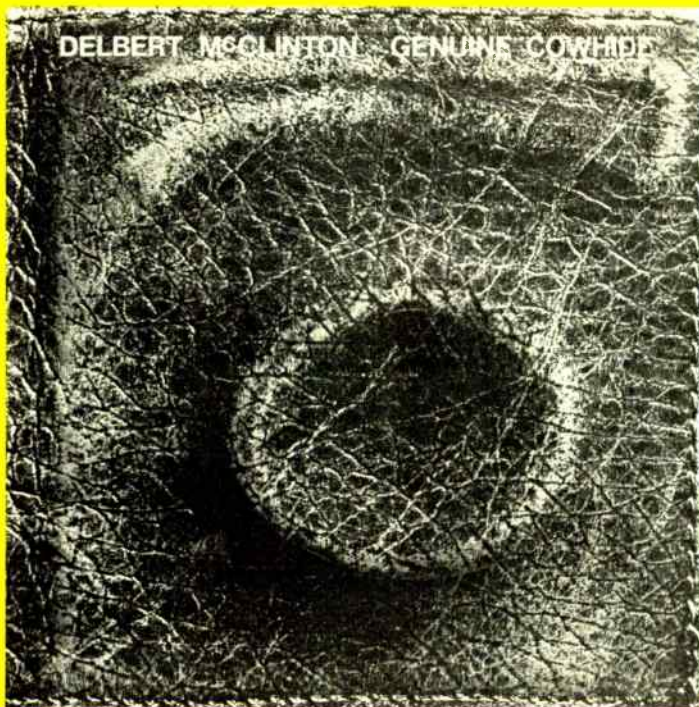


image to Young, very little posing, and a whole lot of fine music. *Renegade Picker* won't get stale.

Doug Sahn & The Texas Tornados

Texas Rock for Country Rollers
 ABC-Dot DOSD-2057 \$6.98
 DOSD-8-2057 (tape) \$7.95
 Star rating: ★ ★

Lord, Doug Sahn's made some great music in the last fifteen years. If anyone's music deserves to be called unique, certainly it's Doug's. In the early sixties, he mixed the same ingredients that Cliff Bruner, Bob Wills, and others had mixed in the early thirties—Latin music, black music, country music, and pop—but instead of coming up with western swing, Doug found a



very different but very Texan sort of music. Call it whatever you want, it was Doug Sahm's sound.

I've spoken with a lot of other hard-core Doug Sahm fans about this album, and they all agree: there's something wrong. First, there are a lot of weak songs here: *Cowboy Peyton Place*, *Texas Ranger Man*, and *You Can't Hide a Redneck* (*Under that Hippy Hair*) are almost parodies of Texas rock. Probably more important is Huey Meaux's production. Simply, it isn't all that good.



I'm going to hold onto my copy of *Texas Rock for Country Rollers*, but I know the only cuts I'll ever play again are *Wolverton Mountain* and the *Gene Thomas Medley: Sometimes/Cryin' Inside*. But it doesn't matter. Doug'll have another one out before long, and I bet it'll be a good one.

New Riders of the Purple Sage
New Riders
MCA MCA-2196 \$6.98
MCAT-2196 (tape) \$7.98
Star rating: ★

I have always tried to like the New Riders, but have never quite succeeded. To me, these



boys sound as if, deep down, they'd rather be surfing.

There are some good cuts here and some bad ones. How these guys managed to ruin Delbert

McClinton's *Honky Tonkin'*, one of the perfect songs in recent memory, is beyond me, but they've done it. Perhaps the truth of the matter is that country music isn't so damned easy to play after all. If you knew that all along, or if you could ever envision yourself using a phrase such as "dumb hippy music," definitely stay away from this one.

Red Sovine
Teddy Bear
Starday SD-968X \$6.98
SD-8-968X (tape) \$7.98
Star rating: None

The surprise hit of 1976 is Red Sovine's *Teddy Bear*, the soggy, tear-jerking tale of CB compassion. Hear the crippled kid tell the trucker about his



dead dad. Hear the trucker cry. Hear the kid's mom cry. *Teddy Bear* became Red Sovine's first Number One hit in over a decade.

If you liked *Teddy Bear* you'll adore this album. *Daddy, Love Is, Does Steppin' Out Mean Daddy Took a Walk* and *Sad Violins* are a few of the titles here, and you can take it from there.

Country Gazette
Country Gazette Live
Antilles AN-7014 \$6.98
AN8-7014 (tape) \$7.98
Star rating: ★ ★ ★

After two albums on United Artists, Country Gazette has joined up with Antilles Records, a subsidiary of Island Records, a company specializing in reggae and chic-rock.

Country Gazette is made up of Byron Berline, on fiddle and mandolin, Roger Bush, on bass, Alan Munde, on banjo, and Roland White, on guitar. Bluegrass fans don't need to be told about this group, or about this album. If you do, read on.

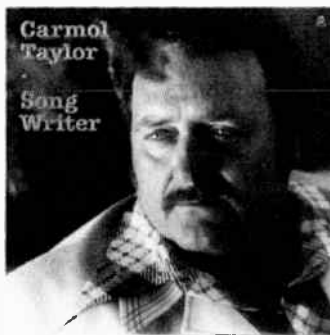
Since their inception in 1971, Country Gazette has tried to widen bluegrass's appeal by removing it from its esoteric context. To a large extent, I think, they succeeded. *Country Gazette Live*, recorded with some over-



dubbing at McCabe's in Santa Monica in November, 1974, is a just representation of what the group is all about. Timeless standards such as *Sally Goodin* and *Look Down that Lonesome Road* sound alongside stuff such as the Louvin Brothers' *My Baby's Gone* and Don Gibson's *Blue, Blue Day*. I'm not a bluegrass fan. But this LP has a lot of merit.

Carmol Taylor
Song Writer
Elektra 7E-1069 \$6.98
7E-8-1069 (tape) \$7.98
Star rating: ★ ★ ★

The recording debuts of successful songwriters are often laugh-up-your-sleeve affairs. Carmol Taylor's *Song Writer* is a welcome exception.

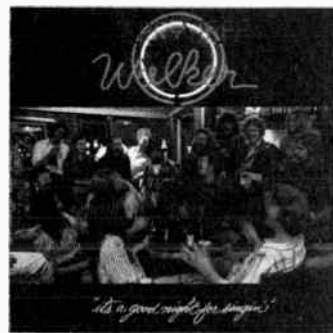


Carmol, the author of numerous records by George Jones, David Houston, and Tammy Wynette, actually can sing. His most successful performances here are *You're Looking at a Happy Man* (co-written with George Jones) and a wholly amazing version of Chuck Berry's *Back in the USA*.

Carmol Taylor is no Kris Kristofferson, but he sure as hell sings a whole lot better.

Jerry Jeff Walker
It's a Good Night for Singin'
MCA MCA-2202 \$6.98
MCAT-2202 (tape) \$7.98
Star rating: ★ ★ ★

Jerry Jeff has put out some pretty good records in the past, and this one is as good as the best of them. Walker's tendency to get overly romantic is absent here, as are his leanings toward down-homey pomposity,



and the result is a mix of songs that seems to have been recorded for lyrical quality rather than trendy poignancy. *Couldn't Do Nothin' Right* is the standout killer.

If you like Jerry Jeff at all, here you'll find him at his best, and if you're not aware of Jerry Jeff, *It's a Good Night for Singin'* is a right fine place to pick up on him.

Ray Price
Rainbows and Tears
ABC-Dot DOSD-2053 \$6.98
DOSD-8-2053 (tape) \$7.95
Star rating: ★

Back in the fifties, Ray Price was one of the greatest honky-tonk singers of all time. Then,



in the mid sixties, things got switched around. In 1964 Ray

was still singing Texas barroom music, plain and simple. In 1967 he was employing a fourteen-piece string section.

The way I see it, Ray Price's music would be a lot better off if he returned to his old honky-tonk sound. Country music has enough Perry Comos, it always has and it always will. But great honky-tonk singers like the Ray Price of the fifties are few and far between.

Rainbows and Tears is no different from any other recent Ray Price album. It's a lot like his last three. As far as I'm concerned, only one song here even hints at his past glories, and that's *I Don't Feel Nothing*. Someday, you wait and see, Ray Price will tire of his chintzy tux.

Gunther Schuller

Country Fiddle Band
Columbia M-33981 \$6.98
MA-33981 (tape) \$7.98
Star rating: ★★

The New England Conservatory, under the direction of

Gunther Schuller, does some fun stuff. Long before the peak of the Scott Joplin revival a couple of years ago, the Conservatory recorded an album of vintage



ragtime. Now they've put together a set of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century country dance music.

Among the cuts here are Miller's Reel, Devil's Dream, Flopp-eared Mule, and Over the Waves (One of the few traditional country songs that can be traced back to a composer, Juventino Rosas.).

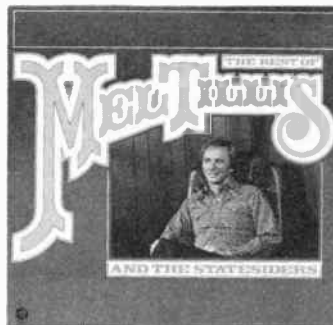
Schuller and the Conservatory

deserve praise for this project. This album is a good one.

Mel Tillis

The Best of Mel Tillis
MGM MG-1-5021 \$6.98
8T-1-5021 (tape) \$7.98
Star rating: ★★

Mel Tillis has become one of the most successful figures in



mainstream country. Turn on *The Mike Douglas Show* and there's Mel making fun of his stuttering problem. Mel is a pop-oriented country picker who

hasn't become a parody of his earlier self. As a matter of fact, most of the stuff he does is downright good. The songs in *The Best of Mel Tillis* are all from the last five years, and there are some winners here. *Commercial Affection* is my favorite cut, but there are also *Sawmill*, *Neon Rose*, *I Ain't Never*, *Stomp Them Grapes*, *Woman in the Back of My Mind*, and a few others with a lot of merit.

Doug Kershaw

Ragin' Cajun
Warner Bros. BS-2910 \$6.98
B8-2910 (tape) \$9.97
Star rating: ★★

This is an exuberant album, full of hard country songs interspersed with cajun tunes, but unfortunately ragged as the Louisiana bayou. Generally, the instrumentation is excellent; it's Kershaw's singing that grates. This man can get more off-key than my grandpa's coon dog. On full-tilt foot-stompers like *It*

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Takes All Day (To Get Over Night) it doesn't show so much;



Kershaw can conceal his transgressions with Cajun whoops. On slower songs, like *I'd Live Anywhere*.

Roy Clark

In Concert

ABC/Dot 2054 \$6.98

DOSD-2054M (tape) \$7.98

Star rating: ★★★★★

Roy Clark has come out with a live performance that captures all of his exciting spontan-

eity in concert. This LP is a marvelous showcase for the diverse talents of Roy.

The album kicks off with the old standard, *Rocky Top*. The vocal patter between numbers



will warm his fans and give them a feeling of closeness to him. A great rendition of *Riders In The Sky* highlights Roy's string virtuosity. A powerful medley follows, including *Come Live With Me*, *Honeymoon Feelin'*, *The Tips Of My Fingers*, *Yesterday, When I Was Young*, and *Sally Was A Good Girl*. It is an instant winner.

The second side kicks off with a cute comedy bit that segues into a spoof of *Duelin' Banjos* and Roy's great effeminate impersonation that he frequently does on *Hee Haw*.

Recorded at the Frontier Hotel in Vegas, Roy's accompanying musicians include the Oak Ridge Boys, and Buck Trent. This is a very well put together LP.

Linda Ronstadt

Hasten Down The Wind

Asylum 7E-1072 \$6.98

Asylum ET-81072 (tape) \$7.98

Star rating: ★★

Considering the number of albums which are not quality work, that should be sufficient; knowing what Ronstadt can do with her remarkable voice, it is



a little disappointing.

The problem lies in the selection of material. Ronstadt gives a good performance on *Crazy*. Willie Nelson or Patsy Cline gave better ones. *That'll Be The Day* comes off surprisingly well. It made me go back to listen to the original Buddy Holly cut. *Give One Heart* is a reggae tune. Robert Marley and Toos and the Maytals sing reggae. Linda Ron-

From being nervous and pregnant and poor in Butcher Holler to the queen of country music—this is Loretta's own story...

Loretta Lynn

Since Loretta admits she is better at "talkin' than writin'," she found a writer to put her story down on paper for her. But she warns right off: "You can bet your last scrip penny that I checked out every word ... and if I didn't like it, out it went."

The result is a book that sounds as honest and saucy as the lady on the records. She talks frankly about her 25-year marriage to Doo, about her medical problems, about the gossip that she and Conway Twitty have something going besides friendship, and about Nashville behind the scenes. She spares nothing and no one.

Loretta may surprise a few of her fans when she says "I'm not really as happy-go-lucky as I appear. I've known a lot of sad times in my life that don't square with that lady you saw clowning up on the stage." *COAL MINER'S DAUGHTER* almost reads like a classic novel—deprived childhood, sudden riches, the temptations and the mistakes—but above all, we really see Loretta Lynn as she sees herself.

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stadt does not have the feel. While none of these songs are done badly, none are as good as the originals, and imitation does invite comparison.

On only one cut does Ronstadt shine. *Down So Low*, the Tracy Nelson composition of 1968, is beautiful. Its lyrics and arrangement give ample opportunity for Ronstadt to show off the range of her voice; here low and bluesy, there high and lonesome. It'll send chills up your spine. It may also lead you to conclude, as I did, that Linda Ronstadt should cut a gospel album. She couldn't miss.

Diehard country fans will not find much of interest in *Hasten Down The Wind*, as most of the material (with the exception of *Crazy*) falls into the soft rock category. However, those who like Ronstadt's style will want this album for *Down So Low*. It's definitive. Obviously, the only person that Linda Ronstadt should imitate is Linda Ronstadt.

MARTHA HUME

2L8-2939 (tape) \$9.97
Star rating: ★★

Commander Cody and His Lost Planet Airmen made three great albums for Paramount, then they made a bad one for Paramount. Now they're recording for Warner Brothers.

I have mixed feelings about this latest, two-record set. Recorded early in 1976 at a series of English concerts, *We've Got a Live One Here!* has some fine moments: *It Should've Been Me*, *Too Much Fun*, and *Lost in the Ozone* are more fun than ever



before. But much else seems a mess of gross excesses and confusions. Here *Mama Hated Diesels* bobs between parody

Commander Cody
We've Got a Live One Here!
Warner Bros. 2LS-2939 \$7.98

and pathos with yawning results. *Hot Rod Lincoln* and *Smoke! Smoke! Smoke!* are silly, overdone.

Commander Cody and His Lost Planet Airmen were one of the first great weird country groups. It's rumored that the group is in a state of break-up; if that's so, I'll just keep on playing those first three albums.

The Smith Brothers Bluegrass Orchestra

Oldgrass, Newgrass, Bluegrass
CMH CMH-6203 \$6.98
CMH-8-6203 (tape) \$7.98
Star rating: ★★

versy. In using only acoustic instruments and playing more or less traditional material, he's on the side of the traditionalists.



Oldgrass, Newgrass, Bluegrass, features "Fiddlin'" Arthur Smith, a multi-talented instrumentalist best-known for his '50s hit, *Guitar Boogie*, lesser known for the composition *Feudin' Banjos*, also called *Duelin' Banjos*. Impressive credentials, certainly impressive enough to allow Smith the freedom to make an experimental album. And that is what *Oldgrass, Newgrass, Bluegrass* is.

With this album, Smith places himself squarely in the middle of the bluegrass/newgrass contro-

The addition of drum and piano and the idea of an "orchestra" (two guitars, mandolin and bass), places him in the camp of the experimenters. What emerges is a more or less traditional sound, but fuller, without the edge you hear in a Bill Monroe-type arrangement. An improvement? Not necessarily.

Not to take sides in the controversy—some newgrass is really good—but the experimenters should not throw out the baby with the bathwater. Bill Monroe has set very high standards for bluegrass and the heart of those standards lies in his insistence on a rigid sense of timing—waltz timing for waltzes, schottish timing for schottishes. The Smith Brothers Orchestra, in this album, have two rhythms: fast and faster. Most of the tunes start out at a breakneck pace and speed up from there. That's just one point in an album which should serve as the basis for many happy hours of arguing among bluegrass pickers.

Despite the departures from traditional standards and instruments, this album retains the feel of bluegrass music.

For those of us who just like music, *Oldgrass, Newgrass, Bluegrass* is a nice album, full of peppy instrumentals and some really fine fiddle work from Arthur Smith—his fiddle rings almost as well as Uncle Pen's. David Deese on five-string and Tommy Faile on guitar also provide some good moments. It's just the thing to bring along to your next hoe-down.

MARTHA HUME

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A backstage talk with America's favorite country artist, Roy Clark.

"I was impressed...they kept the quality!"



How do you handle equipment problems on the road?

By not having any to begin with. Seriously, I've had some problems with one of my guitars on this tour. It's brand new, but there's something fouled up in the controls.

Any problems with your amp?

Nooo! Not this one. I went through a period of about two years trying to find the right amp. The road is tough on amps... handling or mishandling, and then you've always got the power supply to worry about. A lot of amps won't operate correctly unless the line conditions are just right.

You've just started a new tour, after wrapping up taping of *Hee-Haw* in Nashville. How long will you be out this time?

Forever. No, I take that back... probably only eleven or twelve days. I finished taping *Hee-Haw* last week, we have a day off tomorrow, and then we open in Massachusetts.

You're one of a handful of American artists who have played Russia. How did it go?

We were there eighteen days, and we got a fantastic reception! It was kinda different dealing with the language barrier, though. I had an interpreter who worked onstage with me. Really good. I'd set things up like I wanted to do them, and he'd explain to the audience. I could change things around in American slang, and he'd do the equivalent in Russian. It was a lot of fun.

And there's been some talk about a return engagement?

We've tentatively been invited back for a tour in the summer of '77. We've also been talking about going to England this year for the Wembley Festival.

A return invitation to Russia has to be a real compliment for any American entertainer.

Yeah, it is. When we were there before, it was winter, and we played to houses of six or seven thousand. They're talking about outdoor shows this next time,

anywhere from sixty-five to eighty thousand people. And they said there's no question it'll be sold out.

Our Russian friends really like live entertainment?

Well, Russian television leaves a lot to be desired. And that means that the opera and the ballet there are sold out year 'round, year after year. Live entertainment does really well there.

Your first big hit record, *The Tips of My Fingers*, was released in the Fall of '63. How many records ago was that?

It's either twenty-six or twenty-seven, I can't remember which.

And the vast majority of your hit singles have been romantic ballads. That contrasts sharply with the comedian in you. Is there a serious actor in there someplace?

Yeah, I've been thinking about it. In fact, I just sat down with my management and cleared some time to pursue that a little bit.

What kind of amp do you use?

A Kustom. I first tried a Kustom years ago, before they were a known brand. Somebody plugged it in and I tried it, and it sounded great.

But you didn't get one right away?

No, I'm cautious like that. I knew there were new amps coming onto the market all the time, and some of the brands disappear as fast as they came onto the market. You know, the companies get really big, and the production quality starts slipping as soon as the quantity increases. But with the Kustom, I was really impressed. After I tried my first Kustom amp, they came out with a full



line of amplifiers, and I was impressed that they kept the quality and weren't just in business to make all the amps they could, and sell them. I forget what I was playing before Kustom. Little by little, the older you get, the more you demand from an amp. I got back in touch with Kustom and got an amp, and really liked it. I just thought I'd better stay with them.

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STEVE YOUNG

(Continued from page 58)

the South are so concise in their poetry and rhythm that they almost shock you. From *The White Trash Song*:

*Cuz all my cars, they're broken down
Layin' in my front yard,
I oughta get one together
But the work just seems too hard.
But a man come by this mornin',
He wanted to paint my barn.
He painted 'See Rock City,
U.S. Highway 31.'**

In *Montgomery in the Rain*, Steve sings of his visits to Hank Williams' grave in images empty of fake romance or sentiment, full of honky-tonk mysticism and cemetery windstorm.

"We used to go out there a lot . . . well, not a lot," he says of the quiet Montgomery cemetery. "I went through a lot of changes in Montgomery. Met a lot of people. It was a crazy time; good and bad stuff."

It's stuff like that that makes Young such a shining, fresh voice. His songs are strewn with the traditional country music images, but among all the bottles are flashes of expression that lie beyond the reach of too many.

*Copyright Warner-Tamerlane Publishing, BMI.

Somewhere along the line, Steve Young (who, you must keep in mind, would rather drink whiskey than become one with the universe) got the notion that he was killed a century ago by an exploding artillery shell. As time passed, further details of this death came to him, until finally one day he recognized himself in a history book: John Pelham, a young artillery officer, who was killed by an exploding shell while leading a Confederate attack at Kelly's Ford, Virginia, on St. Patrick's Day, 1863. He doesn't talk much about all this, but I like the idea of a rebel soldier being reincarnated as a country singer. In his new album, Steve sings a song called *Home Sweet Home (Revisited)*, written by Rodney Crowell, a member of Emmylou Harris's group. It's a song about the Civil War, Franklin (a town near Nashville), and growing old.

As it stands now, Steve Young's worth is starting to be felt by the industry. Almost every music publisher in Nashville is making a grab for his songs, and *Rene-gade Picker* is one of the most talked-about records of the year. Amid it, Steve maintains composure. "I ain't gonna go lookin' for no pop hits," he says, "and I don't want to be no outlaw, neither. I'm just gonna keep on doin' what I been doin', only I hope to be making some money off it this time around."

Perhaps Steve's most significant spot of luck is his association with Roy Dea, a

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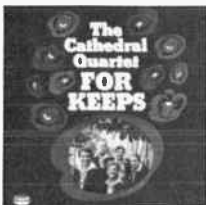
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Tape 3-9755



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producer who understands exactly what Steve's doing and likes it. Like Chip Young and Eddie Kilroy, Roy Dea is one of the few Nashville producers who understand the full importance of rhythm and contrast.

"I don't really worry about it," Steve says. "I like to do different kinds of music and I just want to continue to let it evolve. But all that takes time.

"I've been working pretty steadily as a single performer, just me and a guitar," he says. "I know a lot of people who come up now and say I was better by myself. I

just got real tired of doing it that way. The public responds more to a band than to one guy, and I do want them to respond."

Steve dedicated *Renegade Picker*, the title song on his current album, to Jerry Lee Lewis. In his own way Steve is a lot like the Killer. More sophisticated, less manic maybe, but one of the last of country music's flaming rebels. And like Jerry Lee, Steve Young will be around for a long, long while, and that's good.

*Wasn't but one thing for me to be
And that's a renegade picker.**

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MARY

(Continued from page 34)

Lou's vibrato to blend with Anderson's unadorned style, showing her how to use the microphone so her strong voice wouldn't drown out Anderson's soft tones, and teaching both singers the workings of harmony. "They've got a mutual admiration society," Anderson says. "She admires his musicianship and production talent, and he admires her for her singing ability. They've really got a great relationship."

"That's true, we do," Mary Lou says. "His being a musician helps, because I feel he's a friend of mine, not an old man that's jealous (of my career). He'll help me do things that I need to do, run errands for me, like a friend. And I feel that way about him. Luckily for me, Bill doesn't work a month out on the road at a time like he used to do. He's settled down and works weekends, maybe 90 days a year. I can be home all week."

Mary Lou attributes her even balance between home and career to another factor, too: what she calls personality. "A lot of people don't believe in the zodiac, or the signs you're born under, but I do, and that helps me get through. I'm a Gemini (June 13), and it seems like I've always had several different things going on at once."

That's an understatement.

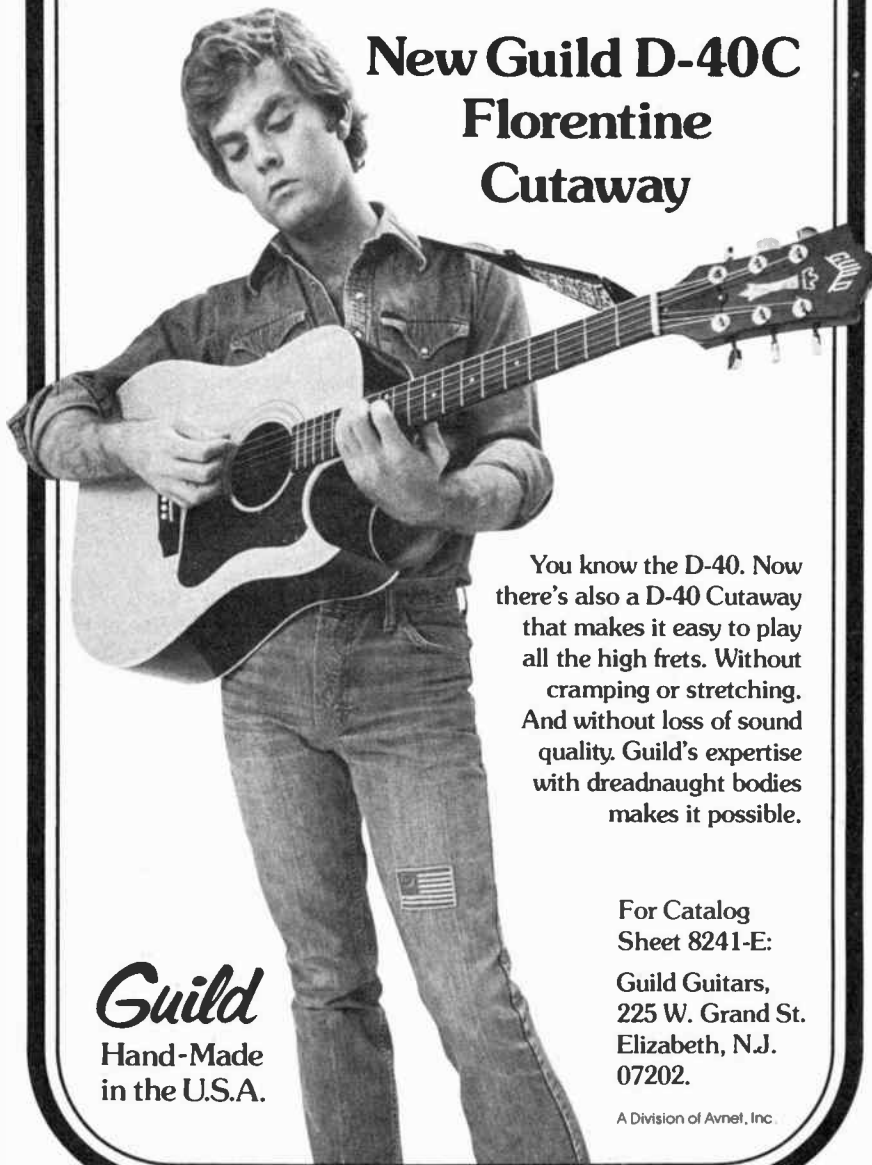
In high school, where her classmates made fun of her country music, she worked as a dental assistant after classes, competed in amateur shows (once failing the Ted Mack regional tryouts in Cincinnati), and drove 200 miles every weekend from Dayton to Wheeling, W. Va., where she was a regular on the Wheeling Jamboree. It was there, on three or four occasions over several years, that she met Anderson, who had always impressed her as a songwriter and whose band—with their gold microphones—mesmerized her. "I went home and told David about them," she remembers. "Never did it cross my mind that one day I'd be right there a part of it."

Both of the big breaks in Mary Lou's career came just after she had resisted a strong urge to quit the business. Most recently was last summer, when she became despondent over the failure of her MCA singles. The first time occurred late in 1972, when she felt she'd gone as far as the Jamboree as she could go, having been there seven years without anyone in the business offering to help her take the next big step. She had even scheduled her appearances on the Jamboree with those of the major stars she either admired, such as Anderson, or thought might give her a break. Several weeks before Christmas, she decided she'd done her last Jamboree show and would probably stop singing.

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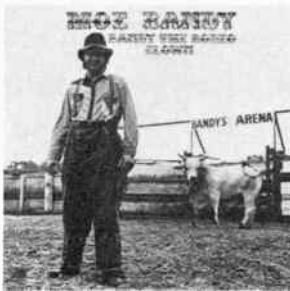
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going. I was really depressed because I couldn't buy anything, and in my mind I was dealing with the idea of quitting the business. I was watching people going by in their mink coats, happy like Christmastime should be, and there I was sitting on one of those benches, just so down. Then all of a sudden, something came over me, a flash of something, and I knew things were gonna change... It wasn't two weeks later that I got the call from Bill Anderson."

Anderson took Mary Lou to Vero Beach, Fla., to audition her at a benefit. She forgot the words to *Country Roads*, her second song, but Anderson thought she covered beautifully. What sold him on her was the confidence with which she faced the audience. "She grabbed that microphone and walked right out there and just had a look on her face of 'OK, folks. Here I am, and you're gonna like me,'" he remembers.

Aside from those two down periods, Mary Lou says she always knew she would make it in music. She blushes when you ask if she sees herself as a full-fledged star now, putting her head down in her lap and covering her hair-rolled head with her hands. "I always have," she finally says, laughing, embarrassing herself. "I just always felt that way, even when I was living in Ohio and working on the Jamboree. I guess that's because my father, who was a musician and who kind of forced me into this, always told me I could do it and preached positive thinking to me." Her large green eyes cloud up. "After he died, I decided I could do anything I wanted."

Anderson, too, seems to think Mary Lou can do any and everything, and the next step appears to be recording an album on her own. Mary Lou says it can't be just any album, though. "I want it to be right and good, and I want it to sell when it comes out," she says adamantly. "I want my records to do at least well enough to pay for the session. I don't want to be a write-off. I guess that's just pride, but if I can do an album, I want it to be something I can be proud of."

"I think Mary Lou's greatest ability is singing something akin to the blues, her deep voice in kind of a belting thing—something in the vein of country blues, which maybe we haven't recorded with her yet," Anderson says. "She's got her own sound and her own identity," he continues, "and I think if she were given an opportunity in a place such as Vegas with a big orchestra that her voice would stand up with the best of them."

"I don't like comparisons," he goes on to say somewhat contradictorily, "but if there has been a girl singer in the 13 years since Patsy Cline's death who could step into the void that Patsy left, I think Mary Lou could." He pauses and looks at the floor, as if to weigh what he's just said. When he lifts his eyes, he looks more confident than before. "I do," he adds. "I really do." ■

TEXAS SCENE

(Continued from page 8)

lon are moving ahead with their plans to purchase the Perdenales Country Club on Lake Travis outside Austin where they intend to build a recording studio. The place includes a swimming pool, tennis courts, and a golf course and might be renamed *The Ranch*.

There's a guy in Austin who owns **Buddy Holly's** original Triumph cycle.

Armadillo World Headquarters' Bobby Hedderman just completed 90 days on the Armadillo's roof as a *living billboard* in order to create a Guinness World Record and to promote something called Armadillo Appreciation Week. And Armadillo's head chief, **Eddie Wilson**, won a taco eating contest held at Taco Flats to benefit a local charity. **Wilson** ate 32 tacos beating out many other Austin crazies including the mayor.

Warner Bros. is planning on shooting a film in Texas called *Outlaw Blues*. It'll star **Peter Fonda** and studio execs are talking to **Waylon Jennings** about the second lead part.

And I'm ready to see the over-worked term *outlaws* put to rest. Organizational people behind various stars claim the label was put on them by the press but I don't remember it that way. The press

didn't title the recent gold record by **Waylon, Willie, Jessi and Tompall**. In any event if the press is responsible I wish they'd stop it. I'm convinced that **Waylon, Willie, Tompall**, etc. and anyone you'd like to add to the list are making some of the best music around and they're all probably mean as hell. But they ain't outlaws 'cause not a single one of 'em has ever robbed a train.

And the original honky-tonk hero himself, **Billy Joe Shaver**, has been spotted in Houston, Waco, and, believe it or not, in the Big Bend country at Terlingua in far west Texas. However, none of these sightings have been verified.

Reviewing this column it occurred to me that Texas has just about everything except **Dolly Parton** which is enough right there to convince me that we haven't got it all.

Some music receiving airplay here that you might not have heard in your neck of the woods: a single called *Fading Love* by **The Doc Jones Band** and the album by **Alvin Crow And The Pleasant Valley Boys** which was recorded here in Austin. Also, for something different you might give a listen to *Bogalusa Boogie* by **Clifton Chenier And His Red Hot Louisiana Band** which is released on **Chris Strachwitz's** Arhoolie label. It's a mixture of country, cajun, and black rhythm and blues. ■

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PEOPLE

(Continued from page 6)

of the main attractions.

Johnny Rodriguez officially represented Governor Dolph Briscoe, of Texas, during a visit to Canada.

Doug Sahm and his Texas Tornado band made their debut in Nashville recently when they appeared at the Exit/In club in conjunction with ABC/Dot Records promotion. Doug, the former **Sir Douglas** of the **Sir Douglas Quintet**, is now being produced and managed by **Huey Meaux**, who flew in for Doug's opening night.

Conway Twitty is an avid fisherman. He recently purchased a new *Hydro-Sport* outboard motorboat. The boat is equipped with AM-FM radio, stereo-cassette player and a CB. He spends much of his time on the lake when not on the road.

Hank Williams, Jr. hosted the first annual outdoor national CB Caravan & Festival at the Garrett Coliseum in Montgomery July 31-August 1. Hank's special guest stars included **Willie Nelson** and Family, **Tanya Tucker** and **George Wallace, Jr.**

Polson, Montana, the town where Hank, Jr. recuperated from his horrible accident



Johnny Rodriguez

held **Hank Williams, Jr.** day there July 25.

The month of August was a busy one for Hank, who took off on a hunting trip somewhere in Northwest Territory, Canada.

Hank, Jr. just signed a five-year contract with **Mike Curb** and Warner Brothers and will soon be recording on the Warner-Curb label in Muscle Shoals, Ala.

Johnny Rodriguez is *knockin' em out* these days, at the Shin Martial Arts Institute, where he took karate lessons. He is their prize pupil.

Crash Craddock ordered a new pool installed in his backyard while he and the family took a few day's vacation. He has three youngsters.

Glen Campbell wrote the liner notes on the back of a recently-released double-packaged collector's album by America's favorite cowboy, Gene Autry. Glen wrote: "Listening to this special album brings

back a lot of boyhood memories . . . it's the next best thing to being in the movie house on Saturday afternoon."

Tom T. Hall and wife **Dixie** held an old-fashioned \$50 per-plate Plantation-type supper party at their Fox Hollow Farm to benefit the Nashville Humane Association Animal Shelter. All the guests dressed in true tradition of the old south and sipped mint juleps. It was a grand evening and a large amount of the money needed by the animal shelter was raised that night. The Halls raise beagle hounds on their farm.

Mrs. Hattie (Mom) Stoneman died at the age of 75, after suffering a heart attack



Freddy Fender

in Murfreesboro, Tenn., July 22. She was the mother of 23 children and the wife of **Ernest (Pop) Stoneman**, leader of the **Stonemans**. Until his death (June 1968) he was the oldest living performer in country music.

Twelve of the 23 children are still living. The five who made a career out of music are Roni, now on Hee Haw; Donna, who left country music for religious music; Patsy, Jim and Van, who are the present day Stonemans.

Mom Stoneman was buried in Nashville.

Freddy Fender has been signed for a starring role in the *Short Eyes* movie, to be produced this fall in New York City by Custom Films of Hollywood. The prison drama is based on an award-winning play by **Miguel Pinero**. Comedian **Godfrey Cambridge** and soul singer **Curtis Mayfield** are set for co-starring roles.

Connie Smith and her husband, **Marshall Haynes**, welcomed a baby daughter July 25. She is named **Jodi Leigh**. Connie said, "The only big surprise was, after having four bald babies, this one came along with a full head of black hair."

This is the third daughter she and Marshall have. Connie has two sons by previous marriages. Her other children are Darren, 13, Kerry, 8, Julie Raye, 2 1/2, and Jeannie Lynn, 1.

There is a new **Dolly Parton** coloring book on the market these days. It's a 16-page book of Dolly all ready for the youngsters to color. Her friend, **Ann Warden** designed the attractive book. ■



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