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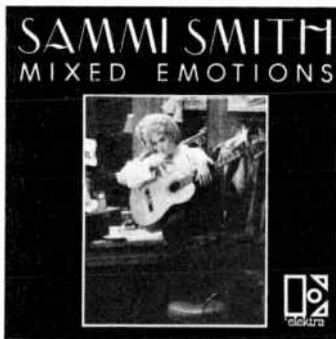
# ELEKTRA/ASYLUM

## Records

# KICKS IN THE COUNTRY

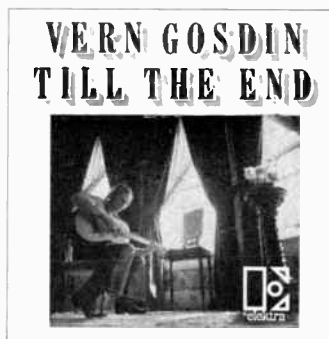
### Sammy Smith *Mixed Emotions*

The woman who made "Help Me Make It Through The Night" a nationwide hit continues to deliver a revolutionary brand of Country Music. "Mixed Emotions" is a brand new album but it is also an instant classic.



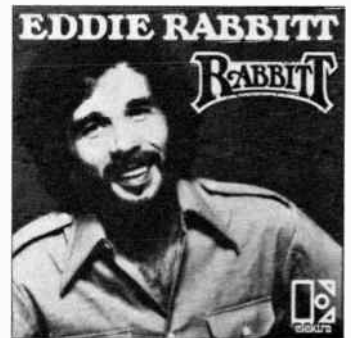
### VERN GOSDIN *Till The End*

If you know Country, you've heard Vern Gosdin's spirit shine in songs like "Hangin' On" and "Yesterday's Gone." Your collection is incomplete without his newest LP, "Till The End." For Vern, it's only the beginning.



### EDDIE RABBITT *Rabbit*

Country Music Roundup says that Eddie Rabbitt can "take it all and achieve overnight superstar status." Listen to his new album, "Rabbit," and you'll understand why. Eddie's simple the best around.



### Country Sweet

### STELLA PARTON

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# COUNTRY MUSIC



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Volume Five, Number Twelve  
September, 1977

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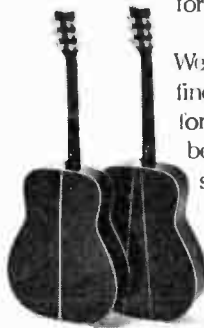
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# Are you missing half the joy of your guitar?

**I**F YOU'RE LIKE a lot of people who've taken up the guitar, you went out and bought your guitar with high hopes. You probably bought a little instruction book to go with it, figuring all you had to do was to learn a few chords... and that with a bit of practice, you'd sound pretty good.

But maybe now you're finding that what you've learned isn't enough. Being able to strum some chords and sing a few songs is nice, of course—but you get tired of the same few songs after awhile. You'd like to be able to play other, harder songs... to play melody along with chords... to say things with your guitar that you feel inside, but haven't got the musical skills to express.

If this is the way you feel, we'd like to help you get the skills you need. We'd like to teach you to play the guitar the right way... by note as well as by chords, and by notes and chords in combination.

We'd like to teach you to read music, too—so you won't be limited to just a few simple songs that you've memorized. We'd like to help you get the freedom and fulfillment you *should* be getting from your guitar—instead of frustration from not being able to play the way you want to.

In short, we'd like to teach you the same kind of things you'd learn if you went to a good, thorough private teacher. The big difference is that you teach yourself to play with the U.S. School of Music courses. By mail.

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# Why Willie?

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"To Lefty From Willie" is a tribute to Lefty Frizzell, one of Willie's idols, and one of the most influential country vocalist/songwriters of all time. (Willie's big hit of last year, "If You've Got the



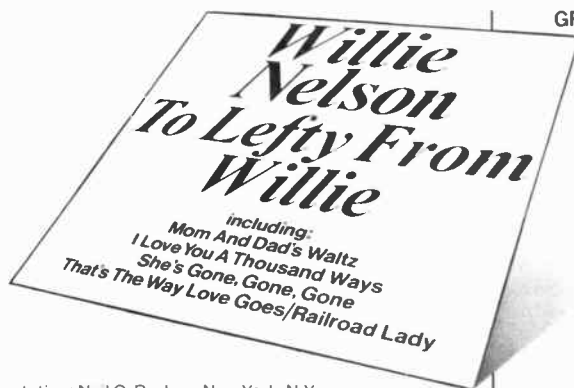
Money I've Got the Time," was a Lefty Frizzell song.)

Why Willie?

Who else communi-

cates *this* much honest feeling and beauty?

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# Letters

## Digs Men Behind The Scenes

I received my June, 1977 issue and want to tell you how very much I enjoyed Don Rhodes' article on pianist Floyd Cramer.

I am a country fan in general, but a Cramer fan in particular. I can tell you there are very few recordings by anyone in my record collection on which Floyd Cramer did not back. There are several great pianists today, but I feel as several others, that he's The Best.

Your Pickers Section is a great idea. Admittedly, the singers *are* good, but how many would be if not for the genius of those talented musicians behind them? I am looking forward to the future months as you pay long overdue honor to the true makers of those million sellers.

MRS. W.L. STREETY  
EDWARDS, CA.

## Liked Mystic Willie

The interview of Willie Nelson by Nelson Allen was very interesting and touched subjects I had never read concerning Willie. You know, the Entertainer of The Year Awards might continuously go to singers like Roy Clark, Mel Tillis, Ronnie Milsap and Mickey Gilley, but in my estimation, Willie Nelson is *this* and *every* year's Entertainer of the Year.

FRANK VEGAZO  
HIALEAH, FLA.

...My appreciation for the fantastic article on Willie Nelson (June 1977). I love to read anything I can find on this extremely talented man, and your magazine always comes up with the best. Keep em coming.

SUSAN SCOTT  
SAN DIEGO, CALIF.

## Lucky 13 For The Killer

This is the 13th letter that I have written to you. I have always been superstitious, so I'm hoping I'll get lucky this time. I hope you publish this letter because it is about the greatest entertainer in the business—Jerry Lee Lewis. Thank you very much for the article on the "Killer" in the June issue. The article entitled *Jerry Lee Lewis On The Rocks* is most representative of the man. Keep up the good work.

RICHARD JOHNSON  
NICKELSVILLE, VA.

*We're glad you like the old Killer, Rich. You'll be happy to know Jerry Lee beat the rap he was jailed for, and which we described in the article you mentioned. Seems he was simply transporting the .38 Derringer home in his car.*

*And he only seemed to be drunk because he was on medication of some sort. Anyway, the incident is closed and Jerry Lee Lewis remains one of the great originals.*

*Ed.*



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The Family Who Prays; Born Again; If We Forget God; Satan Lied To Me; God Bless Her ('Cause She's My Mother); Love Thy Neighbor As Thyself; Preach The Gospel; Just Rehearsing; Pray For Me; Satan And The Saint; Swing Low, Sweet Chariot; Make Him A Soldier.

**BILL MONROE AND HIS BLUE GRASS BOYS - 16 GREATEST HITS - CS-1065 SPECIAL \$2.98**  
Rock Road Blues; Blue Moon Of Kentucky; Blue Grass Stamp; My Rose Of Old Kentucky; Blue Grass Break-down; The Girl In The Blue Velvet Band; Footprints In The Snow; Can't You Hear Me Callin'; Molly And Tenbrooks; Travelin' This Lonesome Road; It's Mighty Dark To Travel; Wicked Path To Sin; When You Are Lonely; Little Cabin On The Hill; Will You Be Loving Another Man; I Hear A Sweet Voice Callin'.

**WILLIE NELSON - ANLI-1102 - SPECIAL \$2.98**  
Where's The Show; Let Me Be A Man (Willie Nelson And Band); In God's Eyes; Family Bible; It's Not For Me To Understand; Medley; These Are Difficult Times; Remember The Good Times; Summer Of Roses; December Day; Yesterday's Wine; Me And Paul; Gain' Home.

**ELVIS PRESLEY - ANLI-0971 - SPECIAL \$2.98**  
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.

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

**MARTY ROBBINS 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.

**MARTY ROBBINS 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 Hanging Tree; Sittin' In A Tree House; She Was Only Seventeen; Singing The Blues; Knee Deep In The Blues; Aloha? Oe.

**JIMMIE RODGERS - ANLI-1209 - SPECIAL \$2.98**  
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**ROY ROGERS AND DALE EVANS - SM-1745 \$2.98**  
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**SONS OF THE PIONEERS - ANLI-1092 - \$2.98**  
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**CONNIE SMITH - ANLI-1206 - SPECIAL \$2.98**  
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**CARL SMITH - CS 8737 - SPECIAL \$2.98**  
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**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; Anqr; Just For A Thrill.

**HANK THOMPSON - SM 2661 - SPECIAL \$2.98**  
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**TOMMY DORSEY - ANLI 1087 SPECIAL \$2.98**  
Marie; Star Dust; Little White Lies; I'll Never Smile Again; Yes Indeed; Boogie Woogie; Please; Once In A While; I'm Gettin' Sentimental Over You.

**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 Traic Romance; Catfish Juh; Let's Til Go Down To The River.

**PORTER WAGONER - ANLI-1213 SPECIAL \$2.98**  
Y'all Come (You All Come); Sorry On The Rocks; Misery Loves Company; I've Enjoyed As Much Of This As I Can Stand; Green, Green Grass Of Home; Company's Comin'; A Satisfied Mind; Dooley; I Thought I Heard You Call My Name; Uncle Pen; Skid Row Joe; I'll Go Down Swingin'.



# Country Scene

## HILLBILLY CENTRAL

by HAZEL SMITH



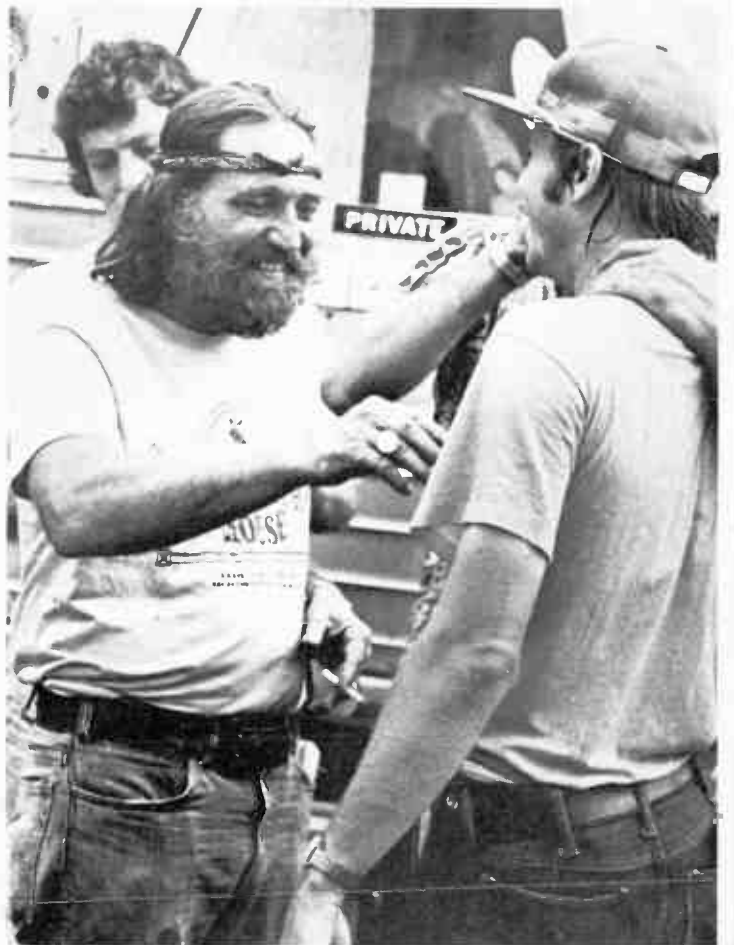
Why is this deceptively simple singer scratching his chin? Only Jim Halsey, Carnegie Hall wiz, knows for sure...



Superpicker Roy Clark plants a big wet one on this unidentified admirer after the big Carnegie Hall concert in New York mid-May.

No, ol' Willie is not moving to Hawaii, regardless of what you've heard.

Faron Young paid a visit to Johnny Paycheck's Music City club recently. Nothing serious—just a few broken glasses. Ol' Faron sure knows how to have a hillbilly good time...



## TEXAS Fromholz Goes Formal; Rusty Wier's Symphony Gig

by NELSON ALLEN



B.W. Stevenson, Jerry Jeff Walker and Rusty Wier at a party in San Antonio.

Old friends Rusty Wier and Steve Fromholz are both doing their singing bit with and for the tie and tails crowd. Fromholz's latest lp, *Frollicking in the Myth* was recorded with the Charles Veal String Ensemble and features Fromholz all decked out in a tux. Meanwhile, Rusty Wier does his bit for the highbrows as he headlines a street dance in downtown Austin thrown for the benefit of the Austin Symphony.

Doug Sahm has split with ABC but claims that he and producer Huey Meaux are still good friends.

Willie Nelson is faced with yet another lawsuit—this time from Houston Munson, who had something to do with arranging the last Willie Nelson Picnic.

One of the members of the Cooder Brown Band was arrested for driving while intoxicated near Llano recently. Promoter Buster Doss sent Laura Lee McBride (former vocalist with Bob Wills) over to spring him out of jail.

Joe Ely and Band have been celebrating and hanging out in Austin for half a month after completing their first national tour. Also back is Doc Jones, after a two month sojourn to California.

He's currently hard at work re-uniting his wildly popular Doc Jones Band. Doc says he's got at least another 150 songs as good as his last two singles, both of which were recorded at Richard and Marianne Lubasch's Hill Country Studios. The Lubaschs are currently spending a good deal of their time helping Willis Alan Ramsey (writer of *Northeast Texas Women* and *Spider John* among other songs) build a studio here in Austin.

Susan St. James was in the state recently to hype a movie—*Outlaw Blues*, in which she stars along with Peter Fonda. *Outlaw Blues* may not be such a bad flick after all—if you can forget that it's supposed to have something to do with the Texas music scene and just enjoy the chase sequences. Miss St. James appeared at a press party in San Antonio co-sponsored by the film's producers and Lone Star beer. After confessing that she had held some rather mundane prejudices against Texas before coming here to make the movie, Susan went on to say that she prepared for the movie by listening to Jerry Jeff Walker records for two months. Jerry Jeff was offered a small role in the movie (the one Steve Fromholz grabbed) but ex-

pressed his contempt for the whole affair by hanging up the phone when he was called. Record Producer Huey Meaux and singer Roy Head also attended the San Antonio press conference. Meaux is apparently interested in acquiring a chicano label and hiring (and recording) a host of Tex-Mex stars including such big names in that field as Steve Jordan, Little Joe, Juan Cornelius, The Latin Breed, and The Mexican Revolution. Of course Huey is already closely associated with the most popular Tex-Mex star of all—Freddy Fender.

Roy Head talked about his juvenile delinquent days in San Marcos, Tex. where he spent his teenage years. Among other antics, Roy used to like to throw cherry bombs and M-80's into the local police station. Jerry Jeff Walker's new album release is quite a package. It's a double album and a memorial to Hondo Crouch called *A Man Must Carry On*. Sides 1 and 2 were recorded in Luckenbach. The third side is devoted to Hondo—there's a recording of Hondo reciting his own poem *Luckenbach Moon*, three poems read by Charles John Quarto and written by him after Hondo's death (a poet who has long been associated with various Texas musicians), and Jerry Jeff singing the old standard *My Buddy*. The fourth side is made up of Jerry Jeff recorded live in various places. *Mr. Bo Jangles* was recorded in New Orleans and *Red Neck Mother* in Dallas, with Willie Nelson and Ray Wylie Hubbard joining in. Jackie Jack also recorded a song written by Slaffy "Farmer Dave" Gilstrap—former banjo-man-at-large, having played with Alvin Crow and Doug Sahm occasionally in the past. The name of the tune is *Rodeo-deo-o*.

Inner Sanctum Records' Joe Bryson and Cowboy Cooper, in conjunction with Polydor Records, hosted a Texas style shindig celebrating the release of Alvin Crow and The Pleasant Valley Boys debut album, *High Riding*. Alvin wouldn't have any other beer but Pearl.

On the other hand David Allan Coe just moved himself and his entire entourage to Austin (from Dallas). Both of his giant tour busses look to be somewhat permanently parked at the Bull Creek Inn, a popular outdoor/indoor nite club located on Lake Austin.

Willie and Waylon were both on hand for the Austin premiere of a film titled *Willie Nelson's 4th of July Picnic*. The film was shot at the third annual picnic which was held in Bryan, Tex. and features Willie, Waylon, Doug Kershaw, B.W. Stevenson and the Lost Gonzo Band. Leon Russel appears throughout as a sort of MC or Shakespearean clown.



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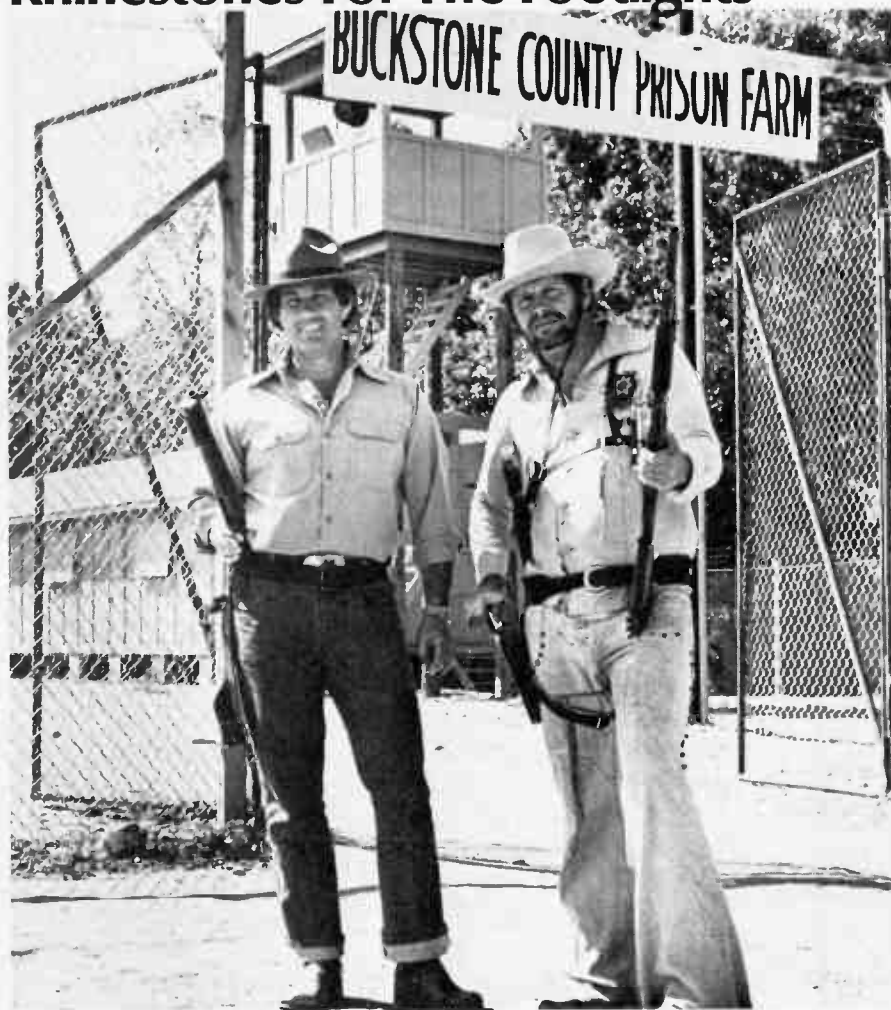
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## NEWS Coe Tries The Silver Screen And Jim Reeves Can Still Turn 'Em On

### David Allan Coe Shucks His Rhinestones For The Footlights



Earl Owensby and former Rhinestone Cowboy on the set of their first film, "Seabo."

Good news for all you B-movie fanatics—David Allan Coe, formerly the Mysterious Rhinestone Cowboy, has temporarily shelved his tough guy image to look for fame and fortune in the movies.

Seems that country music's foremost rebel found himself a soul-mate in Earl Owensby, a renegade North Carolina movie-maker intent on blasting his way into the Hollywood monopoly. Owensby's EO Corporation has already made six films for the small theater-drive in circuit, making Owensby a millionaire along the way and placing him in the running for the title of the new King Of The "Bs."

Coe's first movie, completed in May, is

titled *Seabo* and stars Owensby in the title role and Coe as Rebstock, a mountain-man, ex-convict who helps three prisoners escape from the state pen. Other cast members include former cowboy actor Sunset Carson and former Elvis Presley bodyguard Eddie Parker. Coe wrote the music and sings on the sound track, but not in his role as Rebstock.

According to a press release, "Owensby, a religious man who neither drinks nor smokes, took a liking to Coe's music, although David's language at times leaves a lot to be desired. Owensby figured it was a small price to pay for Coe's other talents. Coe, who is also a tee-totler and non-smoker, is best known for his song

writing and singing. He has followed much the same path as his buddy, Kristofferson, and at a much faster pace."

We'll agree with that faster pace—David has come under increasing criticism lately, some justified, mostly just irritating. His now-infamous *Texas Moon* poster, featuring the members of his former band with, shall we say, their drawers dropped, has become the newest Nashville cocktail party tsk-tsk. As for David himself, he's left Dallas, left the road, left his band and holed up in Nashville, where he just purchased a houseboat on Old Hickory Lake.

"Hell," David said in an exclusive telephone interview with *CM*, "If Nashville's so fed up with me, how come my houseboat is right between Billy Sherrill's and Bill Anderson's? That's country!"

MICHAEL BANE

### Fan Club Scene?



Reeves gravesight in Texas.

From *Rolling Stone* comes the saga of Maureen Marsh, Jim Reeves' fan *extraordinaire*. Marsh first made news at a Jim Reeves Fan Club meeting in Britain last March when it was reported that she had once spent a freezing night draped over the Texas grave of the country singer.

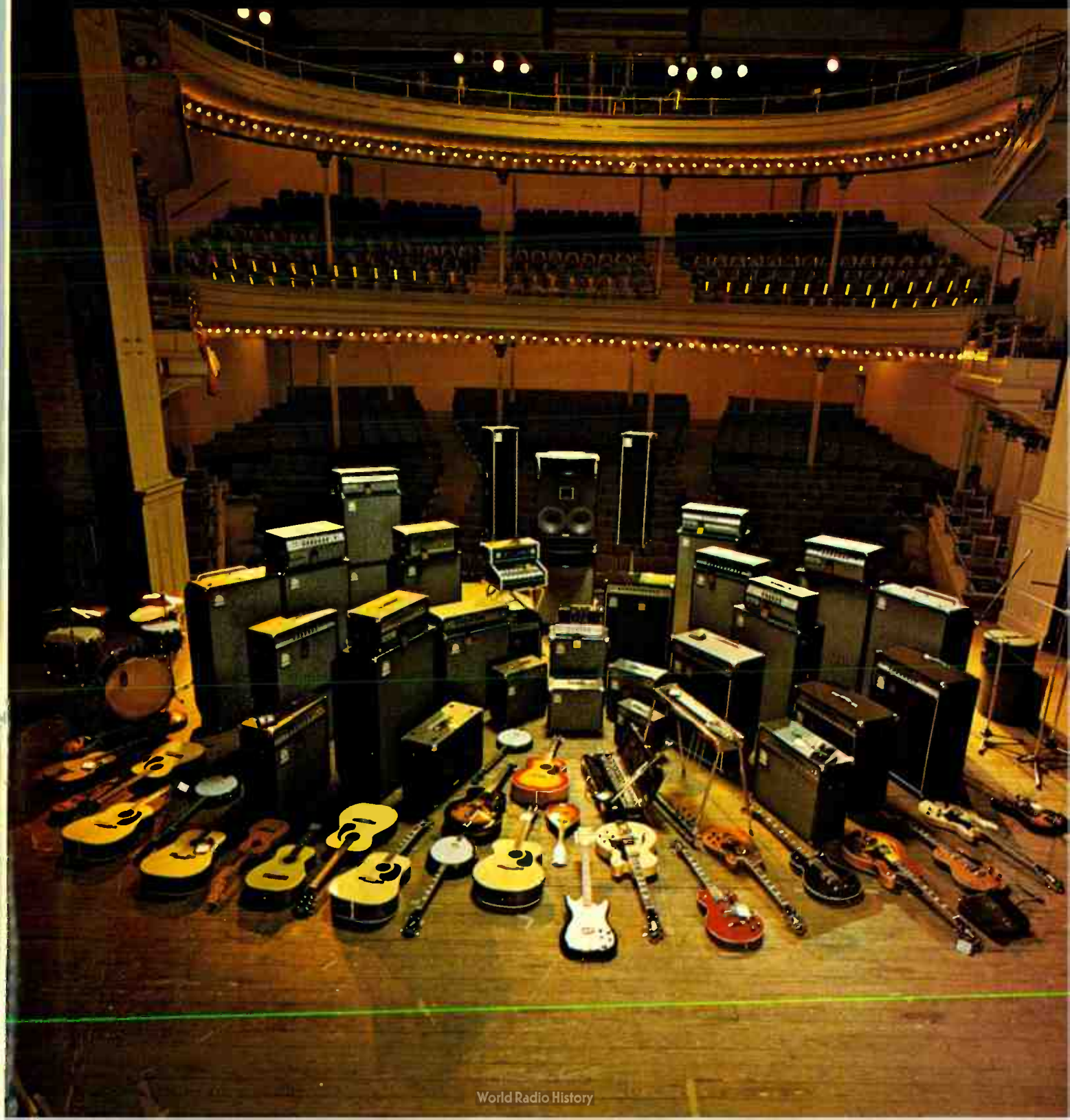
Now the late Reeves has been cited in a current divorce action by Marsh's husband, Jim. "When we made love, she would only do so with Jim Reeves' poster on the wall," he told a London newspaper.

"It is just as though there has been adultery with someone on the other side of the grave. . . . Two years ago she went to a spiritualist and told me that she has been in contact with her idol. Since then she refused to sleep with me."

"After going to the spiritualist," Maureen said, "I felt a funny tingle all over, which told me that no other man, including my husband, should ever touch me."



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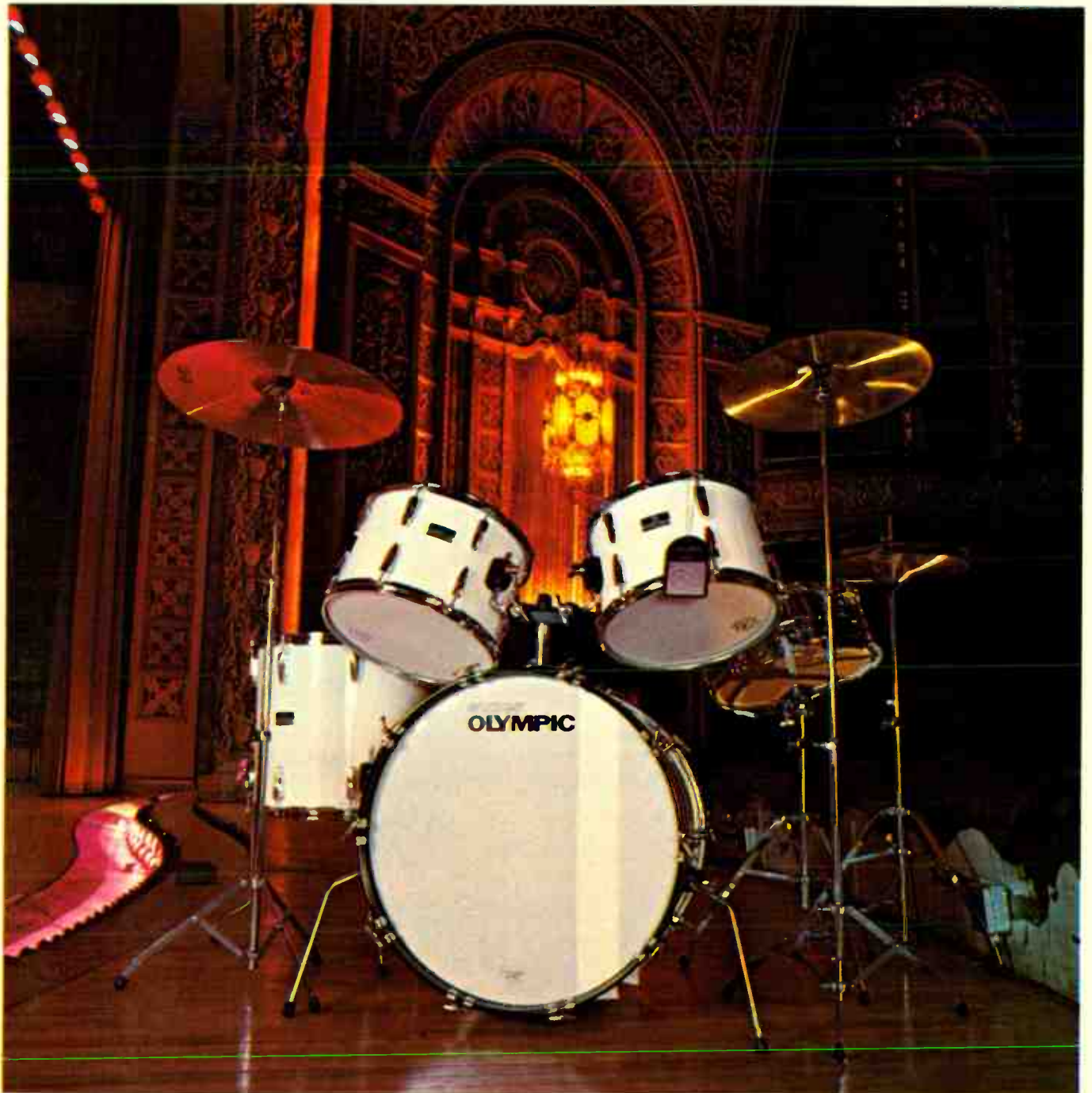
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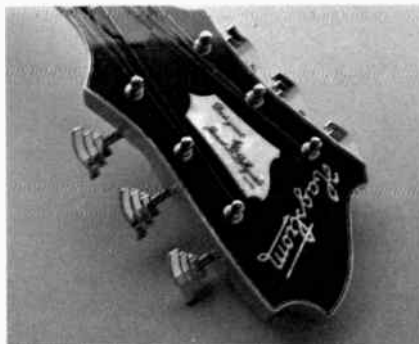
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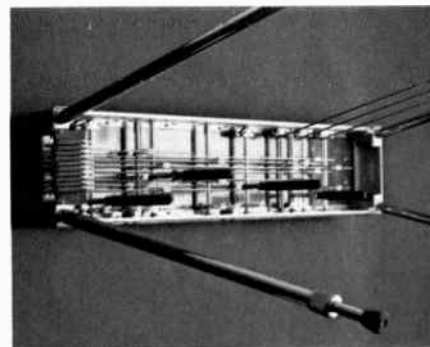
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## Green Ties Knot; Gimble Remains Plucky



Intrepid CM correspondent and sometime Grammy nominee Douglas B. Green has gone and gotten married to longtime buddy Cindy Jernigan, and lots of Music City folk showed up (some for a small fee) to give the couple a proper nuptial sendoff. Here Doug and ace fiddler Johnny Gimble get together for a little of that old time music. Doug wanted us to be sure to mention he once played the Opry.

## Rockin' Ronny Rambles While Papa Marty Beams In The Wings

When a performer plays a club and steps out on stage, there are two ways an audience can react: they can give their undivided attention or they can make the performer feel like he's just climbed the steps of the platform to be hanged in the middle of yesterday's old western town.

Ronny Robbins got the undivided attention as he opened his show with *Good Hearted Woman*, and the response was second only to that of when Willie and Ole Waylon sing the song. When the applause subsided, a voice from a darkened part of the room yelled out, "Aw Right!!!" Ronny, sitting on a bar stool and holding his guitar, shook his head, grinned, and said, "Well, I was afraid of this." He put the guitar down. "We have a . . . well, I've never been in a position to have to do this before, I really don't know how I'm gonna do it . . . so I won't! No . . . I'm blessed . . . or cursed (said under his breath) by following another fine gentleman into this business. His name is Marty



Robbins . . . he's my father . . . HE doesn't admit that. . . ."

The "Aw right" voice, belonging to none other than Marty, yells out again, "And he's proud of ya." Ronny adds, "This is the first time the old man has

ever been to see me do a show." Marty retorts, "Twice . . . first and last. Say, what's this 'old man' business?"

Everyone laughed. Not letting up, Ronny continued, "A lot of you may ask why I don't do any of his songs, and I can only answer 'cause he doesn't do any of mine. But every once in a while, I like to do a few of 'em . . . get 'em outa the way . . ." Marty comes back with, "Aw right . . . you've had it."

Ronny sang *El Paso*, prefacing it by saying, "Y'all feel like listening to a western? I'm almost afraid to do this one . . . aw, I'll give it a shot . . . all he can do is disown me." Marty applauded for all he was worth as the song ended, and Ronny quipped, "Don't know if y'all noticed, but I cut about ten minutes outa that . . . even fooled the old man. At least he didn't blink."

As Ronny left the stage, there was no mistaking he had been in full command, that it was strictly his show, his style. The last name and the resemblance at times in his voice and his father's is where the similarity ends. Ronny Robbins stands in the shadow of no one.

JUDY HEDY

## 'Sunshine' Duane Picks Again



Duane Eddy and Deed, doing a little mutual pickin'.

By now you've probably heard the new version of *You Are My Sunshine* and done a double-take. More likely, you did several double-takes, because this record packs a lot of surprises into four minutes and 50 seconds.

It begins with a twangy guitar that should be unmistakable to anyone who listened to AM radio in the late '50s and early '60s. That just *has* to be Duane Eddy. Then the first verse is sung by someone who sounds just like Waylon Jennings. With strings welling in the background, the chorus is sung by a woman who might well be Jessi Colter. A twangy guitar solo carries the melody, then yields to a pedal steel and a verse sung by someone who's a dead ringer for Willie Nelson. The female singer and strings return for the verse and then it's repeated by a choir and a high gospel voice.

The Elektra label copy says it's by "Duane Eddy featuring Deed and some very good friends." Duane plays the twangy guitar and pedal steel, which he first took up about 18 months ago. Deed is the woman singer easily mistaken for Jessi Colter (who isn't on the record). The gospelish voice belongs to Kin Vassy, formerly of the Backporch Majority and the First Edition. The voices that sound

like Waylon and Willie ... Waylon and Willie.

"I didn't want to exploit those guys, jump on a bandwagon and look like an Outlaw, which I'm not," Eddy explained over the phone the week in early May when the single entered the Billboard charts. "I figured everybody would figure it out anyhow, so we didn't use their names. It just seemed like a classier approach to me, even if it hampers the record's chance of success. And I guess you could say I'm sorta trying to keep my own identity as well."

Working with Phoenix producer Lee Hazelwood in 1958, Eddy came up with the style of playing melodies on the guitar's bass strings, and then recorded a string of instrumental hits - *Rebel Rouser*, *Ramrod*, *Forty Miles of Bad Road*, *Because They're Young*, *Boss Guitar*—that lasted until the British rock invasion. Besides the twangy guitar, those records were usually distinguished by raunchy sax breaks and background whoops from the band. The formula sold Duane some 30 million records, he also won several music polls, appeared in films, and had a line of Guild guitars named after him.

When his bookings and record sales began declining after the Beatles exploded, Duane moved into other areas,

such as publishing and producing. Last year he started getting itchy again, made a single deal with Elektra and initially planned to cut one of his trademark instrumentals. Then he reconsidered.

"I decided on *Sunshine*, but I knew I had to do something different. So I did it real slow. Most people do it fast and happy, but if you listen, it's not a happy song. Those lyrics are very beautiful, very meaningful, but they're very sad. I didn't want to use just Deed on the vocals, because then it would be her record. So I decided to get two or three name singers who could really put those verses across. The whole idea just came to me, I don't know how."

When Duane was seeking his record deal last year, Waylon offered to help. Given the idea behind *Sunshine*, he agreed to sing a verse and also offered to bring along Willie. The two came to L.A. the next month for a Hollywood Bowl concert, and put down their vocals for Duane the morning of the show.

Right now Duane Eddy is living in Lake Tahoe, making plans to perform occasionally, and trying to get a record deal for Deed. If *You Are My Sunshine* is a big enough hit, he'll also cut an album.

"I'm sittin' back with my fingers crossed, my legs crossed, my eyes crossed," Duane laughed. "You name it, anything that can be crossed, I got it crossed on this record."

JOHN MORTHLAND

## Watch This Ax



Watch for fireman Howdy Glenn's new release. *Don't Take Pretty To The City*.



## WATCH THIS FACE: Harlan Sanders

Harlan Sanders, looking like an older version of Billy the Kid and singing like Maker's Mark on a cold day, evokes a lot of comparisons to other country singers, songwriters and ex-convicts. Sanders does not refer to his prison record often; neither does he deny it. He knows Johnny Cash, though he doesn't use the acquaintance as crudely as others have been known to do.

Cash wrote the liner notes for Sanders' first Epic album, where he remembers that he first met Sanders at Vacaville Prison, when Harlan was serving time for armed robbery. The observation running through the notes is a quote from Harlan, "I'm gonna make it." That attitude has become a backhanded logo.

Born in Weedpatch, Calif., Sanders remembers migrant labor camps for the fields and orchards of southern California. Smiling, chewing a cigar, he recalls, "Our life was like Steinbeck wrote in *The Grapes of Wrath*. Do you remember the



Harlan Sanders

movie of it, the one with Henry Fonda? My brother Chuck and I were watching it not long ago, and somewhere in the middle we sort of sneaked a look at each other and we both had tears in our eyes. Then we started laughing like fools. You know, you laugh hardest when it hurts too bad to cry. That makes it all sound sad, but there were good times too."

Some of those good times led to small time "borrowing" and eventually more serious robberies. Prison might, though, in a veiled way, be considered a stroke of good fortune for Harlan

Harlan always loved to read and attended one college on the strength of his short story writing. While in prison he had more time to read (a favorite author being Shakespeare) and began writing

songs with Glen Sherley. Cash recorded two of their songs and told them to keep writing. When released from prison, Sanders headed straight for Nashville.

*(Continued on page 59)*

*On her fourth Capitol album, Jessi Colter explores her roots, her heritage and the music she grew up with as a child.*

# Jessi Colter



## Miriam

*"Mama named me Miriam,  
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*Ten new songs, all composed by Jessi,  
produced by Ken Mansfield and Richie Albright  
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# The Audio Scene

## LET'S HAVE FIDELITY ON THE CAMPUS

By Hans Fantel

We're talking about sound, of course, and if you or yours are heading back to school, it would be nice to take along a transportable sound rig you can stash in the car trunk. Lugging a big component system back to school wouldn't make much sense anyway. Cranking up a really powerful sound system in a dorm would probably weaken the crumbling foundation of those old ivy halls and loosen the molars of the guy next door who (okay, I grant you it's a far-fetched possibility) may just want to study.

So, since you can't use that super-powered dream system at school, you lose nothing and gain a lot by settling for something less than the ultimate. In most cases this means a compact system consisting of three units: a control center containing all the "works" (receiver and changer) and two separate stereo speakers. For the collegiate crowd, such stereo compacts offer distinct advantages: They're 1) easily transportable; 2) fairly cheap; and 3) sound better than ever—some of them, anyway.

First let's talk about the atrocious, to get it over with. Those are the doubtful brands of cheap stereo compacts—the kind they sell for anywhere from \$89.95 to \$139.95 or thereabouts in outlet stores handling all kinds of cut-rate merchandise. What those systems lack in tonal range they usually make up with enough distortion to curdle milk at fifty paces. You wouldn't want to hear your favorite artist mauled by one of those monstrosities. Besides, the tone arm usually bears down heavily on the grooves and reams out your favorite records.

The good news is at the other end of the scale. Quality compacts, made by such reputable companies as Sony, Sanyo, Superscope, Panasonic, Sharp, Zenith, Merit and Channel Master now offer excellent value at prices ranging between about \$180 and \$450. Higher-priced models usually have more power and bigger speakers in enclosures sturdy enough not to get rattled by a real funky bass. They also have smoother-running turntables and some of them have magnetic phono cartridges of the type used in component-grade sound systems. Many of the cheaper compacts don't use separate woofers and tweeters but rely on a single speaker to cover the whole range. So, naturally, they skimp sound at the very bottom and the uppermost top. Even so, the lower-priced compacts among the mentioned brands sound surprisingly smooth, and you can entrust your records to them.

One reason why compacts nowadays sound better than they used to is that many of the current models employ a new kind of speaker design known as "passive radiators." This uses a so-called drone cone in addition to the regular woofer cone. The drone has no power connection, but when a strong bass note comes along, the drone cone, pushed by the back-pressure created within the loudspeaker box, vibrates along with the regular woofer. This creates extra surface for sound radiation, allowing even small speakers to push out more bass from less audio power.

There's yet another reason for the quality jump in today's better compacts. Circuit improvements first developed for fancy components have now trickled down to some of the cheaper equipment. Compacts produced by companies which also make component equipment benefit from these refinements. The net result is clearer sound, with more detail coming through.

Among the models I have heard, I liked Sony's HP-161, a really compact compact combining a quality record changer with a solidly built FM/AM receiver and a pair of two-way speakers (6½-inch woofers plus 2-inch tweeters). It's a bargain at \$200. So is Panasonic's Model SE-7410 (\$180).

If you want the convenience and transportability of a compact, yet demand something closer to full-fledged component sound, check out Panasonic's SE-2600

(\$280), which is among the best dollar values in the field. Or, going right to the top, listen to Sony's standout—the Model HMK-419. With 15 watts per channel at no more than 2 percent distortion, plus a magnetic phono cartridge, it is one of the best-sounding compacts on the market. And when you see that \$450 price tag, keep in mind that this includes a built-in cassette deck (in addition to a stereo record player and a highly sensitive radio tuner) for taping off the air or copying your friends' records. In fact, with a cassette deck, you may not even want to take your favorite records to school with you. Just copy your records on cassettes.

Several less expensive compacts also have built-in cassette decks, among them Radio Shack's "Clarinet 98" (\$250), Sanyo's RD-8020 (\$250) and Superscope's SMS-540 (\$350). All the models mentioned here have a record changer, but you can get equivalent models without the turntable—just for cassettes.

You can also get compacts with built-in 8-track cartridge players. This is handy if you already have a set of 8-tracks for playing in your car. But keep in mind that the fidelity of the 8-track format is basically limited by a lot of flutter, which makes long-held notes sound pretty wobbly. If you're starting from scratch and don't already own 8-track tapes, going for cassettes both in your car and in the house is a better bet. Also, if you have a small battery-powered cassette recorder, you can record classroom lectures on it, then play them back with superior fidelity on your cassette-equipped compact.



Sony's Model HMK-419



Panasonic's Model SE-7410





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# OLIVIA

## A Hint Of Country

by Michael Bane

Olivia Newton-John moves with a kind of understated grace normally reserved for the very young, as if she were a puppet and the puppet master had just dropped all the strings. She folds onto the beige couch at the Park Lane Hotel, overlooking a very inviting Central Park, sighing as she pulls her knees and sneaker-clad feet onto the couch. She looks tired and very resigned in the face of another interview, like a little girl in sneakers and jeans who looks out the window at the park and sees where she'd like to be on this perfect spring afternoon, but instead must spend the afternoon writing time after time on some schoolhouse chalkboard: "My name is Livvy. I am a country and western singer . . . ."

There were the whispered warnings before the interview, outside the door to Olivia's suite. "For God's sake, ask her about her music," a record company representative said as we killed some time waiting for the previous interview to end. "So far she's been asked about her sex life, her fashion designer, her hair stylist, her boyfriend, her family, what parties she attends—everything but her music. She is a singer, after all."

Not only is she definitely a singer, but one of the most popular singers around, if record sales are taken to be the final arbiters of such things. In fact, Olivia Newton-John sells records about the way McDonald's sells hamburgers—over 10 million.

Since exploding on the American music scene in 1974 with *Let Me Be There*, Olivia has managed to surround herself



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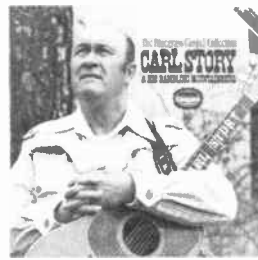
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# JOHNNY'S ANGEL



*Without a June Carter, there might not be a Johnny Cash. Here's a touching excerpt from our first Country Music Magazine Press/Doubleday book, Singers & Sweethearts, on the stands in August.*

*By Joan Dew*

Television cameras dollyed back and forth across the stage at the Grand Ole Opry as June Carter Cash stood in resigned boredom, waiting on her mark for technical problems to be corrected so they could move in for a close-up of her face. When the camera was finally in position she gave the red light a mechanical smile, holding it with the resolved determination of a beauty queen whose face had begun to crack after hours of smiling down from the parade float. Suddenly, from somewhere backstage, Johnny Cash appeared, looking over the cameraman's shoulder to tease his wife:

"Smile, sugar," he implored, making a "smack-smack" kissing noise with his mouth. "C'mon, sugar, *smile*. Thaaaat's

right . . . now *that's* the real thing." He petted her with words until she broke into a warm, wide smile. She was looking at her husband with such naked love in her eyes that the moment was almost too intimate to watch.

Satisfied he had June's best smile on tape for the TV special, the cameraman dollyed back, waiting for the next star to step on the mark, as Johnny took his wife's arm and led her to a corner of the vast stage. There they sat on plexiglass props, talking and laughing softly, their dark heads close together, his big farmer's hand resting gently on her knee.

Other images of June Carter flash quickly to mind: a maternal June, on the phone backstage at the Opry, her hair in

giant curlers, no make-up, oblivious to the strangers milling about as she talked soothingly to a sick daughter at home; a feisty June, cautioning a journalist she'd never met before to "write a good article on Loretta Lynn and don't make fun of the way she talks or I'll call up the magazine and give them a piece of my mind;" a sophisticated June, pulling up in front of the House of Cash in a nut-brown Mercedes sedan, looking like one of those women in a classy automobile ad as she stepped out in a smart tweed hat, an exquisitely tailored jacket with suede elbow patches and English gabardine riding britches, every inch the *Town and Country* sophisticate until she opened her mouth and called out in that wonderful



Johnny Cash and June Carter shortly after the birth of John Junior.

Appalachian twang: "Hi. Y'all come on in and make yourself at home." All these images mean something, but June's loving moment with Johnny in front of the Opry staff and half its performers leaves the most indelible picture, for she is emotionally dependent on her husband. . . . Yet ten years ago you couldn't have found a dozen people in Nashville to give odds that June and Johnny would be happily married a decade later.

Although June Carter was almost grown before she realized the extent of her family's musical contribution, she was aware of her heritage from an early age. "My earliest recollection of music is sitting in front of a shiny mahogany box with a silk screen in front of it, listening to my mother and aunt and uncle singing," she recalls. "I thought they turned into fairy people sometimes, and crawled in that box to go away off to some fairy-land so they could send us back songs. I had visions of it being a wonderful place.

"It was a unique family," she says. "They were thoroughbreds. That's the only way I know to put it. They were strong mountain people who had come from fine English and Irish stock. My mother's great-great-great (I'm not sure how many 'greats') grandfather was Henry Addington, the Prime Minister of England right before William Pitt. The Addington side had come from England and settled in Copper Creek Valley in Southwestern Virginia. Even as hard-working pioneers they carried with them a certain dignity that came down through the generations."

□ □ □

As a girl, June bubbled over with enthusiasm for life and all it had to offer. She was fiercely independent, ambitious, affectionate and flirtatious. Grand Ole Opry veterans who remember the Carters' first days as members if the Opry (1950) also remember that June was the "character" of the group. She was "pretty as a picture" and as gregarious as her mother was shy.

As a mature woman June has retained

many of those characteristics, but she is not so independent now, and religion plays a more important role in her life than it did in the past.

"The big change in me came about because Dr. Nat Winston told me I *had* to change if I wanted to see John get off drugs once and for all," she says. "We had found him in his house, half frozen to a tree at the edge of the lake where he'd been hanging on for dear life for Lord knows how long after running his tractor into the water. He was half-dead from pills and exposure—he had ice in his hair and his face was blue, it was freezing cold—and when I saw him I cried, 'This is it. I can't take it any more.'

"I had gone through so much over John already. Even before I loved him, I couldn't stand by and watch him kill himself. I had fought him and his pills for five years, fought him in ways that were completely against my nature. I was with his show for months before I even knew he was on pills. Then I told myself it was none of my business—I wasn't emotionally involved with him—but when you work with someone they become like family and I couldn't help worrying about him. Marshall Grant (of the Tennessee Three) and I would swipe the key to John's room and sneak into his things looking for pills. When we found them we'd flush them down the commode. Then I'd face him defiantly with what I'd done. It's against my nature to fight. I had never raised my voice to a man before in my life, but I yelled plenty at John. There were times I could see in his eyes he wanted to hit me, but he'd just storm out and go look for more pills. You never knew what to expect from him in those days—he could be mean and wild one minute, kind and sweet the next. But it's funny, the basic goodness in him was always there."

"When I finally admitted to myself that I cared for John, it was a terrible time for me," June recalls. "Here I was in love with this man who was on drugs, and I had two beautiful daughters, and he was

so strange and unpredictable that I didn't even want him at my house around my children. My second marriage was over and I was too ashamed of that to tell anybody. I felt like a complete failure. Months went by after the divorce before I even told the people who traveled with John's show. And he was getting worse and worse. Mother had even been to Dr. Nat Winston—who was State Commissioner of Mental Health, but also a family friend—and said, 'You've got to help him. He's dying.' After Nat met John he gave him a *three million* to one chance of kicking it, because he was taking over a hundred pills a day and had been for a long time.

"So that day when Nat came out to John's house, I told him I was through. I just couldn't take anymore. Nat talked to John for a long time, then he came out to me and said, 'June, I don't know why, but I have a feeling he can kick it this time. He's reached the bottom and he knows it, and I think he's ready to straighten out. But if he's going to make it, you'll have to stay here and help him through it because the withdrawal will be severe.'

"I told him I *couldn't* move in there with John. I said, 'Nat, I'm not that kind of a girl. I can't come out here and stay with him, no matter how much I care,' and he said, 'Well, if you want him to live you're gonna have to, 'cause otherwise he's a dead man.'

"I said, 'Oh, my dear God. What can I do?' I'd been taught to live a certain way and I had never been emotionally involved with anybody I wasn't married to. . . . I mean, I hadn't had an affair, so to speak, with anybody who wasn't my husband. And I had my children to think about, and I just didn't see how I could do what Nat was asking. I remember getting in the car to drive home, crying so hard I could barely see the road. When I got home my father was sitting on the porch and I stopped the car in the driveway and sat there, too distraught to get out. Daddy walked off the porch—I'll never forget he had on this little cap he liked to wear with his overalls—and he said, 'June, honey, what's the matter?'

"I started bawling, and telling him I didn't know what to do. I said, 'John is in real bad shape and Nat Winston says I have to go and stay with him to get him through this withdrawal.'

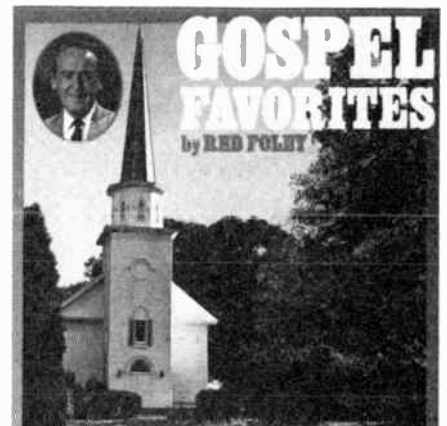
"Daddy pulled me out of the car and looked me right in the eye and said, 'Girl what are you *waiting* on?'

"I said, 'Daddy, you know I can't move in over there with John. What about the girls? And what will the neighbors say?'

"He said, 'You *don't* worry about the girls. We can take care of them. And the neighbors aren't gonna say a thing because I'm going with you. Your mother and I will take turns being with you and we'll sleep in shifts if we have to.'

June and Johnny didn't talk about getting married until several months after his





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June and the Cash's beautiful home overlooking Old Hickory Lake in Nashville.

withdrawal period. "Johnny and I both had long, bumpy marital roads behind us," June says, "and even though we felt we were meant to be together, the idea of another marriage was kind of frightening. Two divorces can make a woman terribly unsure of herself. My first husband, Carl Smith, was a big star when I married him, and I remember telling my mother, 'I won't be working any more 'cause one performer in the family is enough.'

"When we split up I didn't know how I could stand it, or really what had gone wrong. Then after a *second* divorce, well, I just didn't know if I could ever find happiness in marriage. I was disappointed in myself and what I'd done with my life and I didn't want my daughters, Carlene and Rosey, to go through another break-up, but as it turned out it was my girls who planned our marriage. They had gotten to know John by then. At Christmas his four daughters, Kathleen, Cindy, Tara and Roseann, had come from California and my girls and I had gone out to his house for the holidays and they all got along so well. So we had started talking about getting married in June when school was out. My girls and I lived closer into town and I didn't want to change them to a Hendersonville school in the middle of the year.

"I remember it was on a Tuesday in the last week of February when I decided to tell Rosey and Carlene that John and I were thinking about getting married. We were sitting in the kitchen at our house and I said, 'I love this man very much and want to marry him, but if you don't love him or don't feel you can make him a part of your life, then I can't do it.'

"They said, 'Mamma, we *love* John and if you want to marry him that's fine with us, but why do you want to wait 'till June? That's so far away.'

"I explained about school and they understood. But the next day Carlene came home from school and said, 'Mama, I've got it all figured out. John can go to Franklin, Kentucky, tomorrow and get

the license (there's no waiting there) and if you got married on Friday you could have a honeymoon over the weekend. We could stay with Aunt Helen. Then you could pick us up on Sunday night and we could start school in Hendersonville on Monday.' And do you know, that's exactly what we did!"

The marriage took place in 1968, and most Music City observers didn't give it much of a chance. Johnny's reputation, whether earned or fabricated, was that of a man who liked women as much as he liked feeling good on pills and roaring with the guys. And he had done a lot of the latter. There are hotel and motel managers around this country who still cringe at the name of Johnny Cash, and with good reason. He used to get a big kick out of sawing the legs off their furniture and propping it back just so until the next tenant sat on a bed or a chair and went crashing to the floor, or painting the walls of his room black, or unleashing a thousand baby chicks in his room before checking out. (For a long time after their marriage June kept a "couth" book for Johnny, writing down such reminders as, 'Do not sing bluegrass songs walking through airports,' 'do not eat sardines and crackers on planes.')

June is oddly out of place as a millionaire. Two Rolls Royces are parked in her driveway, but they are stored there under tarpaulins like forgotten toys to make room in the garage for her overflow of antique furniture. She has a household staff of four, yet she cooks and cleans and shops for bargains and waits for sales as earnestly as any blue-collar housewife. "I'm just as stingy as I can be," she brags.

Her one extravagance appears to be antique furniture, and she has enough of it crammed into their stone and timber house on Old Hickory Lake to fill a museum. Antique lovers would consider the hundreds of thousands of dollars' worth of furniture she owns an investment, since she *does* know what is good and what is junk, but even a compulsive

collector would balk at her apparent inability to control her buying. The result is that Johnny's "nature house," the rugged structure he bought as a bachelor and in which he lived and almost died before it was furnished, has become so overburdened with massive Baroque, Rococo, Gothic, Romanesque and Renaissance pieces that one expects to see Hamlet's ghost pop out any minute from behind a thirty-foot Jacobean cabinet. Even the downstairs panoramic view of the lake has been almost cut off by huge, ornately carved cabinets and cupboards.

Two more upper levels have been added to the house since they married, but June talks wistfully of the need for more space. The master bedroom, an enormous room probably as large as the entire Arkansas cabin in which Johnny was born, contains *two* huge antique beds, not because the Cashes sleep separately, but because June likes them both so much she can't bear to make a decision and part with one. Their son, John Carter, must have a half dozen antique cradles, cribs and baby beds in his two bedrooms, and they will undoubtedly be on display long after he's grown and moved to a home of his own.

June escorts a visitor through these high-ceilinged, over-furnished rooms with a mixture of pride and embarrassment. She's well aware that the decor smacks of over-indulgence and she continually apologizes—"I know there's too much in here; I know how cluttered it looks"—but in the next breath she's pointing out some interesting and historic piece with the appreciation and respect of a museum curator. She has the problem with furniture that we most often associate with food: a gourmet's taste and a truckdriver's appetite.

□ □ □

"When John Carter was an infant I could find John in his room day or night just looking down at him in his crib. He acted like the first man alive to sire a son. I've often thought that no matter what ever happened between John and me, I know I have something for him no other woman could ever have—I'm John Carter's mother.

□ □ □

"I was doing a lot of work with Elvis at that time, too. Col. Tom Parker was handling me. I was with him when he was on *Louisiana Hayride*, and when he made his first screen test, and I did comedy to open his concert show. In fact, it was through Elvis that I first heard of Johnny Cash. Elvis loved John's records—'Folsom Prison Blues,' 'Cry, Cry, Cry' and 'Hey Porter.' That was his favorite. Everyplace we went, he'd drag me into cafes and honky tonks looking for Johnny Cash records on the juke box. I ate every meal to Johnny's songs. So when I came home to

(Continued on page 56)



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COUNTRYMUSIC

STAR OF THE MONTH







MERLE HAGGARD



# Thirteen heavies who stoke the star-maker machinery

# 13 Most Powerful People In Country

by Art Maher & Michael Bane



## JERRY BRADLEY

Don't let that good ol' boy country demeanor fool you. As the head of the sprawling RCA country empire, Jerry Bradley is the single most powerful man in Nashville.

As Vice-President In Charge Of Nashville Operations, Bradley exercises tremendous control over who RCA adds to their roster, and what the artist will record. Hand-picked by former RCA chief Chet Atkins, the son of Nashville producer-legend Owen Bradley, Jerry Bradley has ramrodded RCA onto the top of the country charts since taking over in 1974.

Perhaps his biggest single coup was the conception and execution of Wanted: The Outlaws, the Waylon Jennings, Willie Nelson, Jessi Colter, Tompall Glaser composite album. That album became the first country album to ever go platinum, to sell one million units.

His philosophy, based on his actions as head of RCA, is simple—anticipate the marketplace, then make a lot of money. An ideology—such as that expressed by Waylon and Willie and others—simply does not matter.



## BILLY SHERRILL

Perhaps no other person in Nashville's recording industry has managed to generate the amounts of respect and hatred heaped on Billy Sherrill, chief of CBS Records' Nashville operations. There seems to be no middle ground on the Sherrill question—he is either loved or hated, admired for building CBS into a country power or detested for manipulating artists into his mold.

Like Atkins, Sherrill had a vision of what would sell—his much vaunted "Wall of Sound," with strings and choruses and all manner of "sweetening" behind the artist.

The first chinks in Sherrill's wall came, perhaps not surprisingly, from Texas and Willie Nelson. Nelson's self-produced Red-Headed Stranger album was everything Sherrill did *not* do (it was rumored, in fact, that Sherrill opposed release of the Nelson masterpiece), the exact opposite of a Wall of Sound approach. But Sherrill didn't get to the top by being stupid.

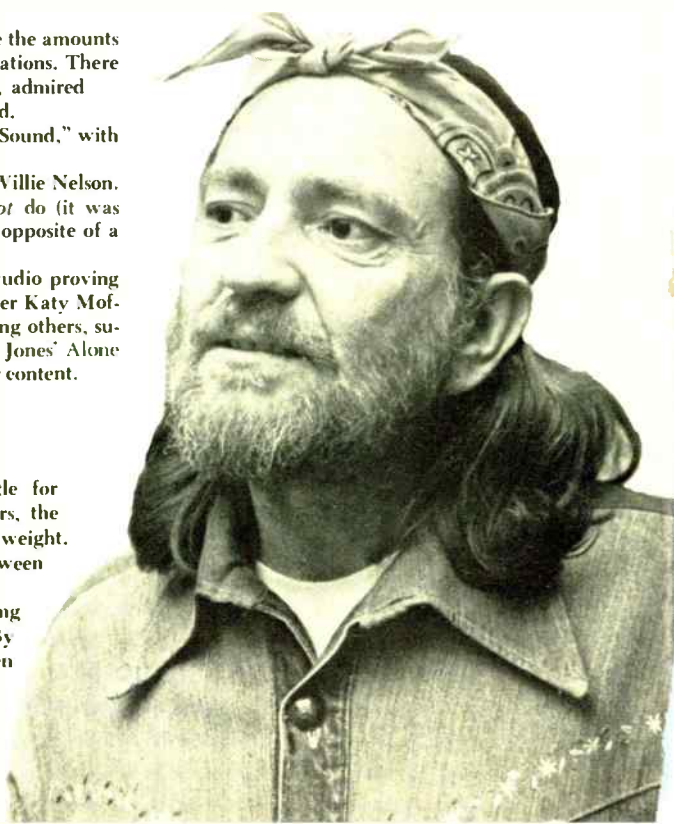
Within months of the success of Red-Headed Stranger, Sherrill was back in the studio proving exactly what a master-producer could do. The first spin-off was an album by newcomer Katy Moffat, featuring very un-Sherrillish production by Sherrill. He followed that with, among others, superb, spare production of Johnny Paycheck's 11 Months and 29 Days and George Jones' Alone Again, with both albums being critically acclaimed for their production as well as their content.

## WILLIE NELSON

Willie Nelson, along with Waylon Jennings, holds what has been called the title for Mr. Trendy Country Music, 1977. He has become, in the last couple of years, the strongest selling purely country artist in America, and that gives Willie's words some weight.

Willie is also one of the very few country artists to successfully straddle the fence between young and old.

In addition, Willie has achieved his tremendous audience without once compromising his deceptively simple style—which has given his record companies fits upon fits. By towing his own line, Willie has helped to redefine the country audience, as well as open up a whole new audience of young people disenchanted with hardened-at-the-arties rock 'n roll.





# behind the popular country song . . .



## Jim Halsey

Jim Halsey could probably make you a star, and if you have a little talent, well that's just icing on the cake. Halsey's management firm, off in the wilds of Oklahoma, specializes in image make-overs, and their graduates have been spectacularly successful.

Take the case of Roy Clark, Halsey's summa-laude graduate. While Clark's reputation as a country picker was assured, Halsey had greater plans. Through careful management and some of the slickest television bookings around, Halsey painted an image of Clark as the complete entertainer. Pretty soon Clark was everywhere—on talk shows, on game shows, on specials, in Russia. *Voila*, one complete entertainer.

Halsey's roster now includes, in addition to Clark, Mel Tillis, Jimmy Dean, Hank Thompson, Freddy Fender, Don Williams, the Oak Ridge Boys, Jody Miller, Donna Fargo and Buck Trent.

Halsey represents the most liberated trend in country music management and booking; indeed, his pioneer work in booking country artists into glittering, high paying Las Vegas, and on national television is one reason for country's present boom. Halsey maintains a special vice president on the West Coast whose only job is to keep Halsey clients in front of the cameras, in the public eye.



## Johnny Cash

Every industry needs an elder statesman, and while John R. Cash may not fit the elder part, he fulfills the statesman portion to a "T." In fact, Johnny Cash represents one of country music's greatest resources.

Aside from his obvious musical talents, Cash has become something of a national spokesman for country music, a voice to whom the general public can turn for an explanation of the Music City madness. In many ways Cash represents the stability of country music.

More importantly, perhaps, Cash has stood as one who has pretty much seen it all, and, though battered, is still on his feet. Even his most simple pronouncements have the not-unsubstantial weight of Cash's background behind them.

Cash also occupies a key position between country music and the rest of popular culture. It was Cash's television show in the late 1960s that served as a two-way clearing house for talent—the non-country audience was introduced to Cash and Roger Miller and Chet Atkins; the country audience met Bob Dylan and Kris Kristofferson.



## Chet Atkins

In many ways, Chet remains the godfather of modern country music. As head of RCA until 1974, Atkins had almost unprecedented power to mold the label into his personal vision—though that power ultimately led to the present revolt, if one can call it such, of today's country artists.

Essentially, Atkins saw country music as moving away from the traditional fiddle band-steel guitar sound into a more easy, cosmopolitan vein with a broader appeal. Atkins' vision sprang from two sources. He himself was more musically sophisticated than most country professionals with leanings toward jazz and classical guitar.

Secondly, Atkins was reacting to the phenomenal growth of rock and roll, a growth that forced country music to go looking for another audience. For Atkins, the growth of that market crystalized the Nashville Sound, and with that began his gentle tyranny of RCA Records.

Three years ago Atkins stepped down from the day-to-day function of the studio to concentrate, once again, on his playing. He remains, though, one of Nashville's most powerful and most respected (if not always agreed with) figures.



### Wesley Rose

When Wesley Rose saw *Blue Eyes Crying In The Rain* rise to the top of the charts, it must have been gratifying. Not only was the song published by his own Acuff-Rose Publications, but was written by his father, Fred Rose.

Which points to the power beneath the Acuff-Rose throne—an incredible catalogue of country music that defies any dollar value. Acuff-Rose was one of the first powerful publishing houses in Nashville, with prolific songwriter Fred Rose joining forces with Grand Ole Opry icon Roy Acuff to break the stranglehold by New York Tin Pan Alley publishers.

Their biggest break came when an Alabama boy named Hank Williams approached Fred Rose about being signed to the company. Rose took one quick listen to Williams' music and signed the boy up, and there's still no way to put an exact dollars-and-cents worth on that particular signature. However, estimates as high as \$250,000 per year in royalty money still rolling in have been tossed around.

Besides the Hank Williams catalogue, Acuff-Rose, with Wesley Rose at the helm, owns the rights to works by the Everly Brothers, Mickey Newbury, and such classics as the oft-recorded *Tennessee Waltz*.

### Solters and Roskin

Larry Solters and Sheldon Roskin, collectively known as Solters and Roskin public relations, represent what might be called the *nouveau riche* of country music. Their firm, with offices in New York and Los Angeles, features as clients the very cream of the country rock/crossover vein—John Denver, the Eagles, Mac Davis, Olivia Newton-John and their most recent acquisition, Dolly Parton, as well as Barbra Streisand and Frank Sinatra.

Solters and Roskin represent a level of professionalism that is new to country music—no more just calling up Miss Dolly at home to chat about what's going on. Instead, it's rock 'n roll all the way—a landslide of phonecalls to the press and carefully orchestrated exposure for their artists.

More than any other public relations agency, Solters and Roskin are able to foster a sense of exclusivity about their artists, a sense that these artists constitute *what's happening now* (see the photo feature on Dolly Parton's New York opening in this issue).



### FRANCES PRESTON

Frances Preston is one of the few women to rise to a position of power in country music, and, not surprisingly, even she began her career on the lowest rung, as a secretary at WSM.

She didn't stay there for long, however. She soon signed on as a secretary at Broadcast Music Incorporated (BMI), just getting under way in Nashville, and now heads that organization.

For the uninitiated, BMI, along with the American Society of Composers and Publishers (ASCAP), and Sesac, are the collection agencies of the music business. Writers and publishers are not in a position to go around to every singer and demand a cut of song royalties, so the licensing organizations perform that chore. The licensing companies are the vehicle by which the writers and publishers get paid, and as such they share top billing with the record companies as the most important organizations in Nashville.

Preston, as head of BMI, ranks along with Jerry Bradley at RCA in terms of influence. Her influence extends beyond the realms of the BMI building, say Music City insiders. It extends over industry jobs. She knows what's going on in Nashville, and she gets things done. Her good graces mean much.



### Bill Mack, Charlie Douglas and Ralph Emery

Disc jockeys Bill Mack at WBAP in Fort Worth, Charlie Douglas at WWL in New Orleans and Ralph Emery at WSM in Nashville can take an obscure cut on an obscure album and make it into a national hit.

There are only a very few disc jockeys in the country who can stand up on their own as tastemakers, and these three are the cream of that crop. One of the reasons is staying power. Radio is a notoriously transitory medium, with deejays coming and going like so many swallows. Douglas, Emery and Mack, though, are veterans of years upon years in the wars. Ralph Emery (who has his own television show), for example, helped launch the country career of Olivia Newton-John just by playing her first record in Nashville.

All three stations are 50,000-watt, clear-channel stations, reaching out over huge chunks of the country and covering much of the United States after dark.

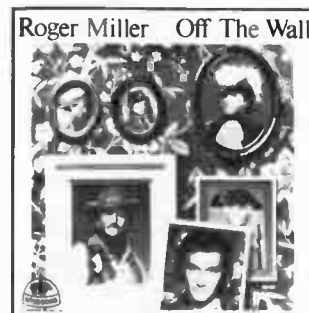
In short, if these guys like your record, they can translate that directly into sales, and that's still the name of the game.



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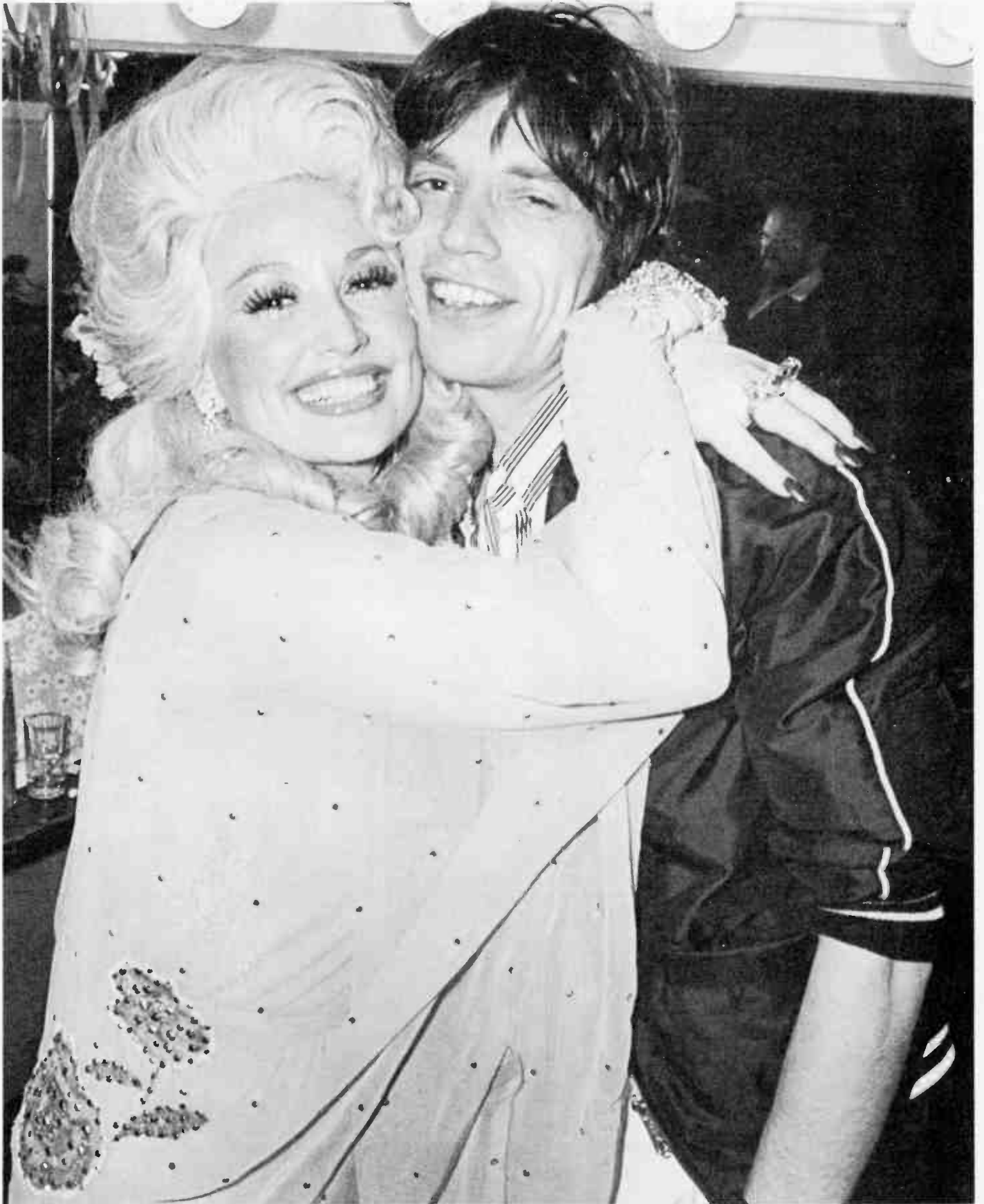


Management III  
Produced by Milton Okun



# ...Dolly Hugs.....

Almost everybody, as the upper echelons of New York chic society turned out to meet the little



...Rolling Stone Mick Jagger, looking content



# RAY

Rememb

# HAN

by Tom Ayres

*As I was driving in, standing out the door and I pulled in. He asked me, "You goin'?"*

*"Back to Shreveport he said it. "You want to go?" And I said, "Naw, no." And that was the last*

girl from Tennessee and to make a New York opening into something of a homecoming.

The posh confines of the Windows On The World restaurant in New York's World Trade Towers hardly seem the place to find a Tennessee mountain girl, but Dolly Parton didn't seem to have the slightest problem adjusting to the Big Apple glitter. Her New York debut the second week of May proved to be the musical event of the year, with all manner of big city heavies trekking down to the Bottom Line club to catch Miss Dolly and Gypsy Fever. At the party after the show, Dolly even found time for a little down home Tennessee mountain hugging...



...Olivia Newton-John, looking small



..."Saturday Night's" John Belushi, looking mothered



...super comedian Lily Tomlin, looking sisterly



...chic superstar Andy Warhol, looking awed



It has been 25 years since Hank Williams and his "little buddy" burned up the highways and the South—and Hank finally beat the life. When they said goodbye at the station that morning, Price



# UNIQU

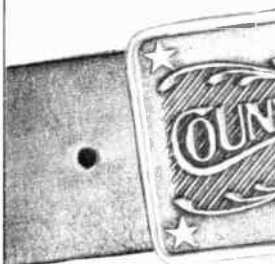
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going, likable, no-nonsense honest. He lives on a ranch near Mt. Pleasant, Tex., 100 miles east of Dallas. There, he raises thoroughbreds, quarterhorses, fighting cocks and racing pigeons and is thinking about getting into the greyhound racing business. He dabbles in real estate. He turns out an album a year and schedules show dates to suit his own pace. The music end of the business is run from a suite of posh, paneled offices in one of those ultra-modern, concrete and glass complexes on the north side of Dallas. The hallways of the suite are lined with neatly-framed awards and mementos, including a nice collection of honorary deputy badges from around the country. The walls of Price's private office are covered with photographs of thoroughbreds and racetrack scenes. Most prominently displayed are pictures of a grey named Sea Phantom.

"She was the best," he said. "Ran right up there with the big boys. A horse like that only comes along about once in a lifetime but you keep looking and hoping for the next one."

A business associate wandered into the office. "Gimme the bad news," said Price.

"Five hundred and fifty thousand," he said, shaking his head. "That's what they want for that 43 acres."

Price emitted a low whistle.

"Everybody wants to make a fortune these days, don't they?"

Following a brief discussion about the skyrocketing cost of real estate, the associate left and Price settled into a leather chair behind his desk.

"My wife runs the office here in Dallas and I run the ranch," he said. "After 20 years of having other people mess things up for me, we decided we could mess them up ourselves. So we handle everything here now—management, bookings, everything."

Why Dallas?

"It's my home and I always wanted to come home. It cost me money to do it and it almost ruined my health, not to mention my career. But I woke up one day

and said, 'I just don't have to live in Nashville... I'm goin' home and that's the way it's goin' to be.' I got tired of letting other people run my life. We spent three years building this organization and we have control of it. It may not be much, but it's ours."

Price was born in Perryville, Tex., just 25 miles from his ranch. His parents divorced when he was still just a toddler.

"My mother moved to Dallas and my father stayed on the farm," he said. "I kind of had the best of both worlds. I would stay with my mother in the winter and go to school in Dallas. Then, each summer, I would go back to the farm and

did it. After that, we decided to put together a band. We had a lot of fun at Roy's. One of the boys in the band wrote some songs and wanted me to sing them for a publisher. So we went over to a recording studio on Ross Avenue where a guy named Jim Beck was producing radio shows for the old Texas network. Hank Thompson was taping his show over there at the time."

Beck was not overly impressed by the songs but he did like the singer. He signed Price to a contract. That led to a spot on the Big D Jamboree and there, Price attracted the attention of Troy Martin who was in charge of the Friday night pre-Opry show in Nashville.

"Troy got me a spot on Hank Williams' Friday Night Follies. He tried to get me on the Opry, but I didn't have any kind of hit record and, back then, you just didn't get on the Opry without a hit record," said Price.

He was not yet 20 and had been singing professionally for only a few months when he walked into Radio Station WSM's Studio C in Nashville and met Hank Williams.

"For some reason, we just hit it off," he said. "We shook hands and we were friends—just like that. He invited me to his house after the show and we talked. He told me all I needed to make it was a hit song and that he

was going to write one for me."

The following day Price rode with Williams to Evansville, Ind., for a show.

"On the way up he wrote *Weary Blues* for me and that night he put me on the show."

Price stayed with Williams for several days before returning to Texas to take a job singing in a Kilgore roadhouse. He had been there only a few weeks when he got a call from Williams.

"He told me I had a spot on the Prince Albert Show—the network portion of the Grand Ole Opry—as his guest. But, he said I had to be up there the very next day. I threw the rubber off four tires getting to Nashville and I don't mean that figuratively.

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work there with my father. And, I mean work. You had to scratch for it back then."

While attending agricultural college at Arlington, Tex., Price began frequenting a nightclub called Roy's House Cafe and it was there he began his singing career.

"Roy was an old entertainer and a lot of other entertainers gathered there. He served food and beer—no hard liquor—and Roy didn't allow dancing. The shows were impromptu. Now and then the customers would just get up and start performing. The atmosphere was something like a coffee house, about 10 years before they had coffee houses.

"Some of my friends at the college kept after me to get up and sing and I finally



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Williams was constantly trying to write a hit song for his “little buddy.” But, the effort resulted in a string of hit records for himself. He penned *Take These Chains From My Heart* for Price and then decided to record it himself.

“I remember one night he tried out *Jambalaya* on me. He asked me what I thought about it and I said I thought it was a hit. ‘Well, I wrote it for you,’ he told me. A couple of days later he came back and asked me what I *really* thought about the song. I told him I thought it was great. So he said, ‘Well, if you think that much of it, I’m gonna record it myself.’ There was no predicting Hank.

“He loved to fish and he loved to shoot guns,” Price remembered. “He always had his fishing tackle with him and he always had an old gun. We would be driving along and Hank would pull off to the side of the road to get in a little target practice. He was always swapping guns with policemen. He would pull up to a country sheriff and say: ‘Hey, friend! Can I look at that piece you’re carrying there?’ Then, he’d pull out his own pistol and say, ‘How’d you like to trade?’ They always traded. Nobody would turn down a Hank Williams pistol.”

Williams was always ready to defend his young protege. On one occasion, when Price went fishing and showed up late for the Opry, he was promptly fired.

“Hank and Roy Acuff and Ernest Tubb told them if they didn’t put me back on the show they’d all quit. So they put me back on.”

But, a couple of months later, Hank himself was fired from the Opry and there was no saving him. He returned to the Louisiana Hayride in Shreveport with the intention of straightening out his drinking problem. By that time (the fall of 1952) Price was one of the hottest artists in Nashville with songs like *Talk To Your Heart* and *Don’t Let The Stars Get In Your Eyes*.

“I talked to Hank not long before he died. He told me he had a show in Canton, Ohio. I was playing about 50 miles away and we had agreed to get together after the shows. But Hank died on the way to Canton. He made a lot of lawyers and CPAs rich. If Hank taught me anything, I guess it was to stand up and be your own man.”

But Hank taught him more than that. Price had seen how the natural, easy, “be yourself” stage manner of Williams affected audiences. And, he had seen how a pop singer like Tony Bennett could sell a million records by doing a stylized version of one of Hank’s country songs. It made him determined to go after some of that Tony Bennett audience.

“My feeling was that we were shutting out a lot of people. I thought country music was good enough for anybody and I wanted to go after a much broader base of people.”

He accomplished that goal with an uptown version of *Crazy Arms*, a song  
(Continued on page 56)



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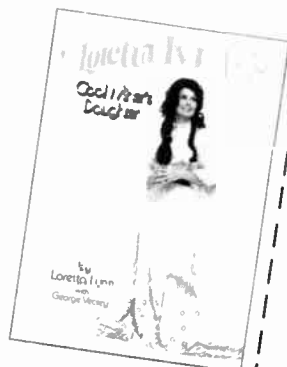
Since Loretta admits she is better at "talk-in' than writin'," she found a writer to put her story down on paper for her. But she warns right off: "You can bet your last scrip penny that I checked out every word ...and if I didn't like it, out it went."

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, 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.

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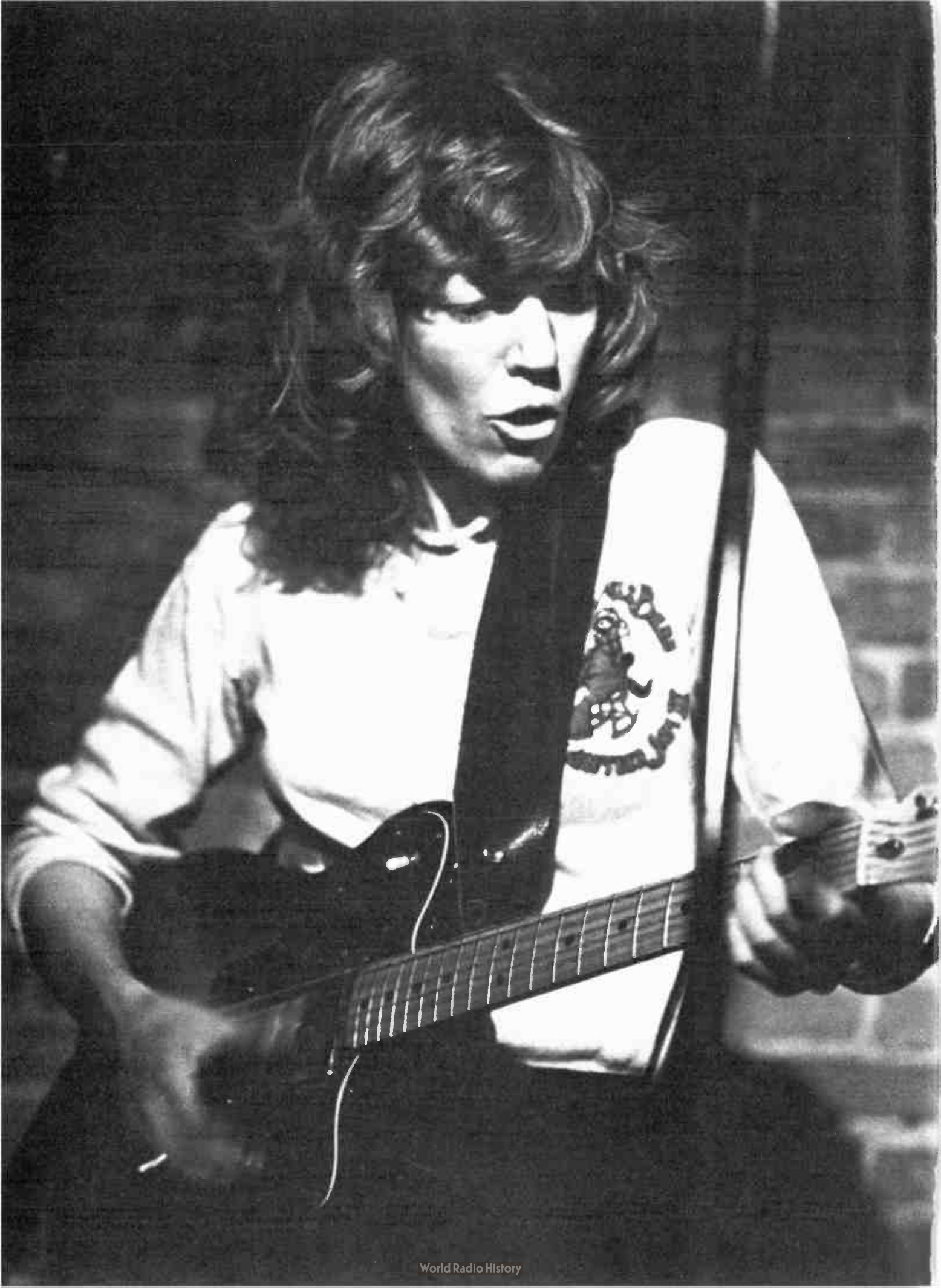
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# RISING STAR AWARD

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## MARSHALL CHAPMAN

### A New Kind Of Honky Tonk Woman

by MARY ELLEN MOORE

Only problem is, Marshall Chapman is just about outdone over the word honky tonk. Doesn't like it anymore. She prefers honkin' or swarmin'. But for the sake of aesthetics, we're gonna call her a woman honky tonker anyway, because woman honker just doesn't have the same ring.

*I met her, just a barroom queen  
in Memphis  
She tried to take me upstairs for a ride  
She had to heave me right across  
her shoulders  
'Cuz I just can't seem to drink her off  
my mind. . .*

*She's a honky-tonk woman  
Gimme, gimme, gimme  
The honky-tonk girl.*

(copyright Gideon Music Inc. BMI)

One look at Marshall and it's easy to picture her heaving her man across her shoulders and carrying him off somewhere. A wiry 5 foot, 10 inches (and the shortest in her family of 6-footers), she's been described as looking like Peter Frampton, Farrah Fawcett-Majors, a magazine model. To me, she looks like a surfer who traded in her board for a Telecaster and started making waves in Nashville rather than riding them elsewhere.

With the release of her first album, *Me, I'm Feelin' Free*, on Epic, the ripples reached as far as New York and Los Angeles where people are talking about this study in contradictions: the daughter of a wealthy South Carolina textile mill president, two-time debutante and Vanderbilt graduate who at one point was living in her car on the streets of Nashville, sneaking around people's showers and palling around with the likes

of Tompall Glaser and Jack Clement.

How'd she get from sleeping in the lap of luxury to the back seat of her beat up Ford Galaxy?

"It just felt like the right way to be living at the time," explains Marshall, her voice as deep and velvety as chocolate mousse. "And I lived that way for about four or five months.

"I had the clothes in the trunk of the car and slept there once or twice, but I usually ended up crashing somewhere. But I'd still go out to the car and lift up my trunk to decide what I was going to wear that day."

Deciding where to get clean was another matter.

"I went to a lot of different places in town, and finally narrowed it down to the shower at Tompall's (studio) and Jack Clement's. Clement's shower has one of those vibratin' things on it and you can get a massage at the same time. I like that shower and I like Tompall's because it has those little tiles with the umbrellas on 'em that say "Singing in the rain." I thought that was real cute.

"I'd just sneak in the back door—nobody was aware except for Captain Midnite, he knows everything. One day I walked in and I had my little basket with my hairblower hanging out, and there was Hazel (Smith, author of *Daddy's Little Girl* and Country Music columnist) and I just slunk in."

Tompall and Clement did more for Marshall than just keep her clean. Although Marshall's musical style changes practically weekly, both Tompall's and Clement's influence are evident in whatever she's doing—whether it's the pure country she started out with to the rock and roll that she's headed for—with rhythm and blues, barroom music, punk

country and even a few torchers in there somewhere.

Despite her southern upbringing, Marshall's roots are in rock and roll.

"I grew up in Spartanburg," she says, "but didn't listen to country music. You just didn't hear it there. The only place you'd hear it was on TV. And the only people you could hear was Porter Wagoner and Norma Jean, Teddy and Doyle and Lester Flatt and Earl Scruggs.

"And one day, when I was about 16, this boy—he was a Yankee and just loved country music, the only Yankee in our school—he said 'I'm gonna take you to hear the greatest thing in the world.' And it was George Jones, at the Spartanburg Memorial Auditorium—I'll never forget it."

When it came time to go to college—not going was out of the question for Marshall's parents—she chose Vanderbilt, which pleased her parents because of its reputation, and delighted Marshall because of the location.

"I had nothing to do with the school much except just getting through. My parents always wanted us to get a college degree, and I knew when I was up here I was gonna hit the streets after I graduated from Vanderbilt. I figured if you drop out and hit the streets, five years from now if you're still in the streets, they're never gonna let you forget it. I figured it was easy to do, so I'd just go ahead and do it.

"'Cuz you're in Nashville meeting people anyway. Cowboy Jack Clement was one of the first people I met musically. I thought, 'Hmmm, he ain't like the boys back home.'

"And then after I got that B.A. (in Fine Arts and French), my parents came up here to take me home and I said, 'Well, I'm staying.' After two years, I was just

hustling around and my father was really disgusted and wanted me to come home, but this is what I wanted to do.”

Her hustling's finally paying off. Although her album didn't do too much on the charts, it was well received by about every music critic around and her New York debut at Reno Sweeny's, a posh night club, clinched her position as a critic's favorite.

Marshall's moods fluctuate almost as much as her music, however, and her mood definitely determines what type show she'll give. If she's down, or has something on her mind other than performing, the audience knows it. But when she's up. . . well, the audience knows that, too, as she and her band rock in and out to the honky-tonk music that seems to be her forte—woman honky tonk music, that is. Unlike Linda Hargrove, who specifically writes her songs so they can be sung either by a man or woman, Marshall's music is definitely female.

“Oh, y'know, when you get your heart broken and you get real depressed, you just don't know what to do with yourself and you're sitting there all alone—that's when I wrote the first song. It's called *A Woman's Heart's A Handy Place To Be*, and so far it's the most commercial success. Crystal Gayle's doing it, Jessi's [Colter] doing it. . . and I'm doing it.

“Tompall said he wanted to cut that 'cuz he loves the title—like he could turn it around and be another real *Put Another Log On The Fire* type song, but when you listen to the song, it wouldn't work at all. You'd have to totally rewrite all the verses. They're women's songs.”

She introduces *Rode Hard And Put Up Wet* as a woman's honky tonk song, then proceeds to sing about honky tonkin' in Nashville with John Prine, Waylon, Johnny Rodriguez and David Allan Coe:

*Now I feel like I been rode hard and  
put up wet  
Lord knows, last night was a night I'll  
never forget  
I can't remember what happened, but  
it must've been the best one yet  
Now I feel like I been rode hard and  
put up wet.\**

“I'm real literal minded,” Marshall explains. “Like *Rode Hard and Put Up Wet*, that's just a song about getting tired, real drunk. And I never thought of it as having any kind of sexual connotations at all, but then somebody said, ‘Rode hard and put up wet—just think about that—it's very, very suggestive.’ Billy Sherrill noticed that. . . he looked at the list of songs on my album and said, ‘*Rode Hard and Put Up Wet*, what's that about?’ That was the one that really caught his attention, y'know?”

And although Marshall would be the last person to deny her own sexuality, she

insists that *Rode Hard* is “a honky tonkin' song. Sometimes girls like to go out and do a little honky tonkin'. I'm just a night person, and that's what's going on at night. I sleep in the daytime.

“I'm a drinker. I don't smoke cigarettes, I don't smoke dope, and I've never done acid or anything like that. I like drinkin'. It's a part of life. My parents drink. We were never heavy drinkers, it's just a social thing. A drink about five o'clock takes the edge off and you just slip into the evening. And, it just sort of makes you less inhibited. I'm a lot shyer when I haven't had a drink or two. When I have to play, I like to have one or two drinks before. I drink a lot on stage. I like to drink beer while I'm playing. You can drink a lot on stage, because you're really sweating.”

The “drinking makes me less inhibited” line is somewhat of a classic, but you can actually see it work with Marshall. Her early shows are usually okay, but as the evening progresses and she gets a few Lone Stars under her belt, she gets really caught up in what she's doing, in turn infecting the band and the audience with her enthusiasm.

Take an evening at Nashville's Armadillo East. Marshall's been half-heartedly

“ . . . Sometimes girls  
like to go out  
and do a little  
honky tonkin' . . . ”

doing her routine and the audience has been paying more attention to her two songstresses (she won't call them back-up singers) Pebble Daniel and Marcia Routh, when suddenly she's apparently hit by the right combination of beer, sweat and vibes from her band and she belts out her introduction to *A Woman's Heart's A Handy Place To Be*:

“This is dedicated to all you women out there who have had your heart broken and all you men who did it,” she laughs.

“*Way to go!*” screams a woman in the audience as Marshall opens the song, stopping to add:

“I know there's some men out there whose hearts have been torn apart by some real badass women, but I didn't give a s-t about you when I was writing this song.”

This time, she finishes the song, then introduces *Magic Man*:

“One night when we were drunk,” she says, “we got to categorizing men. The creeps are the ones when you see them you want to dive into a car and drive away; then there are the guys you fell in love with and would do anything for—except fall in love with them again; then there's the Magic Men. She (co-

writer Joy Wahl who, incidentally, is tone deaf) had two in her pile and so did I. I would've had three, but I got to know him.”

Again, the women in the audience cheer, while even the males in Marshall's band look sheepish.

She's embarrassed at the thought and hesitates as she responds:

“I used to fall in love a lot. I kind of fall in like now. I get crushes. I used to really fall in love and pursue it and now I just like to fall in love from afar and fantasize—it's a lot easier on you. I've got two crushes—I get crushes on people and I just sit there and think about them and it makes me feel warm all over, and I just roll over and go to sleep,” she laughs, visibly shaking off her hesitancy. “Just knowing they're there—they're out there somewhere. . . Oh, God, I used to fall in love, I used to be pitiful. . . fall in love and cry all the time.”

Just as she's replaced falling in love with crushes, Marshall's slowing down on her honky tonkin' to take care of business.

“I don't do as much honky tonkin' these days as I used to,” she says. “I'd rather watch Charlie Chan on TV now. I'm gonna start writing some TV songs. . . ”

But it's more than TV that's keeping Marshall home at nights. She's determined to make it as a singer, and she's devoting most of her energy to her career right now—writing, getting together a band, arranging road tours, trying to get a light show together.

She admits that while she really has no problem because she's a woman, some people tend to think of her as “rapaciously ambitious” since she's trying to keep on top of everything, whereas if she were male, she would be “just taking care of business.”

She's been described as “the toughest sweet woman in Nashville,” an apt description. Her demand for perfection is sometimes confusing. One week she enthuses about how tight her band has gotten (it at one time included Jerry McEwen on guitar and Waylon Jennings' former bass player Duke Goff) and how she couldn't imagine going on tour without Pebble and Marcia. The next week Pebble and Marcia have embarked on careers of their own and have been replaced with two-thirds of Ladysmith (formerly David Allan Coe's back-up group), Carol and Mary Beth Anderson. And Marshall's on her way to Texas to look for another band since she just fired the others (they were tight, she explains, but not consistently tight).

She's searching for a new producer, one more in the rock stream of things, she says; she's on the roster of CBS in New York, although it was Nashville's branch that discovered her playing at Mississippi Whiskers, a Mexican food joint at which she once waitressed.

All this portends big things for Marshall  
(Continued on page 59)

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# HANK WILLIAMS

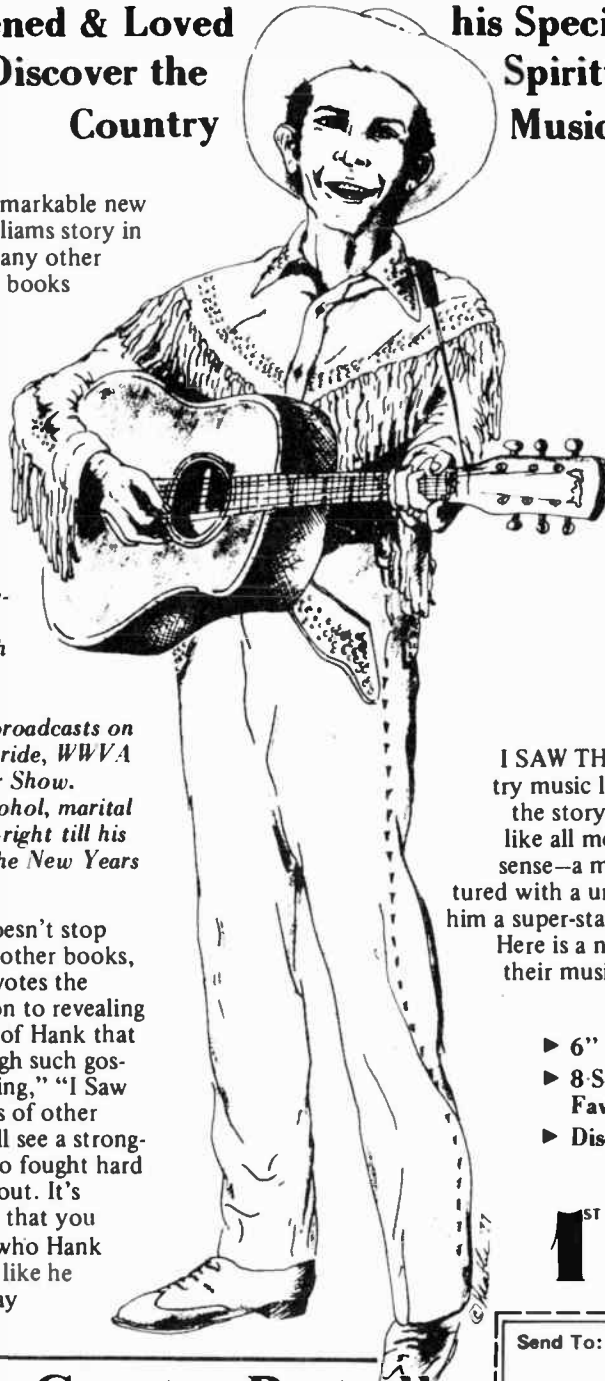
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# Records

## Gary Stewart

Your Place or Mine  
 RCA APL1-2199 \$6.98  
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 Star rating: ★ ★ ★ ★

Gary Stewart's first RCA album, *Out of Hand*, seemed to indicate a preference for the Jerry Lee Lewis/Mickey Gilley sound: honkytonk ballads with an occasional rocker thrown in. The cover even pictured him at the piano. Yet almost as quick as it was released he began picking guitar more and pianoing less. *Steppin' Out*, his second album, reflected a more individual style combining honkytonk, rockabilly and Dixie funk abetted by plenty of screaming guitar and a harder rhythm section, perfect foils for his highstrung vocals. The fact that he's done this so quickly in itself is impressive; some performers spend their careers trying to find their own niche and fail. With *Your Place*



or *Mine*, Stewart's developed and solidified his sound.

The songs themselves are pretty much the same, leaning toward booze-sodden depression best dealt with by the loping *Blue Ribbon Blues*, which should become a minor classic and *Drinking Again*, three and a half minutes of undiluted melancholy. *Your*



*Place or Mine* and *I Had To Get Drunk Last Night* are pretty standard and though he does his best with Guy Clark's *Broken Hearted People* it remains a superficial, folkie imitation of a drinking song. *Leah* is hard-driving and exuberant, but the album's high point comes when Stewart parlays that same wildness into *I Ain't Livin' Long Like This*, an ode to the more ominous strains of hellraising. Willie's *Pretend I Never Happened* gets a novel bluegrass treatment, but it doesn't hold up over repeated listening.

Aside from occasional clinkers, it's obvious that Gary Stewart has become an artist to be reckoned with. From fronting Charley Pride's show he's evolved into a pure country singer with the potential to cross into the Macon school of rock without changing a single note. *Your Place or Mine* is ample proof of that.

RICH KIENZLE

## Alvin Crow And The Pleasant Valley Boys

High Riding  
 Polydor PD-1-6102 \$6.98  
 BT-1-PDI-6102 (Tape) \$7.98  
 Star rating: ★ ★ ★ ★



The music on this album walks the line between the new and the old, the original and the traditional, the progressive and hard-core coun-

try labels—and does it all honestly and without compromise. There's *Yes She Do, No She Don't (I'm Satisfied With My Gal)* (originally done in the '30's by Milton Brown and down here with Leon Rausch joining in for some harmony) and a knock-down version of Faron Young's old hit *Wine Me Up* and Gene Autry's *Can't Shake The Sands Of Texas From My Shoes*. Then there's *Turkey, Texas (Home Of Bob Wills)* which is one of my favorites and was written by steel guitarist Herb Steiner, a nice ballad *You're The One I Thought I'd Never Lose* penned by sax man Ed Vizard, and *One Foot In The Grave* written by harmonica player Roger Crabtree, who once toured with Waylon Jennings.

When Crow and company do a '50s tune they don't slick it up as so many recent country artists have done. This is most apparent on *(Crazy Little Mama) At My Front Door*, originally done in the early '50s by the El Dorados. Also on the truck-drivin' rockabilly *(The Texas Kid's) Retirement Run*.

The LP is rounded out with a couple of instrumentals—the standard *Cotton-Eyed Joe* and Alvin's own *Broken Spoke Waltz*. Although Alvin Crow is the focus, this is a group and that is quite obvious on *Cotton-Eyed Joe* where everyone takes a solo—harp, steel, sax, guitar, fiddle—contributing to what may be the definitive version of that Texas honky-tonk classic.

NELSON ALLEN



### The Winters Brothers

The Winters Brothers Band  
Atco SD 36-145 \$6.98  
8SD 36-145 (tape) \$7.97  
Star rating: ★ ★ ★

The best things about this album are its production, the imagery of its lyrics and its taste. The band is led by Dennis and Donnie Winters, both excellent vocalists and guitarists whose playing manages to evoke a sweet, southern sound that coasts along without complication.

What the band does best are songs which treat facets of life in the Old West. What they do worst is try to sound like the Eagles and other country-rock groups.

*Misty Mountain Morning*, with a guest appearance by Charlie Daniels, is a marvelous ode to the joys of living in the mountains. It has an authentic bluegrass feel. *Old Stories* is about a cowhand who laments the loss of the good old days. *Smoky Mountain Log Cabin Jones* proclaims the pleasures



of living at one with nature.

Another winner is *Shotgun Rider*, about a man who guards the Houston/Dallas stagecoach. The tune is punctuated by a fast guitar-piano boogie that climbs the scale, then stretches out with a couple of high, slow notes that give a feeling of excitement and poignancy. One of the album's best songs is *Devil After My Soul*.

One thing the band should watch out for is a tendency to drag in some of the slower songs.

CAROL ROSE



## ALBUM OF THE MONTH

### George Jones

All Time Greatest Hits—  
Volume One

Epic—KE34692 \$5.98  
EA-34692 (Tape) \$6.98

Star rating: ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Perhaps when George Jones fades into history, Gary Stewart or Moe Bandy will finally be able to make that tribute album to the greatest male singer in country music over the last three decades. Their hero might even be lionized as much as Hank Williams or Patsy Cline—as a veritable C&W cult figure for the 1990s. As it is, all this projected hero worship will just have to wait, though, because the Old Warrior himself is still kicking like an angry mule and no one but no one can sing a George Jones cheatin' song better than Jones himself. Forget the fact that all the songs on *All Time Greatest Hits Vol. One* can be heard on one of at least ten previous *Best Of* albums (many of which feature Jones photos in his flat top hair cut) and don't worry because a

particular favorite of yours isn't included; it'll show up by *Volume Ten*, most likely. Just enjoy the voice that saved a million heartbreaks and soothed too many tears. This legend, unlike most, keeps getting better.

This album was billed as a Back-to-Basics exercise, with producer Billy Sherrill pledged to keep his vaunted Wall-of-Sound concept to a minimum. For most purposes, he kept his part of the bargain. Fiddles dominate strings and a Floyd Cramer-style piano colors most of the activity. He only slips with a particularly excessive mourning chorus that clutters *She Thinks I Still Care* in much the same way as overdubbed pedal steel and sugary female singers messed up the pure '56 vocals of many of Jones' reissues.

For the most part, Sherrill allowed easy access to the meat of the music—George Jones' gifted pipes.

Unlike similar crooners his

age, George doesn't sound blown out or tired, nor does he seek the safety of performing slow romantic ballads. Rather, his pleading is as fresh and believable on *Why Baby Why* as it was on the original more than 20 years ago (and without the shower-stall resonance of the earlier recording). He tackles *The Tender Years* and the almost-gospelish *Walk Through This World With Me*, two songs that could be effectively recycled as pop hits by Olivia Newton-John; he makes no bones about his background, leaning on every phrase with the kind of furry whine that distinguishes authentic country music from its Hollywood turquoise imitators. No matter what kind of slick sales job the powers who control Nashville will use to broaden country's appeal, until George Jones decides to go away, C&W's honky-tonk, barroom image can not be eradicated. And that, pothun, is a blessing.

JOENICK PATOSKI

How We Rate The Albums: 5 Stars...Album of the Month 4 Stars...Excellent  
3 Stars...Very Good 2 Stars...Good 1 Star...Fair 0 Stars...Poor

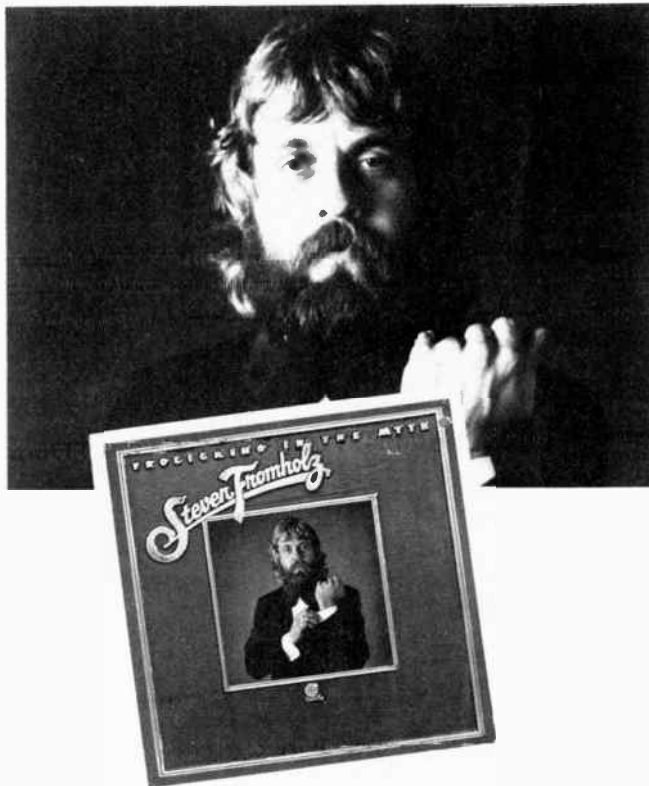
## Steven Fromholz

Frolicking In The Myth  
Capitol ST-11611 \$6.98  
8XT-11611 (Tape) \$7.98  
Star rating: ★ ★ ½

As a writer, Fromholz is in a bag of his own. He deals in sophisticated pop melodies with lyrics full of eccentric phrasings and unusual rhyme schemes.

Fromholz's vocal abilities are similarly impressive. He ranges from a strong, rich baritone, right up to a broad, full-throated tenor ala John Denver. In fact, he and Denver share the same awesome vocal talents, and both level in the same sort of stock-in-trade, neo-rustic imagery. But in Fromholz's case, the overt appeals to commercialism are lacking.

Perhaps the strongest cut on *Frolicking In The Myth* is *Just A Waltz*, a beautiful, lilting tribute to the resolution of personal confusion.



*Just Let Me Be* showcases Fromholz's poignant and unusual sense of humor. *Where Are They All Now?* perhaps exemplifies Fromholz at his weakest, as he takes flagrant, downright sloppy liberties with rhyme schemes. The song is little more than a random recitation of childhood memories, and it smacks of maudlin, cocktail-hour sentimentality.

Songs like *Sophia*, and *Hawkeye* suggest an untapped power in Fromholz's vocals that never seems to bust loose. The accompaniments on these potential rockers are somewhat stiff and slow-moving, as if they were merely wrapped around the songs at the last minute.

Steven Fromholz promises vast talent as a writer and a singer. Perhaps his next album will showcase this fact more convincingly.

BOB ALLEN

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# Records

## Merle Haggard

Songs I'll Always Sing  
Capitol SABB-11531 \$8.98  
8XBB-11531 (Tape) \$10.98  
Star rating: ★★★

The 20 selections on *Songs I'll Always Sing* (all previously released) have been pulled from no less than 15 earlier Haggard LP's. 16 of the 20 songs are Haggard compositions, and roughly half of them have been previously released as singles.

Merle Haggard has been called America's greatest living folk writer by no less an authority than Kris Kristofferson, and there's ample proof to this claim among these selections. Songs like *Daddy Frank*, and *Uncle Lem*, like so many other great Haggard compositions not included here, glorify a fading rural heritage, and celebrate its virtues, which, all too often, seem out of



place in today's claustrophobic world.

*Okie From Muskogee*, *The Fightin' Side Of Me*, and *Workin' Man's Blues*, (all contained herein) are documents of Merle's "protest" period. During the divisive times of the late 60s and early 70s, Merle became the outspoken and articulate voice of the working man. He was one of the few, if not the only country artist who was not afraid to voice his patriotism so uncompromisingly. This took quite a bit of courage.

Sadly, such classic Haggard cuts as *Today I Started Loving You Again*, *I'm Turning Off The Memories*, and *It's All In The Movies*, are absent here. But it is a solid selection of songs by one of country's most vital artists.

BOB ALLEN

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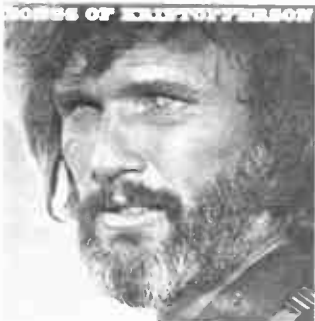
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## Kris Kristofferson

Songs of Kristofferson  
Columbia PZ 34687 \$6.98  
PZA-34687 (Tape) \$7.98  
Star rating: ★ ★ ★ ★

For my money, this album is a much better one to own than any of the last two or three that Kris has released. Because some of these songs are not just among the best that Kristofferson ever did, but just possibly among the best country songs ever written. Side one includes *Loving Her Was Easier (Than Anything I'll Ever Do Again)*, *Me And Bobby McGee*, *Help Me Make It Through The Night*, *For The Good Times*, and *Sunday Mornin' Comin' Down*.



Kristofferson more or less invented the "singer/songwriter down and out in Nashville" song. And although it has since approached overkill by some of those who followed in his bootsteps, *The Pilgrim: Chapter 33* along with *Sunday Mornin' Comin' Down* remain two of the best. Also included is the candid *Silver Tongued Devil* and *Why Me* which has already become a gospel standard. Some of his more recent music is represented by *You Show Me Yours (And I'll Show You Mine)*, *Stranger, I Got A Life Of My Own* and *Who's To Bless And Who's To Blame*.

If it's possible that you're a stranger to Kris's work then this is a quick way to sample it. If you're one of those who admires his songs but thinks he "can't sing" then pick up this album and you should discover that Kris does his own material as well or better than others.

NELSON ALLEN



## Waylon Jennings

Ol' Waylon  
RCA APLi-2317 \$6.98  
APS1-2317 (Tape) \$7.98  
Star rating: ★ ★ ★

It seems like everyone involved in country journalism is tripping over one another these days to proclaim the death of the whole outlaw business, and no wonder. For the past year the scene's been inundated by folkies who don manly footwear and Stetsons the minute they get to Nash-

ville, then proclaim their "country" roots while crooning pretentious ballads. Someone had to separate the real thing from this unsavory element and *Ol' Waylon*, excepting a couple goofs, does just that.

The strongest songs, ironically, are loaded with ambiguities, particularly *Luckenbach, Texas*, a bonanza for those seeking hidden meanings. At last count it could be taken (a) at face

value (b) as a comment on Waylon's success and its effect on old friendships (read Tompall) and (c) as a satire on those who look to Texas/Waylon/Willie as an alternative to subdivision lifestyles. *If You See Me Getting Smaller* is cut from the same cloth. The jaunty *I Think I'm Gonna Kill Myself* is the best piece of country necrophilia I've heard since Cowboy Copas's 1949 rendition of *Hangman's Boogie*. *Satin Sheets*, *Brand New Goodbye Song* and *This is Gettin' Funny* are Waylon at his half-off-the-wall best.

But like *MacArthur Park* a few years back, when he misses, he misses. The Elvis Medley of *That's All Right* and *My Baby Left Me* should have been done at a break-neck tempo, but the band's slower, heavier beat renders it monotonous. And I'll never understand why he bothered with *Sweet Caroline*, that ridiculously overblown Neil Diamond melodrama.

Still he and Chips Moman, the veteran R&B producer have put together the best Waylon set since *Honky Tonk Heroes*.

RICH KIENZLE

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# ANGEL

(Continued from page 30)

do the Opry and this tall guy walked up to me backstage, kinda shy, and said, 'You're June Carter. I'd like to meet you. I'm Johnny Cash,' I said, 'Well, thanks to Elvis I've become a fan of yours,' and he was real pleased.

"Johnny and I are both aware of the pitfalls, the temptations that can hurt a marriage," says June. "Entertainers face more than most, because they get more attention from the opposite sex than most people.

"I like my career now more than ever because it's a *sharing* thing. It's something I *share* with John, or—I should say—he shares with me. He knows I like to perform, and thank goodness he likes to have me doing it with him. But there would never be any question of me going off and working by myself as I once did. Our daughters work with us, my family works with us, even John Carter gets up and sings when he feels like it, so it really becomes a *family* event. I just love that. It makes me so proud. This sounds silly, I know, but sometimes when we're all on stage together I look around me and I'm so filled with love and happiness it's all I can do to keep from crying."

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# RAY

(Continued from page 44)

written by Ralph Mooney.

"Back then, a number one country seller would sell only about 100,000 copies. I mean that was it. Well, *Crazy Arms* sold more than 900,000 records so I knew I was on the right track. I made up my mind to go with a new sound—the four-four and shuffle beat."

In 1957, Price went with yet another innovative sound. He recorded an album titled *Faith*. Anita Kerr did the arrangements. The Nashville Symphony provided 17 strings in the background. And, country music's mossbacks came unglued.

"They really raked me over the coals. I'll never really understand it because nobody reacted that way when Eddy Arnold, Marty Robbins and Glen Campbell went outside the country sphere. But they landed on ole Ray. I was convinced then that the music had reached a point where it had to go off in a new direction. Thank goodness it finally went the way it did. Now, you can play country music in Las Vegas, New York or Hollywood and nobody thinks anything about it. But it wasn't that way back then. And, I'm convinced they never would have been able to do that with the old sound."

After Williams died, Price hired Hank's band, the Drifting Cowboys.

"They were with me for almost two years," he said. "Then one night somebody came up to me after a show and said, 'Man, you sound just like Hank.' Well, it wasn't me that sounded like Hank. It was the music. I knew right then I had to break up the group. That's how the Cherokee Cowboys came into being.

"There was a good band out of Beaumont, Texas called the Western Cherokees. So I combined them with the Drifting Cowboys and came up with the name Cherokee Cowboys."

It was destined to become a famous backup group and some of its members eventually would place their own brands on today's country sound.

"At one time, I had Roger Miller fronting for me. Willie Nelson was my guitar man. Buddy Emmons was my steel player, I had Johnny Paycheck on bass and Johnny Bush was my drummer. I want you to know we could put on a show. People ask me why I don't have the Cherokee Cowboys anymore and I tell them I can't afford them. They all make more bread than I do.

"I'll tell you one thing. I'm proud of every one of those boys. I'd never say I taught them anything. But if they learned one thing from me it was do it your way. I think Willie (Nelson) is a good example. The music he's playing now is the very same thing we were playing back in 1956 when I went to the four-four and shuffle beat. But it's his music, he's playing it his way and it works.

"A lot of people in the industry are amazed that the kids are turning onto country music. But, I knew it had to happen sooner or later. If you'll go back and listen to the Beatles, you'll hear traces of what's happening to the music today—and Loggins and Messina . . . they had it back there with the single-string fiddle and the steel guitar.

"Country music has branched out now and almost anything goes. But, not too many years ago it wasn't like that. In 1967 when I recorded *Danny Boy* you would have thought I did something awful from all the criticism I got. Then *Danny Boy* went gold and the first thing you know other performers were singing it on the Grand Old Opry. Now, *Danny Boy* wasn't country when I was singing it on my concert tours but it was country when they sang it at the Opry. And, I went through the same thing again in '71 when I did *For The Good Times*."

In 1968, Price left Nashville and moved back to Texas. In '73, tired of leaving his destiny to others, he established his own management and booking organization.

"I hit the road for almost 25 years—200 to 300 days a year. Then one day I discovered that all the cats around me were the ones making the money. They were the ones staying at home with their families while I was on the road. They didn't know what it was like to come home and have your kids act like you're some kind of stranger. Believe me, there are a lot of thorns in that bed of roses.

Through all the trials and triumphs, Price has piled up a stack of giant hits—songs like *Release Me*, *I Won't Mention It Again*, *Heartaches By The Numbers*, *I'd Rather Be Sorry* and *City Lights*, to name a few. Eight times he has been named the number one country and western singer of the year. He has never won entertainer of the year honors, though, and that thought evokes a sardonic grin.

"I had a fellow tell me once that I was the world's greatest singer—but I wasn't an entertainer. Now you try to figure that one out.

"What people in the industry are finally beginning to realize is that the music is changing. Country music is not all that hokey, razz-ma-tazz, hoop-la, neon and spangles stuff anymore. That's just not where it's at. It never was there. It's always been in the music itself—in its honesty and realism.

"You know, a couple of years ago, I was talking with Hank Williams, Jr. after a show. He said he was getting tired of being stereotyped as Hank's boy. He wanted to play his own music and they didn't want him to do it. He asked me, 'Ray, how do you fight it when you want to do something different and they won't let you?' And I told him, 'Hank, you just stand up and do it.'"

Hank, Sr. probably would have liked that advice.



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# OLIVIA

(Continued from page 25)

informed that she had a country hit on her hands in *Let Me Be There*, asked for someone to explain exactly what country music was. There is a feeling in this swank hotel suite, with its beige couches and deep blue carpet, that the frail girl in the jeans and sneakers and the ability to strike the most amazingly innocent poses without the slightest hint of pretension just might have represented a blank slate, a voice in search of a face.

"I also believe, and I've said this before, that you can't put a passport on music," Olivia says. "That it doesn't belong to one section of the country. Music is international; the notes, the sounds belong to anyone who can sing them. You don't have to be a rock person to have soul, either. Or to have rhythm—all of these cliches.

"So I really think now, judging from the people I've spoken to since, I think they're really pleased," she continues, uncoiling from the couch and placing her elbows firmly on her knees. "I've opened up doors for artists who otherwise wouldn't get airplay; or wouldn't get as broad a country airplay. And people who didn't use to listen to country music really found that they might get to like it."

And that, pretty much, is the crux of the Olivia Newton-John story—regardless of what you think of her music, Olivia has done as much to open up country music as, say, Willie Nelson or Waylon Jennings. She was the vanguard, the first pop singer to make any serious inroads into country since the years of Bing Crosby singing Hank Williams, and that alone was enough to engage the wrath of Nashville. Coupled with having the poor taste to sell more records than the biggest country star, it's a wonder Miss Livvy wasn't tarred and feathered when she set foot in Music City.

But things have mellowed since 1974, mainly because in the music industry, dollars speak louder than any ideology. While it might have been a little hard to swallow at first, those gold Olivia Newton-John records were powerful persuasion for the Music City heavies. The Nashville Sound had already gone just about as far as it could go, and it didn't seem possible that *everyone* in Nashville could grow a beard, move to Texas and become an outlaw. It was time, around 1974-ish, for a new trend, and Olivia Newton-John proved just the key. Keep the music simple and melodic; once again, keep your lyrics out of the honky tonks and safely in the realm of something universal, like love; keep everything . . . well . . . mellow; then stand back when the fans rush the record racks. Whatever chemistry Olivia Newton-John had (and still has), it worked.

"I like to sing songs that I like, basic-

ally," Olivia says. "Love songs . . . I like to know the feeling.

And much to her credit, as soon as Olivia figured out just what a country star was supposed to do, she set about doing it. She went out of her way to place herself at the disposal of her critics, responding to their hostility with a surprising amount of sincerity—and even in Nashville, that sincerity went a long way. Her next-to-the-most-recent album was recorded in Nashville, with local pickers backing her up. She gave news conferences in Nashville (where she was asked about her sex life, hair stylist, boyfriend, etc.) and even tried to book a concert at the Opry House at Opryland. One thing for certain, no one could accuse Olivia of not trying.

That sincerity even carries over to her stage shows, where she hustles across the stage like a veritable demon, kicking up her heels and generally creating a storm. On stage more than ever she seems like just a little girl, slightly awed by the fact that there's a 70-piece or so orchestra standing right behind her and taken with the idea that all those people out in the audience payed money just to see *her*.

And even her cruelest critic would have to admit that her stage shows are pretty good; that even if her songs tend to run together into one long melody when presented in one setting, her enthusiasm and exuberance carry the day. Even on her tear-jerkers, such as *I Honestly Love You*, Olivia Newton-John really *enjoys* her music.

So what, then, is country music? Are there limits, and if so, just who determines them? It's a question I've considered at various times, such as when Olivia Newton-John encores her New York show at the Metropolitan Opera House with *Don't Cry For Me Argentina*, a song from *Evita*, a rock opera based on the life of Eva Peron. Olivia is backed by a full orchestra and a rhythm section complete with steel, and darned if she doesn't sound very, very good. I've also considered the question with Alexander Harvey, late of *Delta Dawn* and *Reuben James* songwriting fame. Seems Alex was the opening act for Dolly Parton in her gala New York premier, and Alex and I found ourselves invited to the same party to honor Miss Dolly, along with folks like Mick Jagger and Lily Tomlin and Andy Warhol and, of course, Olivia Newton-John. Alex and I, feeling somewhat out of place, holed up at a back table, eating fresh crabmeat and looking out over the greatest city in the world from a mile-high building, one of the World Trade Towers, where Miss Dolly's record label chartered the *tres-swank* Windows On The World restaurant. We didn't reach any decision, Alex and I, but we did drink a lot of champagne and settle on one suitable irony for the evening—Olivia may have come to Miss Dolly's party, but Miss Dolly came to Olivia's music. ■



# HARLAN

(Continued from page 19)

Looking back he says, "The hardest part was staying. Even though everybody I met helped me in some way and believed in me, I felt that I had to justify that belief, make them proud of believing."

After chalking up titles for Eddy Arnold, Cash, Barbara Fairchild and others, Sanders signed with Epic and made his first LP titled *Off and Running*. The album contains a generous helping of material written and co-written by Sanders.

The album cavorts through subject matters of love, homesickness and drinking, the lyrics are generally innovative. (At least one song says, "I know this must sound corny." It does.) Melodies show off the range of his vocals with appealing tension at just the right points. Singing a forceful baritone, similar to a rough-hewn Henson Cargill Sanders is stronger in his own material.

There is always a certain newborn joy in hearing the first product by an artist. The edge, the excitement is an intangible Sanders still possesses. Joy of the music, in tunes like *Highway Woman* and *The Music of Love*, carries well into his stage act. His humor is a highlight—"A lot of people have written songs about seaports. I wrote *Port of San Antone*. Somebody asked me why and I told 'em since there was no port in San Antonio, I knew nobody already had a song about it." Grinning, triumphant, he tears into a blonde Guild guitar and shares one hell of a time with the audience. Later, he gets serious.

"Yeah, I said 'I'm gonna make it' but, there's still a lot I want to do. I want to write better songs. I want to make better records. I want to be a better person." If the past is any indication, that's exactly what he'll do.

SHARON ROWLETT

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 P. 60 Illustration - Peter Bramley

# MARSHALL

(Continued from page 48)

Chapman. In fact, Cowboy Jack Clement, on the album's liner notes, declared: *Our little Marshall's gonna be a star. It's that simple.* And Cowboy has a habit of being right.

Although Marshall doesn't see all this as overnight success, even she admits things are happening pretty fast, and it sometimes makes for tense situations. (She once wrote a song while sitting in her car outside a drugstore waiting for it to open so she could buy some valium because she was too wired to sleep. And she once spent hours drinking coffee and trying to get straight enough to face a reporter from *The Washington Post*. But when she finally met him, she says outraged, all he wanted was to ask her out. All that coffee for a creep. . .)

"But I'm learning to push," she says. "I've just got to learn not to get mad—like you've got your private self and you've got to go out and talk to people. So you've got to shift gears and go out and do it. For awhile, to shift gears I'd have to go and beat my head against the wall *before* and *after* those trips. I'm doing less of that now.

"I grew up in a real social situation. My family was very . . . cocktail parties, debuts, all that stuff. I was a debutante—twice. I'm really glad now. After the last five years, I've been trying to live that down. It's like I said, I used to be ashamed that I was not from Dyess, Arkansas, and had the background that I had, but right now, I'm glad."

At the same time Marshall's realizing that having rich folks back in Spartanburg, S.C., might not be so bad after all. Her parents are coming around to think that maybe having a struggling daughter in Nashville isn't as bad as all that—and maybe country music isn't that bad either.

It all came about when Marshall opened for Jack Clement at the Exit/In and Marshall's mother flew up for the show. Marshall recalls freaking out, but Sharon (then Mrs. Jack) Clement took Mrs. Chapman in hand, had her sit at the table with Waylon and Jessi and treated her like the queen Marshall insists she is.

"Then when she went home," Marshall grins, "all of a sudden I started getting these newspaper clippings, like if Waylon was in the paper.

"And they said, 'Now we like *that* music.'"

But Marshall's music is changing too fast to call it *that* kind of music anymore. In one sense, that's good, because unlike so many other artists, she's not giving anyone a chance to categorize her, then complain she's moving out of that category.

She herself explains how one day she can write a gospel song like *Livin' In The Name Of Love*, and the next day write a

song which seems to poke fun at a religious program:

" . . . That's just how I felt at the time, and *Livin' In The Name of Love* is how I felt then. You can write a song about falling in love, then you can write a song about breaking up—you just write about what you feel at the time. We're all changing."

That's true. But in another sense, it's kind of disheartening to think that now that we've finally found a real, live honky tonk woman, there's a good chance we may lose her to rock and roll. But then again, it was Mick Jagger and Keith Richards of the Rolling Stones (and they don't come much more rock than that) who wrote *Honky Tonk Women*, so maybe we're not losing a honker at all, just breaking down those categories a little bit more.

*I met a divorcee in New York City  
 I had to put up some kind of a fight  
 The lady said she'd cover me in roses  
 She blew my nose, then she blew  
 my mind*

*She's a honky-tonk woman  
 Gimmee, gimmee, gimmee,  
 The honky-tonk girl.*

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# Pickers

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by **ED WARD**

When Kelly, Ron and Maryanne started a country band, it took only a few rehearsals to reveal that Kelly's bass and Ron's acoustic guitar licks just didn't have enough body to accompany Maryanne's singing. The sound was pretty thin. So they advertised on the record shop's bulletin board, and added a lead electric guitar, steel guitar, piano and drums. Much better.

They rehearsed some more, whipped themselves into shape and managed to get booked into a local club, El Rancho. Everything was looking good. Until the night of the gig.

El Rancho was a sleazyish joint that served watered drinks to a young clientele who liked to dance. Only, when our heroes were playing, nobody danced. Other things they didn't do included applaud and holler. You might even say the crowd was bored.

As you might have guessed, the band sounded like hell—unbalanced sound, vocals drowned out by the instruments and the sound not reaching everyone in the place. There had been no P.A. (public address) system, so the band had run the voice microphones through the guitar amplifiers. Seemed like a good idea at the time, but...

"Well," Kelly mused later that night, "I suppose we have to start thinking like pros if we're going to be out acting like pros, huh?" The band nodded gloomy assent. El Rancho hadn't even paid them. "I didn't like that place anyway," Maryanne had said as they'd driven off. But there was no escaping the fact that without better sound gear, they couldn't play any more dates. But what gear was right for them?

The next day, they totted up their various bank accounts, checked out how much stuff any of them could afford to sell or trade, and called up Cosmo. Cosmo was the roadie/sound man/scapegoat of Noise, a local rock band that was all too aptly named. Cosmo was a bit weird, but knew his stuff.

"Jeez, I dunno how you guys could march into a club and set this junk up like this and not expect people to laugh you right off the stage," was his diplomatic response to the band's assembled set-up. "I mean, two high-impedance mikes and a low-impedance mike and running it all into the guitar amp. I mean... And no P.A.?" He looked around, bewildered. "Okay, look, I guess I'll just have to start at the beginning with you folks, but I'm only gonna tell you once, and after that, it's up to you, okay?"

"First off, I like the amps you're all using. Any band that has good amps has a very basic problem covered. Gary knows that his lead guitar sounds good through a Fender Twin Reverb, although I know some guys like the older tube models because they have a warmer sound—stuff like a Deluxe or a Pro Reverb. Or you can use a Peavey Mace, which is a model I like because it has overdrive and distortion, which may or may not appeal to you country guys. And Kelly's bass is done up nice, too, just a simple Ampeg bottom with 15-inch speakers and a Fender Bassman brain."

"Brain?" asked Maryanne.

"Uh... top," said Cosmo. "Some call it the head. It's a speakerless amplifier that you connect to large speakers that don't have amplifiers built into their housings. See, what most people call an amp—like your guitar amps—actually has an amplifier and speakers in a single housing. When you start with big speakers or more elaborate speaker systems, you find the speakers and power amps in separate cabinets. The power amps are small and usually get placed on top, so they have names like head and brain. Dig?"

"Now, your steel player uses a Sho-Bud because it's made especially for the frequency range of his instrument. Yeah, you've got good amps all around."

(Editor's note: The above brands are good choices representing Cosmo's individual preferences. Any name brand like

Ampeg, Gibson, Kustom, Marshall and many others will do just as well in the price range we're talking about.)

"Okay, fine," said Gary. "Then why do we sound so awful on stage?"

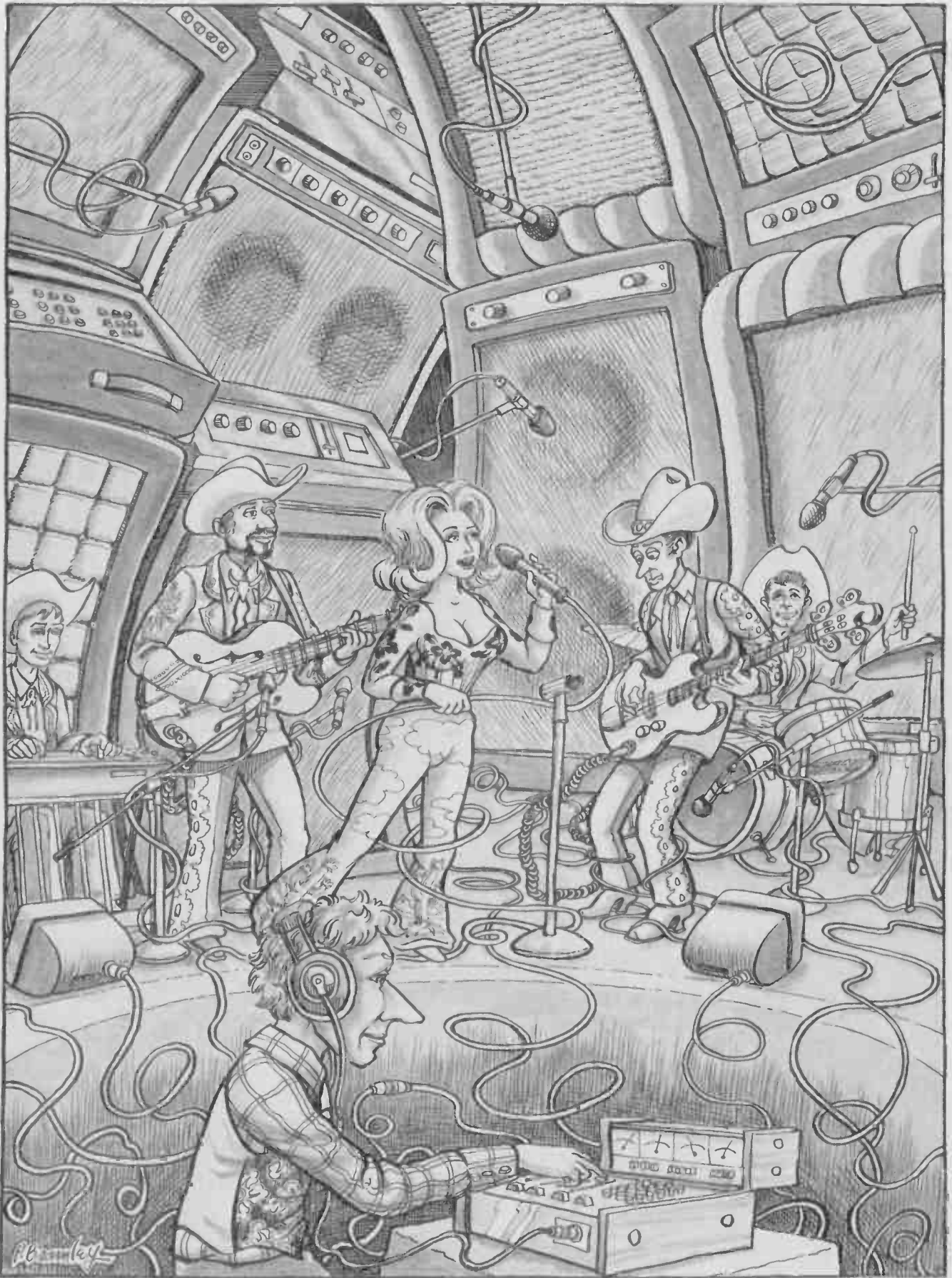
"Because you're making the guitar amps do too much work. They are made for the guitars only, strictly speaking. And when you pipe the voice mikes into them, the speakers just aren't made to sort out all those vibrations, so you get a muddy sound. It wouldn't be so bad at low volume, but because you have no P.A. system, you have to turn the guitar amps way up.

"What you really should do is get some good mikes, mike the amps, and let the P.A. system do most of the work. You play the amps at a level that gives the sound you want, and the P.A. system amplifies that sound and sends it out clean. And Ron—you want people to hear that acoustic guitar. Either mike it or use a pickup. With a mike you gotta watch how you move, but if you need a good pickup, which gives you freedom of movement, a guy down in Nashville called Bill Lawrence makes a very good one. There's also the Buffalo pickup, DeArmond, Barcus-Berry and a bunch of others.

"Okay, so now you need mikes—and this is where you have to start thinking about the design of the band's system." Cosmo walked over to where the three vocal mikes stood and pulled them down.

"Now, these mikes just won't do. To begin with, you need all low-impedance equipment. With high-impedance mikes, you try and stretch the cable more than about 15 feet and you start losing your highs. With low-impedance you can run the cables halfway across the state and you're cool. Also, once you start playing bigger places, you're going to want to stick your mixer out in the crowd, so your sound man can hear what's happening better than he can from the side of the stage—which means you'll have to run a snake from the stage to the mixer. For that, you need low-impedance stuff.







# Pickers

"But the big problem with mikes is that they're so delicate—especially some of your real high-quality stuff. You need something that can take a lot of banging around, and as far as I'm concerned, Shure is the ticket there. You want to figure out what you're using the mike for, and look at its frequency response pattern, but for just regular old vocals, I'd recommend the Shure SN-56 or SN-57. Now, if you need more bottom (bass), you want to get the SN-58.

"And you don't only want to mike the vocals—you want to mike the piano and drums, too, so everything comes through clean. I'd stick a Shure down by where the strings cross on an upright piano, although if you can afford one—and they're not that expensive—a Barcus-Berry pickup is really the way to go with a piano: you just stick it on with this sticky stuff they give you and connect it to the P.A. To mike the drums, ideally, you'd want to put a Beyr 201 on the tom-tom, a Shure



Linda Hargrove with good mike set-up for acoustic guitar.

SN-56 on the snare and, if you can shell out the dough, an Electro-Voice RE-20 on the bass drum, with microphones hanging close overhead to pick up the whole drum sound. Oh, and a good all-purpose mike



A good guitar amp is fine, but can only do so much.

to have handy is the AKG D-1000, which has this three-way switch on it so that you can select the equalization you need for the sound you're trying to get. Equalization is the balance between different frequencies.

"For a lot of club work, you don't really need to mike the amplifiers for your guitar, bass and steel, but if you've got the mikes to do it, and a decent sound-mixer man who knows what he's doing, you really should use them. See, each room you play has different acoustical quirks and you might want to change the balance to fit the room exactly. That's assuming that you get a sound-check, which most of these club owners don't like to give you.

"But whatever you intend to do, you should have a good P.A. system." "Yeah, Cosmo, but don't most of these clubs have their own P.A.s?" Gary inquired.

"Sure," said Cosmo, "but most of them are real antiques, or else they've been bashed around by amateurs who don't have any idea how to treat good sound equipment. Oh, I'll admit that a lot of clubs have good stuff, but most of the best sound equipment in this town is in the discos." He said the word as if he were saying #(\*&c%. "It always helps to have your own P.A. system, with monitors, out in the truck if you're playing a place you've never seen before, believe me."

"Wait a minute, I'm confused," said Ron. "That's because you're not taking notes," Maryanne jibed, looking up from a clipboard with a university sticker on it. "No, no, it's not that at all. What's the difference between a P.A. and a monitor?" Cosmo looked at him very strangely. To him, that was like asking the difference

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# Pickers

between a car and a truck. "Really, man . . ." he said after a minute. But it was evident that Ron really didn't know.

"A P.A. system is a system, right? Several different units that work together, right? So you feed your mikes into a mixer, take the mixer output and run that through a power amplifier (brain, head, etc.) and divide the output of the power amplifier between the P.A. speakers that broadcast into the audience, so they can hear your vocals, and the other half of the output goes to monitor speakers, those little boxes that sit on the edge of the stage and point back up at the band. If the band can't hear what it's doing, especially the vocalists, the singing goes flat. It's a perfectly natural thing. Okay, has everybody got that?" They nodded.

"So, here's your P.A. system. You want a six or eight-channel mixer, with EQ (equalization), reverb, effects capability, patch capability, an output for the monitors with a separate monitor level control with its own EQ."

Ron's head bobbed up. "Wait a minute, I'll explain," said Cosmo. "Six or eight channels. You got a seven-piece band with three vocalists, two of whom play instruments, right? Which means nine things that have to be mixed. Now, for club work, you don't need to run the bass through the mixer, Ron's lead guitar is cool, and you don't need to mix the steel, cuz he does most of his volume control with his foot-pedal. So you have six inputs for a mixer. The equalization is basically bass and treble. You can get more sophisticated equalization than that, sure, but that'll do. The main thing EQ is for is to keep the mikes from feeding back and shrieking, as well as to make sure that the low notes on the piano come out, and all that. Reverb is nice to have when somebody wants to imitate Johnny Cash, or for somebody who doesn't sing too well. I ain't mentioning any names. The patch capability is for plugging a tape recorder in. Effects, well, it's nice to have that capability, but I guess for what you're gonna be playing, you don't really use Echoplex or digital delay or, hey, you guys don't know what I'm talking about, do you? I bet you never even listened to Frampton Comes Alive, did you? Well, anyway, if you ever *do* want to do that sort of thing . . .

"Anyway, there are all kinds of good mixing boards around. Peavey's 600S is a good 6-channel, their 800S is a good 8-channel, and they're both stereo, which

is a big help. Teac's are real good. Now, they don't have power amps in them, so what I'd recommend is something like a Crown D-150 to power your monitors and speakers. But you might want to look into other kinds of mixing boards, too. For instance Yamaha makes them with what they call input attenuators, things that automatically mind your levels so you don't ever feed back. It'll watch your sound if your soundman's gone off for a beer or something. And Cerwin-Vega makes good ones too, so you want to shop around.

Some equipment dealers will give you a real good price if you buy all one brand of equipment, all Peavey or Sunn or something. But whatever you choose, you should make sure you have at least 150 watts of output per channel. Some of your speaker systems have amps built into them so you don't need a power amp in addition—models like the Peavey 112 TS. My own personal choice for P.A. speakers, though, is the Acoustic 807 full-range. Good frequency response, good projection. So there you have it—everything a band's gonna need to make a big hit with the audience. Any questions?"

It took a moment for everybody to recover from the barrage of information. Finally Kelly asked, "Isn't all this going to be kind of expensive? I mean, we're not trying to play the stadium on homecoming weekend or fill Veteran's Memorial."

"Yeah," said Cosmo, "if you were trying to do that, it would be kind of expensive, and I'd have to recommend some more sophisticated stuff—not to mention a much bigger P.A. system and power amp. But no, this stuff will take something of an investment, but not a whole lot. You see, one good thing about electronics these days is that the equipment is so much better than it was, say, ten years ago that you can get something for a couple hundred bucks today that would have run you a grand—if you could have got it—back then.

"Hope I've been of some help to you. I'll drop by someplace you're playing in a couple of months and see how you're doing. Uh, what name should I look for in the paper?"

"Name?" said Ron. "Uh, we don't . . . You know, that's odd, we never . . ."

Cosmo just gaped. Finally, he turned to open the door, and then he turned back and said, "You know, I always thought Noise was a weird bunch of folks, but you guys really take the cake!" ■

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Keep on pickin'.

Guitar making seems to be one of the few remaining fields in which a craftsman can start with little more than his own skill and know-how and end up with a nice income at the head of a sizable company.



A craftsman who's on his way to that goal is Augustine Lo Prinzi, who started making and repairing stringed instruments as a sideline about 20 years ago. He proved so good at the sideline that it became his occupation. Eventually, he founded A. Lo Prinzi Guitars, a New Jersey firm which is still making good guitars, but without Augie. He left about two years ago in a policy dispute with some backers. With very little capital, he rented a shop, bought various tools and equipment—much of it second hand—laid in as much fine wood as he could afford and was off and running again. This time at the head of Augustino Guitars, Baptistown, New Jersey.

It's a small company. Augie and three other craftsmen turn out six models of guitars, all flat top acoustics, all professional quality. We showed the first two in the line last November—the CM36 (now \$675) and the AR38 (now \$795). Since then, Augie had added the DR11 (\$795) which is slightly smaller than the others, for studio work. There's also the AR40 (\$895) with three-piece rosewood back and sides, bound fingerboard and white holly lamination under the rosewood peghead overlay; the AR60 (\$950) with same back and sides, herringbone purfling on the soundboard and snowflake inlays on the fingerboard; and the AR70 (\$1095) with same back and sides, abalone and pearl hexagon inlays in the fingerboard, abalone and pearl top and soundhole decoration and white holly lamination under the rosewood peghead overlay. All models except the DR11 are dreadnaughts, and all have ebony fingerboards and bridges and grover tuning machines. All have clear, well balanced tones and easy actions, with remarkably little variation in tone from one instrument to the next.

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