

COUNTRY MUSIC

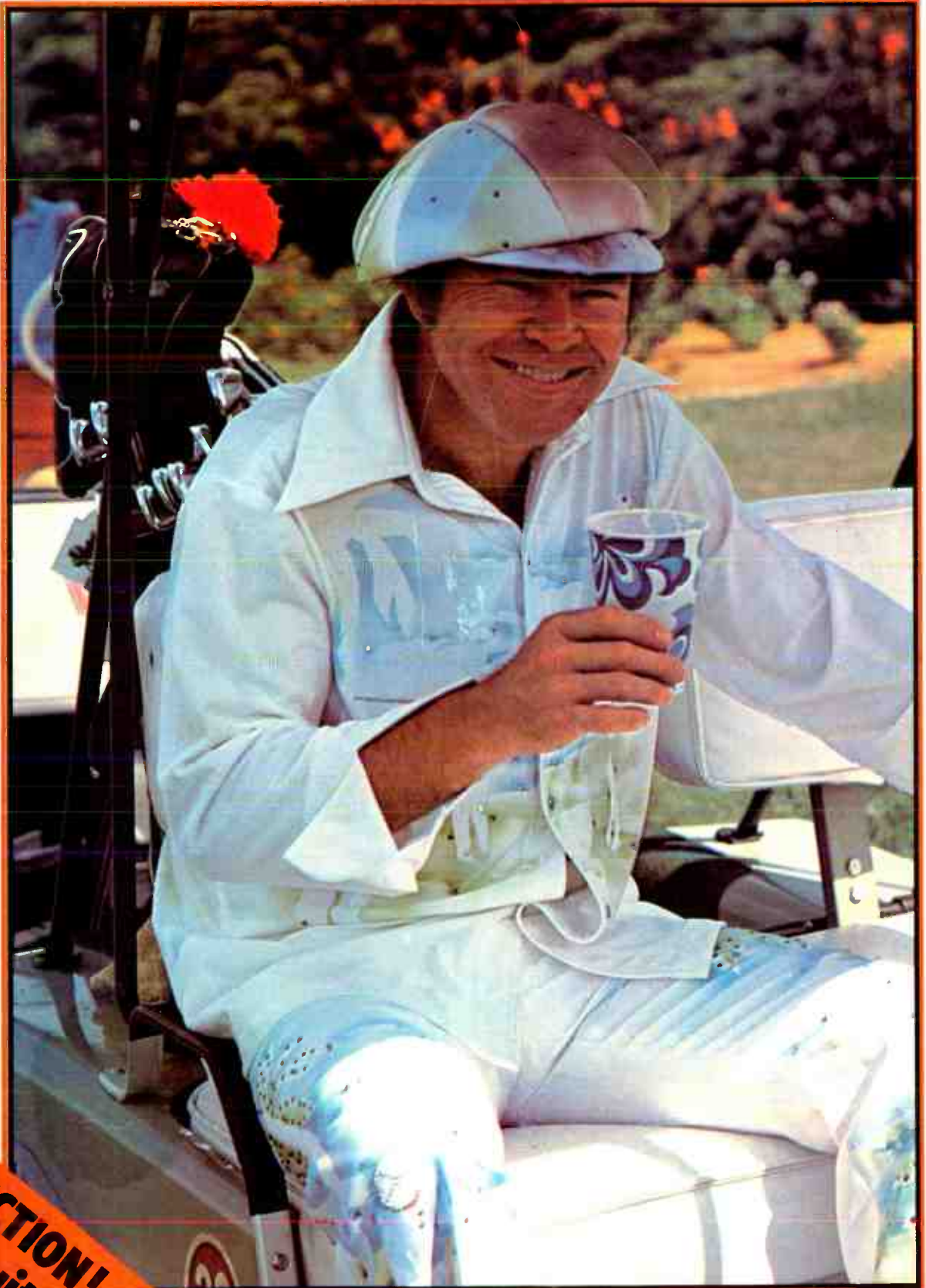
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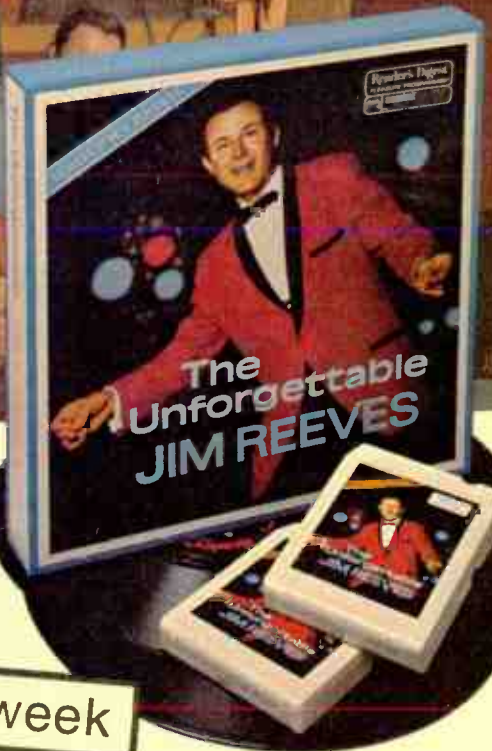
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COUNTRY MUSIC

Volume Six, Number Nine
June, 1978

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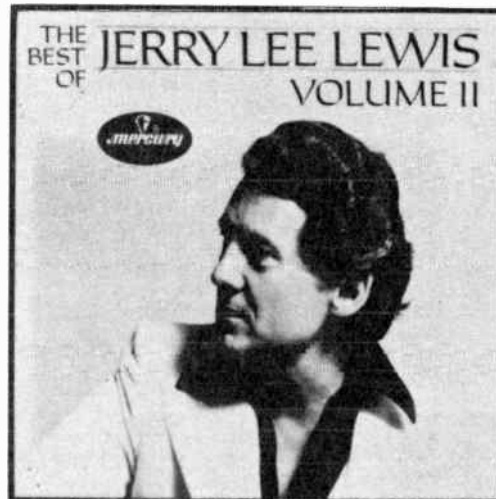
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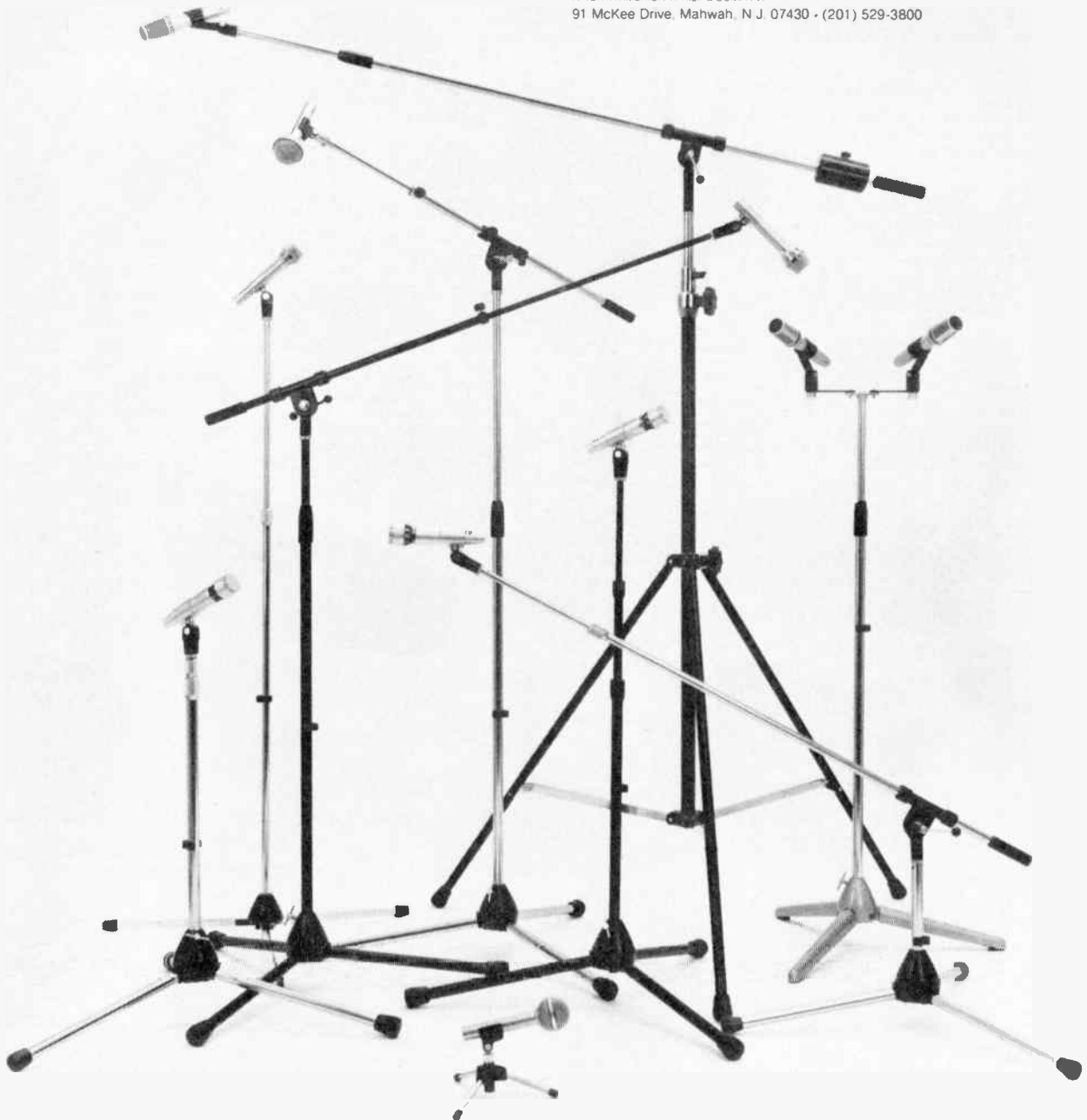


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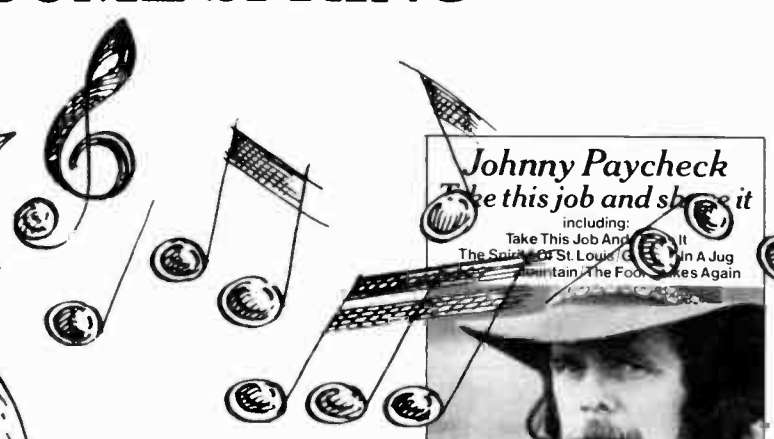
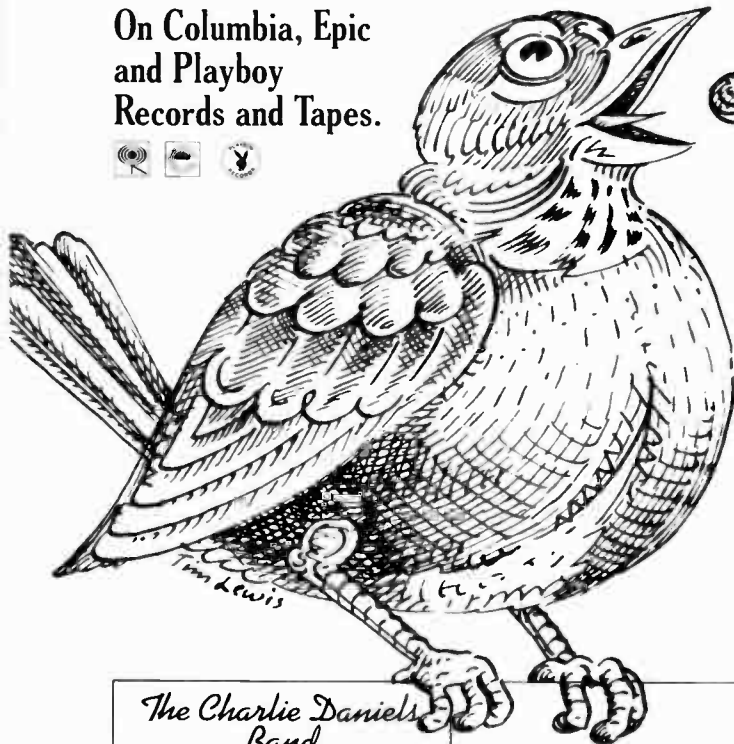
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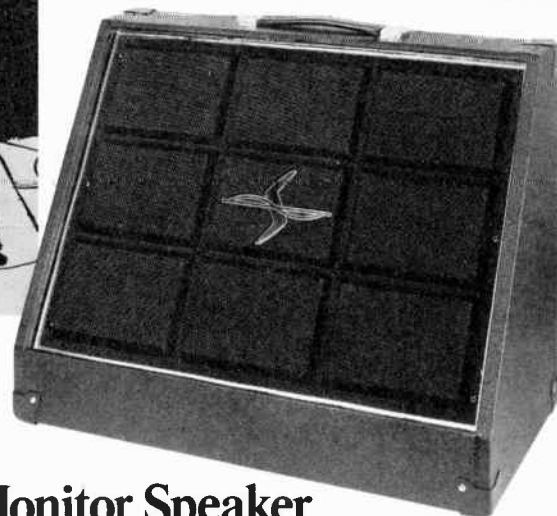
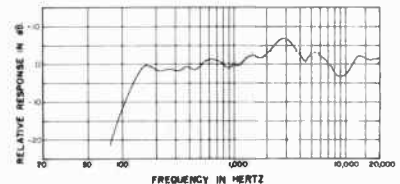


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MASTERS

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Jim Morgan—"With the Astro-Trimmer I actually reduced, firmed and tightened my waistline 5 inches—from 33¼ to 28¼—in just 3 days—without dieting. Remarkable results from a remarkable product."

Debbi Brandon—"This is truly instant reducing. What a thrill to see 3 inches disappear from my waist and 4 inches from my tummy in just 3 short days!"



BEFORE

AFTER

Fred Masters
...6" off waistline in
just 3 days.



BEFORE

AFTER

**Laurie Jensen...her
incredible results
in just 3 days.**

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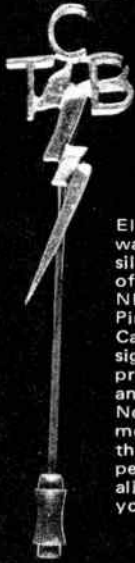
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Editor's Note

It's like this: There are concerts, and there are *concerts*. There are shows where the artist (and I use the term in its loosest sense) should be paying you for attending; there are shows that are not only moderately dull and there are shows that are, well, not bad. But every once in a while, if you're lucky, you catch a real concert, a show that makes you remember all over again why you started going to concerts in the first place.

Delbert McClinton made his debut in New York City recently and made me remember all over again what live music was all about. The two shows I saw were great ("Stick around," Delbert told me, "Maybe I'll get *really* hot later in the week . . ."), and from all reports the energy didn't flag for four nights.

Delbert plays music the way it was supposed to be played—straight from the gut. His music'll pick you up and shake you, drag you off your lazy rear-end and kick you onto a dance floor before you know what hit you. It's music that bypasses the head and strikes straight at the soul. No analyses, no puzzling over thought-provoking lyrics, nothing to put in a college textbook somewhere—just plain ole gut wrenching, kick-ass bar music, and if there's anything better I sure haven't heard it.

Later in the week, on the way to another Delbert show, I happened to run across a couple of friends of mine who happen to be heavyweight rock critics. They were also on the way to see Delbert, but what they happened to be discussing at the time was punk rock. Punk, as you know, is the darling of the critics' set these days, and my friends were giving me a few pointers on the finer points of this revolution in rock. To really understand a lot of punk, they said, you had to be really into French poetry; bone up on your obtuse French poets, and Richard Hell and the Voidoids will make a lot more sense. Well, maybe. You guys in country are very lucky, one of my friends said, all you got to do is read the lyrics to know whether a song is good or not—straightforward, that country music.

I trust he was joking, although I'm afraid he wasn't. The measure of *any* music, be it Delbert McClinton, Beethoven or Richard Hell and the Voidoids, is solely in the ear of the listener. It doesn't matter how subtle or clever the lyrics are, how obscure the literary precedents might be, good music is music that can touch a responsive chord in a person's soul. Good music doesn't need to be decoded with an Encyclopaedia Britannica on one hand and a Bartlett's Familiar Quotations on the other.

Nor am I saying that all song lyrics must be pitifully simple: The lyrics of a master songwriter like Willie Nelson or Hank Williams might be simple on the surface, but convey a world of emotions through the delicate shadings of the language. But obscurity for the sake of obscurity, pretension masquerading as thought-provoking commentary—country music can certainly do without that.

Delbert McClinton, said my friends, we don't know about him. Sounds pretty much like bar music to us.

Sounds to me like rock and roll could use a little more bar music like Delbert McClinton.



Michael Bane

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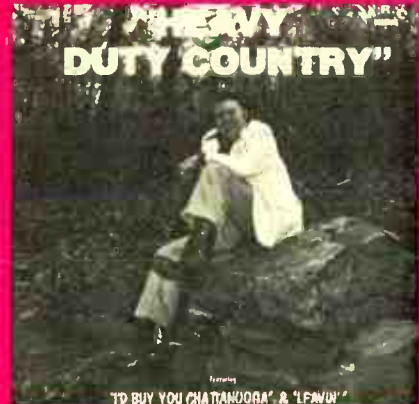
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Letters

Mickey Gilley Is First Class

Thanks so much for the article and pictures of Mickey Gilley in the March issue.

Peter Guarlnick seems to have captured the real Mickey Gilley and the real *Gilley's* and the people involved. I'm one of Mickey's fans that has followed his success up and down all the clubs they always mention on Spencer Highway. And there's no entertainer that deserves the success more.

He is a super person with a great sense of humor, besides being the best singer and piano player there is. Thanks again for the article.

RITA MORA
TEX. REP. MICKEY GILLEY
FAN CLUB
HOUSTON, TEXAS

I have never written a letter to anyone like this before, but it's about time I'd say...

I want to thank you so very much for the great article (nice & long) about Mickey Gilley. He is such a fantastic fellow, not to mention he is so full of talent, and a better showman you can't find. He is the kind of guy who can make you want to dance and sing just by listening to his music.

RUTH LEE
WN. STATE REP. MICKEY GILLEY
FAN CLUB
AUBURN, WASH.

Really enjoyed the article in the March 1978 issue on Mickey Gilley. It was great...

HARRIETT STUFF
WAWAKA, IND.

KFAT—Still The One

Just a line to tell ya that Steve Snell (Letters, March) can take all of his fast talking D.J.'s and furniture store and carpenteria commercials and all of that Ancient Modulation (AM) junk and stick it where it counts. I am a dedicated fattie and always will be. In central California, KFAT is where it's at. Also like yer article on Jerry Jeff, I never hear Jerry Jeff on KEEN, though.

DAVID RAUHAUSER
PACIFIC GROVE, CALIF.

I'm mad. I just read the critic's report on Emmylou's new album, *Quarter Moon*

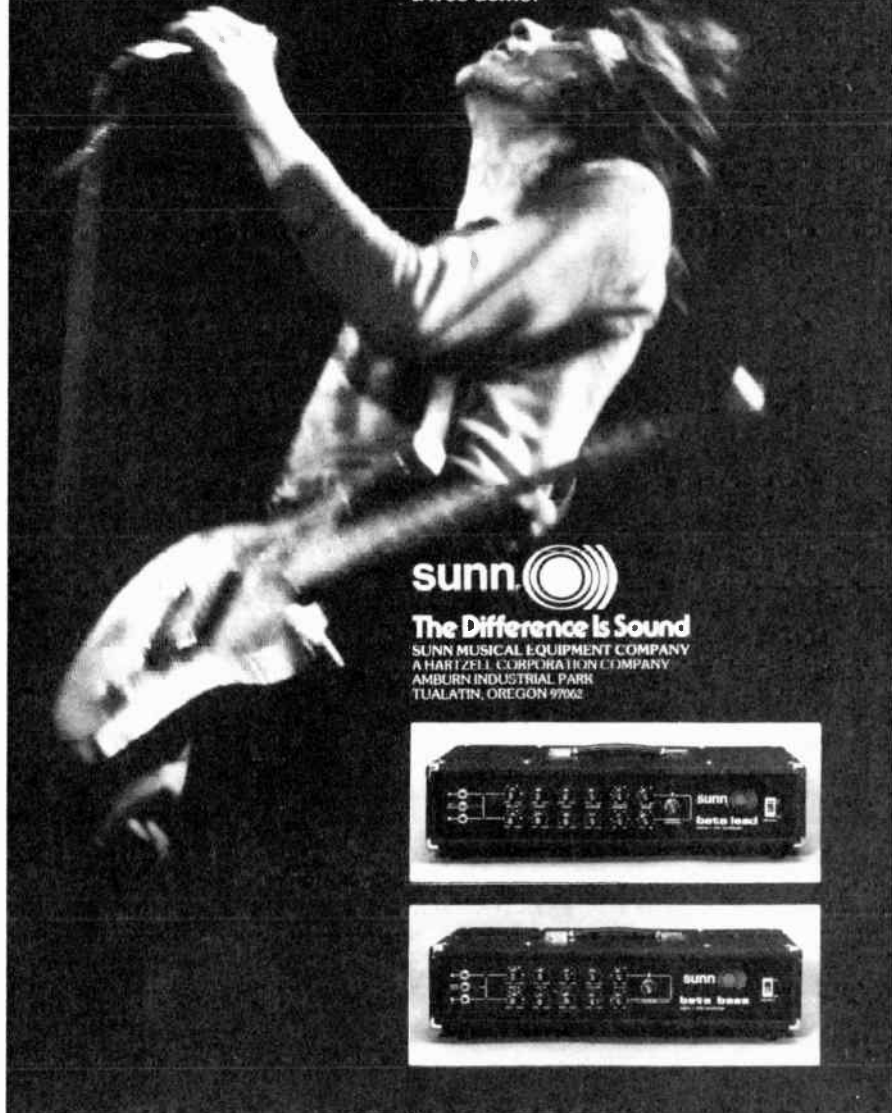
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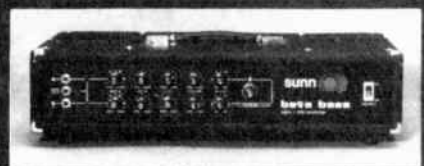
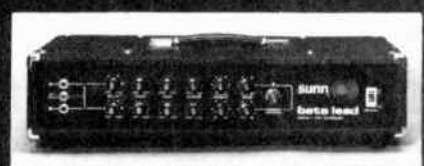
Dual channel operation; Instantaneous switching from channel to channel; Remote switching control; Integrated design for patching throughout the system; Drive control through C MOS circuitry offers tube-type (plate resistance) response; Variable Q tone control circuitry for best possible EQ for musical performance.

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In A Ten Cent Town. This is the second album report on her that has made me very upset. I have every one of her records and I think this last one is her best. I think that the critic should learn to enjoy music before he puts down a fine album. *Leaving Louisiana In The Broad Daylight* is one of my favorite songs. Anyhow, I like your magazine.

DON GARRETT
DELTA, COLO.

Praise The Lord Of Fox Hollow

I haven't quite figured out the reason behind the story on Tom T. Hall—it seemed so down, but I would like to say, the kind of human being he is or isn't doesn't really matter to a real fan. His songs-poems-music are what I really enjoy —when he'll autograph a placemat with "Tom T. loves you", that's all I need to know he's not all bad.

DARLENE LE GARDE
BEMIDJI, MINN.

I have just finished reading the article about Tom T. Hall. It was very good and I enjoyed it. Tom T. said that he wishes he could have been something great and changed the world. Well, he may not change the world, but his songs influence people. . . I hope he gets the book finished and out on the market soon, because I would really like to read it. . .

GRACE PFEIFER
SALEM, MO.

The Bionic Cowboy Rides Again

I've been receiving Country Music Magazine for the past 4 years and I enjoy it very much. I read every corner of each magazine. What I really read and loved was the fantastic article on Larry Mahan, the Bionic Cowboy. He's really great. Now that he quit rodeoing and turned to singing, he will make it. He made it in rodeos, he'll make it in music. . .

ROSIE LINDA LONGORIA
ZAPATA, TEXAS

I just finished reading my first issue of Country Music, and the photography is just great! I enjoyed reading the article on Larry Mahan, the Bionic Cowboy. Being a Tennessean, I really love country music. . .

JUDY A. TAYLOR
CHATTANOOGA, TENN.

Due to our great volume of mail, we regret we can't answer all letters individually. We welcome your opinions and will publish the most representative letters in this column. Let us hear from you. — Ed.

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Country Scene



An Era Ends In Nashville: Tootsie Bess Dead

Nashville lost another historic landmark last February 18 when Hattie Louise "Tootsie" Bess succumbed at last to her long-fought battle with cancer at Vanderbilt Hospital. A friend to struggling songwriters, a brash tormenter to drunks—she was known to eject dozens from her famous Orchid Lounge with the aid of a hatpin—Tootsie ran the little beer joint around the corner from the Opry that became a world famous institution for over two decades.

Countless songs were pitched—including Willie Nelson's *Hello Walls to Faron Young*—within the grimy interior, countless musicians hired for road

bands, countless beers drunk by Opry entertainers between shows. So hallowed had the reputation of the Orchid Lounge become that even after the Opry pulled up stakes and moved to its antiseptic new home at Opryland in 1974 the place stayed crowded with tourists who had heard so much about the funky joint.

Her Opry friends didn't forget Tootsie—Grant Turner spoke at her funeral, Connie Smith sang *In The Sweet By and By*, *How Great Thou Art*, and *If We Never Meet Again This Side of Heaven*, and Ernest and Justin Tubb sent an enormous floral heart, pierced in the center by a gigantic hat pin.

Trials Of Benny Martin Not Over

In the November issue I reported that Benny Martin was on the wagon and ready to roll with his revitalized career. Looks like I spoke too soon; the February 20 Nashville paper reported "Ex-Grand Ole Opry Musician Charged With Armed Robbery."

It seems that Benny had something of an altercation with his "landlady," Vera Philpott. According to Metro Nashville Detective John Pennington, this is how the alleged robbery occurred:

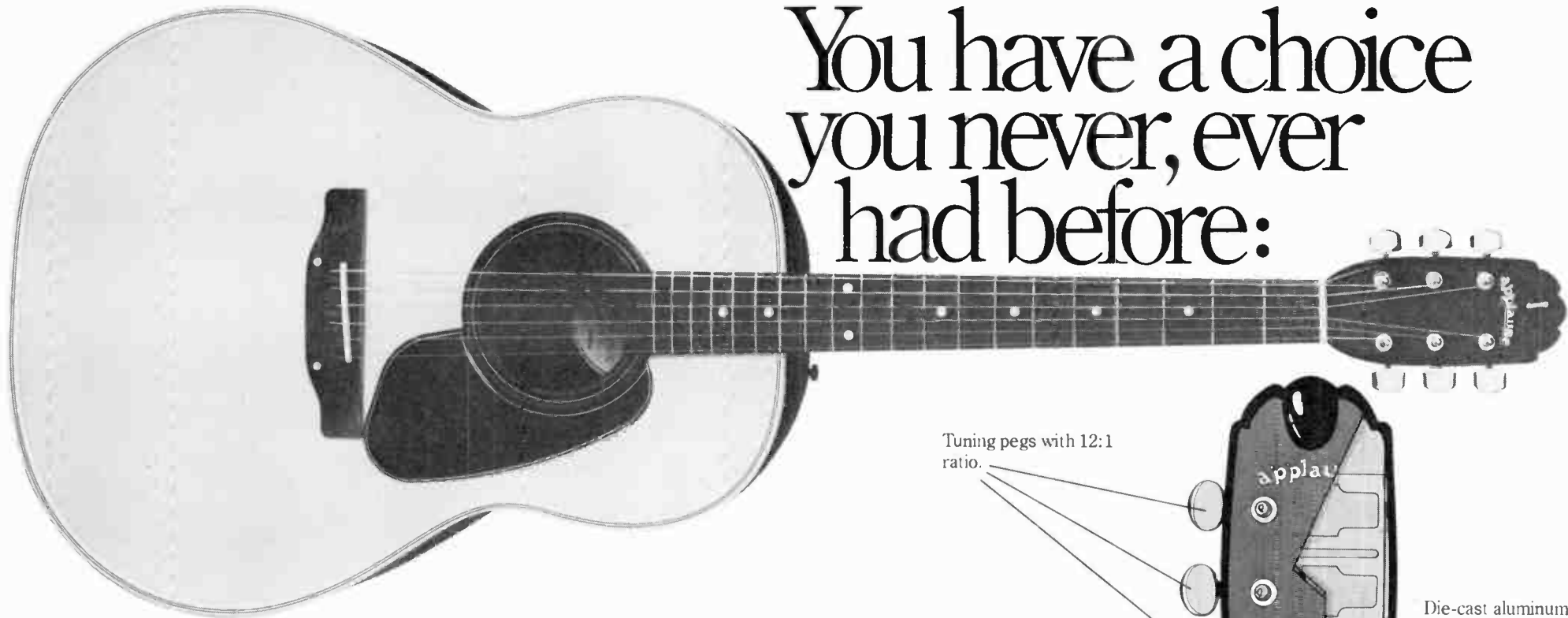
"Mrs. Vera Philpott came to the police station and said he robbed her of a \$640 insurance check at gunpoint. She said he forced her to sign it, and then forged her sister's name. He then took her to the Nashville City Bank and cashed the check. She said he threw the check stub in her face and threatened to kill her if she told anybody."

Police reported when they pulled him over he also had a loaded .38 on the front seat—for which he had no permit, and, "four Librium and eight pills of another kind." DOUGLAS B. GREEN



Befitting the star that she is, Loretta Lynn was honored with one of her own on Hollywood's famous Walk of Fame.

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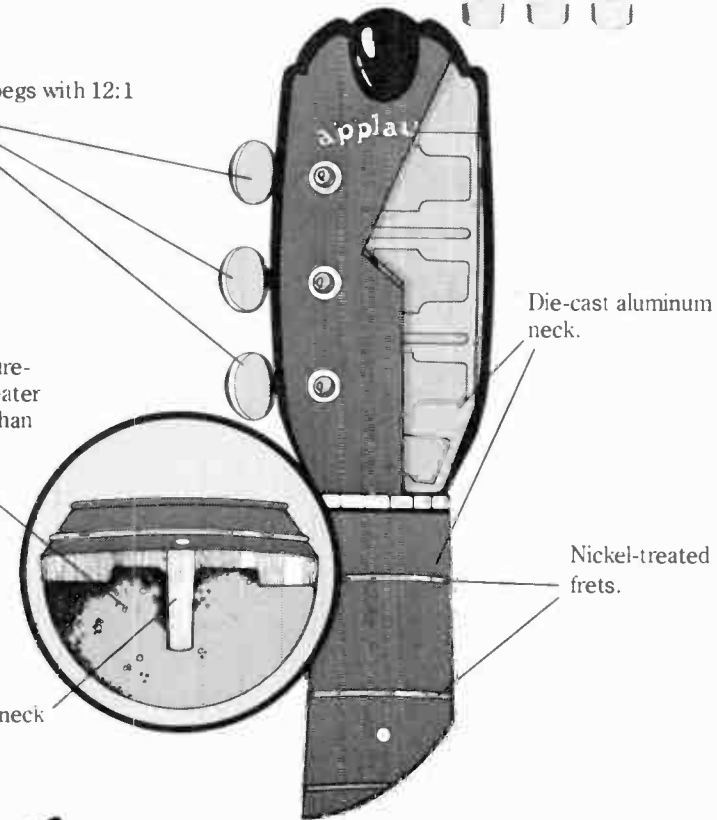
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Country Scene

Jamboree In The Hills Gears Up For 1978 Extravaganza



"Jamboree In The Hills," WWVA's big country concert, will be presented again this July 15 & 16 in Wheeling, W.Va. Last year's show included Barbara Mandrell, Tammy Wynette and Charlie Rich. For a great weekend, call toll-free 1-800-642-5456 or write Tickets, 1015 Main Street, Wheeling, W.Va. 26003. This is a show not to miss.

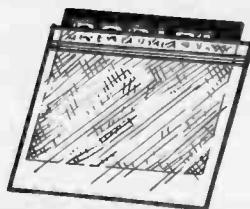
Ol' Rog Ties Knot

It was Wedding Bells for Roger Miller and Mary Arnold, in February. Mary is a former member of Kenny Rogers and the First Edition. Glen Campbell was Best Man.

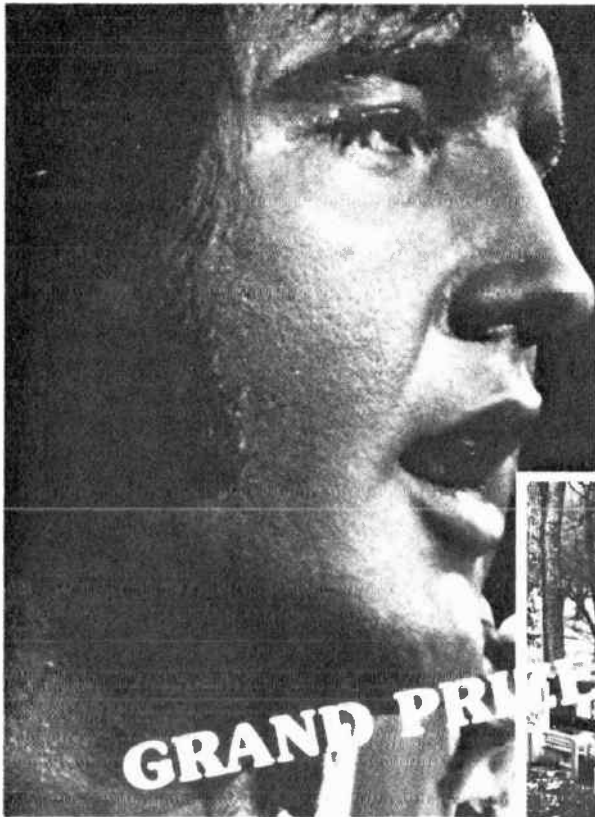


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Third-place winner will receive a Complete Elvis Record Library including a copy of every record Elvis ever made, a truly valuable prize worth many hundreds of dollars. Now is your chance to have a complete collection of the records from the one and only King of Rock and Roll.

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★★★★★★★★★★

HOW TO ENTER: OFFICIAL CONTEST RULES

- 1 On the official entry blank or on a plain piece of paper no larger than 8 1/2" x 11", print your name, address, and zip code. Then attach your essay which answers the question, "Why was Elvis the King of Entertainment?"
- 2 The essay should not exceed fifty (50) words in length. Entries will be judged on historical accuracy, originality, and creativity, and not on artistic ability. Your chances to win are unlimited. Entering more than one essay may increase your chances of winning. This contest is based on the originality and skill shown in the essay, **not on chance.**
- 3 You may enter as often as you wish. Each entry submitted must be different and mailed separately, and must be accompanied by \$3.00 to cover handling charges.
- 4 Mail your entry to the KING'S CAR CONTEST, Lone Star Marketing, Inc., 215 Cherokee Road, Hendersonville, TN 37075. All entries must be postmarked by midnight, July 1, 1978, and received no later than July 20, 1978. All prizes will be awarded and winners will be notified by telegram. No entry will be awarded during special ceremonies in Nashville on Christmas Day, 1978.
- 5 Winners will be selected by a panel of judges. The honorary chairman of the panel is Louisiana's two-term governor, the Honorable Jimmy Davis. Judging will be impartial, based entirely upon the contents of the essays. All decisions will be final. For the names of the prize winners, send a separate self-addressed stamped envelope to Lone Star Marketing, Inc., 215 Cherokee Road, Hendersonville, TN 37075.
- 6 Contest is open to anyone eighteen (18) years of age or older with a valid driver's license, except employees and families of Lone Star Marketing, Inc., its advertising agencies, and the judges. Only one prize to a family.

All winning entries become the property of Lone Star Marketing, Inc. and constitute permission for Lone Star Marketing, Inc. to edit, adapt, modify, publish, and otherwise use, in any way it sees fit, entries received without further consideration or payment to the contestants. Winners will be required to execute an affidavit of eligibility and release. Liability for taxes is the responsibility of each prize winner. Void wherever taxed, prohibited, or restricted by law. No correspondence will be entered into about any particular entry.

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It seems that two of our favorite stars Kitty Wells and Tom T. Hall have a lot cooking lately. Both have recently acquired interests in restaurant businesses and have gotten together to share the secret ingredients of their success.

Kitty Wells' loyalty lies with "The Heritage House," and as head spokeswoman for the chain, her commercials

are soon to be shown nationally. The variety of food found on the "Heritage House" smorgasbord is the key to their success.

The "Tom T. Hall Place," a Christmas present to Tom's wife, Dixie, opened in November. Located in Brentwood, Tenn, Tom's and Dixie's specialty is country cooking.

From Our We'll Know It If We Hear It Dept.

Popular wisdom in Nashville has it that, while one might not be able to tell that proverbial hit record by its lyric sheet, "we'd sure know it if we heard it."

Well, judging by the present charts, we'd guess that somebody knew what he heard. The song in question is called *Lay Down Sally*, written by English guitar wizard Eric Clapton for his *Slow Hand* album.

Seems like everybody in town is

falling over their own feet to get that song on wax. Already, three *Sallys* grace the charts—the original version by Clapton, a version by Jack Paris on the 50-States label and, lo and behold, our old pal Red Sovine with a version of his own.

We haven't been able to get hold of the Paris version, but we'd have to rate the Clapton-Sovine contest a clear toss-up. What's next? Well, how about *Lay Down, Teddy Bear*?

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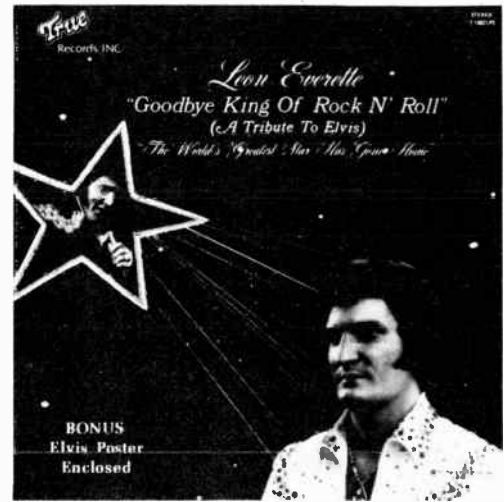


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- "The Old House"
- "Gentle Carpenter"
- "Prairie Man"
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Taking A Peek Inside Your Guitar

Ever taken a look at the faithful old guitar and wondered where that mellow, friendly tone came from? How is a guitar constructed and who does it? Are they produced by gnomes or extruded by some giant machine hidden in the Rockies?

In search of answers for those questions, we sent Hap Kaufner and Stan Jay, the Mandolin Brothers, our resident instrument geniuses, to two major guitar factories—C.F. Martin and Ovation—to scope out the state of guitar manufacturing in the United States. They were charged with looking into the insides of a lot of guitars, looking at the different approaches between Martin, one of the oldest manufacturers, and Ovation, one of the newest.

They also asked executives, salesmen, designers and audio engineers about how *they* viewed country music, and how their views were translated into hardware for country pickers.



C. F. Martin: An American Guitar Dynasty



Perhaps no single name is as synonymous with musical instruments as that of C.F. Martin, the premier American guitar. The story of Martin is, in many ways, a Horatio Alger story. The original C.F. Martin came to the United States from Germany in 1833 after pressure from the German violin makers' guild to prevent Martin, a cabinet-maker, from making guitars.

He set up shop in New York City and within a few years was the acknowledged master of the acoustic guitar. In 1838 he moved to Nazareth, Pennsylvania, near where the impressive new Martin facility is located, and resumed making his superb guitars.

Perhaps the foremost thing that comes to mind when Martin is mentioned is their total unwillingness to compromise—only the best wood, only hand labor of the finest sort, the highest quality work. There are, for example no Martin “seconds”—if a completed guitar is sawed in half and sent to dealers as a display of Martin bracing.

Who owns Martins? Everyone, says Hap Kaufner. “Even if they don’t play it on stage, they own one.” From Jimmie Rodgers to Roy Rogers, from Hank Snow to Elvis Presley, the Martin guitar has been a part of country music history. “Martin is an anachronism,” Kaufner says. “They’re like a Rolls Royce. The best. An American dynasty.”



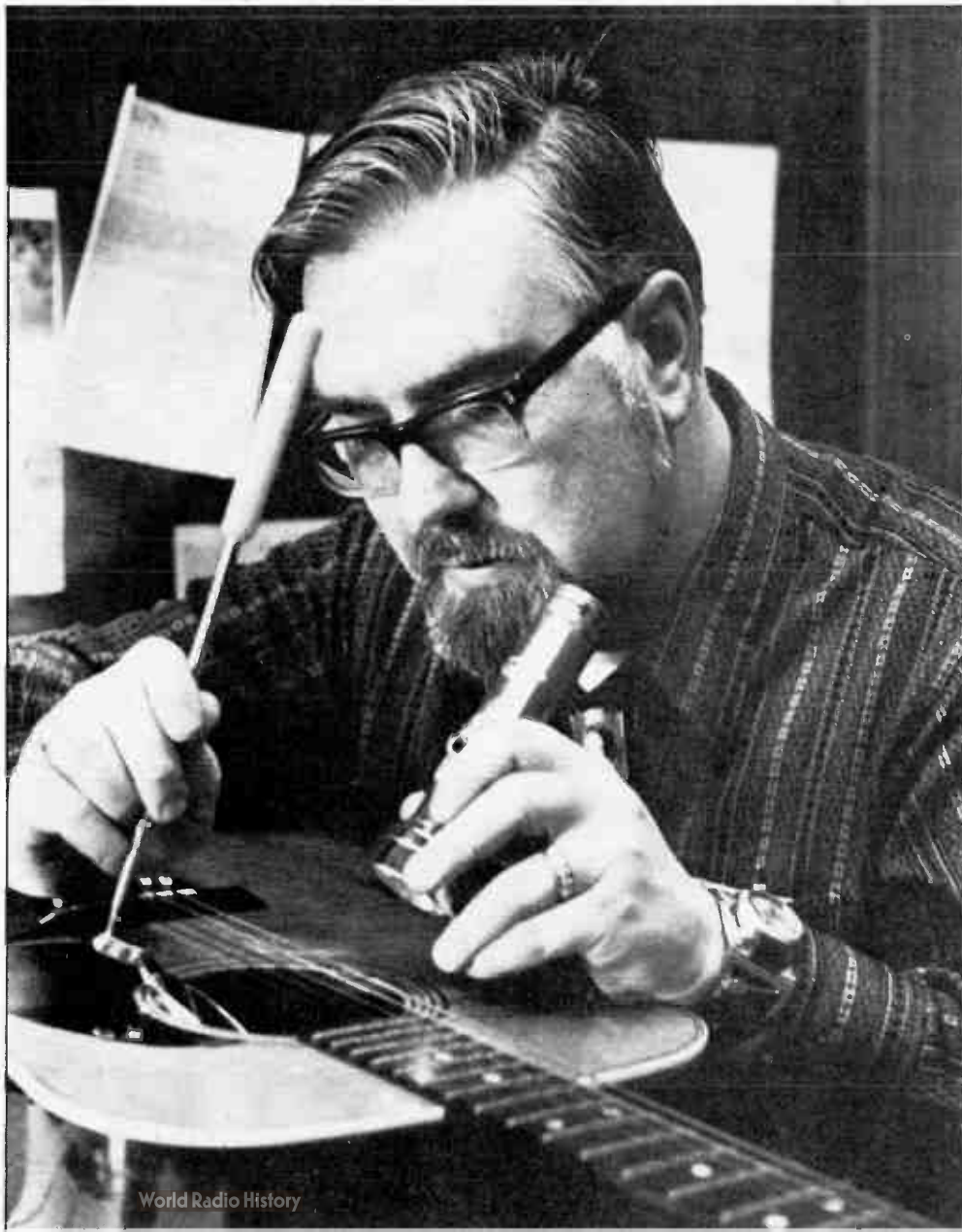
Musical Instruments Special Section



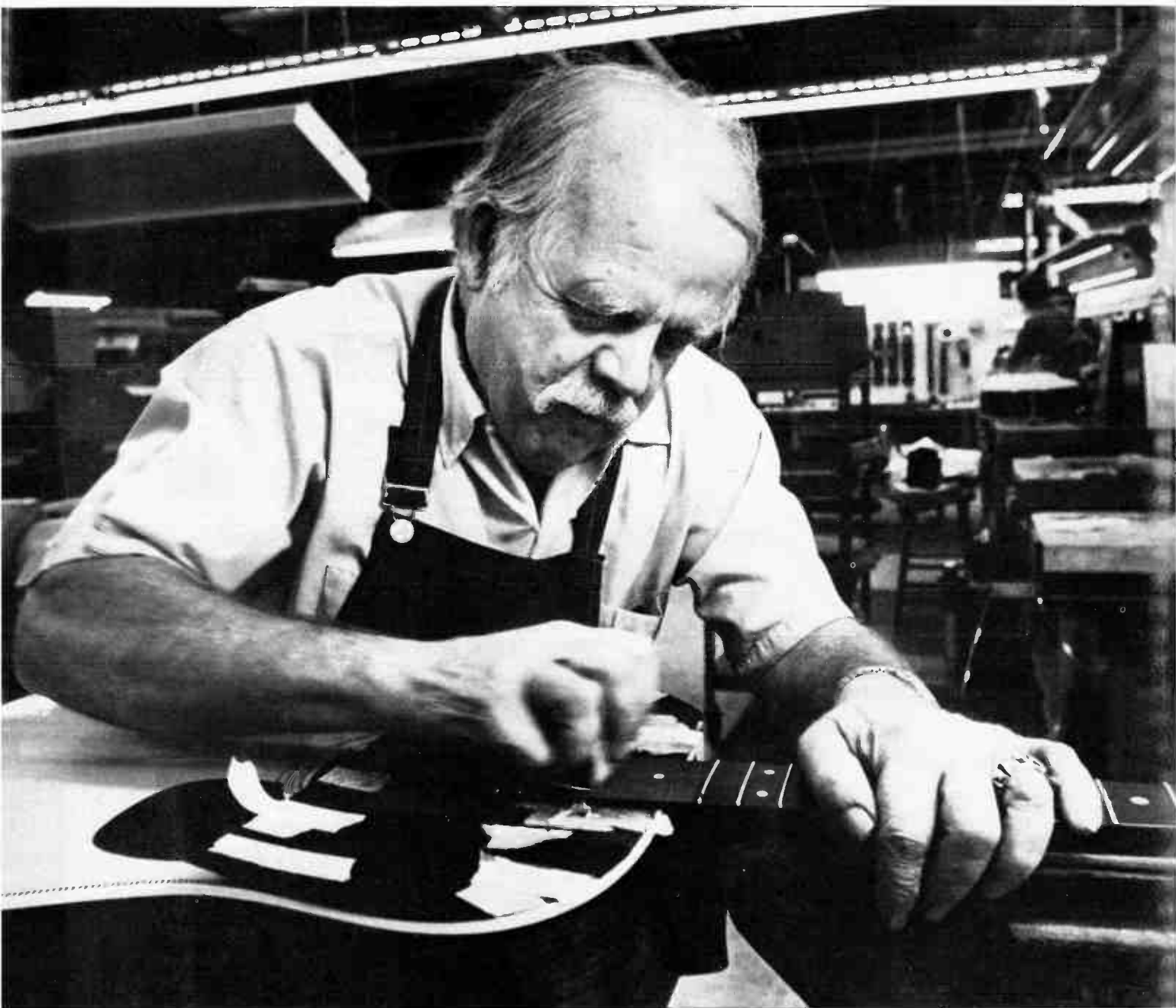
"There is no automation here. None at all," says Mike Longworth, the curator of the Martin museum. "We still utilize a basic sawing and routing machinery." The question is that perennial one—does an older Martin sound better than a new one? The answer, according to Longworth, (pictured on the right), is no.

"It is generally agreed that a guitar will improve as it ages, and the natural ageing process is what I feel contributes most to the improvement in tone of an older guitar," says Longworth. "As far as whether they were better made, as a matter of fact, if anything, the guitars we're making now are better than the old ones. Things have really improved..."

The photos here show various Martin craftsmen at work with Longworth examining one of the finished products.



Musical Instruments Special Section



Another Martin craftsman at work (above), and C.F. Martin III (left) playing one of his beloved guitars.

"We found out a long time ago that a guitar was only as good as the wood," says Don Thompson, Martin's head of research and supervisor of the woodshop. "That's why we decided to do it ourselves."

How does a reissue like the Martin Herringbone D-28 come about?

"Well, there was a lot of pressure from the market," Thompson says. "We had to go back to the original specifications of that time (1942) and because we are able to get better woods now with our sawmill, we were able to do it better. I think we have the finest wood we've ever had."

In future months we'll be looking at some of the other major instrument manufacturers, including Sho-Bud Steels and (with a little luck) Gibson's banjos and mandolins. We originally approached Gibson for this article, but we were informed, after a lengthy wait, that the Gibson factory was closed for visitors because "something really big is in the works." We'll keep you informed.

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COUNTRYMUSIC

STAR OF THE MONTH

World Radio History



Ovation Guitars: Old-Time Quality With Aerospace Technology



Rumor has it that Ovation Guitars are extruded by some gigantic factory in the wilds of New Hartford, Connecticut; that fiberglass and plastic and ersatz ivory are poured in one end and a finished, all plastic guitar pops out the other.

Nothing, of course, could be farther from the truth, but the Ovation guitar, the brainchild of Charlie Command, does stand alone—you've probably seen an Ovation even if you didn't know what it was. You can't miss it—it's the guitar with the round back. Seems that Command's training, (and, originally, his company) rather than being in the construction of musical instruments, was in the construction of helicopters. Research and development are the bywords for the building of contemporary aircraft, and Command's company helped develop, among many other items, a special fiberglass product for helicopter rotors and propellers.

When the aerospace industry began to dry up, Command decided to return to an area he found more and more fascinating—the construction of guitars. What he found was a field dominated by tradition, which didn't at all jibe with his aerospace efficiency/R&D background. He also had one other major advantage—the most important aspect of rotor and propeller design is calculating the resonant frequency of the materials, lest the inherent instability of a spinning object tear the rotor apart. Command had studied plastics for years, and he knew that plastics, along with aerospace engineering techniques could be applied to guitars.

Photos here are of the various stages of assembly of the Ovation, from forming the back and sides (far right) to installing necks, (right).



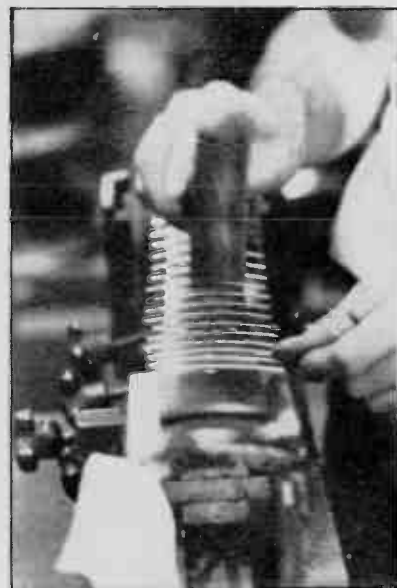
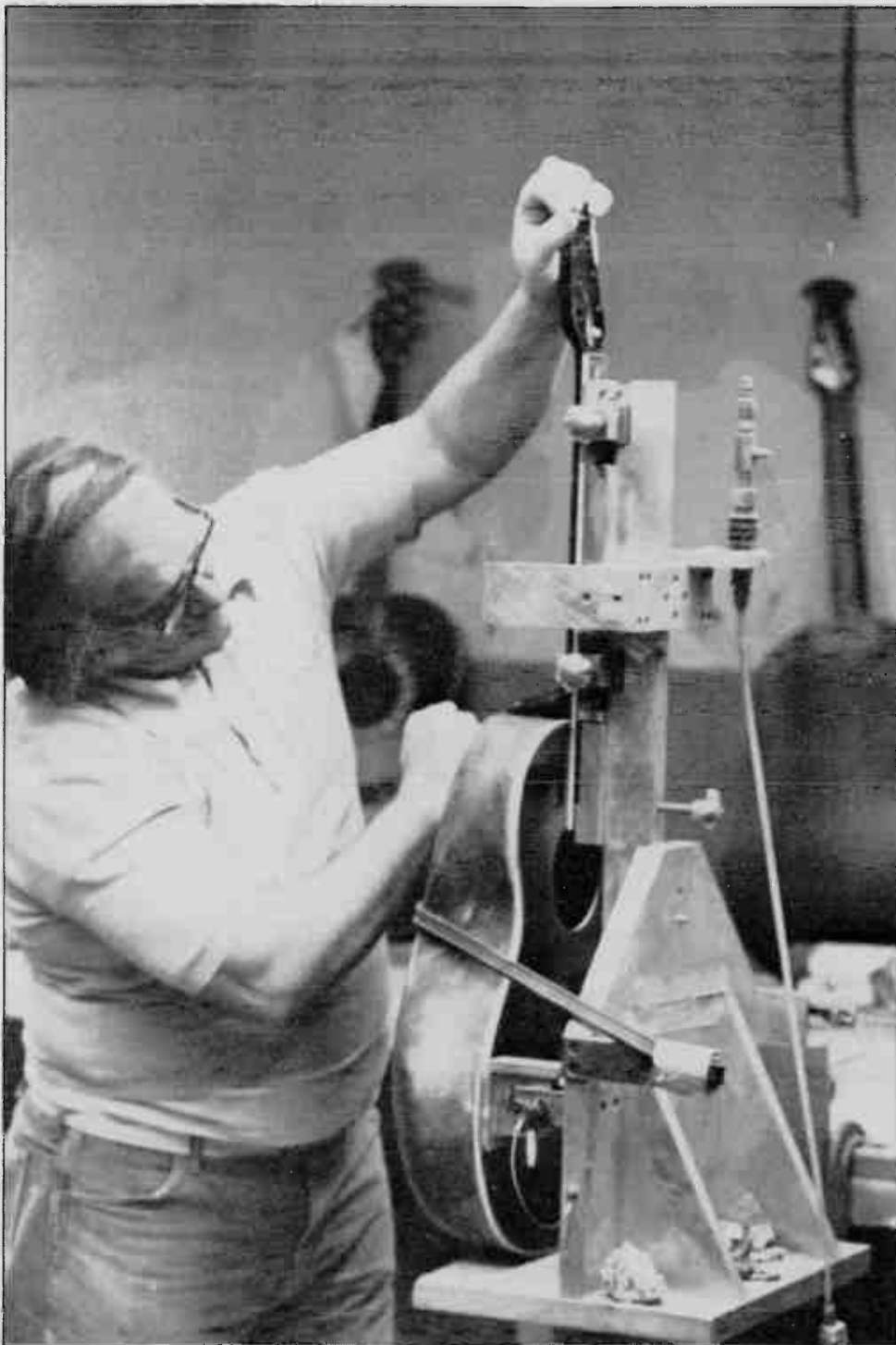
Richard Bell, the marketing director for Ovation, is laughing: "They could afford the company, some of the guys we deal with. They buy Ovation because it plays well and it travels well."

Some of those people include Roy Clark, Glen Campbell, David Allan Coe, Kenny Rogers and Dotty West, Lester Flatt, John Hartford—all the way to former Beatle Paul McCartney. One of the strengths of the Ovation guitar, especially for the country picker on a string of one-night stands, is that ability to travel well—their sturdy build, warranty support and its built-in electrics have given Ovation the reputation as a premier road guitar.

"I think that the musician of today is different from the musician of 20 years ago," says James Hennessey, director of advertising. "He's on the road. He's playing electric guitars and acoustic guitars, and he's putting one down and picking up another...Our guitar has the pickups in it. You don't have to glue anything to it. There's nothing else to do—it's all been factory installed...That's very important to the road musician." It's a whole different way of life for the musician of today."

While rock and roll musicians have been the bread and butter of the Ovation guitar market, a preoccupation with the country guitarist has been taking up more and more time in Ovation's century-old converted textile mill in the pastoral surroundings of Connecticut.

"Rock is still growing," says Dick Bell, "But I see that growth rate as being small. I see the country market as growing at a much faster rate." "I don't think, until recently, that we were giving the country picker the sound he wanted, that he was used to," says Bell. "But that's changed now. We listen to our people."

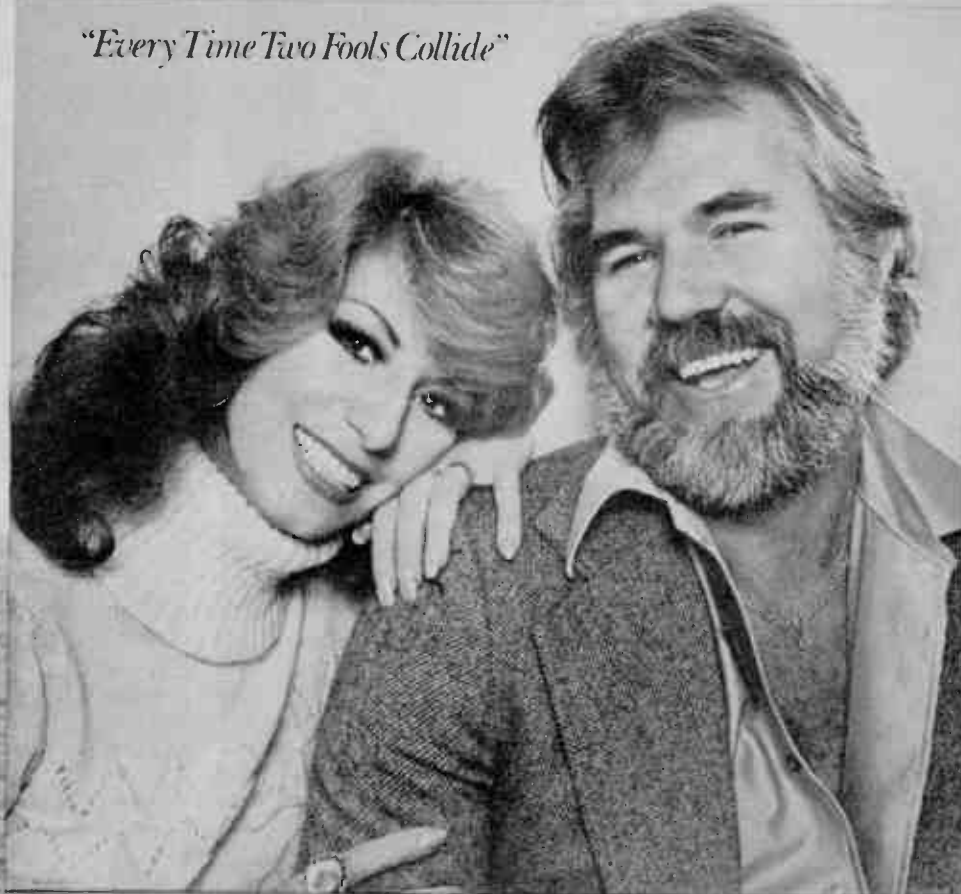


It started with a song.

“Every Time Two Fools Collide”
is the first song Kenny Rogers and Dottie West
recorded together. As a single, it’s a hit.
As a twosome, they’re a hit.
And one song leads to another.

KENNY ROGERS & DOTTIE WEST

“Every Time Two Fools Collide”



Produced by
Larry Butler

Every Time Two Fools Collide

Kenny Rogers and Dottie West's first album together.
Featuring the hit title song.
On United Artists Records and Tapes.



FOR YEARS ELVIS GAVE MILLIONS TO THOSE IN NEED.

NOW IT'S TIME FOR US TO CONTINUE HIS GOOD WORK...



This is truly the best memorial we can pay the King of American Music.

How much did Elvis give to charity?

In actual fact, the exact number will never be known—but it was in the millions!

So many people benefited from his generosity: The Muscular Dystrophy Association . . . The Heart Association . . . St. Jude Hospital . . . Le Bonheur Hospital . . . and so much more.

Now it's time for us to continue the work that Elvis started.

In his memory, we plan to establish The Elvis Presley Park in Nashville, Tennessee . . .

In his memory we will establish several scholarships at major schools across America . . .

In his memory, we will continue the donations that St. Jude Hospital, The Heart Association, and so many other worthwhile causes counted on.

This is truly the best tribute we can pay to Elvis Presley. This is the finest way to continue the memory of the artist who gave so much to America.

No, nothing can compare to the fire and excitement that Elvis

brought to his music. But there was another side to the man—a side that was often overlooked amid all the glamour and publicity.

Elvis, the son of a Mississippi sharecropper, never forgot his roots and was never too busy to help. During the last ten years of his life, Elvis gave away nearly two million dollars to charities and poor people he met. Henry Loeb, the former mayor of Memphis, once said of Elvis, "I don't know of a single instance of genuine need which he heard about when he failed to do something. He was an incredibly caring person."

And he was equally generous with his time and talent—visiting children in the hospital, and doing benefits for countless worthy causes. Maybe his generosity went back to the Sundays he spent in the First Assembly of God Church in Tupelo, Mississippi, where Elvis learned to love Gospel music and developed a deep and abiding faith in God. Without publicity, without show, Elvis was always generous in a manly way.

Now it's your turn to help in a worthy cause. Won't you do what you can to help us build the proper memorial Elvis deserves?

As a sponsor of the Elvis Presley Foundation you will

This sensational momento is a true limited-edition collector's item. It is not available in any store. And with so many Elvis collectors around, it may actually increase in value over the years.



The Elvis Presley Memorial Park in Nashville is just one of the ways your donation will be used. The Foundation will also give to the hospitals Elvis supported and establish a series of special music scholarships in his name.

receive "Elvis's Historic 1961 Press Conference." You'll hear Elvis's candid answers to the questions you've always wanted to ask him yourself: **What was his favorite song? How did he really feel about his days in the service? What was his greatest thrill in life? You'll gain new insights into his hopes, his dreams, and his disappointments. It's yours free as a sponsor of the Elvis Presley Foundation.**

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Elvis was the King. And nobody else could ever take his special place in our hearts. Only Elvis had the power, the magic and the charisma to appeal to such a wide range of audiences—young and old, white and black, rich and poor. Won't you join your friends and neighbors in supporting this important effort. Whatever you can give will be appreciated—even if it's only five dollars.

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I enclose \$10.00. Please send my copy of Elvis' 1961 Press Conference.

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Send more information about the Elvis Presley Foundation.

The King Of The Dobro Hits The Road

Josh Graves could play a session a day if he wanted, but the king of the Dobro would rather be out there with the friends and neighbors, working the road.

by **BOB KRUEGER**



Josh and son Brian pickin' at home (above); on stage with Vassar Clements and Earl Scruggs (right).



Josh on stage—his favorite place (above); with Lester Flatt and Bill Monroe (left).

We hear a lot about the stars, the big names, the headliners, but all too little about the musicians that make it all possible. Josh Graves is unique in his position of being a non-star, as well as the most vociferous and pioneering exponent of his chosen instrument, the Dobro. To anybody who has followed folk and country music for any period of time, Josh Graves has almost single-handedly brought the Dobro to the highest level of musical expression, putting him in the same virtuoso class as Earl Scruggs with his five string banjo, as Bill Monroe with his mandolin, or as people like Riley Puckett, Sam McGee, Merle Travis and Doc Watson with the flat top guitar.

A good portion of my last trip to Nashville was spent just sitting around and talking with Josh about his life and the years spent in the music business. It was one of those hot fourth of July weeks in Nashville where both the temperature and humidity claw at the one hundred mark. As we chipped away at the ice collected on his air conditioner, Josh talked about growing up in the little town of Tilco Plains in east Tennessee. He talked about the hours he spent listening to his black neighbor, Buck Roper, sit on the porch and play bottleneck slide banjo. He

told about signing up for 60 one-dollar lessons with one of the many "conservatories of music" that traveled throughout the South. He told of how, after a few lessons they packed up and moved on, leaving young Josh with a Stella Hawaiian-style guitar. Like many country musicians, including the likes of Jimmie Rodgers and Hank Williams, much of Josh's early exposure to music was from the community of black musicians who first brought the guitar and the style of lonesome blues up from the Mexican border and across the Texas plains to Appalachia in the early 1920s. He told of how, "my daddy would throw a party, and these two black men, one played a little old 'tatter bug' mandolin and the other played guitar, would come over. The men



Musical Instruments Special Section

folks would slip on down to the barn and daddy'd have a jug hid out there 'cause mamma wouldn't let him keep it in the house. I'd just go along down there with them and listen to 'em play. And you talk about playing some blues—nobody knew what they were playing. I don't guess I really did. I was just a little bitty boy, but a lot of that stuff I can still remember."

Josh lists Cliff Carlisle, who played dobro on many of Jimmie Rodgers early recordings, as one of his major influences. He still remembers when the Carlisle Brothers first came through his hometown. "Cliff was talking to a group of people," Josh recalls, "and I just stood there and stared. After a while he came over and talked to me. All I could say was 'I got a guitar like yours.' Of course I didn't, but I thought I did."

Now he does, in fact, he has Cliff's old guitar, which he has used ever since his was stolen in Syracuse in 1974. "I could

never understand," Josh said, "why anybody would want to steal from a musician. He's never got anything anyway. Maybe he's worked all his life for an instrument that he really wanted. Maybe some day I'll get mine back. Maybe somebody's conscience will start bothering them, and they know who it belongs to."

For a country musician life is an endless chain of 'one nighters,' and Josh is no exception. Over the years he has played for a variety of groups, starting out with Esco Hankins in 1943. He then went with Wilma Lee and Stoney Cooper, followed by Mac Wiseman. Finally, in 1955, he started his 14-year stint with Flatt and Scruggs. He recalls that, "in '47, I think it was, things got pretty rough. I was married and had one kid and was expecting another one. Well, I figured, I'm gonna have to do something, so I quit. I went back home and got a job on construction. When eight o'clock in the evening rolled

around, I knew that was show time, I'd wonder where the boys were tonight, and I'd walk the floor like a cat. You just can't stay out. It's like gambling, I guess—it just grows on you. I can't explain it, I don't guess anybody can. I've seen guys, and I guess I've done it myself, be so hungry that you didn't know where your next meal was coming from. Another time I almost quit when we hadn't been payed for two weeks. The rent was due and the groceries were getting low. I met the guys I was working with coming down the stairs, and one of 'em said, 'where're you going.' I told him, 'I got a chance to sell this guitar, and I'm goin' down down to sell it. I'm gonna pay my bills here and then I'm goin' back to east Tennessee and get a job. I was gonna get out. I was that disgusted. But things changed that day. He came up with the money, so I stayed on. It got pretty rough, I'll tell you. It got down to the nitty gritty. A musician lives in the dream that



An evening of relaxation for Josh and fiddler friend Vassar Clements.

tomorrow he's gonna hit it. And I'll tell you another thing, country musicians just never retire. You just have to carry them out when they go."

In 1955 Josh came off the road with Mac Wiseman, and his wife, Evelin, told him Earl Scruggs had called, and that they were looking for someone to play bass, if Josh still played. Josh took the job on a two-week trial. "I worked for them for 14 years and they finally decided to hire me in '69, just before they split up. I'd worked with 'em playing bass for a couple of weeks when they called me one morning and said they wanted to talk. I thought, 'Oh hell, here I go.' I thought they were gonna get rid of me. They asked me if I had my preference would I rather play bass or Dobro. I said, 'well naturally I'd like to play Dobro.' They wanted to change their sound. They wanted to try something different, and I guess it worked out alright... I guess it did."

Maybe all bluegrass bands do sound alike, but through the years there have been groups that have had that something extra, that spark of showmanship and talent that elevates them beyond that just another band status. Flatt and Scruggs had it. They don't seem to be able to quite recapture it separately, but they sure had it together. "They used to call us a football team at the Opry," Josh recalled. "Earl was the quarterback, and I was the running back. Earl would hand it off to me, and I'd cut through the hole. If they knew I was coming from the back side, Flatt would go to his left. I remember one time we had this boy come in, he'd worked with us before, but he'd forgotten the patterns that they run. I turned and caught him in the back of the head with my Dobro neck; liked to plumb knock him off the stage."

We're listening to some cuts off of Josh's new solo album on youngest son, Brian's, Donald Duck record player. Brian or Josh, or someone has demolished the needle and arm on Josh's stereo system. His daughter, Linda, calls from down the street and says we're to come down there for dinner. Josh has been bacheloring it for a couple of weeks while wife Evelin is back in east Tennessee sitting with sick relatives. It has fallen to daughter Linda to check up on the old man and try to keep him out of trouble. Linda's husband, Carrol, has been doubling as a furniture salesman and Josh's agent since he left Scruggs to go it on his own in '74. You'd think after 33 years on the road Josh'd want to settle into doing sessions work in Nashville and leave the one nighters to the younger set. But, as Josh is fond of saying, "Once it gets in your blood. I'd rather play live, on stage. This month I've got six sessions to do, if I can get to them. If I'm laying around the house I don't mind doing it, but I'm not gonna kill myself to get in there and cut sessions. I'd rather hit the road." ■



Josh at work in the studio—"I'd rather play live, on stage...I'm not gonna kill myself to get in there and cut sessions" (top); Josh and fiddler Benny Martin in a little kitchen pickin' session.

LaCosta In Waiting

All she needs, see, is this one fan-tastic record...

by ED WARD

La Costa's been up since the dawn's early light, putting things in boxes, and that's what she'd been doing until 3:30 that morning. Three hours' sleep and back to work, preparing for the big move from Belair to Phoenix. Her pilot-husband, has already got a place for them to live out near Scottsdale, and La Costa's excited about leaving Los Angeles and getting back to the country she grew up in.

But it's not that easy. She's got to go have lunch with the lady from Capitol Records and a guy from *Country Music Magazine* who's going to interview her, totally disrupting everything. But she promised to do it, so she changes her clothes, gets into the Econoline and heads off for the Capitol Tower. Lunch is at an Italian restaurant north of Hollywood Boulevard, an out-of-the-way little place with red vinyl booths and darkened corners. They make an odd trio, the thin dark-haired publicity lady with the aristocratic British accent and the guy from San Francisco who looks like he's just gotten off an airplane. Such an odd trio, in fact, that the waiter can't resist.

"Are you in show business?" he asks, to the table at large. The publicity lady explains there's an artist, a writer and herself. The waiter is now enraptured. He'd been pretty sure the blonde was the star. "And what is your name?" he asks graciously. "La Costa," she replies. "Oh, but that is beautiful!" he exclaims. "La Costa! What does it mean?" "It's Spanish for the sea coast." His eyes bug. "Incredible! It really means seacoast? My name, it's Italian, is La Marra, and that means the sea. So we have La Costa and La Marra." La Costa beams, and the waiter goes on to discuss his bit of the music business (everybody in Hollywood is in some sort of show biz), which is jazz composition. "Do you have any records out?" he asks La Costa. "Four, on Capitol." "Can I get them at Tower?" (Tower Records is Hollywood's big record supermarket). "I sure hope so," she smiles, and if the vibes in the room mean anything, I'd bet she's just scored herself four albums' worth of royalties. "La

Costa, what a beautiful name," says La Marra in a very soft voice, and then he sighs and heads back to the kitchen for the espresso.

It's the ineffable charm of those Tucker women, I'm sure. Some magic they carry around with them and use, benevolently, on the hapless males of this world. Chuck, the photographer who took these pictures, first encountered it at the Eddie Rabbit show when Tanya got on stage, cocked her hip and raised the temperature in the room so fast that his camera, a brand-new Nikon, literally exploded, sending pieces three feet into the air. Today, La Costa's only managed to melt a waiter, but then, she'd been up late last night and didn't get her rest.

Actually, now that she's doing it, La Costa doesn't mind at all that she's out for this interview. She puts everything she's got into whatever she's doing at the time, and soon she's going on full-tilt about Tanya's experiments with her new wok and her recent trip to Steamboat, where she went snow-skiing and twisted her leg clean out of the socket and then twisted it back in (but she still wants to go back for more) and the beauties of Sedona, Arizona, nearby to where she's moving.

The writer edges toward the door—his tape recorder is back at the Capitol Tower—and they leave the restaurant, with one broken-hearted waiter. And, once La Costa's in front of the tape recorder, she's just as voluble as before. Laughing over the coincidence of names, the writer asks her where she got it, anyhow. "Oh, I was named after a lady that lives in Denver City, Texas, a beautiful lady. You couldn't ask for a better person to be named after. She was a friend of Mom and Dad's before I was born, and today she's one of my most devoted fans.

"I was born in Seminole, Texas, but grew up in Denver City. We lived in Texas til I was in second grade, and then we moved to Arizona. See, Daddy was a water-well driller and a jack-of-all-trades, so when he got a job in San Simón, Arizona, he sent for us. We stayed there for three years and then started hoppin'

all over the place: Cortez, Colorado; Wilcox, Arizona, and finally I went off to school in Douglas, Arizona, at Cochise College. I don't know why in the world I chose that one, since I'd won a scholarship and a grant with which I could go anywhere I wanted to, but I guess I was insecure. That's the same reason I chose to study medical records, because it was a course where everything was all planned out, you'd go in there and come out as an A.R.T., an associated record technician. Another couple of years, and I could have become a medical librarian. But I worked as an A.R.T. in Douglas and Casa Grande, Toltec, Yucchh. . ."

But wasn't there a burning desire to become a performer? Hadn't you been singing all this while? "Oh, of course. All the while I was growing' up I liked to sing. I'd sing around the house, and I first appeared on the stage when I was four years old in a talent contest in Snyder, Texas. I didn't win, but the desire was there. And during my high school years and my first year of college, my older brother Don and Tanya and I had a group called the Country Westerners in Wilcox. We'd play at different places like the Vets' Club and the Elks' Club, and gradually the word got out that we were entertainers. Oh, and I entered talent contests and stuff like that, and kept that bug in me itchin' just a little bit more. But I didn't have the confidence that I could do it, me, a little girl from Texas. Being an entertainer was something for everybody else. But when Tanya got into it, maybe it did show me that it was possible. I think I may have been the spark for her, and she was the spark for me, but her hearin' me singin' while she was growin' up, it might have rubbed off on her."

So here you were, working with medical records in Yucch, Arizona, and suddenly here's your 13-year-old sister on the radio doing what you'd always secretly wanted to do. Weren't you jealous? "Gosh no! Boy, I was so happy! I couldn't believe it when I heard her on the radio for the first time. I said golly! That's *my sister*. I thought that was really neat, and I still do. I think she's one of the best



female vocalists around today, and it perturbs me that she hasn't ever won an award. People tell her she's gotta wait, that she's got her whole life ahead of her. But I've seen years she shoulda won, and I'm not prejudiced, either."

After she gets through giggling about that last statement, she admits that she and Tanya "had our little battles, just like ordinary sisters, but nowadays we hardly ever have a cross word. We don't have so much of an age difference now because she's dating, and she's grown up. We can ca-hort a little bit more, you know..." Well, haven't people accused you of cashing in on Tanya's success? "No, not

really, I don't look too much like her, and I don't try and sing like her or anything. And, of course, I don't use the Tucker name. I didn't think there should be another Tucker in the music business, at least not from our family. At first I used another name professionally, but I found people couldn't remember the La Costa part, so I dropped the last name, figuring that if Elvis and Ann-Margaret didn't need last names, I didn't either. The only problem I've run into using La Costa is that a lot of people think I'm Spanish, and they think I'm some sort of act with black lace and castanets. But when they see all this blond hair, they know I'm not."

After a year of pushing papers and hearing Tanya on the radio, La Costa decided to take the big jump herself. Enlisting the help of her father, Beau Tucker, who'd been instrumental in getting Tanya her record deal, La Costa signed with Capitol Records and scored a hit with *Love Train* first time out of the chute. Sadly, nothing since has scored as big, but La Costa's not terribly depressed about it. "It just hasn't clicked yet, that's all," she says. "It took Freddie Hart 18 years, so it comes down to whether the artist has the determination and perseverance to stay in there and try to hook 'em. It's like Charlie Rich said, 'Everybody's star's gonna shine sometime, you just gotta wait your turn'."

And when you're going for a higher goal than some of your contemporaries, the effort can be trying indeed. "I want to appeal to everybody, and, well, of course you can't do that, but I'd like to be considered a crossover country artist, selling records to the 18-to-35-year-olds. What I have been doing is playing between 200 and 250 dates a year, state fairs, shows with Bob Hope and Mac Davis and Merle Haggard, really truckin' on down. But my daddy's helped me see that you can't work yourself into the ground. I'm going to lay off all the little doohickey dates and cut down on the showcases and just sit back and try and find that really good hit. See, I've never had a number one hit, a big fabulous start to my career that my sister's had, and that's really what I'm looking for. I have everything else, I have the talent, I know how to work the stage and everything. I may not be the greatest yet, but I'm workin' on that, too.

"It's tough, too, because it's like with Tanya. She hasn't been quite as big recently because she's growing in her music. I just hope people don't try and stick her on that one narrow road and say 'Well, she ain't doin' *Delta Dawn* any more so I don't like her.' I'm not doin' *Love Train* any more. Gee, just let me experiment. See, if they might try it, they might like it. It's just that you have to do it very gently. Country audiences are good people to have on your side, because no matter what you do, even if you do have that 18-year slump, once you get that next hit record they're up there in your hand. Whereas a lot of rock groups come and go as quick as they record, and you never hear anything more from them. The audience doesn't care. But country people are, well, they're me—I'm just country, really."

A clue to the direction she'd like to take may be found in a short summary of her favorite performers: Linda Ronstadt, Emmylou Harris, Crystal Gayle ("I've loved everything she's put out."), Loretta Lynn ("especially singing Patsy Cline!"), Alice Cooper, Asleep at the Wheel, Fleetwood Mac, the Rolling Stones...



Country Music Interview With

ROY CLARK

by MICHAEL BANE

Consider Roy Clark. After almost 30 years in the business of country music he has, for all intents and purposes, reached the top. He is the most visible and, at \$35,000 per show, the highest paid country artist, as well as a regular host of the *Tonight Show* and a guaranteed full-house draw in almost everywhere. He has, virtually single-handedly, changed the definition of "Country entertainer," spawned a host of imitators—none of whom can match his facile wit and keen sense of comic timing—and won numerous awards, the most recent being the CMA's Instrumentalist Of The Year award for 1977. Yet Clark continues to follow a killing tour schedule—260 dates a year on top of television and movie appearances.

We caught up with Roy in, of all places, Cleveland, Ohio, in the dead of winter, where he was working a week-long engagement at the Front Row Theater-In-Round.



COUNTRY MUSIC: *Was there some point in your career when you said, 'I want something more for myself? I don't want to find myself locked into this traditional grand old man of country music?'*

ROY CLARK: No, I don't think I ever thought about it. The only thing that I can see looking back on it, that may have changed me was the fact that I was raised in Washington, D.C., and that's so different in itself, you know, that I had probably one of the best upbringing—or best chance of anyone—because Washington, D.C., especially back then, the mid-50's, was—you had just about the right influence from all. You had southern people there with country music. You had, well, that was when rock music first came on. Had people from all over the world who came to work for the government. And so when I started playing clubs there I knew I was going to have to satisfy those people and do what they wanted, rather than just do what I wanted to do and have them come to me. I've often wondered what would have happened if I'd...

CM: *Been from Alabama?*

CLARK: Yeah. Or had lived and was raised where I was born in the southern part of Virginia. Where I'm sure that my influences would've been quite a bit different. I've never known any bounds.

CM: *When did you first link up with Jim Halsey?*

CLARK: 1960. I'd been playing clubs around





“I don’t think there’s a group of people in the world anymore clannish than country music fans. I mean, they’ll stay with you forever.”

Washington, D.C. and having a group of my own playing local television, local radio. And all of a sudden it just dawned on me that I had to do something. I either had to make a try, see if I had what it took to build a career, or get out of the business. So Wanda Jackson came into town and she was going to open in Vegas—this was in 1960—and she needed someone to front the band. And she just happened to hit me at the right time, and I said, yep, I’ll do it. So I went to Vegas with her and I worked for a little over a year. And Jim was her manager and that’s how I met him. And he said I bet you have a good future in front of you, and I’d like to manage you, try to get it organized, trying to get it together. So evidently he knew a lot more than I knew at the time, because I said that’s fine. We’ve been together now going on 18 years.

CM: He seems to me to be one of the really true—I don’t know if this is the right word—but the real visionaries in the field.

CLARK: Yeah. I guess him and I think the same way, although he has a tendency to think a little bit further than I do, which is probably what he should do, as far as planning someone else’s career. You can see them doing things that they may not be able to see themselves. A long time ago he broke me of the habit of saying, ‘well I can’t do that’ or ‘I don’t want to do that. I don’t think I can do it.’ Because he’s helped me prove to myself that you can, you know, that everything is possible and everything will work. You just don’t have to look at it in one certain direction to say well, that’s not the image that I’m projecting. This is not what I really want to do. Or this is not country. You don’t have to spend too much time saying which is country and which is not, because it’s all going to work itself out anyway.

CM: When did you first start working humor into your act?

CLARK: I’ve always done it. Always, since I was four or five years old, I guess. I guess when you’re like three or four or

five years old, you do something and people laugh at you, well, they laugh at children and. . .

CM: Were you a smart ass all through school?

CLARK: Yeah. Exactly. But you know that when you’re that young, and of course everyone laughs at children when they do cute things and stuff. Well, some kids get away with it and it doesn’t ring a bell with them. But to some, when they laugh at him, it could do something to his mind, I guess. And he says, hey I’d like to do more of that.

CM: Were there any instances that stand out from your early childhood—good old precocious Roy Clark?

CLARK: I did one thing—I was evidently always talking and always doing things to make people laugh, and I almost remember it. But I was like in the first grade, and I asked the teacher a real obvious question. I mean, it was so obvious that I should’ve had it. And she said, well, I’m not going to tell you. She says, just think. And I supposedly said, ‘well I’ve think and think and I still can’t come up with it.’ And that broke up the classroom. And I think I knew what I was doing even then.

And I evidently was talking—talking an awful lot. Because I remember one time that I was sitting—again, this is like the first grade. And I went to a country school in Virginia and you brought your own glass from home and had your name on it on adhesive tape. During recess you went out and there was a pump in the school yard, and you would pump the water out and get a drink. And so one day I’m sitting there talking and all of a sudden from out of nowhere the teacher comes up behind me and puts a piece of adhesive tape across my mouth with the instructions not to take it off. I remember I was sitting there; I really had everything going. I was just preaching to everybody up and down the aisle. And so I went all day that day without a glass of water.

CM: If you had some time to sit down and work something instrumental into your act, something you really wanted to do, what would it be?

CLARK: If I had the time and the patience, I’d try to do a few more light classical things. Something in the vein of *Malaguena* maybe not all that dramatic. But something that’s universal. I mean, there’s some tunes like *Malaguena*, *Wildwood Flower* that are universal. You can play them anywhere in the world, and it’s just something about the tune that everybody likes. Just a few more of those and maybe get a little more serious. I think a lot of people come out, and there’s a certain percentage of people who would like to really hear more serious music. Even though my main attempt is to be entertaining. And to entertain as many people in a given period of time as I can—trying to speak to individuals. You say, well

(Continued on page 59)

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Records

Billie Jo Spears

Lonely Hearts Club
United Artists UA-LA859-G
Star Rating: ★★½

Back in 1969, Billie Jo Spears had a hit record called *Mr. Walker It's All Over (I Don't Like Your New York Secretary's Life)* in which a tough little Okie secretary tells her boss to take his job and shove it, writing her resignation letter in lipstick on his desk. It was a hit not only because it was a good and clever song, but also because it was a perfect vehicle for Billie Jo Spears' voice, a voice which brings to mind the image of a certain kind of girl: tough, bitchy, brassy, sexy, sassy; the kind of girl who is short on tenderness but wild as a mink and loyal with terrifying ferocity once she sets her mind to it.

Since 1975, Billie Jo's career has been in resurgence, and although her producers have seen fit to gloss up her sound with gushy string sections, there is no disguising that flat Texas twang and flat out country delivery—at times like a female Willie Nelson. Billie Jo sparkles on gutsy tunes like *Lover's Reunion*, *Last Night Every Night*, and *All The Love*



I Have I Give to You. She's far less successful or comfortable with Tammy Wynette-styled songs like *That's The Way It Is* and *The Livin' Kind*. They are well and competently done, but not convincing.

Billie Jo Spears' voice does

not paint the mental image of a starry-eyed romantic; those songs don't work. The songs in which she can be tough reveal one of the most straightforward, no-nonsense country voices of our time.

DOUGLAS B. GREEN

Bobby Bare

Bare
Columbia KC 35314
Star Rating: ★★

I guess it's a tribute to Bobby Bare to say that he's the only performer in the world who can get me to sit through a Shel Silverstein song without squirming *too* much, but that does sort of lead to the next logical question, which is why does he record so many of them? Oh, he doesn't always: his best recent album, *Cowboys and Daddies*, only had a couple, and he even recorded a real good album of Bob McDill songs. But on his debut for Columbia, it's back to ol' Shel with a vengeance.

Silverstein's songs rub me wrong. They're too polished, too facile, to pat. The first time you hear one, you'll mistake the facility for country honesty, but a few more listens, and it sounds machine-like. A song like *Big Dupree* here is



Shel at his worst: guy is told not to fool with big Cajun's girlfriend, does anyway, and gets, uh, cut. A grand old plot, but told without much art. Or the kids' singalong, *Greasy Grit Gravy*, which really cloy after a couple of listens. In fairness, not all the bad songs here are Silverstein's: Leon Wilkerson's *Finger On the Button* is out of a genre I thought ended with the bomb shelter craze.

And there are some good songs, too: *Childhood Hero* and *This Guitar Is For Sale* (both Silverstein's), are quite nice, the latter in particular, dealing as it does with a sad situation any picker can relate to.

ED WARD

Charley Pride

Someone Loves You Honey
RCA APL1-2478
Star Rating: ★★★

It has been said that the final test of a new country release is not how well it sounds when played back through the huge, sophisticated speakers in the studio, but rather, how it's going to come across when heard through the small, monaural radio speaker of a pick-up truck in Alabama or Texas.

If this is the case, *Someone Loves You Honey* should pass with flying colors. While Charley Pride's voice is not the most versatile, it is nonetheless, broad, rich, and country through and through. His is a style that lends itself well to the uncluttered arrangements and sincere themes of the common man that characterize most of the cuts on *Someone Loves You Honey*.

The LP has one obvious weakness, however: It is the inclusion of no less than three recycled hits: *Daydreams About Night Things* (Ronnie Milsap); along with *Georgia Keeps Pull-*



ing On My Ring, and *Play, Guitar, Play* (Conway Twitty). They're, all three, great commercial songs (included, I assume, for their recognition factor). And even though Charley's renditions are enthusiastic and spirited, they simply don't live up to the more popular versions.

Instead, it's songs like *I'm Never Leavin' You*, *Another I Love You Kind Of Day*, *More To Me*, and *I Live You* that are the backbone of this album.

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

They are Charley Pride at his best. They are solid songs, sung powerfully and confidently, made to be played loud on that truck radio as you ride down that highway in Texarkana or Alabama, against the setting sun, with a cold 16-ounce can of Budweiser cradled between your knees: They are kind of what country music is all about.

BOB ALLEN

Moe Bandy

Soft Lights and Hard Country Music
 Columbia KC-35288
 Star Rating: ★★½

By now, after four years worth of albums, Moe Bandy's style has become so strictly defined that there's no surprises in store. You know you're going to get a set of honky tonk songs with little embellishment, and unless you're a big fan, it's likely to sound very samey to you. That's where songs come in: because his style is so strictly defined, Bandy's albums rise and fall mainly on the strength of the material. Regrettably, it's pretty thin this time out.

The title song is exactly the sort he's built his career on, and you can bet *That's What Makes The Jukebox Play* will be following it right up the charts. *There's Nobody Home On The Range Anymore*, a portrait of a faded old cowboy, effectively mines the vein of western mythology and imagery that has provided hits for many an Outlaw. But most of the rest of the songs are



Lee Clayton

Border Affair
 Capitol ST-11751

Star Rating: ★★★★★

Sometimes it seems presumptuous to review a record, and this is one of those times. Because *Border Affair* is not just another great record, it's a work of art. From start to finish, the production, musicianship, songwriting, even the cover art, everything, is near flawless and works together.

The last time I saw Lee Clayton he was passing through Texas on his way to California in a lavender Cadillac convertible (a convertible so he could watch the desert skies). Once he reached the west coast, he chased UFO's around the high desert with Warren Oates, fell in and out of love with Robert Mitchum's daughter, and tried to break into the movie business (via soundtracks), but somewhere along the line he lost interest in California. Having already earned a reputation as one of Music City's better songwriters some years before, he decided Nashville was where he belonged. This album proves he was right.

Producer Neil Wilburn has handled the whole project with care and artistry. The musicians, headed up by veteran steel guitar magician Jimmy Day, are excellent. Clayton's own songs, distinctive and



sometimes eerie, are better than ever, and his singing, because he doesn't bother to try to sound like everybody else, is all right too. *Silver Stallion*, *If You Can Touch Her At All*, *Back Home in Tennessee*, and *Like A Diamond* stand out lyri-

cally. *My Woman My Love* is sheer poetry and *Tequila Is Addictive* but "pepsi cola don't do nothing to you at all," is sheer truth; *Old Number Nine*, which chronicles the adventures of an airplane, serves a lighter vein. I'm not sure how commercial *Border Affair* will prove to be, but it's *there* and that's the important thing.

"I've looked for God in Texas," Clayton sings, "and I've looked for God in Spain, I've looked for God in a woman's eyes and in the roses and in the rain, but I found you in myself, Lord, Back Home In Tennessee."

NELSON ALLEN



standard stuff—adequate, but not inspiring, and Bandy can't really sink his teeth into them. A couple more—*Darling. Will You Marry Me Again* and *A Baby and A Sewing Machine*—are just plain trite, and Moe's singing of them is (understandably) a pale shadow of his usual virile vocals.

In short, Bandy is a prisoner of his inferior material. This album will probably suffice for his hard-core fans, but I hope songs are picked more carefully next time. He deserves, and is capable of, much better.

JOHN MORTILAND

Loretta Lynn

Out of My Head and Back In My Bed
MCA-2330

Star Rating: ★★ ★

Loretta Lynn sings best when she's mad. That anger may be modified by pride, humor or anguish, but the bold statement remains her forte. And when such a declaration springs from sexual frustration, Loretta can get her message across like few other women.

So the two most impressive cuts on this album are those in which she responds to rejection with bold, decisive, immediate warnings. *Out Of My Head And Back In My Bed*, the title song and first single, is classic Loretta, filled with sensual vocal chokes and fervent crescendos. All the more disappointing, then, when it ends in a strange, yet predictable, fade—she should charge out with this one, not wander away.

I'm Gonna Do Somebody Right, the second variation on the strong and sexy theme, is even more explicit, with some healthy humorous revenge attached. The changes are pure Tammy Wynette, but there's a



lot of Loretta's soul in this song, too. And occasional glimmers of emotion can be heard in *Black-Eyed Peas*, a mawkishly traditional tune propped up by a shoo-in reference to Butcher Holler.

But the majority of the material is mediocre, and producer Owen Bradley may have here reached his most uninspired peak. A silly adult nursery rhyme like *Three Riddles*, with its irritating, tinkling pedal steel, could stand as a textbook example of contemporary country music at its worst.

Even Loretta can't muster much energy for such drivel. Yet ironically, one of the LP's cheapest shots, Dallas Cody's *God Bless The Children*, only serves to illustrate the superiority of her talent. Few other performers could touch this lullaby to bruised, abused and abandoned children without betraying a cynical calculation. But no matter how maudlin the lyrics, how mediocre the tune, you can hear that Loretta Lynn truly cares. And that is an accomplishment befitting her legend.

SUSAN TOEPFER

Various Artists

CBS Rockabilly Classics Vol. 1
CBS 82401 (England)

Star Rating: ★★ ★★

If there really is a renewed interest in rockabilly, there also exist two basic misconceptions about its nature: one, that it was essentially a parochial style restricted to the Memphis area and to Sun Records; and two, that it brought immediate howls of anguish from Nashville, where it was perceived as a bopping, febrile threat to the virility of hardcore C&W. This superb 20-song anthology, the first of a projected three volumes of vintage Columbia material, effectively squelches both myths.

Impossible as it is to discuss all the tracks, the artists represented here go far beyond Memphis, and, ironically, some of the strongest material comes from those so-called hardcore singers. For example, *Dig, Boy Dig*, a spirited 1956

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Records

rocker by Freddie Hart is far more lyrical and natural than the denatured sap he records today, and only such Marty Robbins classics as *El Paso* can surpass his driving version of *Tennessee Toddy*, a tale of honky tonk violence. Ex-Texas Playboy Sleepy Johnson's weird rocker *Go 'Way Hound Dog* is eons away from Western swing. Two 1956 cuts by the legendary 'Texas rockabilly Sid King prove why his old records command outrageous prices from collectors.

Unfortunately, several cuts simply don't fit. The Collins Kids, whose uninhibited *Hoy Hoy* kicks off side one, wax

Rockabilly



merely cute with *Beetle Bug Bop*, and Jimmy Dickens' tepid *Rockin' With Red* pales next to the far tougher rockers he cut in 1956. Johnny Horton's *The Woman I Love* simply lacks the utter abandon characteristic of good rockabilly. Still, this is one of the finest foreign rock reissues, one that proves Columbia wasn't asleep during the fifties. (Available through Southern Record Sales, 5001 Reynard Avenue, La Crescenta, California 91214, for \$6.95.)

RICH KIENZLE

Mickey Newbury

His Eye Is On The Sparrow
Hickory HA-44011

Star Rating: ★★★

Perhaps the reason that Mickey Newbury's music hasn't made a more pronounced impact is that he's too capable a straddler. He's sufficiently left-of-center to be embraced by the Jennings-Nelson-Kristofferson axis, facile enough to pen tunes that become durable copyrights in the hands of the country pros, but not so en-



The Dusty Chaps

Domino Joe
Capitol ST-11755

Star Rating: ★★★★★

These seven western swingers from Arizona are certainly an ambitious bunch, because all their second album *Domino Joe* attempts to do is pull off the first cohesive C&W opera album since Willie Nelson penned the brilliant *Yesterday's Wine* and his breakthrough *Red Headed Stranger*. To a degree, they succeed grandly. Conceived in the fertile after hours imagination of the Chaps' chief composer,

George Hawke, the ballad of *Domino Joe* is sort of a night-life morality play. Strung through eleven songs, it traces our hero, a barroom denizen who drinks, brawls, hustles, dances, and romances, through a couple seductions, an aborted shotgun wedding saved by some hot poker hands, and a sidetrip to a Mexican border town (complete with *puro pedo* cantina sound effects) before he meets his fate in a climactic shootout at the rough and tumble Rocket Club.

The music scoring this sce-

nario proves the Chaps are a swing band to be reckoned with. Their razor sharp rhythm section and finely tuned horns provide a snappy punch to the proceedings, and yet they are brave and loose enough to wander off with reckless abandon for an experi-



mental encounter with polka-driven *norteno* music (the result may not be Flaco Jimenez or Marty Robbins, but it'll do just fine).

But regardless of how adventurous the project is, *Domino Joe*, like every other hybrid opera before it, demands to be taken as a whole or not at all. It is difficult, if not impossible, to appreciate and understand individual cuts when taken out of context. Which means the Dusty Chaps won't likely have the Single of the Year out of this experience. But it also means they are by no measure your average beer/tear/dear country copy band, either.

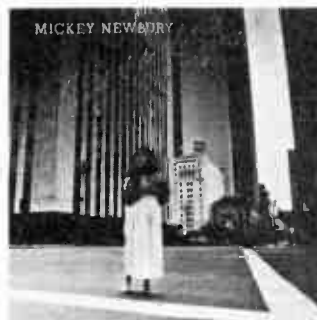
JOE NICK PATOSKI

trenched on either side as to forge a distinctive personality. *His Eye Is On The Sparrow* probably won't change things. Newbury has a knack for the resurrection of melodic and emotional cliches, writes tunes that feel like patches of the American landscape, and does well as a conventional crooner-cleffer.

The dominant tone is introspective, recollective. Scenes seen through a haze, as in the parting-mist melody and rustling, dimly lit sexuality of *Westphalia Texas Waltz*. The two most commonplace songs, *It Don't Matter Anymore* and *I Don't Know What They Wanted Me To Say*, are medita-

tions that just border on schmaltz.

The ambitiousness of the material, the sound effects intruding on the songs, and the "Nashphilharmonic" arrangements underlining their messages, all emphasize Newbury's



admirable intentions and lamentable shortcomings. He can be affecting, emerging untainted by dips into sentimentality, or banal, wishing he were a grain of sand. The title song starts off gracefully with a sound-association transition for *Wish I Was*, an accapella vocal gradually joined by piano, but when the strings enter, a battle begins between Newbury's voice and the overbearing environment. One minute he seems in touch with feelings and style, the next he's straining for an image or effect. Mickey Newbury's genuine talent hasn't found its niche, but he remains a pleasant medium.

MITCH COHEN

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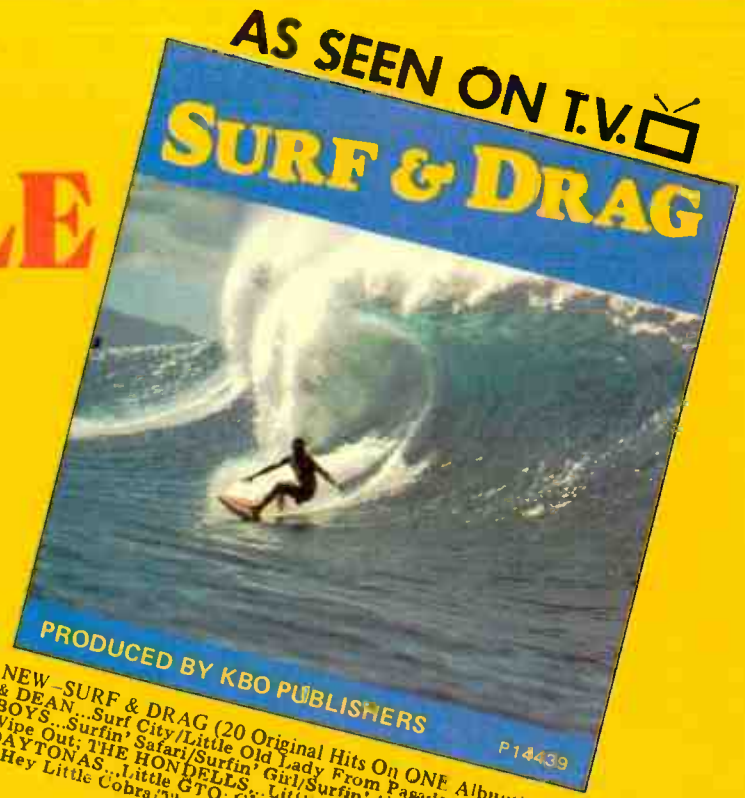
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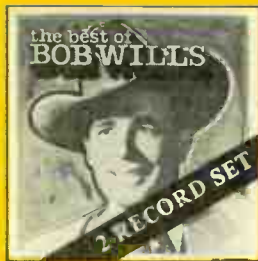
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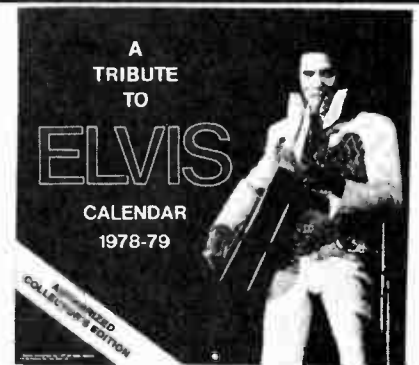
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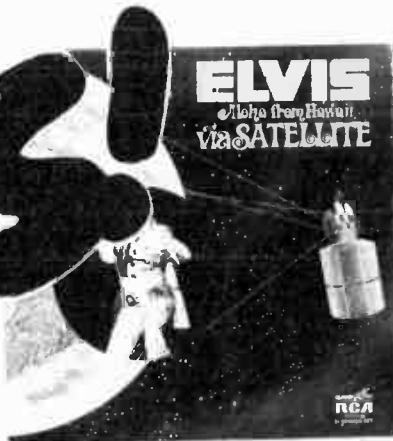


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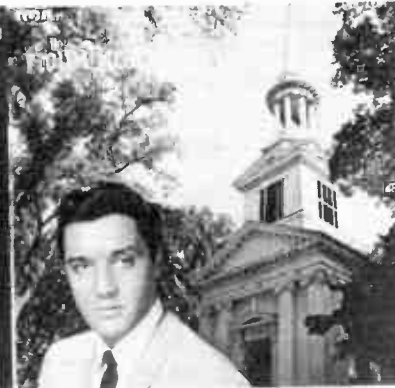
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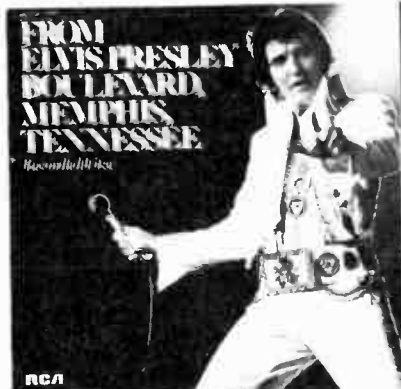
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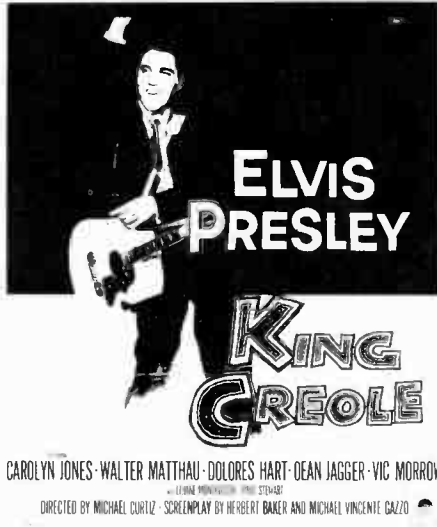
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LA COSTA

(Continued from page 43)

Confused? "I've been listening to all types of music for as long as I can remember. I think it's good because with exposure to everything that's going on, it helps you narrow down just exactly what the specific thing you want to do is. I haven't been able to do that up to this time. I'm still reaching for that style, that certain something that'll make people sit up and say 'La Costa!' but I don't think I've found it yet. I don't walk into a recording session and have made up in my mind that I'm going to cut a country song or a pop song. I just want to go in there and cut a fan-tastic song." And who writes that sort of songs? She names Neil Diamond, Curly Putnam, Larry Gatlin and J.D. Souther right off the top of her head.

And while she's waiting for that big break, that fan-tastic song, she's got her husband (but no kids—"The road's no place for a child. I got a Siberian Husky when I first started touring, a puppy, and touring stunted its growth. I'd hate to think what it would do to a kid.") and their mutual interests. "We do a lot of falconry. He's been doin' it since junior high, and when we first got married, we had a prairie falcon that we'd trained, and a few owls that we'd found injured, and a sparrow hawk that we caught out by the Nashville airport, which I kept right up til I started goin' on the road. It's sad that so many of the different kinds of hawks and eagles are disappearing, because they're so majestic, they're the fastest-flying thing there is, they say." Her other activities tend towards the outdoorsy, too, things like bicycling, horseback riding and snowskiing, and on top of everything else, she's a crack shot—better than her husband, who is still trying to catch up to her. "So you see," she draws, "I'm not your ordinary dainty petite lil country girl."

Her outdoor activities have also gotten her involved in conservation, and she and Tanya plan to join the Greenpeace protestors when they face off with the Canadian seal-clubbers this year in Newfoundland this year. I'd say that's an excellent idea on everybody's part. Brigitte Bardot, Tanya and La Costa Tucker, all in the same place trying to keep the hunters from clubbing the baby seals to death. With that much pulchritude assembled on the Newfoundland ice, it wouldn't be surprising if the hunters started clubbing each other and forgot about the seals entirely.

The interview comes to an end when the photographer shows up and La Costa remembers that she's in the process of moving to Arizona and has taken this time out to talk. She leaves behind the definite impression that she knows what she wants, and that she's not going to stop looking for it til she finds it. ■

ROY CLARK

(Continued from page 46)

there's three people here in a crowd of 5000 that would like to hear serious guitar music. But if you get pieces that will work, pieces of music that are really generally accepted and do it with a little flair, you can get away with it, you know, and be entertaining to more than just that select number.

CM: If there's any single criticism that I've heard of Roy Clark, it always runs something like this: here is a man who's one of the greatest virtuosos on string instruments, and when he goes out on stage, what he does is not nearly what he could do. Here's a man who could be anything he wanted. Here's a man who could just be really devastating, but his show is geared more to the lighter side. And the question is always, why isn't he doing at least something that's expanding the horizons of the guitar? Really testing the audience—pushing them?

CLARK: A lot of that comes to people who say it's more of an individual thing. They say, well, I enjoyed it, but I wish you'd have played more. I like to hear the instrumentals. So, really, sometimes you stop listening to people because you think well, if I listen to everyone there's no way that I could do it anyway. I just don't have enough time to do everything that each individual person would want.

But on the other hand, you could get a general feeling from talking to people and finding out what—you could get a more general idea of what their overall audience feeling is... because I have a tendency to look at an audience as one. You get the pulse and the feel of that one audience instead of individuals. And you can tell the ones getting more reaction, and you'll do a light hearted, *Thank God and Greyhound*, as opposed to *Yesterday When I Was Young*. As opposed to telling stories. You can feel it when you're getting too long, the restlessness of the audience. And so I try to keep it moving. And just try to feel that whole audience and try to—although I'm going to do the same thing that I'm doing anyway, because the show is structured that way. But still you can tell which way to spend more time and which way to...

CM: There's nothing there that you're pained doing?

CLARK: I have worked—years ago, when I was working package shows, you know, there'd be like three or four people, three or four artists on one show. And—because I'm the biggest fan in the world, I'd love to be around people who have been successful, who I've admired, or admired in the past. And I've seen them come out on stage and fall so far short. And I thought, if I had what they had going for them, I would sure attempt to do it a lot different. I've seen great singers come out and try to be comedians.

(Continued on page 60)

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ROY CLARK

(Continued from page 59)

And...

CM: George Jones is never going to be a great American humorist.

CLARK: No, and he's a fantastic singer. So why not go in the area that you really have been blessed with that talent? The reason that I do comedy—I say the reason I do it; now I probably do it for reasons that I'm not even aware of—I've been blessed with looking at all things, all serious things in life, and seeing the comedy side to it. And I think that is a blessing. I think some people are blessed with it and some people are not.

But I've often wondered why I got into comedy. And one of the reasons is, one of the reasons that I do all of the different things that I try to do on stage, I try to get into the humor, I try to make it light, I try to play different instruments, I wasn't doing that to really make... consciously make the show any different or any better. To have them say, 'wow, this guy does everything.' I was doing it out of necessity, because I'm not the greatest singer in the world. I'm not the greatest guitar player in the world. I'm not the greatest joke teller in the world. But if you put them all together, then you have a better shot. You do all the things that you believe in doing, and just do it, and try to do as many things as you can. In other words, dazzle them with footwork.

CM: Your music is a reflection of the fact that country music is changing, moving to a national basis instead of a southern regional basis.

CLARK: Yeah, well, I agree that it has. But I also agree that it had to happen. It's ironic that this is the time. But I don't think—I think you can get too involved in what you're doing that you lose sight of the outside world. And that may have been what happened to Nashville. All the thinking down there... well, most of the thinking down there was structured in the old Nashville Grand Ole Opry way of thinking, which is fantastic, except that it didn't leave any room for growth. And I think the growth had to come from somewhere else, like a Halsey.

CM: That's partly a southern feeling. I'm from Memphis, and you tend to look at everything... very insular. It does come down to us and them...

CLARK: I think that happened from the early years of survival, when everyone was wanting to call it hillbilly music and they looked down at it and they taunted (it). And it threw everybody in country music in tight-like. So they got protective of each other and themselves. And they had their own identity. And that's why it came down to hey, that guy is not one of us.

And so that's when it came back to say-

ing, 'he's not country. He's not one of us. He's only doing it because he feels that he'll make monetary gains out of it,' and that's when they started putting the finger on everybody and saying this is not country. If one of their own started to stray, boy, the rest of them jumped on him with all the wrath that they could muster up, and said, 'wait a minute: What you're doing is not for the good of the group.' It got very clannish. I don't think there's a group of people in the world any more clannish than country music fans. I mean, they'll stay with you forever. You know, there's people making a very handsome living who haven't had a hit record in twenty years. You'll never find that happening in any other field of entertainment. I mean, whatever happened to the guy that sold 10 million records six months ago? He's long forgotten. Gone.

CM: *What about your own records? Do you see your records as—I don't know if this is the right word—but, as secondary to your performing career?*

CLARK: Yeah, it does in that it's not . . . one of the things it boils down to is time, which is why it makes it secondary. There are a lot of things that I'd like to do. I'd like to get more involved in records. But it's hard. It's hard when you're out so much on the road. You know you just don't go in and record. You have to go in and select material, screen it. We usually start off with two or three hundred pieces of material, then narrow that down to 10 or 15. It depends on how much time you've got to record. And you know you're going through hit songs, hit material. But there's just no other way to do it. So it's secondary by necessity more than by design.

CM: *When Bruce Springsteen did Born To Run he spent a year and a half on the album and nine months cutting one single, the Born to Run single.*

CLARK: See, that's completely beyond my realm of thinking.

CM: *You've got so many irons in the fire now. Where do you want to go with your career? Are you going to suddenly go back to going into movies?*

CLARK: That's one of the things that I'd like to do. I'd like to get involved in motion pictures. I wouldn't want to do like what Kris Kristofferson has . . .

CM: *Become a sex symbol?*

CLARK: Yeah. He's found his thing though. I'm not looking for that. I would just like to do, oh, maybe a film a year—if it worked up to that. I may do two or three and say, well, this is not it. It's too much hard work, and I'm not really coming across the way I thought I should or that I thought I would, and just not be there at all.

CM: *What sort of pictures would you like to do?*

CLARK: I—I don't know . . .

CM: *How do you see yourself in the films? What sort of matinee idol?*

CLARK: I'd just like to play down

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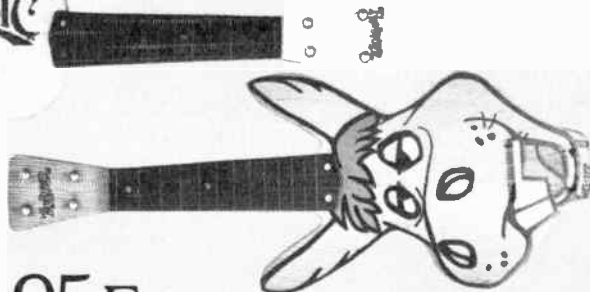
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to—I'm trying to think of a role that . . . something that people could identify with. I mean, that's the only way I could do it anyway. I wouldn't be a great enough actor that I could go off and do something from Hamlet. I'm not even geared to that way of thinking. I just like to portray life. Just, you know, what people can identify with. My least desire is to do musicals. And to do things that are just offshoot of things I've been doing all my life. I'd like to just really get into dramatics and do good pictures. Good, entertaining pictures. My whole thing is as an entertainer.

CM: So you're very much personally committed to the stage, to live performances.

CLARK: Yeah. I've been doing it so long. Concerts have been a mainstay of my life, and when you sit back and you've got that contact with the people, I don't think I could really give that up. You know, I do a lot more than I should be doing.

CM: You're on the road how much?

CLARK: About 260 days a year.

You know, that's ridiculous in a way. But then the next thing, you know—oh, I can see how it happens too. You know, we set up and line up what looks like a healthy string of dates over the entire year, and you've got time off to do this, time off to do that. And next thing you know these things start cropping up that you can't turn down. These are good for your career. These are obligations that you promised someone that you would do because of . . . and—they want it now. So next thing you know you go back over it again and everything's filled up.

CM: When do you get time to do the things you like to do? To play golf? To fly?

CLARK: Well, I don't. I don't. I've got motorcycles. I've got a 1971 Harley-Davidson, big road hog, as they call it. It's got three thousand miles on it. Seven years old, three thousand miles. That shows you how often I get to ride it. I collect antique cars. I've got some I haven't even started up in a year. I've got three airplanes, and that sounds like I've got a whole lot. I've got an old Steerman bi-wing, two open cockpits. Just old antique airplanes. And the other one—I have one airplane out of the three that is really worth any money, and that's the one we use to travel in. But I don't get a chance to fly the others at all, and that's sport flying. You know, I don't get a chance to do that.

I love to play golf, but the best chance that I have to do that is to work it in when I'm on the road. And what I do—I have a golf tournament of my own in Tulsa in September. I usually play in about five different golf tournaments in a year.

CM: Is there some point where you're finally going to throttle back and say, well 259 dates a year? One day looking at your house?

CLARK: Yeah, yeah I'm going to. It'll take a while to get down to something I

can live with, like maybe working a week out of every month. Or enough just to keep it flowing, you know. It's got . . . I've got to get the obligation of all the other people that are dependent on me off my back. I'm sure they're not as dependent on me as I think they are. So they advise me to do things, you know, when a lot of times, when I say well it'll be good for them,

CM: It's a good deal to start planning retirement early.

CLARK: But you know, I never thought about it. You've been working for 20, 30 years. You just don't all of a sudden one day walk in and say that's it. What are you going to do? Your mind is not ready for it. You have to plan that as much as you plan anything else that you've ever done in your life. So . . .

CM: You're going to start thinking about it next year, right?

CLARK: No. I sort of think about it. I don't work at it like I should. I've never been one to really plan my life anyway. I've never been one to say well, I'm going to do this, and next year I'm going to do that. I sort of take things as they come.

But you know, you're going to have to one of these days. I guess work until finally one day you just . . .

CM: Drop?

CLARK: Yeah.

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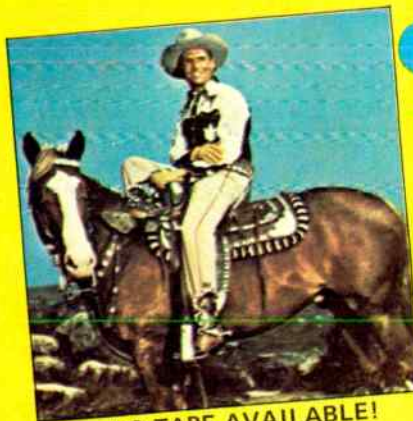
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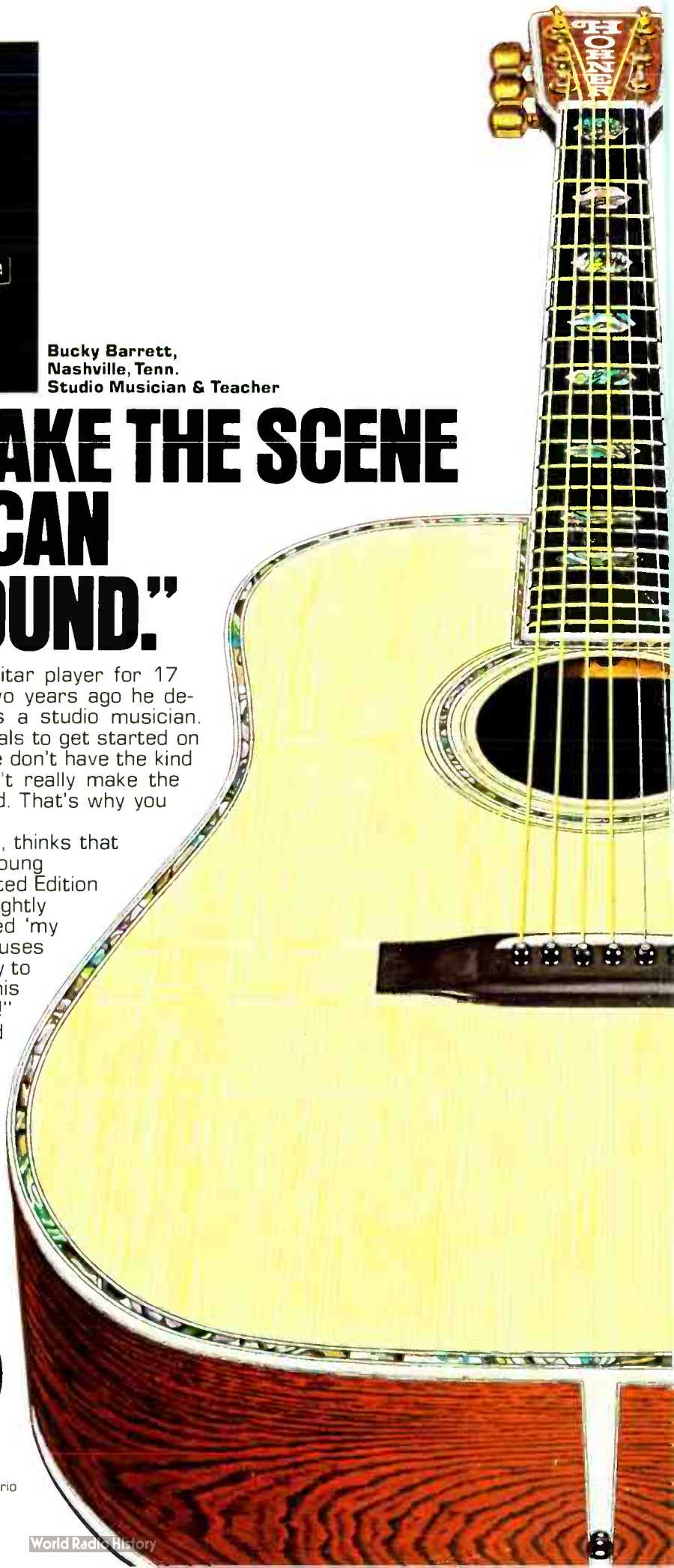
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