

SPECIAL 15TH ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

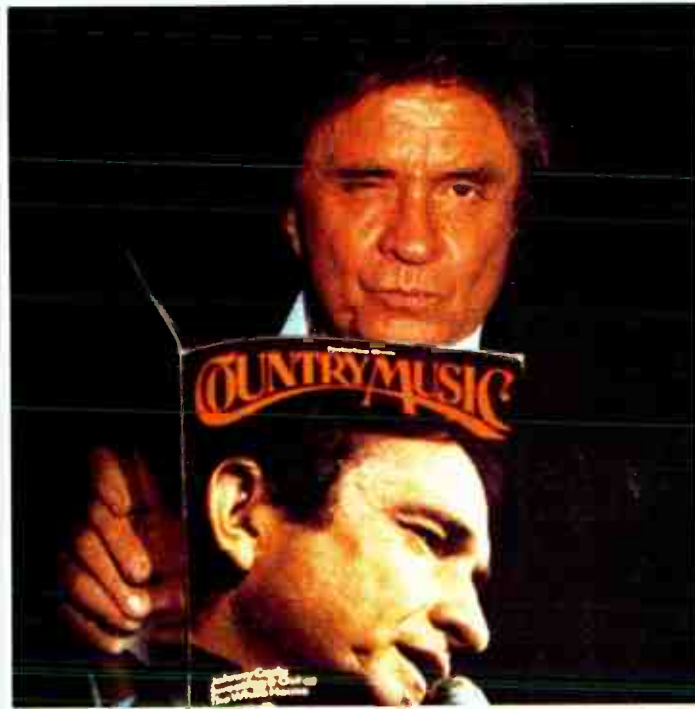
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**Ricky Skaggs
Johnny Cash
Dolly Parton
George Jones
Randy Travis**

**Gary Stewart
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Tompall Glaser
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Cash started us off in September 1972. Holding a copy of that first issue, he helps us celebrate our 15th anniversary with this, his eighth cover appearance, more than anyone else. Why change horses in mid-stream?

4 Letters

Ricky Skaggs' future, Bocephus' name, Gary Morris' shoes.

21 People

Cash and Blackburn bury the hatchet, The Oaks get a new man, the Coe family sits for a portrait and an Update on Jack Greene. *by Hazel Smith*

31 Country Music Magazine Celebrates Its First Fifteen Years

Each editor gives his or her views on this occasion and picks the Top 15 albums from 1972 to the present.

- **Fifteen Years of Readers, Writers and Pickers:** Russ Barnard looks at our latest anniversary.
- **Fifteen Years of Stars and Stories:** a pictorial look at our history.
- **Looking Forward to the Past:** Bob Allen believes journalists sometimes say too much.
- **An Occurrence on Seven Bridges Road:** Michael Bane hears many meanings in a song.
- **Photographic Memories:** Leonard Kamsler can't explain it, he just aims the camera and shoots.
- **Hearing the Reader's Voice:** Helen Barnard finds out why it's good to open the mail.
- **Ask Me Another:** Patrick Carr leaks secrets of the journalistic trail.
- **The Perfect Friendship:** Rochelle Friedman speaks from the heart about heartfelt matters.
- **Listening to Country Music:** Peter Guralnick says the thrill is gone, but why?
- **Here We Go Again:** Rich Kienzle takes the long view.
- **Getting the Business:** John Morthland warns us to watch out for cycles.
- **Well, Shut My Mouth:** Hazel Smith threatens to kiss and tell.
- **Thank Goodness Nashville's Always Going to the Dogs:** Russ Barnard sees through it all.

61 Record Reviews

Music rolls on and on. New artists and the tried and true: Steve Earle, Johnny Cash, Gene Watson, Holly Dunn and more.

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Letters

Skaggs Still the Greatest

I just read the article on Ricky Skaggs in your May/June issue. He feels he is at a standstill, but I would like to tell him he is not with me and a lot of other people. Ricky, my whole family just loves you. I have a set of five-year-old twins who love you and know all the words to most of your songs. My son's favorite is "Honey."

This past spring, you played in Odessa, Texas, and for my anniversary, my gift was two tickets to see you. That was a great concert, and you put on a great show. I always talked about how some people act by screaming, jumping and standing at the front of a stage. Well, it hit me the minute you walked on that stage. I weaseled myself way up to the front, I mean right in front of you. It was great! I took three rolls of film standing there because the twins couldn't go. They turned out great.

I guess the tornado that hit Saragosa, Texas, scared ya pretty bad. It did me, and it bothers me that I was having such a great time while all those people lost their lives. Considering I live 20 miles from where it hit, I was scared.

Take care. You're still at the top of my list, along with Randy Travis and your beautiful wife Sharon. Do you ever plan to have a concert with Sharon?

Wanda Faye Ryan
Pecos, Texas

Yes, the plans are in the works—it may have even happened by the time you read this.—Ed.

Ricky Speaks for Himself

Dear Rochelle,
You women in the music business sure help us men keep our careers on line. Thank you so much for your help with the story, photographs and cover.

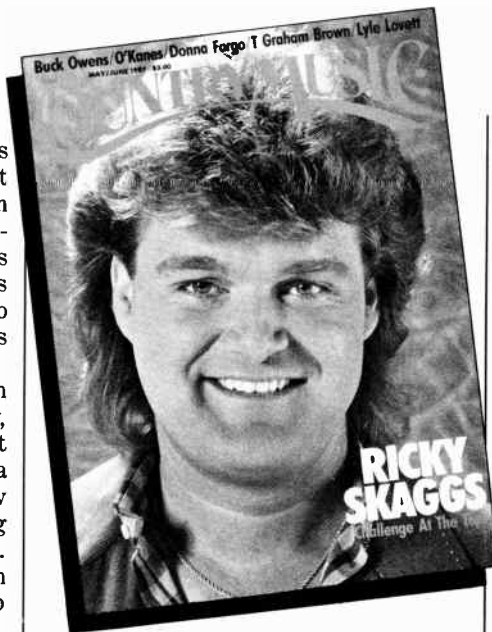
It all came out great. I really do appreciate it.

Love,
Ricky Skaggs

Glad you liked it.—Rochelle, Jan, Helen, Germaine, Annemarie, Norma, Jeanine and Hazel.

Skaggs and Whites—A Great Team

I wanted to let Ricky Skaggs and The Whites know how much a fan I am of theirs. From my point of view, they are



the best around! I always look forward to their next record. Their voices and music are absolutely superb! Every one of their songs are my favorites. I know that whenever they put out a song, it's gonna be great!

I also wish to express my concern on behalf of Ricky's son. Like he said, "Better times are a-comin'." I say, keep it up, you're doing an excellent job!

Also I would like to know if Ricky and The Whites still plan to perform in the Holy Land? I am going to move there sometime soon, and I would certainly look forward to seeing them there.

Janet M.
Deming, New Mexico

It's in their hearts to do so, but the date's not set.—Ed.

Call Letters, Please

I am writing in regard to the letter in the May/June issue from the lady who went to see Ricky Skaggs in Buffalo. The radio station is WYRK, not WGRK. It is my favorite station, and I think they deserve the credit.

Candy Allen
Sanborn, New York

Thanks for the correction.—Ed.

Found Fargo At Last

Just finished your May/June issue and am purrin' like a cream-fed kitten. I'm only a recent subscriber, but have grabbed one of your mags off the newsstands from time to time over the years,

and the first thing I *always* look for is some kind of whisper or comment on what Donna Fargo is doing *now*. I love that lady! And it was a real pleasure to find that Patrick Carr got to meet and talk with and *know* the gal I thought only I knew (from her songs) since 1972.

She's truly a winner. And since I know she reads your magazine, you can tell her for me that I too have been among the number to gain insight or inspiration from the feeling and philosophies she's dedicated herself to sharing. I'm overjoyed to hear she's ready to 'crack heads' again in the recording industry.

Lee Drumbringer
Wortburg, Tennessee

CMM has been back on newsstands across the country since July. Tell your friends.—Ed.

Memories of Donna Fargo

Many years ago I was driving down Cherry Avenue in Long Beach, California. There were some people playing country music in the parking lot of a tire store. I stopped to listen. There were only about ten people around.

One young lady in white boots got up and really did an outstanding job of singing. I wanted to stop all the cars and tell the drivers to come and listen to a beginner who couldn't miss being a future star. The young singer was introduced as Donna Fargo.

William Buckley
Lakewood, California

T Graham Brown Mega-Muffin

I want to thank Patrick Carr for his great article on T Graham Brown in the May/June issue. I wonder if his T-ness knows that his music is turning on as many as five generations of women, ranging from 13 to 94 years old. I myself am 73 years old, and I want you to know that I can still boogie with the best of them to T's terrific music. My mother, 94 years old, calls T her "irresistible little corn muffin." I call him my "cooking little candied yam." My daughter, 52 years old, calls him her "fluffy tumbleweed." My granddaughter, 31 years old, refers to him as her "kissable country casserole." But I think my 13-year-old great-granddaughter sums it up best—she calls him a "matchless psychedelic

John Wesley Hardin

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Jesse James

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Cattle Rustler

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pseudonutty mega-crazy awesome super-tripping spastic ultra-nifty sexy doll!" (Whew!)

What we all mean is that T is extremely handsome and talented. Even my 18-year-old great grandson claims that T is "the coolest cat in country music." Mercy me, what a turn on! Why, goodness gracious, we all fought over my issue of your magazine to get T's picture.

I made a deal with them. Each of them promised me they would subscribe to *Country Music Magazine* if you printed my letter. They don't think you will, but I have faith. I want T to know how much we adore him. I want to thank everyone who had anything to do with T's article.

Emma Lumpkin
Soso, Mississippi

We can't wait to see those subscriptions come in.—Ed.

Willie Nelson Doll

Yes! I really have a Willie Nelson doll. I was surprised to see my name in the Letters section of the May/June issue. My doll was purchased direct from Nashville in 1984 by my children as a Christmas gift to me.

My granddaughter Trisha dances with the Willie doll. Even at three years old, she knows who Willie Nelson is. We all love Willie here, but I really think I love him a little more than the others.

Dot Roggi
Glastonbury, Connecticut
Dot's family got her doll at the Willie Nelson and Family General Store in Madison, Tennessee. For address, see Letters in the May/June issue.—Ed.



Willie Nelson doll has company in Dot Roggi's home far from Texas.

Lyle Lovett's Band

In the May/June issue of *Country Music Magazine*, I was very glad to see an article on Lyle Lovett, country music's newcomer. In the article, Lyle referred to "his" band in Arizona.

The band he was referring to is the J. David Sloan Band from Phoenix, Arizona. They have played at Mr. Lucky's Club for fifteen years. They are not and never have been just a backup band—they are an opening and closing band on

their own. They're very talented with a great variety of songs of their own.

I'm sure Lyle Lovett appreciates their great talent and by no means meant to refer to the J. David Sloan Band as "his" band. He certainly owes these fine musicians a debt of thanks.

Susie Silva
Springerville, Arizona
Absolutely. He was just speaking casually when he said "his." Some of the band musicians are currently with him on the road.—Ed.

Rattlesnake Annie in Concert

We recently attended a Rattlesnake Annie benefit concert for the Crippled Children's Miracle Network in East Petersburg, Pennsylvania. Annie did the show for free, and what a great show she had. She is quite a great lady, well known in Europe and England, and hopefully her career will take off in the States now that she has signed with Columbia Records.

Her new album is great. Her band is second to none, all acoustic instruments like country should be and no drums.

Joan and Charlie Rothrock
Selinsgrove, Pennsylvania
See John Morthland's review of Rattlesnake's album in this issue.—Ed.



Rattlesnake Annie wowed the Rothrocks in concert recently.

Willie Nelson's Bass Player

Bee Separs? Where are your proof-readers? Willie's bass player Bee Spears, referred to in your People feature in the May/June issue, deserves more respect.

Anna M. Jones
Paoli, Indiana

Good catch!—Ed.

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World Radio History



Foreign Release

Yugoslavian country band Plava Trava Zaborava announces the release of its third album, *Hat Trick*, co-produced by Brian Hodgson and Gerry Hogan on the Jugoton label. Songs, sung in English, include "One Way Rider," "Children, Go Where I Send Thee," "Ring of Fire" and "Grandpa, Tell Me 'Bout the Good Old Days." The group's two previous albums had sales of 130,000 and 85,000 copies each.

Vladimir Georgev
Zagreb, Yugoslavia
Miso, is Vladimir Georgev your friend in Zagreb?—Ed.



Miso Bjelanovic's friend at Yugoslavian country radio station in Sibenik.

Country Music Yugoslavian Style

Dear Country Friends!

I'm music editor on local radio and I'm corresponding with country music. I've not lost contact with country, because my friend in Zagreb has every new issue of CMM, but he is 500 km away. Please do something for me! I'd like to subscribe.

Jerry Douglas and the Nashville Masters planned to be in Yugoslavia this April. If possible, I'll send you a picture from the concert.

Enclosed is a picture of my girlfriend from radio.

Miso Bjelanovic
Sibenik, Yugoslavia

Miso's now a subscriber, thanks to the Customer Service Department. All European countries except Spain, add \$4.00 to price of subscription.—Ed.

A Loyal Rice Fan

I am a new subscriber to *Country Music Magazine* and was thrilled to see a great record review of Tony Rice, *Me and My Guitar*, in the May/June issue. I have been a fan of his for over ten years. I wish him the same success as his friend and former bluegrass picker, Ricky Skaggs.

Also a big thanks for the photographs and personal story on Ricky. Keep up the good work.

Susan Wagner
Grand Rapids, Ohio

Ray Price's Kindness

My brother met Ray Price in Reno, Nevada, not long ago and in the course of the conversation, he mentioned to Mr. Price how much his music was enjoyed by our mother, who was critically ill and bed-ridden for two years. Mr. Price called Mom and inquired as to how she was feeling, and they had a nice conversation. That phone call made her entire month; she had something no one else did and something to talk about that was quite pleasant. Mom died in April and my father and I would like to write to Mr. Price and thank him and inform him of what that simple act of kindness did to enhance my mother's last days. It was a beautiful thing for him to do.

Linda Carson
Santa Clara, California

To reach Ray Price, write Ray Price Enterprises, P.O. Box 1986, Mt. Pleasant, Texas 75455.—Ed.

Jim Reeves' Record

My husband is a big Jim Reeves fan. He has most of his records. In your May/June issue, there was a write-up on Jim Reeves' *Live at the Opry*. Where can we buy this record? I would like to get it for my husband's birthday.

Mrs. Clifford Haney
Greenville, South Carolina

Write the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum Country Store, Mail Order Dept., 4 Music Square East, Nashville, Tennessee 37203.—Ed.

John Schneider The Star

I used to be a resident of Holland, and country music is not big there at all. But since I've moved to Texas, it has changed my life completely.

I've been a fan of John Schneider's for many, many years now. I had the opportunity to meet him in person and see him perform live a couple of times, and that

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Shelley de Raad caught John Schneider looking every inch a star.

sure was a dream come true.

John is a very talented singer and actor, but he always, no matter how tired he is or how busy, takes time for his fans and listens. For that I would like to thank John! For staying himself and giving 100% of his time.

Shelley de Raad
Austin, Texas

Wondering About Wopat

I really enjoy your magazine. I think all of your articles are terrific, but there's just one thing missing—Tom Wopat. I haven't seen anything at all about him in any of your magazines. To me he's a wonderful singer! I really like his song "The Rock and Roll of Love." I must not be the only one who thinks he has talent, considering he was nominated for New Male Vocalist in the 22nd Annual Academy of Country Music Awards. Please do a story on him soon! And, also please give me his fan club address if you can.

Jeannie Frazee
Bruceeton Mills, West Virginia
For more on Schneider and Wopat, see *People in this issue*. Wopat's fan club address is Rt. 1, Box 522, Haleyville, Alabama 35565.—Ed.

Special Thanks to Buck Owens

Thank you for 20 Questions with Buck Owens in the May/June issue. It's good to read about him once again. Buck has thousands of fans who love him and wonder about him.

I like to think I was a special fan to him, too. He often stopped at my house in his leaner days, to rest, eat and visit. My family all thought he was super. Although we think he is one of the best singers, I am glad he can retire from it and relax. He did work hard to reach the goals he set for himself.

Hee Haw is not the same without Buck! I'm old now and don't get around like I once did. I was a volunteer country music fan and promoter. I've given all that up, because I cannot keep up. I want to thank Buck for the pleasures he has brought us.

Margaret S. Patterson
Roanoke, Virginia

Kenny Rogers Belts 'Em...Out

I just received my May/June issue of *Country Music Magazine*. I haven't had a chance to read it all, but I did read far enough to see that you have Kenny Rogers on the line-up in the near future. What took you so long? Kenny has been my favorite artist/entertainer for years. I finally joined his fan club four years ago. I am still a member. I want to say to all of Kenny's fans—if they haven't seen him in concert, they should because he can really belt 'em out. I saw him recently in Wheeling, West Virginia. It was great.

I'll be waiting on your feature. Make it a good one. You have so much good stuff to read in *Country Music*. Thanks for the enjoyment.

Wilma Williams
Belpre, Ohio

Big Stars Make Too Much Glitter

I've been reading your magazine almost since you began. Twenty Questions with Mr. Buck Owens was your best to date.

I feel there are so many artists that you overlook just as there are some you wear out. I know you have to "get 'em while they're hot," but how about some of those who mean more to their fans than the front page or another Number One hit: Faron Young, Del Reeves, Margie Bowes, Norma Jean, etc. Big stars are nice, but too much glitter gives me a headache!

William Franklin Mitchell III
Lithia Springs, Georgia

Dwight Yoakam Gets Hot

I saw Dwight Yoakam in person at The Saddle Rack recently. I must say he was better than his records. He had me screaming and yelling like I remember everyone used to do at Elvis' concerts. I've never seen such a moved crowd! I wanted to jump on the cocktail table and dance. At the end of the night I was ready to get the sewing machine out and rearrange my old man's pants! I call him a cross between Elvis and James Dean! But a lot of country!

Linda D. Lee
San Jose, California
Seeing is believing. For more on Dwight Yoakam, see Record Reviews in this issue.—Ed.

Tried and True Opry Stars

I would like to see your magazine do more on Opry stars. These artists keep the Opry going. They are great performers. It is a shame that more people do not know of them. Most people go to the Opry expecting to find Kenny Rogers, Dolly Parton, Loretta Lynn to name a few. It is impossible, of course, for these stars to be there weekly. I go to at least four Opry shows while I am in town and am delighted to see and hear such greats as Roy Acuff, Jean Shepard, Minnie Pearl, Jan Howard, Billy Walker, Char-

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**CAST YOUR
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See Page 60
for CMSA Poll.



Grand Ole Opry star Jimmy Dickens is long on heart.

lie Walker, Ray Pillow and the many other regulars of the Opry.

Country Music Magazine is the best ever around, and I would like to see it get even better by letting Opry fans know more about the Opry stars and their activities.

Gail E. Stafford
Lockport, New York

See *CMM Update on Jack Greene* in this issue. Plus, for Opry fans, there's a new *Opry Fan Club*, including a newsletter on Opry stars. To join, write *Grand Ole Opry Fan Club*, 2804 Opryland Drive, Nashville, Tennessee 37214. Annual dues, \$10.—Ed.

Portrait of Wariner

One of my best birthday presents was a subscription to your magazine. Up here in New Hampshire, it's hard enough to get an artist's newest album, much less any information about them. Your magazine gives me an opportunity to get both!

My favorite artists are Steve Wariner and Restless Heart. I've seen them both at Sandy's Lake in Dracut, Massachusetts. At Mr. Wariner's show, I ended up on stage with him in front of my family



Steve Wariner took Kathie Patterson and her portrait of him right up on stage.

and friends. He was so nice and asked all kinds of questions. He asked to see me after the show and gave me a kiss—all because I had done a large-scale portrait of him.

Mr. Wariner and I talked for almost half an hour about art and odds and ends. Eventually, we ended up talking about basketball and Larry Bird and the Celtics. One thing led to another, and I'm now doing a painting for him of Larry Bird.

Kathie Patterson

Londonderry, New Hampshire

A feature on Steve Wariner is coming soon.—Ed.

Cruising with Twitty and Travis

I am a new subscriber and enjoy reading your magazine very much. When will you have articles on Conway Twitty?

I have heard that a cruise to the Bahamas the first week in December will feature Conway and Randy Travis performing. Is this the truth? What's the scoop?

Also where can I write to get in touch with Conway? Keep up the good work.

Gail Pittman

Cartersville, Georgia

Conway Twitty and Ambassador Travel in Nashville are organizing the December 4th cruise, with Randy Travis also aboard. Tickets were going fast at press-time. To reach Conway, write Twitty City, 1 Music Village Blvd., Hendersonville, Tennessee 37075.—Ed.

How Bocephus Got His Name—The Saga Continues

According to Hank Jr.'s autobiography, *Living Proof*, Bocephus was nicknamed by his father.

If memory serves me right, Bocephus in Latin means "Balls of Iron."

Those who admire the great talent in this man should by all means read this book. I just couldn't put it down 'til I was finished.

Fred Prendergast Jr.

Sandy Hook, Connecticut

Help! Is there a Latin expert in the house?—Ed.



LEE TAKES COMMAND

"Lee has arrived, and our hopes are high. He is silent, inscrutable, strong, like a God."
 Lieutenant John H. Chamberlayne, Virginia Artillery, C.S.A.

Not everyone cheered the selection of Robert E. Lee to command the army defending Richmond in 1862. Many thought him too cautious, too gentle. They called him "Granny Lee". But within three months the doubts were gone. Lee had driven the enemy from the doorstep of his capital to the doorstep of their own. The tide, it seemed, had turned. Spirits were high. And Lee had begun his rise as the great gentleman-hero of the Confederacy.

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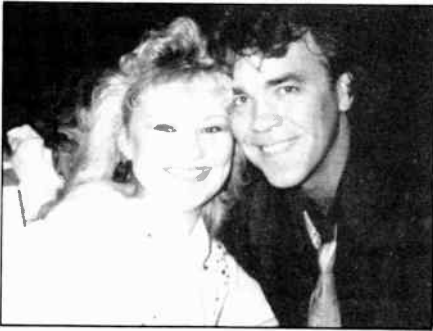
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Tristin McGannon enjoyed Gary Morris' recent concert in Minneapolis.

Gary Morris Hits the Spot

I recently had the pleasure of attending a Gary Morris concert here in Minneapolis, and it was nothing less than *fabulous*, to say the least! Having the chance to see and hear him perform live really makes me appreciate what an unbelievable talent he is! I'm just in awe every time he opens his mouth.

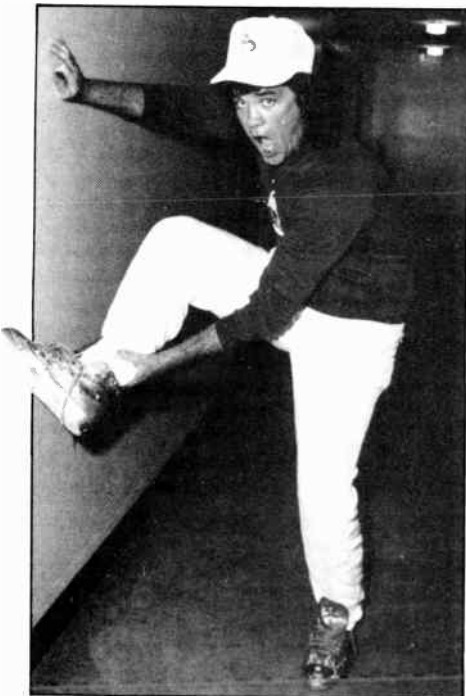
Tristin McGannon
Crystal, Minnesota

But Gary, where's the beard and mustache?—Ed.

High-Steppin' Gary Morris

Enclosed is a photo I wanted to share with you. I met Gary Morris a few years ago and have been friends since. So while he was doing a show in Saginaw, I paid him a visit. He was given an early birthday gift on stage, green sneakers, which he liked so much he put them on during a song.

After the show we were talking, and he said, "Hey, get a shot of these shoes." As a photographer, I said sure. And



Gary Morris doesn't quite know what to make of his new shoes.

here is the photo of the green and blue high top tennies.

David C. Shaffer
Lapeer, Michigan

They're special!—Ed.

Presley Honored by Quilt

I've been a country and western fan ever since I was a lil' girl. I will be 71 years old September 26th, and I never outgrew country and western music. Really I have no favorites. I love all country and western stars. They're all wonderful singers. But David Allan Coe—he is great.

Thought I'd send you a picture of my Elvis Presley quilt, so others will see what a pretty quilt it is. My daughter was and still is a big Elvis fan.

Thanks for a lovely magazine. Really enjoy reading it.

Alice Van Camp
Magnolia, Ohio

Anyone else with a quilt?—Ed.



Alice Van Camp honored Elvis with this quilt. She loves all the stars.

Here's What Happened to Charlie Hodge...

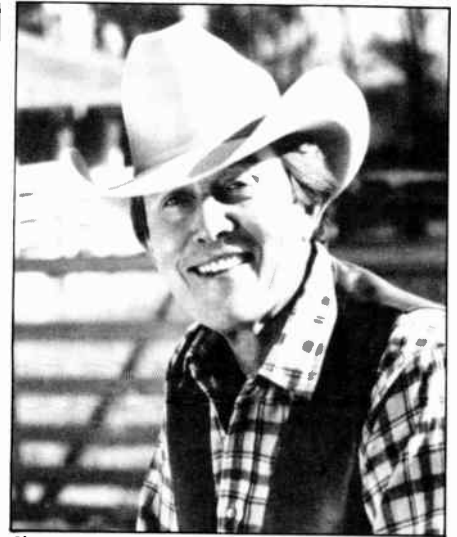
I am writing in response to D.S. in Berryville, Arkansas, who asked about Charlie Hodge in the May/June issue. Charlie lives in Alabama now. I'm not sure what he does with his time, but he is usually a participant in the Annual Elvis Presley International Week Festivities in Memphis, Tennessee, in mid-August. He still clowns and steals the show as he did for Elvis.

Tell D.S. to join us in Memphis and he'll probably see Charlie Hodge and lots of others who were a part of Elvis' life.

Sue Myers

Little Rock, Arkansas

Anybody go? Write and tell us about it.—Ed.



Jimmy Dean alive and well in Texas.

...Now Whatever Happened to Jimmy Dean?

I would like to know where Jimmy Dean is. I have looked for his records and can't find them. I have known him since he was 18 years old, long before he was a country singer, but I knew he would make it. But now I do not hear anything of him except his commercials on TV. I would sure like to know if he is still singing.

In my book, Jimmy Dean is the best. Where is he?

Hazel Varner
El Paso, Texas

Jimmy hasn't sung in some time, but he keeps busy running his sausage company, the largest in the U.S., now owned by Sara Lee, appearing at celebrity golf tournaments and on telethons and riding his yacht, Big Bad John, based in Ft. Lauderdale.—Ed.

...and Wilburn and O'Day and Bowes?

Have been a subscriber to *Country Music* less than a year, and I really enjoy your fine magazine. I would love to see a story on my favorite singer Teddy Wilburn. Have been a fan of The Wilburns for many years.

"Whatever happened to" Molly O'Day and Margie Bowes?

Mildred Tinker
Minturn, Arkansas

Teddy Wilburn still appears occasionally on the Opry. Margie Bowes is re-entering the music business in Nashville after working as a nurse. Molly O'Day, Mrs. Lynn Davis, lives in Huntington, West Virginia.—Ed.

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2467 "The very finest Christmas gifts are not found below the tree..." (12-line poem inside) "Merry Christmas and Happy New Year" —artist *Richard Barth*



2276 "May Christmas bring Friends to your Fireside, and Peace to your Pathway." "Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year" —artist *Chris Cummings*



2130 "When the tips of the pines, touch the heavenly skies... may your blessings be more..." (6-line poem) "Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year" —artist *Bill Shaddix*



2426 "'Twas the night before Christmas, when me and my horse... with me dressed as St. Nick..." (12-line poem) "May your Holiday Season be filled with cheer!" —artist *Boots Reynolds*



1304 LEGENDARY IRISH GREETING "May the trail rise up to meet you... "Merry Christmas and Best Wishes for a Happy New Year" —artist *Gordon Snidow*



1745 "...It's friendship's warm and cheery touch that makes this season mean so much." "Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year" —artist *Lee K. Parkinson*



2346 "GREETINGS... from our outfit to yours" "May there come to you at this holiday time an abundance... Health, Happiness, and Enduring Friendships" —artist *Ron Crooks*



2498 "Let's lift our hats to the old year and welcome the Christmas morn with joy..." "Merry Christmas and Best Wishes for a Happy New Year" —artist *Clayton Nicles*



3352 "To those we love and see each day... those with whom we're somehow out of touch, Merry Christmas and Happy New Year" —artist *Roger T. Flythe*



2421 "We've loaded up everything and moved..." "Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from our new digs!" —artist *Ted Blaylock*



2417 "May Christmas bring Friends to your Fireside, Peace to your Pathway, and Good Health throughout the New Year" —artist *Ted Blaylock*



1674 WHOA, HOSS, WHOA "...and best wishes for a Happy New Year from Our Outfit to Yours" —artist *Vic Donahue*



3261 "May Christmas bring to you the music of laughter, the warmth of friendship and the spirit of love" —artist *Richard Barth*



1462 "Peace on Earth" "May Peace be your Gift at Christmas and your Treasure through all the Year" —Pawnee Indian artist *Brummett EchoHawk*

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World Radio History

People

YOU KNOW THE MANDRELL SISTERS, BUT HOW ABOUT MOM

She counts blessings and pennies. She stands by her man. She goes to visit **Barbara Mandrell** when she wants. She knocks on **Louise Mandrell's** door noon or midnight and is welcome. She tells **Irlene Mandrell** secrets on how to raise her son and Irlene doesn't get angry. She even gives **Irby Mandrell** advice and he listens! (There are those who say this is a miracle.) Now, this lady is the kindest, sweetest Mandrell of all. She kept young **Nathaniel** while Barbara and her husband **Ken Dudney** and kids, **Matthew** and **Jaime**, along with Louise and her daughter and Irlene and her baby and Irby visited Australia. Irby was tending to business, Irlene hosting a TV show, Louise performed and Barbara closed the show. Great shows, is the word that reached the states. Back to the mystery woman. The prettiest Mandrell of all. She and I both dined at El Chico while the above was happening down under in Aussie land. **Mary Mandrell** is the lady. The mama of the sisters and wife of Irby, Mary Mandrell could be called Mother Mary and the title would fit. She is the greatest.



The people's choice.

BARBARA MANDRELL PEOPLE'S CHOICE

Cybill Sheppard and Barbara Mandrell tied for Favorite All Around Female Entertainer in the People's



Blackburn, Cash and Emery with Cash's doubles.

Choice Awards. The two picked up their "tie award" in Los Angeles. This was Barbara's sixth consecutive People's Choice Award.

THOSE WILLIAMS BOYS...

Update on **Don Williams**. He is recuperating following back surgery. Don has been plagued with pain. Hopefully, the corrective surgery will make him good as new and maybe he will perform again. He hasn't said he would perform, but he has said he will record. This is a step in the right direction for a good ole boy with a former bad, wrong back. We love you, Don.

Hank Sr., thanks for the songs of my youth. Hank Jr., thanks for truth till it hurt in your songs. Don, get well! Those Williams boys....

SONGSTERS FOR YWCA SHELTER

Lynn Anderson, Patty Loveless, Rattlesnake Annie, Mike Reid, Libby

Hurley, Karen Brooks, Nanci Griffith and Peter McCann showed up and sang out for this very worthwhile cause. This shelter houses battered wives. You would not believe how many battered women there are in this town, or in your hometown for that matter.

BIG JOHN CASH PRESENTED WITH DOUBLES

Don't worry, **Johnny Cash** was sober as a judge and twice as cute. He just went on *Nashville Now* to showcase his brand new Mercury album. While on stage, his old label head **Rick Blackburn** surprised Cash with three double-platinum albums from CBS. Cash was quite moved by Blackburn's appearance and the honor. I was afraid there were hard feelings between CBS/Cash/Blackburn, and it worried me. Nashville is a small town and folks talk. Cash and Blackburn embraced like two prodigal sons as I bawled like a baby and the world smiled.

Reporter: Hazel Smith

Editor: Rochelle Friedman

People

NEWSOME FOURSOME



Just thought you'd like to see a picture of the new Oak Ridge Boys. Of course you recognize Duane, Joe and Richard. The new Oak is Steve Sanders, who joined the group recently to replace William Lee Golden. It will be interesting to see how Steve does on the concert tour. But, you know country folks, if he's talented and true, then he's in. Remember when Jimmy Fortune joined The Statler Brothers to replace Lew DeWitt? The boy took off with flying colors.

YOU DON'T NEED A PARACHUTE AT THE TOP OF THE CHARTS

Hey, Waylon! I predicted you and Jimmy Bowen would join forces and make Number One records, and right off the bat you did it. "Rose in Paradise" took you all the way up where you belong. Waylon, when you weren't at the top position on the charts, you were in my heart and the hearts of millions. Fans, let's hear it for Waylon. Don't we need more like him? Yeah!!

KNOWSING

Kris Kristofferson was in the Big Apple in support of current album *Repossessed*. In the audience were Eric Anderson, Ian Hunter, June Carter Cash and Johnny Cash. The latter joined Kris onstage at the Bottom Line duoining a song.

Innovative steel guitarist Pete Drake received the prestigious "Master Award" during a tribute dinner at Vanderbilt Plaza Hotel. Wearing a tux and a smile, Pete joins friends Grady Martin, the Jordanaires and Billy Sherrill in receiving this honor. "Master" Drake's claim to fame includes working on 118 gold and platinum albums! The semi-retired musician, producer, publisher is tired of the "good idleness" and plans to activate himself in the music again.

Good for Pete, but better for those lives he may touch.

McEwen, Tennessee, honored their favorite son, Ralph Emery, for the sixth consecutive year. Cousin Minnie Pearl, Ronnie McDowell and the Nashville Now Band all were a part of the day-long festivities, which included a parade and evening concert. *Nashville Now* regulars Darlene Austin and Tom Grant also performed to honor their bossman.

Restless Heart, touring with The Judds and others, boasts a Top Three country record with crossover to Adult Contemporary as well as some pop action. 'Bout time, you dummies out in radioland!

Allen Brown is the nice, new guy at CBS who is positioned as Associate Director, Media. The Belmont graduate interned at CBS, stayed with the label three years, departed for the Benson Company-Gospel, did a tailspin and returned home like a homing pigeon.

Didja know Judy Rodman performed twice on *The Tonight Show*? I'm glad.

Most of us have been fans of Jeannie C. Riley since "Harper Valley PTA." This was several hundred country music miles ago. I find it quite interesting that 19 years later Jeannie C. is still "booked up for the year." In other words, Jeannie has 250 work days for this year. Isn't that wonderful! Most current "stars" (so to speak) can't boast this many.

John Hartford, banjo player, fiddle player, singer, songwriter and husband of one of my best friends on this planet, hosted the "Words and Music" program for the Country Music Foundation. The third annual event features songs written by area school children. Students learned the craft from a kit developed by the CMF. Aren't you proud this is happening in Music City? I am.

Hey, I know where the good music is and the new John Hartford album on MCA/Dot Records is good music. Produced by everybody's favorite cowboy, "Cowboy" Jack Clement, the groovy grooves are well worth the music store cost. John Hartford also is a guitarist and author (remember his book I told you about — *Steamboat in a Cornfield*) and a riverboat captain! By the way, the new album's title is *Annual Waltz*. You gotta get one! The cover features an excellent photo of Hartford with the lovely Mrs. Marie Hartford. You wanna see what my friends look like, don't you?

Vince Gill has a new album out and hopefully up... up the charts, that is, by the time you read this.

I liked the stuff RCA sent me on K.T. Oslin. The Arkansas native has been around the world and Texas too, landing in Music City and ending up in the studio with Harold Shedd of Alabama fame. K.T. is a friend of Guy Clark, wrote "Round the Clock Lovin'" for Gail

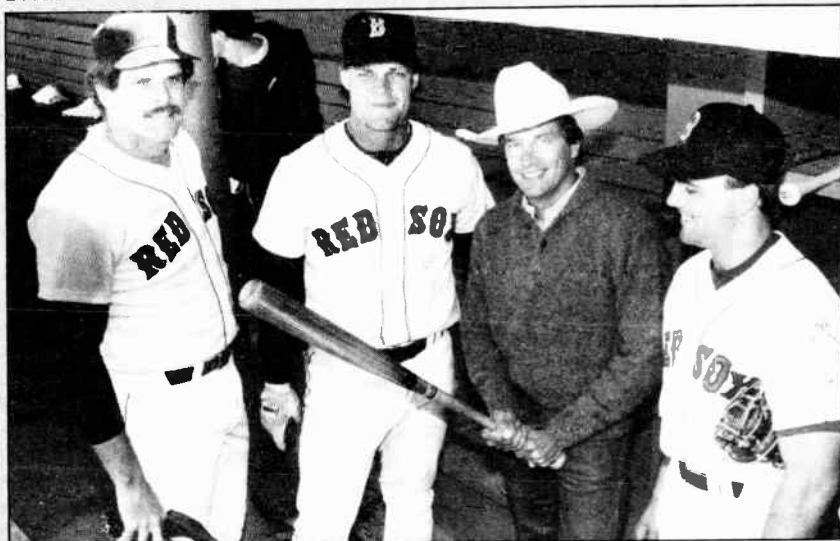
THE McENTIRES



During a recent performance in Tulsa, Pake McEntire was joined on stage by his sister Reba to perform Pake's single "Heart to Heart." Reba is featured on the single as well.

People

BATTER UP



While in Boston preparing for the Marlboro Country Music Concert, George Strait stopped at Fenway Park to pick up a few batting tips. Red Sox pitcher Steve Crawford (left) and First Baseman Pat Dodson (second left) watched as Shortstop Spike Owen (far right) gave pointers. George also threw out the opening pitch.

Davies, sang jingles for Sanka (so she could sleep-hahaha) and blamed it on paying dues. She left the street called Broadway in NYC, came to Dixie to sing songs to women. Give her a listen.

A "Big Wheel" from Glory Land (New York City) named Norman Mailer (world renowned novelist) brought his city-self to Nashville to record a movie theme song. Movie's title, *Tough Guys Don't Dance*. Song, "You'll Come Back (You Always Do)," was co-written by Mailer (his first time at songwriting). Word I got is the whole film is written, directed and produced by Mr. Norman Mailer. Tell you one thing, hillbillies, if Mailer strikes it rich on this one, the son-of-a-gun is gonna be scandalously wealthy until he dies! Mel Tillis sang the song. It was Mailer's wife's idea that Mel sing instead of stammer.

All my readers know I just love pretty, young boys. This one, named Fletcher Foster, is 21. He works at the CMA, where Jo Walker-Meador is executive director. Fletcher is by far the most handsome person on staff at the Country Music Association and the youngest. Fletcher sent me some stuff and amongst this stuff were some items of interest: Board member Ralph Peer allowed at the CMA/Austin meeting that the 2nd annual UK merchandising campaign was underway, so-called

"New Country '87." This follows up last year's "Discover New Country" campaign which featured such talent as The O'Kanes, Ricky Skaggs, Randy Travis, Reba McEntire, Steve Earle, T Graham Brown, Dan Seals and The Judds. Resident Austin CMAer's who attended a reception were country music greats Floyd Tillman and Johnny Gimble.

CMA also announced the host for

October's televised awards show—Kenny Rogers. One thing I do hope is the press will be treated a little bit better than cattle this year. If not, I am making an appointment with my friend Jo Walker-Meador and all those good-standing folks on the board and find out why.

I ran into an old friend the other day, Steve Campbell. Son of the multi-talented Archie Campbell, Steve (or Stephen) and his wife Alie Michael Campbell have formed ACTS (Archie Campbell Talent). The full-service company's first client is, of course, papa Archie whose career the duo will manage. Other acts involved with ACTS managerially are Connie Smith and The Hagers. The company provides public relations for Stella Parton. Best of luck to Steve and his wife and their new endeavor. And of course our prayers are with Archie. He suffered a heart attack recently.

Lee Greenwood has hooked up with Jimmy Bowen for his new album. Co-producing for his first time, Greenwood was delighted when pal Glen Campbell came by to harmonize a chorus or two at the Sound Stage Studio where Bowen records all those MCA hits.

My friends The Whites are all black and blue from cross country, cross-the-ocean and Fan Fair all in the month of June. Zug, Switzerland, and Branson Missouri, and both in the same week. Reckon that's why it's called show biz??

Did you see Kitty Wells and Johnny Wright and their Family Band on *Nashville Now??* I died. Right then I knew I'd stay in country music till I died. Kitty Wells kills me when she sings,

IN THE STUDIO



Left to right, Keith Whitley, Emmylou Harris, Vern Gosdin and producer Blake Mevis. Emmylou and Vern were there to lend their talents to Keith's new single.

People

ANOTHER COUNTRY FAMILY



The "uncrazed outlaw" David Allan Coe, more likable and down to earth, shown with his family. Left to right, 16-year-old daughter Carla Dawn from a previous marriage; David Allan holds young Tanya Montana; two-year-old Tyler is held by his mother, Jody Lynn. Six-month-old Tanya Montana is the subject of a song made into video by her famous dad. The baby is named for Tanya Tucker and the State of Montana. These young kids and mileage possibly are the reasons for David calming his once boisterous lifestyle.

thrills me when she speaks and humbles me when I see her shopping for groceries at the same Kroger I do. Kitty doesn't know this, but my seeing her shopping for groceries keeps me humble and close to the roots...potatoes, rutabagas. . . . turnips and carrots!! See how informative I am. Who else tells you about grocery shopping with the stars?

BO AND LUKE DUKE AIN'T BO AND LUKE

But they are together again! Tom Wopat and John Schneider are skedded for a TV film *Christmas Time at Copper Creek*. From what I hear, it is two good ole boys in the snow instead of in the dust. "The Dukes of Hazard a/k/a Good Ole Boys At Copper Creek" come Christmas.

GOLFERS IN WICHITA, KANSAS, AND ME IN TENNESSEE

The second annual Charlie Daniels Celebrity Golf Classic was held at Rolling Hills Country Club in Wichita, Kansas, with folks like Moe Bandy, Asleep at the Wheel's Ray Benson and that

good looking Danny White of the Dallas Cowboys, along with the great Charlie Walker teeing off with big Charlie Daniels. While they tee in Kansas, I teevee (look at television!) in Tennessee.

WILLIE COOKS

My buddy, Billy Paul Jones, producer of the TNN show *Country Cooking* with Florence Henderson emceeing, tells me Willie Nelson cooked up a storm. He further tells me that Waylon Jennings and wife Jessi Colter and Ricky Skaggs are all set for the fall lineup. Sounds like something wonderful cooked up by some wonderful folks.

BLUE STAYS, GOLD GOES

While the "Bluegrass Father" still reigns, the ring of gold has to go from the finger of Bill Monroe. Couple of years ago when Bill Monroe vowed to love, honor and obey, I reported in this magazine that I wouldn't have been any more shocked if the pope had wed. Cause in my heart and mind I knew if either the pope or Bill married, they

would divorce. It looks like the 76-year-old monarch may be headed down the path of "I don't's." His bride moved out and moved on, leaving songs to be sung about a love gone, gone wrong, or never was. Let's see, he could sing the grass is still blue but the gold is gone from my finger. Or she took the bed, the washer, and the cat, but left the ring in the sink. Whatever, the personal lives will die, but the bluegrass music concocted by the master will live as long as there is time immortal. Monroe's virtuosity continues on a brand new phonograph record on MCA Records titled *Bluegrass '87*. Producer Emory Gordy recorded the old man of bluegrass digitally for the first time. Monroe penned all the songs except the haunting "Music Valley Waltz." He and friend John Hartford wrote that one together. I remember when they put the song on tape. I was there. But then, I am most everywhere.

DESERT ROSE ADDS FIRE TO ASHES

The old Johnny and Jack standard "Ashes of Love" exhumed by the group Desert Rose is a real treat for us seasoned fans and a new awakening for the smart, young set. Band members Chris Hillman and Herb Pedersen have paid enough dues to be broke on dues. Maybe Desert Rose will be the answer to their banker's prayers. Lord, I hope so. Their Desert Rose Band is great, and their clothes are colorful and hill-billy.

WHO ARE THOSE MASKED MEN?



Pretty easy, huh? Kenny Rogers and Ronnie Milsap are currently touring together and teaming up to sing their duet, "Make No Mistake, She's Mine." The song, written by Kim Carnes, is on both Milsap's and Rogers' albums.

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THE "I LOVE COUNTRY MUSIC" T-SHIRT It comes in blue with white and red lettering in adult sizes only. This half cotton/polyester shirt is available in small, medium, large, X-large. Item No. G20—ONLY \$8.95



THE COUNTRY MUSIC ALLSTAR PHOTO CARDS Here is one of the most unique decks of playing cards you are likely to find anywhere. Each card carries a full color photo of a different country music celebrity. You'll find Loretta Lynn, Conway Twitty, Johnny Cash, Barbara Mandrell, Roy Acuff . . . 54 in all. If you're more than just an occasional country music listener, you should have them. Item NO. G2T—ONLY \$3.95



THE DOLLY PARTON JIGSAW PUZZLE You won't find this collector's item anywhere...at any price. It has been over six years since it appeared in stores. But we still have a small supply. It measures 11" x 17" when complete and comes with 200 fun-filled pieces. Item No. G3H—ONLY \$5.95



THE ORIGINAL COUNTRY MUSIC LOGO BELT BUCKLE This six ounce heave metal buckle measures 2" x 3³/₈" and is available exclusively through Nashville Warehouse. It makes an ideal gift for any country music fan, especially yourself. Item No. G3Y—ONLY \$6.95



ELVIS MUSICAL POP-UP The life of the "King" in a musical extravaganza. This loving tribute contains nearly a dozen two-page, full color pop-up spreads each representing a significant period in Elvis' career. A musical disc plays the tune of one of his most memorable songs as the last page is turned. 8¹/₂" x 12. Item No. B8J—ONLY \$12.98

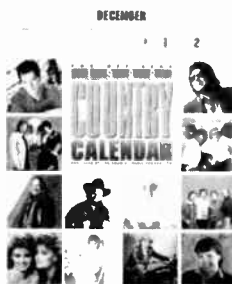


THE COLLIE PARTON STUFFED ANIMAL Outrageous! Dolly Parton watch out. There's a brand new stuffed animal from North America Bear Co. It stands a big 18" tall. You'll love it. Item No. G3C—NOW \$44.95

Christmas Gift Ideas



THE COUNTRY MUSIC CHALLENGE BOARD GAME Here is the brand new "Trivial Pursuit" game of country music that everyone is talking about. It comes complete with 4000 questions and answers on 800 game cards. Fans 12 and over will love it. There's a money-back guarantee if you are not delighted. Item No. G1D—NOW \$39.95



THE 1988 COUNTRY MUSIC FOUNDATION ALLSTAR CALENDAR

Here is the 1988 edition of the calendar that every country music fan loves. It features big full color photos of the likes of Willie Nelson, Alabama, The Judds, George Strait, Dolly Parton, Randy Travis, The Statler Brothers, Dwight Yoakam, Ronnie Milsap, Hank Williams Jr. and the rest of your favorite headliners. It opens to 12½" x 25" and there are even birthdates of the stars and listings of award winners. If you truly love country music, don't miss this chance to order your copy. Item No. G1B—ONLY \$8.95



THE "I LOVE COUNTRY MUSIC" ADJUSTABLE CAP This unique blue cap adjusts to fit all adult sizes. It is fully vented to insure cool wearin' during these hot summer months. And it carries the country music message on a handsome 3-color patch. You'll love it. Item No. G2N—ONLY \$6.95



THE ELVIS PRESLEY COLOR PICTURE PLAYING CARDS Each of these cards carries a different color photo of the "King" in action . . . on stage. There are 54 in all. Use them to play cards or put them away for safekeeping. Either way, they are an absolute must for every Elvis fan. Item No. G4P—ONLY \$3.95



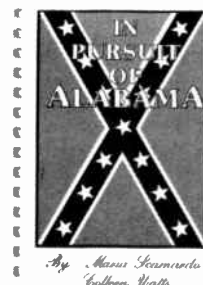
THE "I LOVE COUNTRY MUSIC" BELT BUCKLE For country music fans this is an absolute must. This handsome design was originally made up exclusively for Country Music Magazine. Now it's available through Nashville Warehouse while supplies last. It measures 2" x 3¾" and is brass plated. Item No. G3X—ONLY \$6.96



INSTANT PLAY HARMONICA INSTRUCTION COURSE Learn to play even if you can't read a note of music. Actually play a song the minute you open the book. Your instruction package comes complete with easy-to-follow Guide with 46 songs—a step-by-step sound recording to play along with—and your own world-famous Hohner Harmonica. Item No. G5Y—Was \$14.95 . . . NOW \$12.95



GRAND OLE OPRY COMMEMORATIVE MUSIC BOX Handsome and unique, it stands 5¼" high and is crafted in highly polished ceramic. Rotate the Ryman Auditorium replica and it plays "The Tennessee Waltz." Item No. G1X—ONLY \$14.95



IN PURSUIT OF ALABAMA TRIVIA BOOK GAME If you love Alabama or just want to enjoy good old country music fun, this game book is for you. There are questions and answers in all categories...biography, songs, history, videos and tidbits. There is plenty of room to write in your answers as you go and score sheets to keep track of how you did. It's 166 fun-filled pages with 600 challenging questions in all. Item No. B9B—ONLY \$7.98

Christmas Gift Ideas



THE WURLITZER JUKE BOX CASSETTE PLAYER This just might be the hottest new item for 1987. It's styled after the ever popular Wurlitzer brand juke box of the 50's...complete with a light switch controlling a pulsating light system. It features a volume control...start, stop and fast-forward push-button controls...is battery operated and has the capacity for an AC converter. Regularly sold for \$99.95, order yours now and save \$10.00. Item No. G3W—NOW \$89.95



THE 1988 ELVIS PRESLEY CALENDAR Here is everyone's favorite calendar again, with 12 more great black and white photos of the king. It's a big 12" x 12". Item No. G2E—NOW \$8.95



THE COUNTRY STARS COOK-BOOK There's everything from Roy Acuff's Bean Soup, to Kitty Wells' Chicken Saute Continental, to Ronnie Milsap's Moonshine recipe. You get assorted soups, breads, main-courses... 102 mouth-watering recipes in all... plus photos of the stars and brief biographies. It's great! Item No. B2W-ONLY \$3.95



THE COUNTRY MUSIC T-SHIRT A long time favorite, this handsome logo shirt is back by special demand. It comes in bright red cotton/polyester with white lettering. Specify adult size only: S-M-L-XL. Item No. G2P—Was \$7.95, NOW \$6.95.



THE COUNTRY MUSIC LEATHER BELT It comes with the Country Music message stamped on heavy duty, top grade leather. It features a detachable buckle and is available in even sizes 28 to 46. Item No. G4N—ONLY \$15.95

HANK WILLIAMS



AND THE DRIFTING COWBOYS

HANK WILLIAMS RARE RADIO PROGRAMMES Four complete shows from 1949, 20 songs with the Drifting Cowboys: Happy Rovin' Cowboy/Lovesick Blues/ Cotton Eyed Joe/I'm So Lonesome I Could Cry/I Can't Get You Off Of My Mind/Pan America/I Saw The Light/Arkansas Traveler, plus 12 more! LP No. R8Q/Cass. No. C4A—\$9.98



THE BEST OF DON WILLIAMS (Extended Album) Featuring: Some Broken Hearts Never Mend/Till The Rivers All Run Dry/It Must Be Love/I Believe In You/If Hollywood Don't Need You/You're My Best Friend/Good Ole Boys Like Me/Love Me Over Again/Turn Out The Lights/Amanda, more! LP No. R7A/Cass. No. C7C—\$9.98



THE VERY BEST OF THE STATLERS (Extended Album) Featuring: Flower On The Wall/Elizabeth/My Only Love/Don't Wait On Me/Atlanta Blue/Do You Remember These/I'll Even Love You Better Than I Did/Guilty/Who Am I To Say/Charlotte's Web/I'll Go To My Grave Loving You, more! LP No. R51/Cass. No. C5K—\$9.98



20 OF THE BEST OF JIMMIE RODGERS Featuring: The Soldier's Sweetheart/Blue Yodel No. 1/Blue Yodel No. 9/Blue Yodel No. 2 (My Lovin' Gal Lucille)/Blue Yodel No. 3/Blue Yodel No. 4 (California Blues)/Waiting For A Train/Blue Yodel No. 5/Hobo Bill's Last Ride/In The Jailhouse Now No. 2, more! LP No. R8R/Cass. No. C8S—\$9.98

Christmas Gift Ideas



OLE OPRY CLASSIC COUNTRY TRIBUTE #1 It's 26 classic country acts from the stage of the Ole Opry. Featuring Ernest Tubb, Jim Reeves, Ray Price, Minnie Pearl, Carl Smith, Cowboy Copas, Marty Robbins and more! It's one hour of great country in full color. Item No. G8T—NOW \$39.95



OLE OPRY CLASSIC COUNTRY TRIBUTE #2 Here are 26 more great country acts from the Opry. Just a sample: Ernest Tubb—Dear Judge/Carter Family—I Gotta Go Get My Baby/Webb Pierce—In The Jailhouse Now/Chet Atkins—Country Gentlemen, and more! Item No. G8U—\$39.95



OLE OPRY CLASSIC COUNTRY TRIBUTE #3 More great Opry acts, 25 in all, featuring: Marty Robbins Tribute/Webb Pierce—Slowly/Carl Smith—Before I Met You/Jim Reeves—Then I'll Stop Loving You/Kitty Wells—When I Kiss You One More Time, and more! Item No. G8V—NOW \$39.95



OLE OPRY CLASSIC COUNTRY TRIBUTE #4 Show #4 features: A Carl Smith Tribute/June Carter—Tennessee Mambo/Faron Young—Forgive Me My Dear/Kitty Wells—I Don't Claim To Be An Angel/Cowboy Copas—Down In Nashville, and more! Item No. G3B—NOW \$39.95



OLE OPRY CLASSIC COUNTRY TRIBUTE #5 Show #5 features: Marty Robbins—Times Goes By & At The End Of A Long, Lonely Day/Chet Atkins—Georgia Camp Meeting/Kitty Wells—There's Poison In My Heart, plus 23 more memorable country music shows! Item No. G3J—NOW \$39.95



OLE OPRY CLASSIC COUNTRY TRIBUTE #6 The last in this great series features 25 memorable performances: Ray Price—Much Too Young To Die/Carter Family—Solemn Old Judge/Moon Mullican—Cherokee Boogie/Minnie Pearl Comedy, and more! Item No. G3L—NOW \$39.95



JOHNNY CASH IN LONDON Recorded in 1981, it's 50 minutes of great country featuring: Ring Of Fire/Folsom Prison Blues/If I Were A Carpenter/San Antonio Rose/I Walk The Line/Ghost Riders In The Sky/Big River/Jackson/Gotta Do My Time, and more! Item No. G8H—ONLY \$29.95



ELVIS PRESLEY'S GRACELAND Hosted by Priscilla Beaulieu Presley, you'll be guided through the wonderful rooms of America's number one home, Graceland, as Priscilla shares some of The King's most meaningful moments. It's 60 great full color minutes. Item No. G2H—NOW \$39.95

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DO NOT combine offers, this only delays handling. Offer expires 12/31/87!

9107-7

People

EVERY DOG HAS HIS DAY AND SOME SONGWRITERS DO, TOO!

Songwriter Paul Davis has his day, "Paul Davis Day" in Meridian, Mississippi. Davis also was named Mississippian of the Year. Another famed Meridian is Jimmie Rodgers, whom we all know and most of us love.

AMERICAN PIE IN HILLBILLY TOWN

Don McLean wants to be a country boy! Are you believing this stuff? Everybody whose songs are pop chart memories is migrating to Music City where the real music seldom sashays with the reel. All I can figure is they left Hollywood to get close to Dollywood—or maybe to me.

STRAIT GOLD EIGHT TIMES

Ocean Front Property by George Strait went straight to the top of the single record charts, to the top of the country album charts and achieved the prestigious gold status...boasting sales of over 500,000 units. This is the eighth gold album for the golden-throated Texan who is shaded by a cowboy hat.

EMMYLOU AIN'T RUNNING FOR NOTHING POLITICAL

Washington, D.C., is famed mostly for politicians and politics. You don't have to be either to go, however, but it helps. Remember the great folk trio, Peter, Paul and Mary? Well, Mary Travers from the folkies and Emmylou Harris from Nashville took their female selves to the capitol to do some urging. Aim was to convince those who make the laws of the land to pass legislation preventing digital audio tape machines from taping copyrighted music. If the music biz and the politicians don't get their heads together on this, a whole bunch of us could be up the Cumberland River without a paddle. By the way, the *Trio* album with Harris and her "harmony singers," Dolly Parton and Linda Ronstadt, went Number One country, Number Six pop and home to my house for much play and enjoyment.

JOHNNY RODRIGUEZ VISITS THE KIDS

Country music star Johnny Rodriguez and representatives of Southwest Airlines visited Vanderbilt Children's Hospital recently. After presenting the

CMM Update: Jack Greene



"We're still on the road. Matter of fact, we're leaving today for two days in Virginia Beach. We're gonna stay up there a couple of days and enjoy the ocean. My wife June and I both are great worshippers of the ocean sand," says Jack Greene, relishing the thought. Twenty years ago Jack Greene, Ernest Tubb's drummer, had his first Number One hit with "There Goes My Everything." He racked up four more over the next three years, and recorded and toured with Jeannie Seely into the 1970's.

But the road, though still part of Jack's life, no longer takes up most of his time. "We're doing an average of 40 working days on the road, about 80 to 100 days of travel." Why a laid-back approach? These days, he has little reason to leave Nashville. "We play the Opry a lot during the summer, and during winter that's all we do," he explains. "We don't travel much in the winter. As a rule, we open up touring in March and close up at the end of September.

"We sell records, tapes and single records, and everytime we get a fan letter, we send out a list of things that are available through the office here (Box 487, Goodlettsville, Tennessee 37072). We still run a 74-acre farm. I just sit on the land, but we have to keep it looking good. This is the first chance we've had time to do that. On those 300-day tours, all you did was come home to get some clean clothes and go back out.

"Outside of my immediate family, the Grand Ole Opry has become the most important thing in my life," he says proudly. Since the Opry now holds several matinees as well as

Friday and Saturday nights, he's amply occupied. "The Nashville Network opened up a lot of work for me," he continues. "We do *Nashville Now* about four times a year, *Fandangos*, *You Can Be a Star*, and the cooking show at least once a year." And, he's talking recording deals with some of Nashville's independent labels. "I do want to get back in the game," he admits. "I need new product on the road and I need it on the radio."

If problems seem few, Jack does have a troubling one: an impostor. For seven years a Texan's been singing his songs in clubs and running up big motel bills under Jack's name before disappearing. "He's a great con artist," adds Jack. "He knows how to catch vulnerable people. In Santa Fe, New Mexico, he got a dear old couple that retired there from Ohio, they gave him \$2000. He said he had a new bus comin' and had a wire of \$100,000 comin' into the bank that was a little late." Most of his victims, ashamed of their naivete, refuse to press charges. Jack is trying to nail the man himself, but admits it will take time.

"This is my 40th anniversary in the business," he concludes with pride. "In August of 1947 I went on a little station in Maryville, Tennessee, called WGAP. That should be significant, but as a rule, people want you to stay young so I don't hack on it. I thought I'd put together a 40th Anniversary Tour, but the more I talked, people don't like to know that you've been around that long. It doesn't matter to them as much as it does to me."

—RICH KIENZLE

children with stuffed toys, Johnny performed for them—some in wheel chairs, some with I.V.'s and some propped up in little red wagons. Rodriguez, who has been plagued with chemicals, was heard to lament, "People should do this kind of thing more often, not only for the children, but for themselves. It reminds me

that my problems just aren't that big." Amen, Johnny. Amen. Sometimes it takes seeing a child with no legs to remind us not to complain that we have no shoes. And hopefully remind Johnny that chemicals wear off but friends wear on and on and on. I'm your friend, Johnny!!

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...about this issue

15 YEARS READERS WRITERS AND PICKERS



by Russ Barnard

It was hard to come up with an idea for this issue. We all felt good about the magazine, but what to put in this particular issue—that was a stumper! So Rochelle and I decided to ask each contributing editor. These people have been with the magazine a long time, many of them since the beginning, and two, Patrick and Michael, had been editors before me. Their ideas would surely be relevant.

Their ideas were relevant, all right. They were also all different. So much for that one! Then we tried various ideas about stars, but what star or stars could sum up fifteen years of trials and tribulations and triumphs for us? Country music has been long and varied even in just the fifteen years we've been covering it—and it goes back quite a ways before us, too. No matter who we picked or what collection of people we picked, who would we leave out? Or what would we seem to be saying by our omissions or commissions?

Back to square one. And maybe, just maybe, hidden in there in square one, was the kernel. Why not let each contributing editor, plus Rochelle, plus Helen, plus me, say whatever he or she liked on this occasion? Ah, that was a great one, and you see the results before you in this special anniversary section. Essays by each individual writer, plus a photo essay by Leonard Kamsler.

I also asked the editors to pick the Top 15 albums from 1972 to the



Tom T. is shocked...



Merle's amazed...



Hank and...



Kenny and...

present. You'll find these at the end of each essay, and thanks to my crack staff for assembling the wild and varied collection of album jackets to illustrate them. Once this album material was in, I couldn't resist getting my crack staff (again) to tabulate the results. That's how I came up with the Top 15 Artists based on Album Choices that you'll find on the last page of the section, along with my essay. In the next issue I will be making a hot sales offering—whatever I can find in Nashville to make available to you from among the editors' choices.

What about country music, itself, in this year of 1987? The essays say a lot about it. I'll have more to say myself, as the year rolls by. And I'll be printing your special letters that you sent in

about the 15th Anniversary, some in every issue from now until next September. If you haven't written yet, there's still time.

Now for our cover. Surely you've noticed there's something about it that's familiar and that rings true. If there were one star that we would say summed up for us the best of the best of the tradition of country music, it would be the Man in Black. He was on our first cover, he's been on many in between, his daughter was on our comeback issue in September 1983, and he is on this one.

Three important people deserve special mention. All of them were associated, along with me, with the very first days of *Country Music Magazine*. They are, Jack Killion, the first



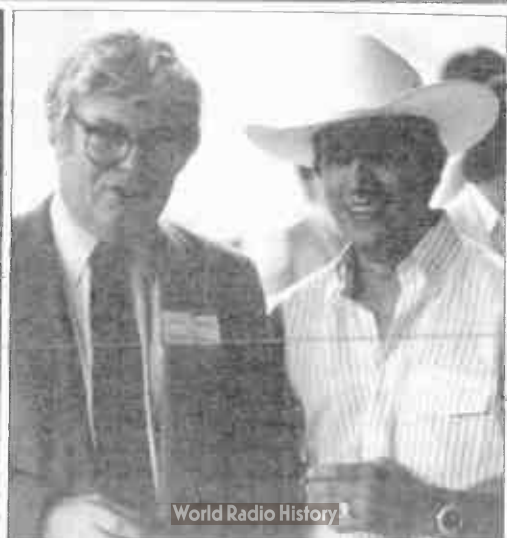
Jan, Rochelle, Helen, Tony, Jeanine, Annemarie, George, Norma, Olos, me, and seated, Margaret and Karen, with Germaine inset.



Further enterprising journalism proves that I can take my eyes off Dolly Parton and that George Strait never takes his hat off.



Investigative journalism wins again: we proved you can get Larry Gatlin's autograph.



World Radio History



Dolly are absorbed by *Country Music*



...while Cash and...



Burt prefer to wear it.

publisher of *Country Music Magazine*; Spencer Oettinger, Jack's and my partner at the time; and Leonard Mendelson, the company's first employee, whose task both then and now was and is to sell lots of ads for this magazine so that you, the subscribers, do not have to single-handedly pay all our salaries plus the printer's and the typesetter's bills. When I asked Leonard to pick his Top 15 advertisers, he said he couldn't—he he loved them all the same. Jack Killion is now in the horse business in New Jersey, and Spencer, whom we loved so well, died last year. We miss him badly.

So now I've covered pickers and writers, and some others, in honor of our 15th Anniversary. That leaves you, the readers. In

some ways you've changed, and I'll have more to say about that in issues to come this year. But in the most important ways, that we can see, you have remained the same. You love us when you think we're right and let us know when you think we're wrong, and most of all, you love your country music.

Together, as Readers, Writers and Pickers, we make this magazine. We are a close-knit group. That's also what we discovered when we did our Tenth Anniversary issue, so it's natural that this issue is similar. One thing is different, though. Then, Michael said, "No pictures of you and Johnny Cash." I fixed that this time.

Together let's salute our First Fifteen Years. Read on!



Ricky Skaggs and I rest up between sets at the Lone Star Cafe around 1981.

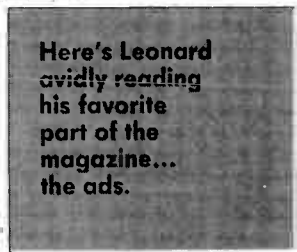
My daughter Anne went to FarmAid I with me. I took this photo to show "there's more pretty girls than one."



Board members: Norman Dolph keeps our computers running and Dan McNamee keeps me running.



Some people say I don't have any sense when it comes to Johnny Cash, but that's obviously not true. Here's John listening to my plan for us to capture Emmylou Harris and export her husband, Paul Kennerly, back to England.



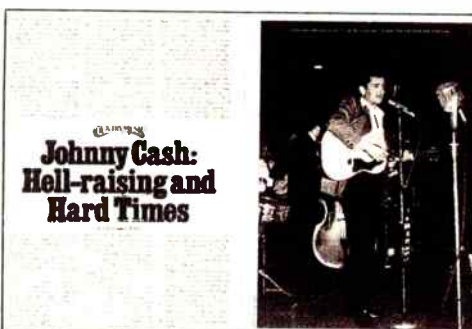
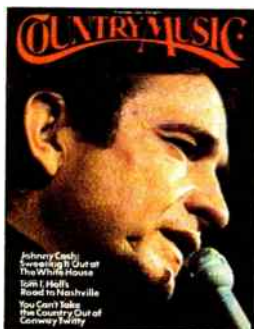
Here's Leonard avidly reading his favorite part of the magazine... the ads.



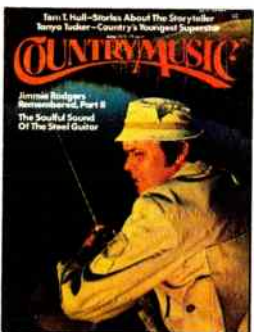
ST. WIDE-ST. LONGEST

15 Years of Stars and Stories

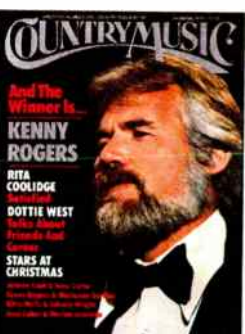
It would be nice to reprint all our favorite stories and pictures to remind ourselves of special moments in Country Music's 15 years and to share them with you. But we can't do that. So, here we offer some snapshots which we think visually tell the story of Country Music as a magazine.



JOHNNY CASH graced our first cover in 1972 and many more. We are proud to call **The Man in Black** our friend for all these years. **CONWAY TWITTY** could never believe we used this picture for a 1974 cover. We can't, either!



TOM T. HALL can fish in our pond anytime. His first cover dates from 1973, the story from the first issue in 1972. **DOLLY PARTON** helped us celebrate the bicentennial of our nation with this special cover in July 1976.

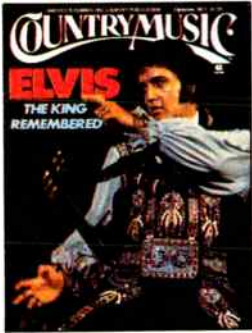


MINNIE PEARL and other stars helped the **GRAND OLE OPRY** celebrate 50 years in 1975. We did too. **KENNY ROGERS** took home many top CMA honors in 1979. **WAYLON JENNINGS** and the **OUTLAWS** were the talk of the town in 1977.



BARBARA MANDRELL has always been photogenic in our pages, never more so than in 1986 with son Nathaniel. **THE STATLER BROS.** were so good they won it all in 1981, then survived the loss of DeWitt and added Jimmy Fortune.

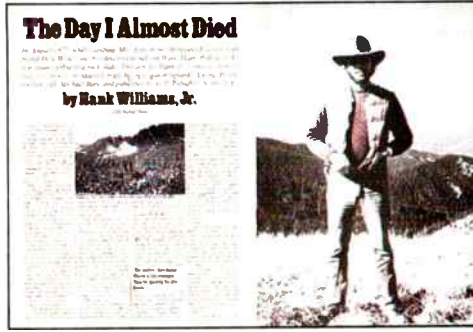
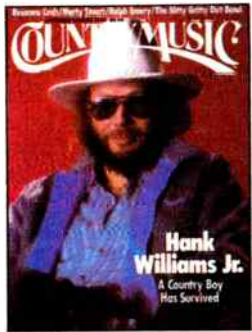




ELVIS PRESLEY rocked country music to its roots. When he died in 1977, we put out a special issue, and again in 1980. Elvis was honored by many writers but most of all by fans who loved his music.



ROY CLARK, a longtime friend of this magazine, starred in one of its famous centerfolds in 1976.



HANK WILLIAMS JR. tops lots of lists in 1986, with his rowdy friends and his famous last name. In 1979 he came back from death's door to tell the tale of his fall down the mountain.



TAMMY WYNETTE and GEORGE JONES talked it all over in this interview in 1981, after their d-i-v-o-r-c-e. RONNIE MILSAP's fabulous mixed music brought him fame and fortune and his first cover in 1976.



ERNEST TUBB's life touched many hearts, and after his death, stars and friends remembered him in a special issue in 1985. CHARLEY PRIDE was a special performer from the word go. He was justly proud of his success in 1979.



THE OAKS brought bounce to country music in 1979. ROSANNE CASH got us started in 1983. THE JUDDS tell how family can be fun in 1987. ALABAMA and country bands are big news in 1985.





Looking Forward to the Past: Is Today's 'New' Country Music Really All That New?

by Bob Allen

It's somehow fitting and certainly fortunate for us all that, as *Country Music* celebrates its fifteenth anniversary, the field of country music finds itself in the midst of a period of renewed optimism. In fact, one would have to go back to that wild and crazy era of the early 1970's, when Waylon and Willie were beginning to explode on the scene, and when this magazine was founded, in order to find another period when the music, as represented in its new artists, possessed such a degree of vitality and diversity and when the record labels were so enthusiastic about promoting it.

This is good news. Underlying all the praise that has been heaped on the newest generation of singer/songwriter prodigies—the Randy Travis/Steve Earle/Dwight Yoakam “brat pack”—however, there seems to be lack of perspective, something short-sighted in the way the inevitable cycles of recent music history are being viewed.

After all, the dusty journalistic annals and fan magazine back issues of the last decade and a half are filled with a hundred, perhaps a thousand, profiles of soon-to-be stars who, for some strange reason, never were. And our fifteenth anniversary, it seems to me, is an appropriate time to at least tip the hat to some of these people.

I really believe that, in many cases, these artists were casualties of the sort of over-zealous praise and superlative hype that we in this business are too prone to heap on those who may or may not truly be ready for it. Music journalists, after all, do get caught up in the heat of the moment like every-

one else. Most of the time we're all too afraid of missing the boat. We're all too eager to jump on the bandwagon and second each other's opinions, and to make and break legends before their time.

To say that there are dozens of artists who bit the dust and vanished from the scene after an album or two, who were every bit as talented as the latest batch of neophytes, is certainly not to downgrade the Steve Earles, Lyle Lovett's, Nanci Griffiths and Patty Lovelesses of the world. It's simply telling the truth. I mean, really, what happened to all those other new faces who've come and gone in the last fifteen years? What became of all those other, already-forgotten newcomers for whom all of us music writers, over the years, have trotted out our best sixty-five-dollar adjectives, artists we proclaimed as the greatest living hope for the future since Patsy Cline or Lefty Frizzell?

Who am I talking about? Well, I'll name a few for star-

ters—and this is just a few: Gary Stewart, Marshall Chapman, Lee Clayton, Steve Young, Joe Ely, Billy Swan, Tom Benjamin, Eddy Raven, James Talley, Billy Joe Shaver, Con Hunley, Marcia Ball, Steve Fromholz, Rusty Weir, Randy Gurley, Daryl McCall, The Silver City Band, Jimmy Hall, Lacy J. Dalton. I mean, hell, we believed in them all for at least as long as we were writing about them, or at least until the record companies made it clear it was time to pull out the rug and move on to the next soon-to-be great white wonder they'd invested a percentage in. I've still got fancy, custom-made, record company-paid t-shirts with these peoples' names on them, and record company bios full of glowing quotes, and even an occasional clip from *Time* Magazine to prove that we all believed in them...at least for a while.


I do not call up these semi-forgotten talents from the hoary past, many of whom are still doing well somewhere out

there beyond the blinding glow of entertainment media hype, in order to cast aspersions on the relative quality of our latest batch of much-heralded up-and-comers. Many of these earlier artists were—and, in most cases, still are—every bit as talented as this latest batch. Rather, this is my way of calling attention to the country music press' nearsighted style of reporting on fast-breaking talents. Perhaps, too, it's my way of lamenting our failure to offer any true perspective in this regard. And since I've been more or less making my living doing this very same thing for the past eight or nine years, pointing the finger at others in this line of work is pointing the finger at myself, as well.

So even though it may sound like I'm grinding the ax, maybe the sound you hear is just me grinding my own teeth. But I'll grind the ax—and my teeth—anyway. Here goes.

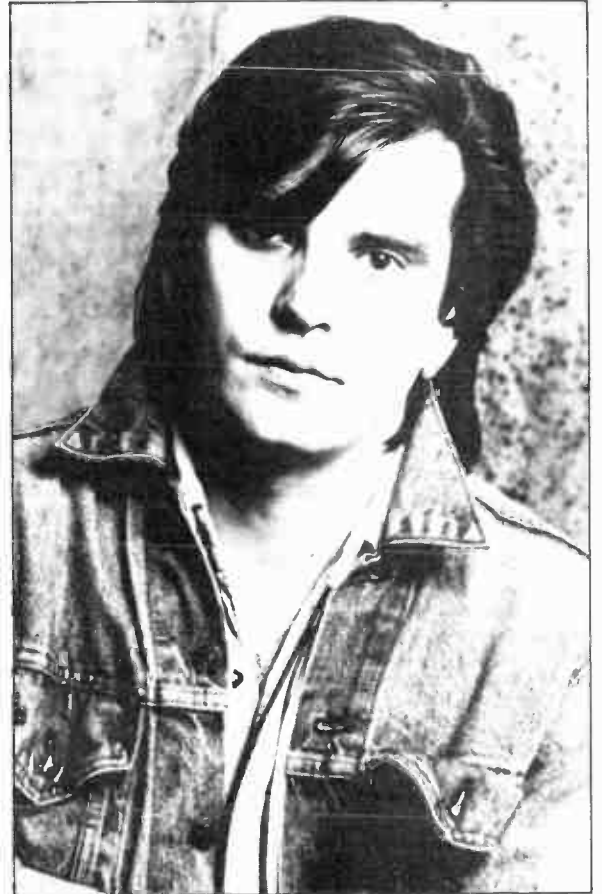
Too much of country music journalism—which is, in itself, a rather new field, which hardly existed until pioneering writers like Paul Hemphill (*The Nashville Sound: Bright Lights And Country Music*) and John Grissim (*Country Music: White Man's Blues*) stepped into the breach in the late 1960's—has simply never grown up. Too many writers in the field have never really learned the difference between journalism and Chamber of Commerce-style promotion. It's never dawned on them that a little bit of constructive, or even satirical, negative criticism of the music and its reigning royalty is sometimes necessary to help both the music and the industry grow.

What I'm talking about is the sort of “ga-ga-eyed,” slobberingly adoring brand of country music feature reportage which covers the entire



BOB ALLEN'S TOP 15

1. *Out of Hand*, Gary Stewart
2. *Border Affair*, Lee Clayton
3. *Old Five and Dimers Like Me*, Billy Joe Shaver
4. *Storms of Life*, Randy Travis
5. *Are You Ready For the Country?*, Waylon Jennings
6. *Whoever's in New England*, Reba McEntire
7. *Last of the True Believers*, Nanci Griffith
8. *Wild and Blue*, John Anderson
9. *Alone Again*, George Jones
10. *Serving 190 Proof*, Merte Haggard
11. *Joe Ely*, Joe Ely
12. *Blue Kentucky Girl*, Emmylou Harris
13. *Diamonds in the Rough*, John Prine
14. *Somewhere Between*, J.D. Crowe and The New South
15. *Lefty Frizzell, His Life, His Music*, Lefty Frizzell



Leading the pack of newcomers in the late 1980's are Randy Travis, Steve Earle and Dwight Yoakam. Will these and other members of the new generation stand up to the past?

critical spectrum—all the way from “wonderful,” to “more wonderful” and “wonderful-est.” This childish style of shrill, fawning, uptempo, defensive writing is too often indulged in by country music fan magazines (present company not always excluded) and by Nashville’s daily newspapers (the worst and most chronic offenders in this regard).

What I’m talking about is the sort of pom-pom-waving, fawning and largely indiscriminating sort of music coverage that seems aimed less at giving the general reader any sort of accurate perspective, and more at ensuring that the writer of the same stays on the record labels’ Christmas gift and party invite list. To read a steady diet of this garbage is kind of like getting cotton candy stuck between your teeth.

Such pseudo-journalism, which has about zero credibility beyond the small pond in which it makes ripples, is an exercise in mutual ego-stroking and self-delusion, and it commonly goes on between much of the Nashville press corps and the all-powerful Music Row record industry. The Nashville music industry is, in fact, one of the few places where a writer can rise from obscurity to quasi-celebrity status without ever having to master the basics of English grammar and syntax, as long as he or she is willing to play the game of cheerleader and court jester.

And I think, in the long run, this kind of coverage has hurt country music’s national credibility more than it has helped it. It is a style of coverage that has held back the overall growth of country music’s popularity with a wider and more discerning audience.

And, as I say, we’ve all been guilty of it while growing up with the music during the past fifteen years.

If there is any parting message here it is simply to thank all of you readers who have put up with these occasional indulgences, excesses, and fits of hyper-enthusiasm or hyper-negativity that we writers have occasionally suffered through while growing up and, hopefully, refining our craft in pub-

lic. And thanks, too, to all of you who’ve ever taken the time to write a letter to the editor and let us know about it. (Please—keep those letters coming; we need to hear from you.)

Looking back, it seems like I’ve been covering the music for half my life, though it’s not

really been that long. Back when I did my first piece for *Country Music*, I was still little more than another semi-starving, long-haired idealist of the 1970’s, still in my twenties. Now, I’m a semi-starving, post-idealist, stranded in the late 1980’s, with gray in my beard, on the precarious brink of becoming

middle aged.

Writing for this magazine is really the closest thing I’ve ever had during those years to a real sit-down job.

All in all, it’s been fun.

And maybe we’ll all get a little better at what we do by the time the next fifteen years have rolled around.

THE FIRST 15 YEARS



An Occurrence on Seven Bridges Road

by Michael Bane

I once had occasion to be on the Seven Bridges Road, a dull red sun inching up into a blank sky. I hadn’t slept in 24 hours or so, and the bitter tailings of the night’s Jack Black had turned my mouth to dirty cotton and my soul to flat gray lead. There was no traffic, no passing cars, not even a breeze to disturb the cathedral silence. The road twisted around a little hill, past oaks hung with cloaks of Spanish moss, down to a graveyard. In the distance, past the graveyard, was a locomotive switchyard, and I could hear the muted clanking of the trains. On that gray morning, it was about the loneliest sound I’d ever heard. Later, a singer I knew wrote this:

There are stars in the southern sky

Southward as you roam

There is moonlight and moss in the trees

Down the Seven Bridges Road...

There were secrets whispered on that road, but what was left of the whiskey burned them all away, snatches of almost heard melodies. Another time, another place, the same singer told me what it was like to live before my place and time, to wear the gray of the Confederacy, to fight and run and fight again until a Union minie ball sent your blood flowing into the rich southern dirt. I remembered the Seven Bridges Road and secrets I almost learned, and I said nothing.

It all came back to me one sunny afternoon, with the air conditioner humming and nothing stronger than the occasional club soda in the refrigerator. The album was titled *Wildwood Flower*, and I wanted to hear The Carter Family—June, Helen, Anita and now Carlene—sing again. I remembered first hearing The Carter Family, old scratchy records that belonged to my buddy Doug Marlette. I played them on my crummy portable record player, and the songs stayed with me in those first years on the road, occupying some special place on those long nights down the backroads.

So I popped the tape in the

expensive new Sony and ran fast-forward past “Wildwood Flower,” past “Banks of the Ohio,” past “Worried Man Blues” and pushed the button. The four voices twisted and twined, weaving a whole cloth of harmony so pure, so alive, that I was transfixed. The harmonies moved and flowed like the breezes, like the stitches of the mountain quilters following a thread that stretched back into other times and other places. There is moonlight, the family sang, and moss is in the trees. Down the Seven Bridges Road.

I felt the cold dew and tasted the sour tang of whiskey. Saw the flat gray dawn and heard, again, the clanking of the



MICHAEL BANE’S TOP 15

1. Hank Williams Jr. and Friends, *Hank Williams Jr.*
2. Whiskey Bent and Hell Bound, *Hank Williams Jr.*
3. Storms of Life, *Randy Travis*
4. Lone Justice, *Lone Justice*
5. Dreaming My Dreams, *Waylon Jennings*
6. Red Headed Stranger, *Willie Nelson*
7. Pieces of the Sky, *Emmylou Harris*
8. My Kind of Country, *Reba McEntire*
9. Old Number One, *Guy Clark*
10. Me, I’m Feelin’ Free, *Marshall Chapman*
11. A One A, *Jimmy Buffett*
12. The Sun Sessions, *Elvis Presley*
13. All I Want to Do in Life, *Jack Clement*
14. Big River, *Cast Album*
15. Wynonna and Naomi, *The Judds*



The Original Carter Family—Maybelle, Sara and A.P.—still inspire country hearts.

COUNTRY MUSIC FOUNDATION

trains. The generations of Carter voices stitched their quilt in the cool artificial air, and time rippled in the breeze.

After 13 or 14 years of knocking around country music, I've come to the unoriginal conclusion that time and music are locked together like the loops of a Wedding Ring quilt. Time lies lightly on the South, like the first touch of color on the autumn leaves. I've watched the mists settle in the Smoky Mountains, filling the hollows like gray reservoirs. I've heard the music in those mists, a banjo, a fiddle, a tantalizing hint of a woman's laughter. I've heard the wind move through the rivers of grass, a song that suggests the grace of the panther and the strength of warriors. I've stood on the high bluffs when the Mississippi

was low and looked out into the darkness, heard the tortured notes of a National steel guitar, blues lost in the night. I've walked the battlefields, felt the dirt trickle through my fingers, leaving the white-dusted lead weight of grapeshot resting in my palm. They, too, have their songs to sing.

There are songs rising from the watchfires of a hundred circling camps, the blues burned into the asphalt of a hundred forgotten backroads, the accordion sounds of the Louisiana bayous and the fiddles of the flat Texas plains, and, always, the high, lonesome sound of the mountains.

I was always going to do this, write about music, until I grew up. Until I found gainful employment. But somewhere along the way, I was seduced

not so much by a song as by the myths those songs create. Myths are the way we shoe-horn ourselves into the universe, and music is one of the ways we create myths. With music, we cast ourselves as actors on a very small stage. For those few minutes we become the Red Headed Stranger or a woman who walks the line, the cheater or the cheated upon, the lover or the loser. And, in a small way, the music changes us and shapes us and, I think, brings us a little closer together.

Maybe. Or maybe it's just background noise in a honky tonk, another Saturday night when you ain't got nobody. Doesn't matter—the songs go on whether we choose to listen to them or not. As they've always gone on. That's about

the only thing I've learned from all those years. The songs are there, as much a part of the landscape as the live oaks and moss along the Seven Bridges Road. All you have to do is listen.

"There are stars in the southern sky," the voices sing, *a capella* harmony. "And if ever you decide you should go... There is a taste of time, sweet as honey, down the Seven Bridges Road..."

I would like to dedicate this essay to the memory of my grandparents, Roscoe Bane—fisherman, farmer, connoisseur of fine moonshine—and Madgeline Bane—mill worker, mother, maker of the finest banana pudding in the world—who cast off this veil of illusions in the year of our lord, 1986.



Country music, the thread that weaves the generations together. Mother Maybelle Carter in the 1970's, top left. June, Maybelle, Anita and Helen in their heyday, right. June, Carlene, Helen and Anita in the 1980's, clockwise, bottom left.



COUNTRY MUSIC FOUNDATION

CMSA NEWSLETTER OF THE COUNTRY MUSIC SOCIETY OF AMERICA SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 1987—HELEN BARNARD, EDITOR

Newsletter

REVIEWS & FEATURES

Potpourri

Like a potpourri blend of spring and summer flowers, this *Newsletter* has a little bit of a lot of things. First, the word from Rich Kienzle on how to locate records that are hard to find in K-Mart or the record chains. We know a lot of you are going to like this one. Then, we have word from the West Coast—how Los Angeles went cowboy for one day, with the first Country Scene

festival. Will it become an annual event? Third, we have a timely Legends piece on something else that came out of Los Angeles a long time ago. The Original Sons of the Pioneers got their start in the City of Angels. After 54 years and many changes in line-up, they're still going strong, performing now in Branson, Missouri, and Tucson, Arizona. Plus follow-ups on other *Newsletter* items. Enjoy the blend!

Kienzle's Guide to Buying Old Records

Digging up old records can be quite a challenge. Here are Rich Kienzle's suggestions for how to unearth those precious pieces of gold. Happy hunting!

A Few Givens

- Chain store operations tend to handle only current popular releases.
- Cassettes and compact discs are squeezing even the most popular albums quickly off the shelves.

Helpful Hints

In spite of the squeeze, there are places you can go. You may find what you want for \$1.99 or it may cost you \$10-\$12.

- *Flea markets, swap meets and thrift shops* often stock old 78's, 45's, albums, 8-tracks and even cassettes at dirt-cheap prices. Check condition of stock carefully before you buy.
- *Record store budget bins* can yield deletions—discontinued items that are brand new.
- *Mail order auctions* provide access to things you can't find close to home. Write to the dealer for his list (dealers' names listed below). If you see something you want, submit your bid by mail—more on

how to be a successful bidder below. You will be notified, also by mail, if yours was the winning bid. Bill will include charges for insurance and handling. Send your payment and the record will be mailed.

- *Set sales* are more rigid than auctions. Write the dealer for his list. Prices will be included. In a set sale, speed is important. A long distance call can make the difference between getting what you want and losing it.

Tips on Mail Order Bidding

- Familiarize yourself with *the grading system*. Top dealers will stand behind their grading.
 - Mint (M)* means wear-free, often never played.
 - Excellent (E)* shows few signs of wear.
 - Very Good (VG)* shows some wear, but not enough to interfere with the music.
 - Good (G)* indicates more wear and probably a fair amount of surface noise.

Fair (F) and *Poor (P)*—many dealers won't sell these.

Plus and *minus* signs indicate variations in condition.

All records should play skip-free.

- *Standard pricing*—forget this, folks; there's no such thing. I've gone as high as \$10 or \$20 for something I've wanted.
- *Add a few cents* to your bid—\$23.67 may make you a winner if your bid and another are close.
- *Know the record* that you're looking for. Dealers don't accept returns.
- *Pay up* when you win. Otherwise you'll never get another list.
- *Money orders* will speed your winnings to you faster. Dealers who don't know you won't ship till your check clears.

Trials and Tribulations

- Occasionally disreputable dealers cash checks and don't send merchandise. If this happens, contact your local postmaster.
- Every now and then a dealer will accept a later bid and return your check to you. This is disappointing, but at least you've got your money back.

Independent Record Stores

These stores have often been in business for 20-30 years and hold on to older stock.

In This Issue

- Locating Old Records
- Los Angeles Goes Country
- Sons of the Pioneers
- Collections



Alabama may be easy, but some of these are hard to find.

Those who don't live near one can deal by mail.

- Send an *accurate want list*. Dealers don't have time for inquiries such as, "I don't remember the title, but the words go..." Save those for CMSA Q & A.
- Don't be discouraged. Stocks change constantly.
- These stores are often colorful. See two that are new to me featured in this issue.

Dealers and Stores:

These folks have good stocks and are thoroughly reliable. All do auctions.

- **Keith Kolby, 6604 Chapel Lane, Fort Worth, Texas 76135**, was a drummer for Hank Thompson and George Jones. He has all types of country but specializes in Western swing and honky tonk. Keith's store, *The Record Finder*, is at 4051 Denton Highway, Fort Worth. Kolby is

reliable, knowledgeable and honest—and he knows what the good stuff's worth.

- **Jack's Record Cellar, 254 Scott Street, San Francisco, California 94117**, was run by the legendary Bay Area recordman *Norm Pierce* from 1951 until his death in 1983. His protege *Jeff Richardson* now carries on with partner *Wade Wright*. They handle mail order and over-the-counter sales and plan future auctions.
- **Craig Moerer, Box 19231, Portland, Oregon 97219**, has some superb auction and set sale lists. If you like country and rockabilly, Craig comes up with some real rarities. And when Craig says it's mint, it's *mint*.
- **Eugene Earle, Box 4755, Carson, California 90749**, is one of the best-known dealers in vintage country records in the entire world. He sends out regular auction lists.

- **Village Music, 9 East Blithedale, Mill Valley, California 94941**, maintains a constant stock of older country albums as well as rare rock, jazz, blues, etc. Their business is mainly walk-in, but on mail orders I've found them totally reliable.

Valuable Reference Guide:

- **Jerry Osborne's *Country Music Buyers-Sellers Reference Book and Price Guide*** lists nearly 15,000 albums and extended-play 45's, complete with info on year of release, catalog number, biographical notes and pricing for M and VG versions. Pricing on rare ones is often low, but the book's worthwhile.

It all comes down to educating yourself and dealing with the reputable sellers. If you know a dealer or an independent record store you've been happy with, let the *Newsletter* know.

Big Source in Big Spring

The Record Shop in Big Spring, Texas, is a favorite of member JoEtta Hart. We're grateful to her for bringing it to our attention and to Eddie Curran of the Big Spring Herald for photos and information.

The Record Shop was founded in 1942 by Oscar Glickman. Oscar did not believe in

record returns, and he never threw anything away. On the main floor of the shop today are 10,000 albums. Some 40,000 more are ranged in the basement below, not to mention another 60,000 on the main floor—all 45's. All the records are new.

Oscar died in 1984. The shop's run now by his widow Bobbie and son Jake. The

huge collection covers all kinds of music. "This would be a very good place to write, call or visit," JoEtta Hart, also of Big Spring, says. "They do lots of mailouts all over the world."

When Eddie Curran, staff writer for the *Big Spring Herald*, interviewed Bobbie Glickman not long ago, she told him that artists who visit the store—and many do, as well as collectors from all over the world—all do the same thing. "Take it from me," she says, "every artist—and I don't care who they are—they're going to look at their records." Some of her famous visitors over the years include Eddie Albert, Elvis, Jerry Lee Lewis and The Jefferson Airplane.

Jake and Bobbie are carrying on. Every now and then Jake comes across an album he didn't even know was there. But he's sure his father knew. —H.B.



The Record Shop in Big Spring, Texas, was founded by Oscar Glickman in 1942. That's Oscar, above, in his stacks. Son Jake and widow Bobbie, inset, carry on the store today.

Write to **The Record Shop at 211 Main Street, Big Spring, Texas 79721.**



HISTORIC PHOTOS



Brenda Lee in 1956.

Thanks to those who responded to our request for historic photos in the May/June Newsletter. Our favorite was this 1956 photo of Brenda Lee, sent in by William G. Prentice of Hayward, California. It was taken in Denver, Colorado, where Brenda was performing with a show.

Anyone else out there have a photo that they would like to share? All prints will be returned.

MAY POLL

Album and Single of the Month

Randy Travis *Storms of Life*
George Strait "Ocean Front Property"

Another first for the boy from North Carolina! Randy Travis has just won Album of the Month in the CMSA Poll for the third time in a row, first time for any artist, with his indomitable *Storms of Life*. George Strait is second with *Ocean Front Property* and Reba McEntire third with *What Am I Gonna Do About You?*

George Strait's "Ocean Front Property" single is the May singles winner, with four more contenders closely packed, only one vote apart, vying for second. In order, they are: Kenny Rogers, "Twenty Years Ago"; Dolly Parton, Linda Ronstadt and Emmylou Harris, "To Know Him Is to Love Him"; George Jones, "The Right Left Hand"; and Alabama, "You've Got the Touch." Reba's in third with "Let the Music Lift You Up."

July Poll results also appear in this issue. Check it out!

Bright Light in Louisville

King's Record Shop in Louisville, Kentucky, run by Gene King, Pee Wee King's brother, has survived for years in what Gene calls an "undesirable" neighborhood. Now it's been thrust into the limelight by Rosanne Cash and CBS Records.

Gene King has been waiting to be urban renewed for years. In 1960, he bought the store from a drummer whose family ran it while he was on the road and started building his collection. "It takes years, you know," he says, pleasantly, "to amass a collection like what I have here." He's never revamped the store, because he always expected the bulldozer to be coming through his front window soon.

Despite the neighborhood, Gene has plenty of visitors—collectors from all over the world and artists looking for their own material. Just the other day, he made a \$150 sale to two visitors from Germany, and Marty Robbins, when he was alive, came to Gene looking for his own records which he could not find in Nashville.

When Rosanne Cash was working on her latest album, she saw a photo of King's

Record Shop taken by Nashville musician Hank de Vito. The idea of the shop worked its way into her thinking and its name became the title of the album.

Gene welcomes the publicity he is receiving in connection with Rosanne's *King's Record Shop*. He says Pee Wee and Johnny Cash are friends.

In addition to tending his customers and his collection, Gene is the most sought-after judge around for country music contests and has been, in his area, for the last ten years. He's done the Marlboro and Wrangler contests as well as, most recently, the Philip Morris, and innumerable smaller contests in local clubs.

Gene does not do record auctions, but he does welcome mail order requests from other fans and collectors. If he ever gets urban-renewed, he has an idea for a unique new type of store—the exact plan is a secret right now. —H.B.

Write to King's Record Shop at 240 West Jefferson Street, Louisville, Kentucky 40202. Phone: 502-JU4-5535.



King's Record Shop in Louisville struck Rosanne Cash's fancy so much, she made it the title of her new album and held a party in the store in early summer. Gene King, inset, welcomes the publicity.



Looking For Life Stories

Loranda Sam Daniels' contribution to the March/April Newsletter piqued my curiosity. Since I am starting research for a writing project—which hopefully will be a publishable novel—I am asking for help from other members who are currently working country musicians.

I'd like to hear from those who are ambitious, hoping to work their way up to stardom, and also from those who are in it just because they love the music and love to perform. If there are performers

who have been discovered, who have worked their way from the lounge to a shot at Nashville and the big time? That is the plot I am toying with, but what's the reality?

Any and all letters will be gratefully accepted. Loranda Sam, if you have anything you want to add to your earlier story, it will be welcome.

Thanks for your help.

Jim Alexander
947 Paularino Avenue
Costa Mesa, California 92626



Freddy Fender, Charley Pride and Gary Morris kept the crowds hopping, but there were plenty of amateurs around, too. The LAPD fit right in on horseback.

Country Music Goes West

Country music hasn't "gone Hollywood," but Los Angeles is getting into the "Country Scene." CMSA member Timothy Tanaka was one of the lucky Californians to attend L.A.'s Country Scene '87, and was good enough to fill us in on the details.

Attention, CMM! Talk about eye saw! Los Angeles, California, had its first country music festival, Country Scene '87. It was a two-day show, Saturday, April 4th and Sunday, April 5th. Saturday had a pretty good crowd, Sunday was wall to wall people. Country Scene '87 was said to be the brainchild of L.A. City Councilman Joel Wachs and put together by Sylvia Cunliffe with Mayor Tom Bradley's blessing. There was a chili cook-off, there were square dancers and cloggers showing their stuff under a tent. There were a couple of cowboy poets and some quick draw cowboys. They had carnival rides and games for the kids, souvenir shirts, etc.

The food was okay, but left plenty to be desired. They were professional food service outfits that handled the task. Barbecued ribs, hot dogs and burgers were good, but foods like beef teriyaki and egg rolls were terrible. The three booths were run by Vietnamese or Thai. In my opinion, food like beef teriyaki and eggrolls taste best when made by the Japanese and Chinese. So much for playing Elmer Dills (Food Critic, Channel 7, KABC *Eyewitness News*, Los Angeles).

Even cops (LAPD) can be cowboys as evidenced by the enclosed picture—how about that! There were many well known country music performers, due to the Academy of Country Music Awards show at Knott's Berry Farm. Lucky for all country music lovers in L.A.

Eye saw the whole thing, eye took pictures and eye sent some to you guys to show readers across the country what Los Angeles can do when we get the notion,

which by the way, was planned on sort of short notice (one month), not a year in advance, but there's talk of doing another one in 1988.

Anyhow, here are pictures of Freddy Fender, Gary Morris, Restless Heart, Ricky Skaggs, Earl Thomas Conley, Johnny Paycheck, Larry, Steve, and Rudy—The Gatlin Brothers—and Charley Pride, who also brought out his son Dion for a duet. The crowd went wild! Then Charley said, "Let him get his own show," but the crowd kept on so he let Dion do one more number.

Lee Greenwood was very good, and if anyone told you Lee can't play Yakety Sax, they told you wrong. There were three stages—Cactus (main), Tumbleweed and Klondike. I had a really good time along with everyone else.

L.A. City did have help from country radio stations KZLA/FM 93.9 and KLAC/AM 570. Maybe next year you guys at CMM could get involved and make it



Square dances for oldsters, ponyrides for youngsters, while Lee Greenwood got hot on that "yakety sax." A native American and friend joined in the fun at L.A.'s first Country Scene held this past April.

really big, maybe even a west coast version of Fan Fair. What do you think?

One more thing, this was all done at Hansen Dam in the L.A.-San Fernando Valley, with bridle path accessibility for cowboys who want to ride in.

Timothy Tanaka
South Pasadena, California

Bob Guerra, Program Director of KZLA, told us the non-violent reputation of country music fans helped get the Country Scene event approved. He hopes this and future festivals will stimulate country music listeners throughout Southern California.

He also reports that Country Scene '88 is in the planning stages. —Ed.

Two-Step to the Stars Puzzle Results

Congratulations to all who submitted answers to Wanda J. Watson Pirani's puzzle in the May/June Newsletter. It was a tough one, and you all deserve to be commended. Now for the results:

—Vivian Griffith of Wisner, Louisiana, was the first to submit a completed puzzle. All your answers were correct, Vivian, but you forgot to circle "Uncle" along with Dave Macon in the

second part of the puzzle. Nevertheless, congratulations on your first place!

—For second and third place, we have a tie. We received answers from Verda Rasmussen of Worland, Wyoming, and Bettye Graham of Salem, Oregon, on the same day. Congratulations, ladies! But Bettye, you did the same thing as Vivian! Where's the "Uncle"?

Thanks again to Wanda for submitting this great puzzle.

JULY POLL

Album and Single of the Month

Randy Travis *Storms of Life*
Randy Travis "Forever and Ever, Amen"

And July makes it four in a row for Randy Travis! He wins again, CMSA Album of the Month, with *Storms of Life*. George Strait is second with *Ocean Front Property* and Reba McEntire third with *What Am I Gonna Do About You?* Album results are the same as the May Poll.

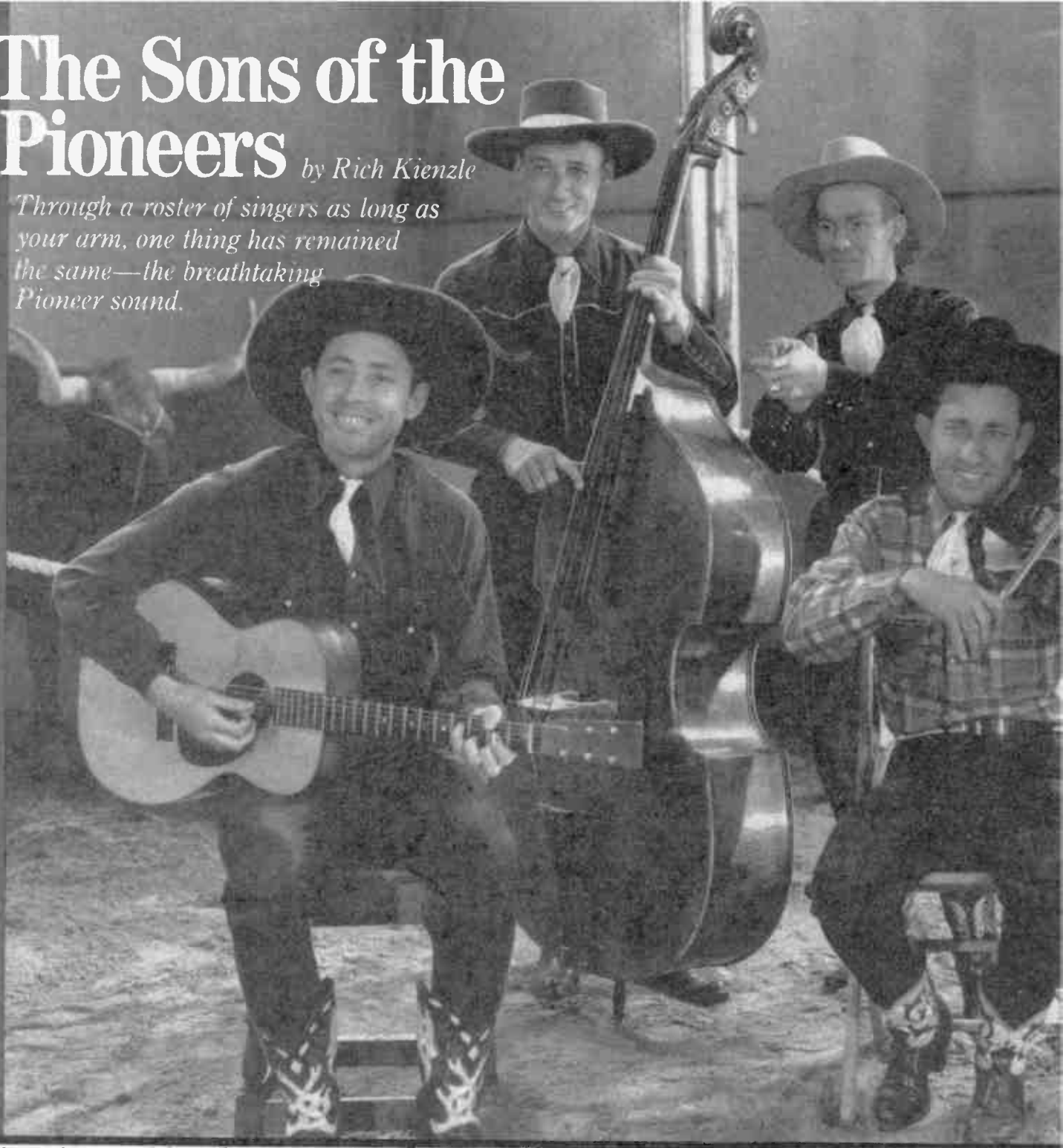
In singles, Randy Travis also wins this month, with "Forever and Ever, Amen." George Strait, May's singles winner, goes down to second place with "All My Ex's Live in Texas." Honky tonker Moe Bandy is in third with "Til I'm Too Old to Die Young" with Dwight Yoakam close behind in fourth singing "Little Sister."

Don't forget the September Poll on the For Members Only page in this issue.

The Sons of the Pioneers

by Rich Kienzle

Through a roster of singers as long as your arm, one thing has remained the same—the breathtaking Pioneer sound.



Original Pioneers (left to right) Karl Farr, Bob Nolan, Tim Spencer, Hugh Farr and Len Slye created an unforgettable sound.

In 1993 there will undoubtedly be a western vocal group called the Sons of the Pioneers, still singing “Cool Water” and “Tumbling Tumbleweeds” as they celebrate their 60th anniversary. As of today, barely 30 men have been through their ranks, an amazingly low turnover for a 54-year-old act.

It's easy to take the Pioneers for granted since their sound is so ingrained in our consciousness. They weren't hit artists in the conventional sense, yet their three original members were true innovators

who created a western music unlike anything preceding it. That style helped define the idiom and inspired countless imitators, among them Andy Parker and the Plainsmen, the Riders of the Purple Sage and others. *The Nashville Network's Riders in the Sky*, who've created their own western identity, took their name from the title of one of their best known songs.

John Morthland summarized the Pioneer sound in his book *The Best of Country Music*. “(They) triumphed through a combination of Bob Nolan's rich, evocative

songwriting and creamy-smooth harmonies that went *very* easy on the ear.” Decca, their first record company, may have dubbed them a “hillbilly” act, but today no one thinks of them as anything but the epitome of quality western music.

Their founder, Len Slye, was born in 1911 in Cincinnati. He moved to California during the Depression, where he drove a truck and picked peaches before beginning his musical career in 1931 as part of an instrumental group known as the Rocky Mountaineers. He convinced the Moun-



COURTESY COUNTRY MUSIC FOUNDATION

since. Among the first songs they learned was Nolan's now-classic "Tumbling Tumbleweeds."

They called themselves the Pioneer Trio in the fall of 1933 when they began performing with the Texas Outlaws over KFVB radio in Los Angeles. After their version of the western classic "The Last Roundup" caught the listeners' attention, the station gave them their own program.

In early 1934, realizing they needed more instrumental depth, they hired fiddler Hugh Farr, who could play both country and jazz. Shortly afterward a KFVB announcer, noting their youth, introduced them as the *Sons of the Pioneers*. The name didn't particularly please them at first, but after thinking about it, they stuck with it.

By 1935 they were recording for Decca. "Tumbleweeds" was the second song they tried during their first session. They also recorded the first of many radio transcriptions that would bear their name. To meet the challenges of recording, they needed another good instrumentalist. They found one in Farr's brother Karl, a fine guitarist who influenced Hank Snow and Willie Nelson among others. As if recording weren't enough, the group also made its first film appearance in 1935, in *Radio Scout*, the first of 98 films they would appear in from then through 1962.

So much exposure spread their popularity far beyond Los Angeles. In 1936, they appeared with Bing Crosby in *Rhythm on the Range*, and shortly thereafter added one more singer, Lloyd Perryman, to the lineup.

The fall of 1937 brought further changes. They'd just switched from Decca to ARC (which later became Columbia), when Gene Autry, America's top movie cowboy, got into a contract hassle with Republic Pictures. Republic Pictures threatened to find a new singing cowboy, Len Slye auditioned, got the job and in October signed with Republic under a new name—Roy Rogers. Singer/comedian/bassplayer Pat Brady, who later appeared on Rogers' TV show, replaced Slye in the Pioneers.

The Pioneers inspired imitators who went on to make their own contributions to western music. In Oklahoma City, singer Johnny Bond formed a trio with vocalists Jimmy Wakely and Dick Reinhardt. In 1940 they linked up with Gene Autry and moved to California. Wakely later became a country music and western film legend while Bond, a successful recording artist in his own right, penned such lasting western

standards as "Cimarron (Roll On)."

From 1941 to late 1943, the Pioneers once again recorded for Decca. At the outset of World War II, Perryman and Brady were drafted and temporarily replaced (one replacement, bassist Shug Fisher, stayed on after the war). They stopped recording commercially in 1944 but performed on radio and at military bases and joined Roy Rogers for 23 western films (they did others with him after the war). In 1945, as the war was ending, they signed a new recording contract with RCA Victor. That August, in Hollywood, they recorded their original version of Bob Nolan's enduring "Cool Water."

Brady and Perryman rejoined the group after their discharges. For the next three years things were in high gear. Tim Spencer left in 1949, replaced by ex-big band singer Ken Curtis. Ironically, the debonair Curtis later became famous for his portrayal of the mangy, unshaven Festus Hagen on TV's *Gunslinger*.

According to Pioneers authority Ken Griffis, Bob Nolan almost rejected another of the group's signature tunes during this period. When a songwriter submitted "Riders in the Sky," Nolan apparently complained that the melody was too close to "When Johnny Comes Marching Home." But the others liked it. Their dramatically arranged version, recorded in 1949, became a Pioneer standard. At the same session they recorded Tim Spencer's "Room Full of Roses." More personnel changes followed, yet in some mysterious way *the group* remained the same. Brady left, shortly after Curtis joined, and Nolan followed. At this point none of the original members remained. Former Bob Wills singer Tommy Doss replaced Nolan.

Today the six-man group, composed of Luther Nallie, Sunny Spencer, Roy Lanham, Gary Foster, Tommy Nallie and senior member Dale Warren, has cut back on national tours. They divide most of their time between Branson, Missouri, where they appear through the summer and early fall at the Foggy River Boys Theater, and their new ranch, the Triple C, in Tucson, Arizona, where they perform nightly December 27-May 1. Lanham has been ill and may retire, but the group as a whole is looking forward to their 55th Anniversary next year.

Through all the personnel changes the group has undergone, the one constant has been the breathtaking Pioneer vocal sound. The texture has changed over the years as singers have come and gone, but the spirit is much as it was when they began 54 years ago. The Sons of the Pioneers didn't need hits. They are an institution, a part of Americana that will endure, perhaps forever. ■

tainers to let him form a vocal trio within the group, made up of himself and newcomers Bob Nolan and Tim Spencer. Eventually the trio left the fold and affiliated first with one act, then with another, going nowhere each time.

Nolan returned to a fulltime job, but Slye and Spencer lured him away from his work to try performing again—this time they concentrated on building a sound of their own. Weeks of intense rehearsals perfected the rich, cohesive vocal harmonies that have characterized the group ever

Albums Available

A wealth of material exists. See For CMSA Members Only page in this issue for how to order.

COLLECTIONS

Collecting the Magazine
Here's your chance to help fellow members complete their collections or to complete your own.

● I have March, August, September, October and December of 1973. I also have all of 1974 (except for October 1974 which wasn't printed), all of 1975, 1976, 1977, 1978, 1979 and 1980. I have 1981 through September. I have January/February of 1982. I also have September/October and November/December of 1983. I have all of 1984, 1985, and all of 1986 except for September/October, and I have 1987 to present. Anyone needing all or any of my collection can get it very reasonably. Almost all issues are in good to very good condition. **Mark Focke, 7261 Pippin Road, Cincinnati, Ohio 45239.**

● I subscribed to *Country Music Magazine* before there was a Charter Member deal. By this time I have quite a collection. I have the December issue for 1973, January through July for 1974, all but January, February, and March for 1977, all issues from 1978, 1979, and 1980. For 1981, I have January through September. For 1982, I have just the January and February issues. For 1983 I have September, October, November and December. I have all the issues from 1984 and 1985, and all but the May/June issue from 1986. For 1987, I have the January/February and March/April issues. I also have the Memorial Issue to Elvis.

I also have many *Country Song Round-up* issues, also *Music City News*. I will sell if anyone is interested and will pay a reasonable price. **Ruth Long Coulter, R.R. 3, Box 321, Lawrenceville, Illinois 62439.**

● I need Preview, and September through December, 1972; January, March, April, June and July of 1973; May and October through December of 1981 (Updated Hank Williams Jr.).

If anyone has these issues, please write to me. Or if anyone is interested in my collection, I

will take the best offer. **Mrs. Robert L. Carter, Star Route 1, Box 4970, Tallahassee, Florida 32304.**

● I have for sale *Country Music Magazines* from 1973 to 1986 if anyone is interested. Good condition. **F.E. Oswald, 711 Carl Avenue, Altoona, Pennsylvania 16602.**

● I would like to know if anyone has a back issue of *Country Music Magazine*, June 1976, with Charlie Rich on the cover. I would very much like to purchase one, if anyone has one for sale. **Mary Heaps, 50638 Lilac Road, South Bend, Indiana 46628.**

We're Happy To Help

Leona Hargraves' letter in the March/April Newsletter drew responses from all over.

● Thank you so much for printing my letter in your magazine. I had looked for years for a record, "Temptation" (comedy version). Through your printing my letter, I have received letters from fourteen different people all over the United States. I have been able to purchase three tapes and have made many new friends. Also wrote to the lady in New Zealand who wanted a pen pal.

Keep up the good work, we appreciate you. **Leona Hargraves, Phoenix, Arizona.**

Information, Please

Write to these members directly if you have what they need or need what they have.

● I would like to locate a tape or record of *Best of Tennessee Yodeler Margo Smith*. Also would like to replace a broken 45 of Porter Wagoner on RCA Victor, "Haven't You Heard," number 47-7279, or any record of his with this song on it. Would also like a Ray Price *Collector's Choice* on Columbia Records' Harmony label HL7372 and H511172. **Mrs. Burtis Robertson, R.3, Columbus Junction, Iowa 52738.**

● I have been trying to get albums of Harry and Jeannie West and Marty Robbins. The songs most wanted are "Little Rosewood Casket" and Marty's version of "One Day at a Time." **Sarah E. Cupp, P.O. Box**

183, Bieber, California 96009.

● If anyone knows how I can get some recordings of DeFord Bailey (died in 1982), I would like anything I can get. Or anything of anyone else who plays a harmonica like he did. I'm particularly interested in the tunes "Lost John" and "Freight Train Blues."

Jim Tidwell, 26648 Cornell, Hemet, California 92344.

● I would like to obtain records, tapes, books, photographs, articles, magazines, or anything else concerning Janie Fricke. I need to finish my collection of her records and the ones I need are: *Singer of Songs, From the Heart* and *Nice 'N' Easy* (with Johnny Duncan.) All of these are on the Columbia label. I would also like to be a pen pal. I'm in the Army, and I need letters to help pass the time. **Chris DiFlauro 5005 Tetons Drive, El Paso, Texas 79904.**

● I am interested in securing a 45 r.p.m. record of "What Kind of Deal is This" by Bill Carlisle. **William D. Immel, Box 157-C, R.D. #8, Greensburg, Pennsylvania 15601.**

● I am seeking a record or a tape of a record made by Texas Jim Robertson, vintage 1939 or 1940, "All the Things That Might Have Been." This recording was on the juke boxes, at least in Texas and New Mexico, during that period of time. **George B. Miller, 4817 N. 11th Avenue, Phoenix, Arizona 85013.**

● I am looking for anything on Dolly Parton. Have a large collection to sell or trade and will buy almost anything of Dolly, especially albums, magazines, fan club journals, books, articles, photos, etc. **Frank Echols, 759 Fern Street, Yeadon, Pennsylvania 19050.**

● I would like to buy the album *My Baby's Gone* by The Louvin Brothers (Capitol T1385). I would also like to buy a copy of the 45 r.p.m. "Honky Tonk Girl" by Loretta Lynn. **Vern Kongslie, P.O. Box 234, Towner, North Dakota 58788.**

● I am looking for the following songs from anyone who has

them and will make me a tape. I will mail them a blank tape or send money for the tape: "Jimmie Rodgers Blues" by Elton Britt, "Sing Me a Sad Song, Hank Williams" (artist unknown) and "Wonder If God Loves Country Music" by Bill Anderson and Roy Acuff. Also would like some information on where I can purchase some Hylo Brown records or tapes. **Jana Burton, 4805 Condit Road, Sunbury, Ohio 43074.**

● I am trying to find out who first wrote and recorded "Silver Dew On the Blue Grass." It was popular during WW II, and goes, "Soldier boy, far from me, how I wish that you could see, silver dew on the blue grass tonight." **Ellen White, P.O. Box 102, Prairie Home, Missouri 65068.**

● I need a record of *Country Guitar* by Bill Ball. Can anyone help me find it? **Dorothy Mae Page, 37 Center Street, Salinas, California 93905.**

Pen Pals

Make new friends by writing.

● I'm in the U.S. Air Force, stationed in Kunsan, South Korea, on a one-year tour. Over here we practice defending South Korea from the threat of North Korea. Sometimes we work twelve to fourteen hours a day, for up to two weeks, wearing chemical and war gear. At the end of a simulated war, they play "God Bless the U.S.A" by Lee Greenwood over the loud speakers. The song gives everybody who's tired and worn out a burst of energy and a reason for being here. It's still Number One to me.

Anyone interested in writing me, please do. I'm a 26-year old, white male who loves to western dance. Over here a letter is the next best thing to hearing an American voice. **Sgt. Wes Fields, PSC Box 1085, A.P.O. San Francisco, 96264-0006.**

To submit material to the Newsletter, write Country Music Magazine, 342 Madison Avenue, Suite 2118, New York, New York 10173. Mark envelope, Attention: Newsletter. Include membership number.



MERLE TRAVIS



BILL MONROE



CHARLIE DANIELS



TANYA TUCKER

THE FIRST 15 YEARS

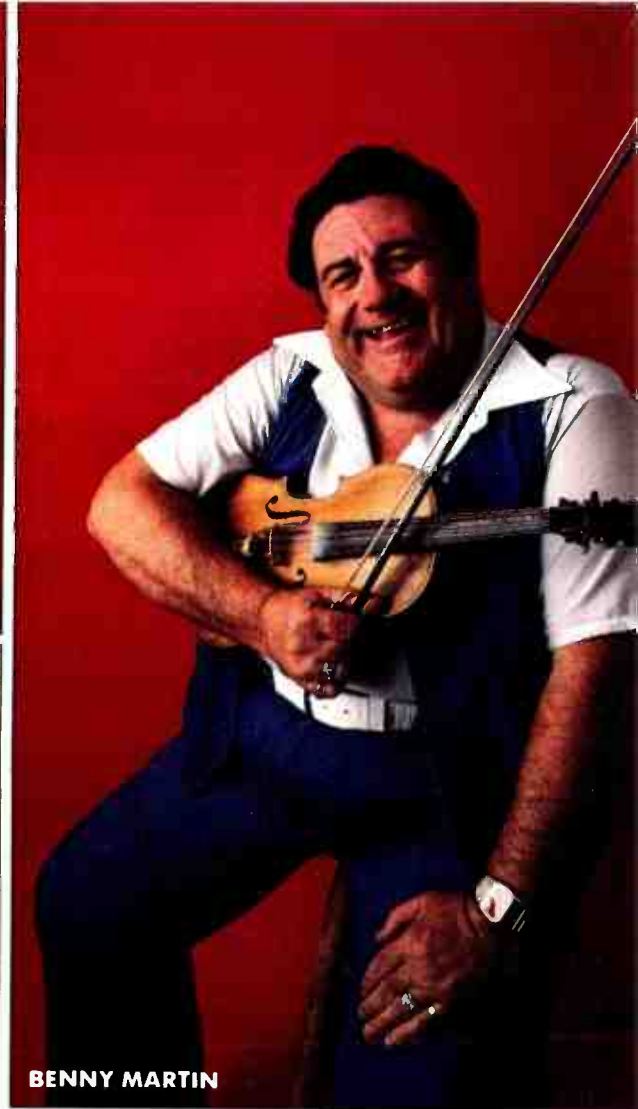


Photographic Memories

by Leonard Kamsler



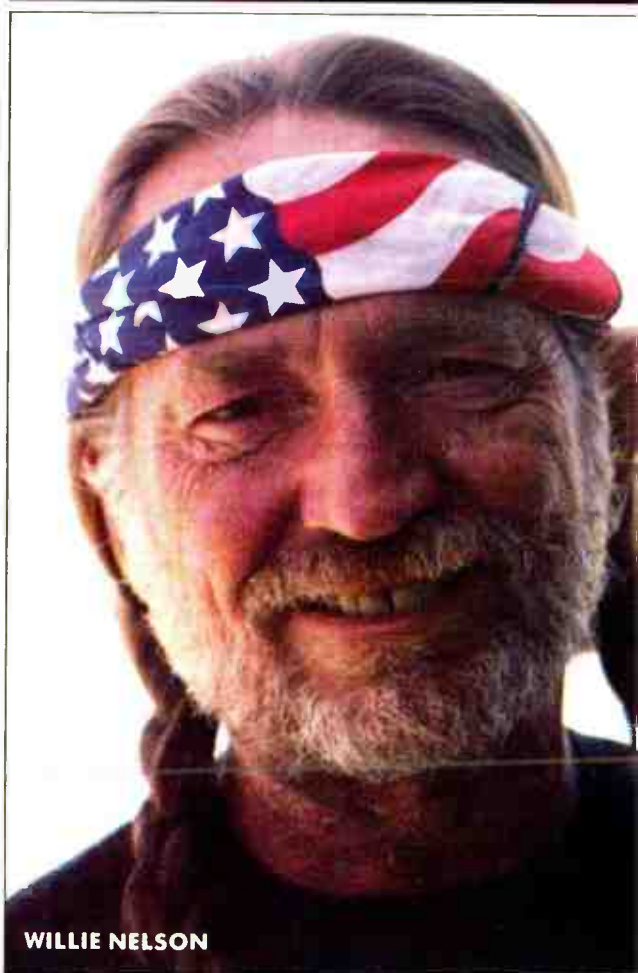
DAVID ALLAN COE



BENNY MARTIN



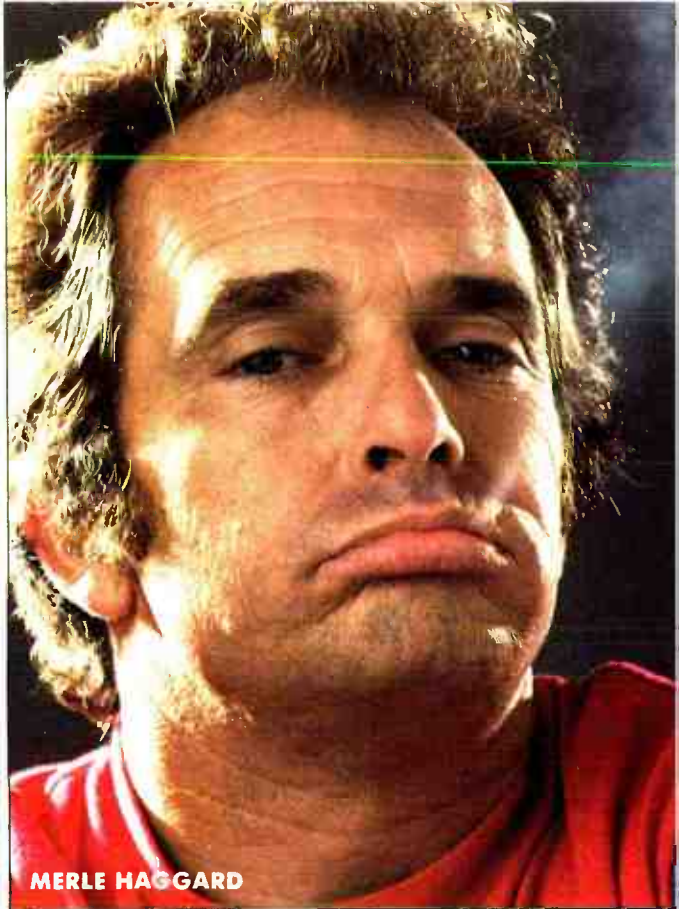
WAYLON JENNINGS/JESSI COLTER



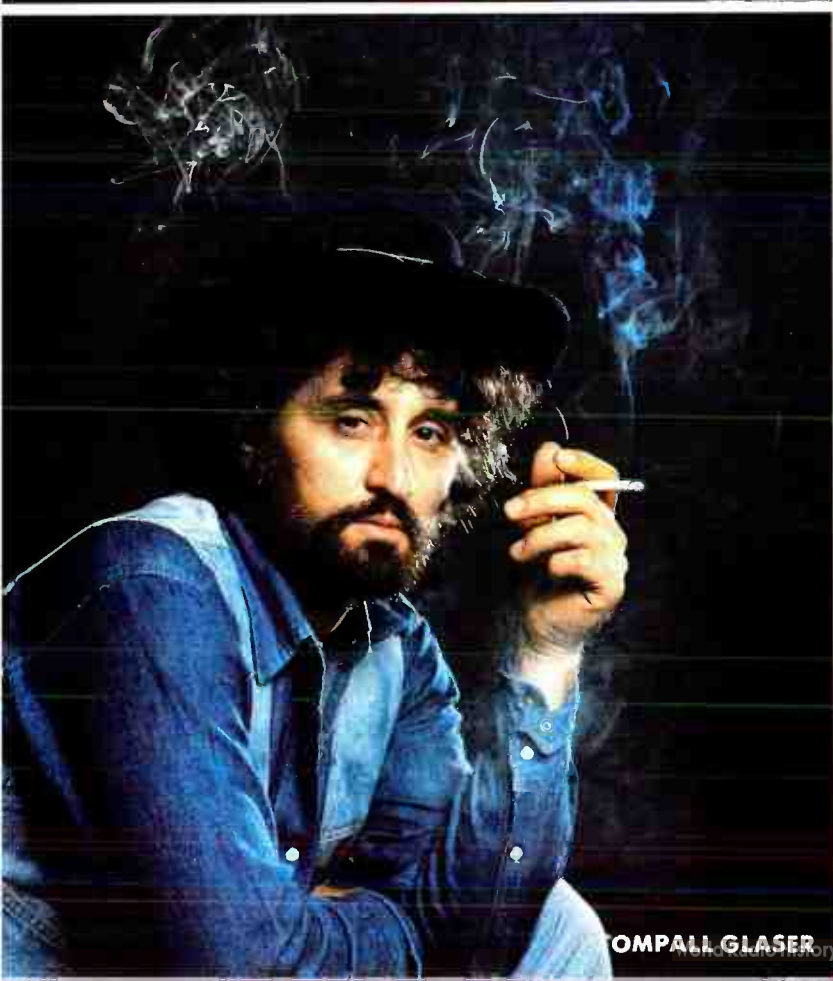
WILLIE NELSON



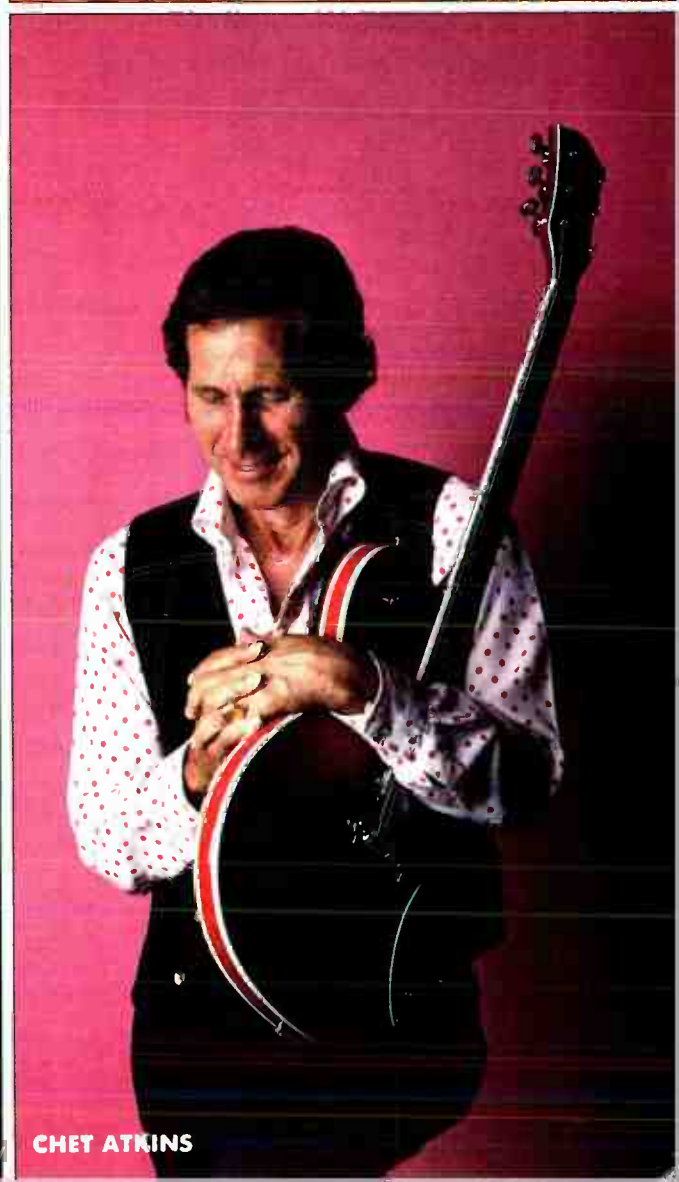
LORETTA LYNN/SISSY SPACEK



MERLE HAGGARD



TOMMY STINSON



CHET ATKINS



ROY ORBISON



RED SOVINE



DOLLY PARTON



LEONARD KAMSLER'S TOP 15

1. *Cowboy Jubilee, Riders In the Sky*
2. *Hard Times, Lacy J. Dalton*
3. *Luxury Liner, Emmylou Harris*
4. *This Time, Waylon Jennings*
5. *Stardust, Willie Nelson*
6. *Live, Willie Nelson*
7. *Heart Like a Wheel, Linda Ronstadt*
8. *First Night, Jane Oliver*
9. *Tompall, Tompall Glaser*
10. *Love Is Just a Game, Larry Gatlin*
11. *Songs I'll Always Sing, Merle Haggard*
12. *George & Tammy, George Jones & Tammy Wynette*
13. *The Divine Miss M, Bette Midler*
14. *The Broadway Album, Barbra Streisand*
15. *Greatest Hits, The Eagles*



Hearing the Reader's Voice

by Helen Barnard

Since coming to the magazine in 1983, I have had two main jobs. One is to assist Russell and Rochelle in the general editing of the magazine. The other is to listen to the reader's voice. With the help of others, I have read the reader mail and assembled the Letters column. With the help of others, I started the CMSA Newsletter, which goes only to members of the Country Music Society of America (CMSA), and have watched it evolve. Recently I have gone to work in a minor way in the circulation department, where we design and produce the promotions that bring so many of our readers back to us as renewed subscribers and CMSA members.

The common thread in all this is the reader's voice. I am the one in the company who tells the editor and managing editor and circulation what the readers want.

This is a unique and wonderful job, and it has brought many happy moments. Thanks to Russell's suggestion that we add photos to the Letters column, that section has grown to be one of the most popular in the magazine. Nothing will ever replace Record Reviews or

People or the features, but we get a lot of mail about the Letters column alone.

The Newsletter has changed even more than Letters. What began as me writing up articles and little squibs of information based upon press releases, interviews with readers or conclusions I had drawn from reading the mail, has become a full-fledged publication written and illustrated almost entirely by you CMSA members, using your articles, poems, photographs, puzzles, drawings and queries about old, half-forgotten songs and records or back issues of the magazine. A reader-written section by, for and about country music enthusiasts in all walks of life all across the U.S.

The Newsletter goes to all of our subscribers who are also members of the Country Music Society of America. At present, you members number more than 100,000, about one-fourth of our subscribers. Many of the members are among our longest-term subscribers to the magazine, people for whom the 15th Anniversary may be especially meaningful, people who have every issue, or almost every issue, this magazine ever printed stashed away

in barn, file drawer or attic.

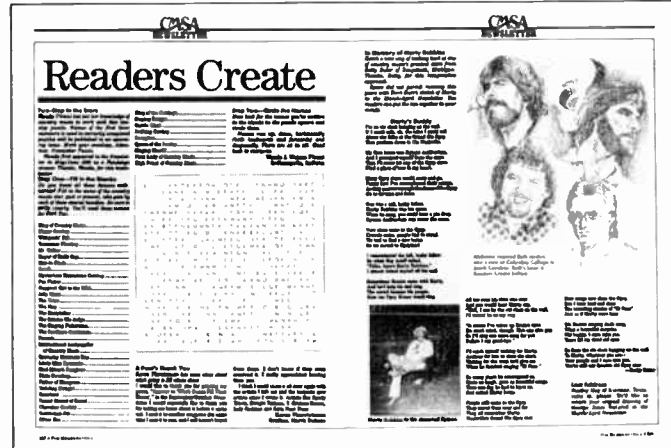
The Country Music Society of America is very important to this magazine. Partly because, as I said, it includes many of our most longstanding subscribers. Partly because it includes so many inspired, dedicated performers of all ages, who have been entertaining others in their communities over the years. Partly because it includes so many outspoken fans of the traditional, early performers of country music, a number of whom are still touring today. Because the member-readers insisted, Russell established the Legends of Country Music feature in the Newsletter to celebrate and recall artists like Uncle Dave Macon and Red Foley and Kitty Wells and Eddy Arnold and Roy Acuff and Hank Snow who through their talent altered the course of country music forever. The Legends features are written by our writers, but they are a response to the readers.

When Russell established the CMSA in 1983, he envisioned many things for it. Not all of them have come to pass. But the Newsletter has grown in ways we never dreamed. All readers were treated to copies of it in the May/June 1984 issue.

All newsstand copies that went on sale nationwide on July 14th this year included it. The featured article in the September/October issue is all about independent record stores and record auctions. The Legends feature honors the Sons of the Pioneers, who celebrate their 55th Anniversary next year.

The reader's voice is also heard around here on the Customer Service line and in the CMSA and Readers' Polls. The CMSA and Readers' Polls, both Russell's babies, help to set the magazine's policy in advertising and alert us to trends and changes in taste in music. The Customer Service line—well, how to describe it? It provides us, and here I'm speaking principally for Annemarie Jocka and Norma Segarra, with some of our most satisfying and some of our most frustrating all-time moments, worthy of being anniversaried in their own right. One customer calls up every month about two weeks before the issue is mailed to say hers hasn't come yet! Calendars? Don't even speak about calendars to our Customer Service department. Never have we had such a successful promotion, and woe betide us if one of you has not received it or any other premium promised. You meant what you said when you rapped, and you want us to mean it, too. You'd be surprised how long it takes Norma, sometimes, to straighten out the web and get your item to you. I won't even tell you how many calendars we're printing this year, for 1988. It's embarrassing, but I'll bet they'll all be gone by February 1.

Now a word about our mascot, Margie. Margie was an unforgettable part of this magazine while we were at 450 Park Avenue South. The new digs are too uptown for her, but she reads the magazine at home.



The Newsletter features readers' stories and their creative talents.



Ask Me Another

by Patrick Carr

Look: I don't give a hoot what *you* think about the major themes of country music's last fifteen years, so I'm going to do you a favor and assume you feel the same about me. This way neither of us has to have Significant Thoughts, which cause bad breath and heartburn.

Instead, why don't I tell you about the only thing I know more about than you do? That is, me and my job.

The most burning question, of course, is *How much do I get paid?* Well, tough: I want to tell you—I really do, because the paycheck is very obviously the single most important fact about any job—and, if I were the only one whose paycheck I'd be revealing, I'd tell you. But others are involved, so I can't. But I'll say this: I couldn't make a living just off of what I write for *Country Music*. *Country Music* does pay writers substantially more than any other country publication, but that's substantially less for an article than a Famous National Maga-

zine pays me. Therefore, let's just say that the bucks aren't exactly enormous, but on the other hand the work's steady, and, moreover, I love it and I feel a powerful loyalty to the magazine and its people; we've been together 15 years because of a whole lot more than money.

The way it all works out, the big-time writing I do ends up subsidizing my *CMM* work; I spend somewhere between a third and a half of my time working for *CMM* for about a fifth of my total income. The only way I could go full-time in country, I figure, would be to start charging Major Entertainers for all the stuff I don't write about them—but so far nobody's gone for it, and I have to keep them out of jail or divorce court for free.

The next question, then, is *What are my ethics when writing for this magazine? Just how honest am I?* That's something I always wonder about writers and critics but never find out except by accident, so I figure I should break the rules

and just plain tell you.

The only *Country Music* writing in which I don't withhold certain embarrassing information (typically unadmitted drug use and adultery), or soft-pedal negative feelings about stars, is my record reviews. They're very straight; my one rock-solid Golden Rule is that I say exactly what I feel about the music itself, my only constraint being *CMM's* policy against

foul language. In my personality profiles, I try to subvert truly obnoxious stars gently (even going so far as to perceive their good sides and/or excuses for being the way they are). But I never say or imply that I like someone I really don't; if I create the impression that X is a real prince or princess, that's how I really feel. I've operated like this throughout my 15 years with



PATRICK CARR'S TOP 15

1. *Dreaming My Dreams, Waylon Jennings*
2. *I Am What I Am, George Jones*
3. *Out of Hand, Gary Stewart*
4. *Rockabilly Blues, Johnny Cash*
5. *Grievous Angel, Gram Parsons*
6. *Guitar Town, Steve Earle*
7. *The Best of Dolly, Dolly Parton*
8. *Pieces of the Sky, Emmylou Harris*
9. *Phases and Stages, Willie Nelson*
10. *Dobro, Mike Auldridge*
11. *Skeeter Davis and NRBQ, Skeeter Davis and NRBQ*
12. *Marty Stuart, Marty Stuart*
13. *Tompall Glaser and His Outlaw Band, Tompall Glaser*
14. *Family Tradition, Hank Williams Jr.*
15. *Serving 190 Proof, Merle Haggard*



The Hanks—Locklin, Snow and Williams. A memorable introduction to country music for a boy in Britain and Patrick Carr's first instructors in heartbreak.



CHRISTOPHER WRIGHT

Patrick, on his Most Revolting Junket, was well exposed, acting in Lee Greenwood's never-seen video.

Country Music Magazine.

You can make what you want of the issues involved here (Sunday morning seminars on entertainment-journalist integrity and the public's Right To Know, anyone?), but I don't really want to go into it any further; bad breath and heartburn are only syllables away.

Other stuff about me isn't very relevant, but it might interest you. I'm an Englishman, and I've been a country music fan since I was six or seven (strange but true). Skeeter Davis was my first singing sex object and the Hanks (Williams, Locklin and Snow) my first Instructors in Heartbreak. I loved country because by dealing directly with the most powerful human emotions and problems (chiefly problems), it turned pain into beauty. The best of it still does that, but these days country music's job description has expanded so hugely that about 80% of "country product" either bores or irritates me. But I think things are on the up and up (the spineless-trash count is down from about 90% five years ago), and the cream is still sublime. Overall, country music would account for at least 50% of my Post-Nuclear-Exchange Musical Survival Kit. The rest would be rock, blues, reggae, whatever.

Now for the good stuff. I'm sure you want to know as much as I'm willing to tell you about my 15 years of hanging out where you can't—in intimate personal contact with...*The Stars!* Well, tough again; you're not going to get...*The Real Dirt* until I retire and

write my memoirs, *The Real Dirt*, at least \$59.95 with a 15% hardcover royalty rate. Therefore you'll have to make do with the following tidbits, which I hope you'll approach in the spirit of what we in the biz call "a teaser."

- *Most Disappointing Lie in an Interview:* Johnny Cash denying his then-continuing drug problems (repeatedly).
- *Most Forgivable Lie in an Interview:* Johnny Cash denying his then-continuing drug problems.
- *Favorite Junket:* One week in Hawaii for a one-evening interview with Tennessee Ernie Ford. Well worth an otherwise pointless cover story.
- *Most Revolting Junket:* Lee Greenwood in Miami. Well worth 150 years in purgatory, and how come you can never find a firing squad when you really need one?
- *Most Embarrassing Junket:* Slim Whitman in Nashville. Not worth the thirteen stitches in a sensitive spot and the consequent, but totally unfounded, creation of my Yodelling Journalist legend.
- *Favorite Star Hobbies:* Roy Orbison, model World War II aircraft, chiefly Messerschmitts; Billy Sherrill, Nazi memorabilia; George Jones, interior decoration; Hank Williams Jr., beauty queens.
- *Most Tedious Star Hobby:* Charley Pride, astrology, astrology, astrology, astrology...
- *Most Encouraging Stars:* Merle Haggard, for changing so little; George Jones again, for changing so much; David Allan Coe, for proving that lunatics can be divine.
- *Most Discouraging Stars:*

Gary Stewart, self destruction; Loretta Lynn and Joe Ely, industry destruction; Johnny Paycheck and Jerry Lee Lewis, for proof that lunatics can be dangerous.

- *Worst Fisherman (explo-sives division):* Waylon Jennings.
- *Best Judge of Character:* Jessi Colter.
- *Best Toupees:* Hank Snow, Ralph Emery.
- *Worst Toupee:* Ricky Skaggs?
- *Favorite Quote:* "If you ever git that thang in tune, boy, solder it" (session jock X to rock star Y).
- *Least Favorite Quotes:* "I love every one of you," Larry Gatlin; "I love you all so much," T.G. Sheppard; "I can't tell you people how much I love you,"

Razzy Bailey.

- *Things I Most Miss from Yesterday's Nashville:* Twittyburgers and the Grand Ole Opry.
- *Favorite Brand New Opry Performers:* Richard Nixon, piano and yo-yo; Ernie (or was that Ernestine?) The Singin' Squirrel (or was that a groundhog?).
- *Absolute All-Time Favorite Country Music Person:* Jack Clement.
- *Country Music Person Most Deserving of Termination (or at least grievous bodily harm):* You think I'm stupid or something?

That'll do it. Eat right, watch out for Lite Rock, be firm with your beast, and please buy lots of books and magazines.

THE FIRST 15 YEARS



The Perfect Friendship

by Rochelle Friedman

In my 10th Anniversary issue essay, I wrote about how I was introduced, some years prior, to country music via Willie and Waylon and the boys. Here it is five years later, and they are still around, and more importantly, still popular. Since I am in the

office every day, I have access to the back issue file. I wanted to find out who, besides these superstars, is as active and popular today as when we first started publishing in 1972.

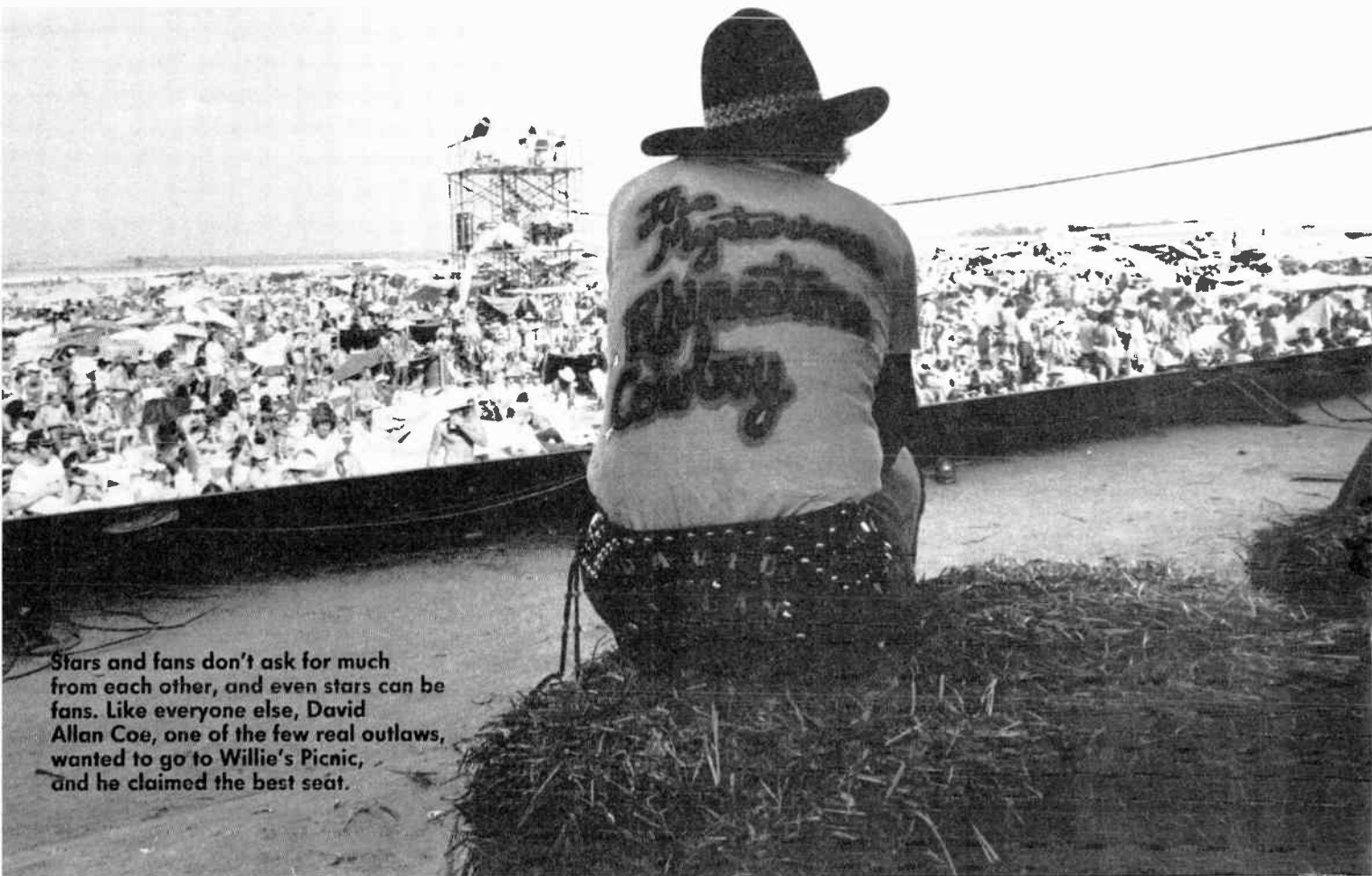
Interestingly, there are more survivors from 15 years ago than you would think there



ROCHELLE FRIEDMAN'S TOP 15

1. *What Can I Say, Gail Davies*
2. *Willie Sings Kristofferson, Willie Nelson*
3. *Seven Year Ache, Rosanne Cash*
4. *The Forester Sisters, The Forester Sisters*
5. *All I Want to Do in Life, Jack Clement*
6. *Mark O'Connor, Mark O'Connor*
7. *Country Boy, Ricky Skaggs*
8. *Coat of Many Colors, Dolly Parton*
9. *A Tribute to the Best Damn Fiddle Player, Merle Haggard*
10. *The O'Kanes, The O'Kanes*
11. *The Way We Were, Barbra Streisand*
12. *The Broadway Album, Barbra Streisand*
13. *A Star is Born, Barbra Streisand/Kris Kristofferson*
14. *Superman, Barbra Streisand*
15. *Wet, Barbra Streisand*

(What can I say—she's from my country.)



Stars and fans don't ask for much from each other, and even stars can be fans. Like everyone else, David Allan Coe, one of the few real outlaws, wanted to go to Willie's Picnic, and he claimed the best seat.

TIM MCGUIRE

would be in a fickle business like music.

How's this for a list—Merle Haggard, The Statler Bros., Tom T. Hall, Johnny Cash, June Carter, Roy Acuff, Conway Twitty, Chet Atkins, Bill Monroe, Loretta Lynn, George Jones, Tammy Wynette, Willie Nelson and Tanya Tucker. These were the people we covered in our first issue in 1972.

Why is it that these people are still popular today? They have not paled or faded in our eyes, even when their careers have been in a slump. Why is it that we can go to their shows and listen to their greatest hits again and again? We even demand to hear them over and over. Why is it that we can understand when one of these artists doesn't show up for a performance? We still find ourselves coming back to try again. How is it that we can call them by their first names, even though we've never met them? Why is it that most of the people we covered in our first

few issues in 1972 are still prominent in our 1987 issues?

I'd say it's because we, the country fan and the country artist, have the perfect relationship; a very special friendship in which neither one demands perfection. Through his music, the artist is willing to open himself up and let us see inside. He believes in what he sings, and we relate in kind.

He is the poet of the common man. He sings not only of his conflicts, but of ours. He tells our story and shares our frustrations and our dreams. He is able to put into words what we can only imagine. He shows us that we neither suffer nor rejoice alone.

His lyrics have come to symbolize his understanding and acceptance of human frailties. And, with rare exceptions, he does not set himself above any one of us and is there for that autograph, that snapshot, or that hug at the end of a concert. The country artist does not distance himself from his fans

by placing himself behind a barricade of ego. He remembers his roots, and we, his fans, remember our commitment.

We care what happens to him personally, and cry for his hardships and delight in his triumphs. Like good friends, we depend on each other to be there and agree to put up with each others' faults. As long as he is willing to give, and put himself on the line, we are proud to listen. We know that what an artist does demands more than just his talent and his time. He has made a total commitment to be where he is today. And we know that there are not many of us who could do what he does, and for that, we respect him that much more.

Today we are hearing about a resurgence in country music, about how it is going back to the traditional sound and how younger performers are taking it there. While we may be somewhat leery of newcomers, and a little gun shy of imitators,

when we do open the gates, we also open our hearts. Yet we don't come cheap! Once we accept them into our club, they must play by the rules. We're a tough group who have given many years to our music and we like to know that the artist who represents us is as dedicated to his gift as we are devoted to him.

So we welcome you, Dwight, Randy, The Foresters, Steve, Lyle, O'Kanes, Nanci, Patty, Holly and all the other talented newcomers, and we hope that in our 30th Anniversary issue, it will be your names which grace both our back issues and our headlines in 2002.

As a country fan in New York, we recently lost a good friend in WHN radio, which has switched formats. WHN was there when we first started publishing and was our country neighbor through the years. We will miss them.



NINA GURALNICK

Listening to Country Music

by Peter Guralnick

I've never thought much of lists, even though we all like to make them. All lists are by nature arbitrary and thus inherently misleading, generally encouraging the most unworthy displays of self-righteousness. Nonetheless, with these reservations in mind—and with the added proviso that I don't hear every record that comes out by any means nor do I hear every record the same way twice—I offer mine.

All the records that I've listed mean a lot to me. Mostly I remember them for some vivid detail, or at least the parts of them that are stuck in my mind. When I first started listening to music, or to long-playing records anyway, every passage was embedded permanently, I thought, on my brain pan. Now I think I remember Waylon Jennings' version of "Honky Tonk Heroes," but if I happen

to hear it on the radio, it can either sound so fresh that I wonder if someone has revived the song or so familiar that I wonder if it still has any zip left for me at all.

Sometimes I'll get on a kick. Sometimes I'll listen to Jerry Lee Lewis or John Prine for days—well, hours. Sometimes I'll listen to Merle Haggard for months and discover treasures untold. Lately I've been hearing all kinds of music that I've liked a lot: Randy Travis, The Judds, Dwight Yoakam, Steve Earle, The O'Kanes, Ricky Van Shelton, George Strait, George Jones of course, Jason and the Scorchers, Rosanne Cash, Marty Stuart's *Busy Bee Cafe*, and Mac Davis' *Texas in My Rearview Mirror*. Why didn't I list any of these? I don't know. Because the others came through stronger—in my mental mindset—today, anyway.

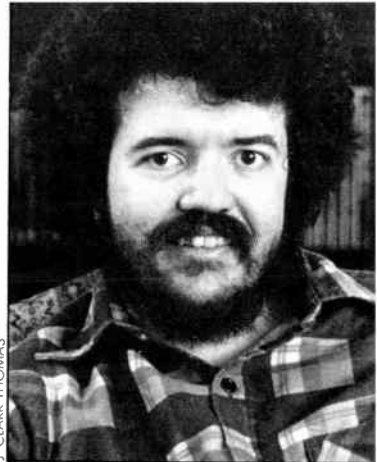
But I think this is a very heartening time for country music, perhaps the most heart-

ening since I began writing about music 20 years ago. People often recall the dear days of the Outlaw movement, but to me the current climate offers a more open road. Outlawry became a brand name for a while, and to get certified everyone had to adopt the label. Today, it seems to me, there are no labels, there is no tyranny of the new acoustic, and while some of my favorite records stem from that period of trademark rebellion, I'm convinced that the last year or two has opened things up more than I can ever remember—though I can't for the life of me understand why.

At the same time I'm not sure if music means as much to people now as it did fifteen or twenty years ago. What I mean by this is I'm not sure passions run as deep. This may not be altogether a bad thing. Music was never going to cure all our ills—but music as recreation? It just seems to fill one more leisure-time spot. I never would have believed how accessible music has become—on records, television, and in live performance.

When I was a kid, music was a taste you had to fight for. I remember the first country music package I ever saw coming to Boston around 1964, with Johnny Cash headlining, Ferlin Husky getting second billing, and a 15-year-old Hank Williams Jr. somewhere near the top of the bill. For me that was it—I didn't know where else you could find country music in Boston (maybe Jim Rooney did) except at folk clubs or the Hill-billy Ranch.

With my friends I constructed fantasies about Hank Williams and Jimmie Rodgers, fantasies that oddly enough turned out to be largely true, in much the same way that we constructed fantasies about Robert Johnson and Elvis Presley. Maybe because it was the stuff of fantasy it meant more to us then—or maybe it was because we were younger, but I know for every performer that I've interviewed it was much the same. Music was magic. It wasn't just entertainment, it wasn't even conceived of as a business. It was the myth by which we extended our lives, a moment of transcendence in



J. CLARK THOMAS



BILL DICKINSON

an untranscendent time.

Mostly it isn't that for me anymore, and I'm not sure if I'm making a personal confession or a critical point—but for me there are very few moments of transcendence. Listening to a Charlie Rich demo or the tape of a live performance in Memphis, watching Ricky Skaggs and Rosanne Cash sound the first notes of the New Rockabilly on the CMA Awards show a few years ago, soaking up the oddball warmth of Floyd Tillman on a televised songwriters' workshop—these are moments I'll continue to cherish, but what worries me is the extent to which music has become background noise in my life. I hear something, I nod my head—oh yes, it's very good, but rarely is there anything so startling about it that I'll drop everything to listen, starting in the way that Howlin' Wolf or Jerry Lee Lewis still are to me or Merle Haggard's "Leonard" woke me up the first time I heard it and



PETER GURALNICK'S TOP 15

1. Honky Tonk Masquerade, Joe Ely
2. Serving 190 Proof, Merle Haggard
3. Phases and Stages, Willie Nelson
4. Electricity, Jimmy Murphy
5. Honky Tonk Heroes, Waylon Jennings
6. My Tennessee Mountain Home, Dolly Parton
7. Got No Bread, No Milk, No Honey, But We Sure Got a Lot of Love, James Talley
8. Silver, Johnny Cash
9. Nothing But the Truth, Sleepy LaBeef
10. Glad I'm In the Band, Lonnie Mack
11. She Even Woke Me Up to Say Goodbye, Jerry Lee Lewis
12. Legendary Lefty Frizzell, Lefty Frizzell
13. Victim of Life's Circumstances, Delbert McClinton / Doug Sahn and The Band, Doug Sahn—a tie.
14. Waitin' For the Sun to Shine, Ricky Skaggs
15. Homemade Ice Cream, Tony Joe White



James Talley and Sleepy LaBeef, top and bottom left, and Charlie Rich have been there with that special moment.

nearly every time I've heard it since. About the only records that I've heard with a country tinge to have that kind of effect on me in the last few years are Elvis Costello's *King of America*—which like Van Morrison's music and early rock 'n' roll represents a whole new synthesis incorporating country music, but by no means limited to it—and Los Lobos' *Will the Wolf Survive?* But that may just be me.

Well, I don't know where I'm going with this, and I don't even know if it's a place worth going to. Russ and Rochelle said to write anything I wanted, so I did, but if it doesn't fit your definition of country music, I'm certainly not going to argue the point. Anyway, I'm looking forward as always to the future. I want to hear Charlie Rich's next album, the album he's never made, which will incorporate jazz, country, blues, and gospel in the same way that every Charlie Rich club performance does as a

matter of course; I'd like to see James Talley go back to Oklahoma, or take up the plight of the downtrodden again; I want to hear Waylon Jennings or Hank Williams Jr. record John Lincoln Wright's "I'm Too Old to Die Young Now" (I think that's the title, but I'm too far from home to check). I want to see Joe Ely reunited with Lloyd Maines and Ponty Bone, on record anyway, and Butch Hancock and Jimmy Lee Gilmore in spirit. I want to hear the undiscovered Elvis Sun sides, whether or not they exist, with Elvis wailing out Martha Carson's "Satisfied," "Uncle Pen" and "Tennessee Saturday Night." And I want to catch the next Sleepy LaBeef Saturday night—because in the end music is in the air, not in the grooves. There is no permanence; it's only that rare moment of evanescence that comes when, and where, you least expect it that really counts.

THE FIRST 15 YEARS



Here We Go Again

by Rich Kienzle

On September 17, 1985, Robert Palmer, the erstwhile *New York Times* pop music critic, revealed in a front-page article that "Nashville's country music stars are really waiting the blues these days. Audiences are dwindling, sales of country records are plummeting and the fabled Nashville Sound, which defined country music for decades... may soon sound as dated as the ukelele."

Palmer quoted Bobby Bare's complaint that "Country records...all sound alike and nobody's buying them." He cited declining record sales of top artists to prove his point, and aired gripes from within that artists were being forced to record material designed solely for radio airplay.

He didn't discover all this on his own; the problem was known for some time on Music Row. Still, many there didn't appreciate front page coverage in America's major newspaper. The mere mention of Palmer that fall could spark torrents of

deleted expletives, even from Nashville music reporters who'd printed similar stories. That a generation of singers quit selling records was apparently a fit topic for local gossip, but not for the rest of the nation. Alas, some Nashville "journalists" don't know where journalism ends and cheer-leading begins.

Then Dwight Yoakam, Randy Travis, Steve Earle, The Sweethearts of the Rodeo and The O'Kanes all debuted and hit big last year. Though none were widely known when Palmer's article appeared, their sudden stardom gave a burned-out industry what it desperately needed: something fresh. These artists filled the void that Palmer documented.

The same thing happened 30 years ago in the opposite direction. People wearied of fiddles and steel, of everyone singing like Hank and Lefty. When Elvis hit, country music went into a tailspin. Record sales and concert attendance faltered. Many radio stations switched to rock, as did many



RICH KIENZLE'S TOP 15

1. *Texas Gold, Asleep at the Wheel*
2. *Still Swingin', Johnny Gimble and the Texas Swing Pioneers*
3. *Angel Eyes, Willie Nelson*
4. 2, *John Anderson*
5. *Live From Deep in the Heart of Texas, Commander Cody and His Lost Planet Airmen*
6. *Pink Cadillac, John Prine*
7. *Steppin' Out, Gary Stewart*
8. *Shotgun Willie, Willie Nelson*
9. *Honky Tonk Heroes, Waylon Jennings*
10. *Victim of Life's Circumstances, Delbert McClinton*
11. *Live Shots, Joe Ely*
12. *Whiskey Bent and Hell Bound, Hank Williams Jr.*
13. *Guitar Town, Steve Earle*
14. *The O'Kanes, The O'Kanes*
15. *Waitin' For the Sun to Shine, Ricky Skaggs*

younger singers, though they later returned to the fold.

The audience had to be expanded. So Chet Atkins, Don Law and Owen Bradley created the more neutral Nashville Sound: less fiddle and steel, more new sounds, new artists, more choruses and strings. It saved country music. And it wasn't all schlock by a long shot, as Don Gibson, Jim Reeves and Patsy Cline proved many times over.

In 1957 Nashville's music business could move quickly to meet the challenge. It was like a mom and pop store back then. Like all big business, the megabuck industry on today's Music Row moved slowly and nearly lost it all. Remember how long ago we critics blasted crossover in the Records section?

Well, we may not always reflect your views, but I suspect many of you were becoming as fed up as we were.

Something made those record sales drop.

Hard country actually started coming back a few years ago with Ricky Skaggs and John Anderson, then with Reba and George Strait. Yet crossover still held the field. Many hits sounded like the "mellow" 1970's pop of singer-songwriters like Neil Diamond, James Taylor or Carole King: sterile, sound-alike tunes and lyrics, gushing strings and no heart. It was the Nashville Sound gone berserk, Sherrillization grown huge and malevolent like Godzilla.

Why'd it hang on so long? Blame radio in part. Many of today's country deejays and program directors started at rock stations in the 1970's when the "mellow" types held sway. They took their tastes with them to country stations and Nashville gave them what they wanted: country for people who hate country. Fiddles,

steel and raw vocals? That was hillbilly crap nobody under age 55 wanted to hear.

Funny thing is, many of the New Traditionalist stars are roughly the same ages (30-35) as those radio people. They may have heard country as kids, yet their music was often 1960's rock 'n' roll: Beatles, Rolling Stones, etc. One way or another they got sidetracked. Instead of listening to the mellow mush of the 1970's, they were caught up in the romance of Nudie suits 'n' neon, of Buck, Elvis, Patsy and Lefty.

They understood the energy potential of small bands and knew what Sam Phillips proved decades ago: small *can* sound huge. Besides, simplicity has always been the essence of country music, and their rock 'n' roll sensibilities didn't hurt. New ideas didn't spook them, be it an acoustic, non-bluegrass lineup like The O'Kanes, revitalized honky

tonkers like Dwight and Randy or Steve Earle's rocking blue-collar dramas in miniature. Their roots may have been 1960's, yet their approach is rooted in the 1980's, and that's part of the reason it works.

But don't kid yourself, dear reader. Music Row didn't embrace these new folks out of a burning desire to bring back tradition. Never forget for *one second* that the music you love is, in the final analysis, part of American commerce. These acts were there with their talent when something new was desperately needed. Signing them was a business move not much different from McDonald's introducing a new salad. As it turned out, this one paid off for everyone.

Are these the "new Outlaws"? No. Waylon, Willie and friends were older and successful before fighting their battles against the Nashville establishment for the creative freedom this younger generation enjoys. The industry quickly embraced the New Traditionalists. At the risk of sounding like an aging war veteran, I hope the newcomers remember what those earlier battles meant at the time.

Overnight stardom, however, has its risks. Peaking too soon, laziness and falling into self-parody are just three. Sudden fame can exact a high price. And one thing's inevitable. Expect any day to see a slew of would-be Yoakams, Rebas and Earles complete with tiny bands and MTV hairdos, thrown against the barn to see if they stick. Some may. Most won't. However, today's best will stand with the best from any era. You'll probably be able to find *Storms of Life* and The O'Kanes' debut on CD 20 years from now.

I know this essay sounds a bit cynical when it should be a celebration. In fact, I'm delighted. Three years ago I was so disgusted with Nashville's sugarcoated cowflop that just listening to it was an ordeal. They learned their lesson the hard way and now creativity is back. It's like the old phrase in Fats Domino's lemonade commercial on TV: everything old is new again. So it is, so shall it be—so long as it sells.



Every era has its own heroes. Lefty Frizzell, Jim Reeves and Patsy Cline each made an indelible mark. Each seemed like a savior in his or her time.

KIT LUICE



COUNTRY MUSIC FOUNDATION



Country music saved again. Ricky Van Shelton, Lyle Lovett, Nanci Griffith, Patty Loveless and The O'Kanes, clockwise from top, are now making their try. Will later generations look back and see these people as yesterday's heroes? The future looks promising, but only time will tell.





Getting the Business

by John Morthland

It was the fall of 1985, somewhere just south of Waco, when a friend of mine—himself once a music journalist/critic and in fact a regular contributor to this magazine about a decade ago—flipped through the nighttime radio dial before landing on a song in which a polite sax and lushly layered background voices engulfed a faintly country voice and the even fainter strains of a steel guitar way off in the arrangement's Back Forty. "So what is country music these days?" my friend asked. "Is this country music?"

After thinking a long time, I finally replied, "It must be. They're playing it on a country station."

The thing I like best about country music right now is that I can point to records by Randy Travis, Dwight Yoakam, Patty Loveless, Steve Earle, Ricky Van Shelton and a surprising number of others and I can say, "That is country music." Best of all, I don't have to arrive at that conclusion by process of elimination: I know what it is and you and my friend do, too.

Like rock music, country music moves in cycles. To some extent, today's changes are not unprecedented—the bluegrass movement which paralleled the rise of honky tonk was as much a 1940's attempt to take the music back to its purist roots as the so-called New Traditionalism of today is an attempt to return the music to its roadhouse heritage. All popular music, in adapting to new audiences and influences, typically re-invents itself, drifts away from its sources, keeps drifting until it's gone too far, then returns to the tried and true to regain its bearings. But country music, because of its unique relationship to a particular segment of the population, did so less than other forms. Country artists could count on more continuity; once you had found an audience, you could keep working without ever changing until both you and it died of old age.

What's most remarkable now is that country music's cycles come and go almost as quickly as rock's. There are a few exceptions—Hag, Willie,

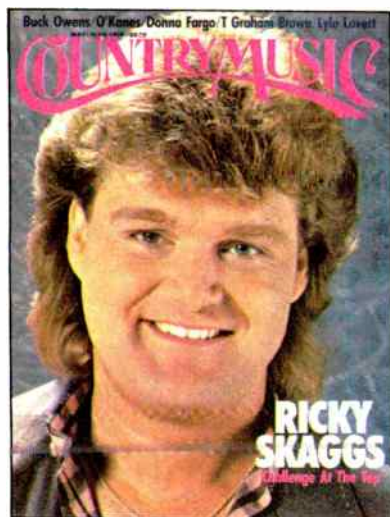
Hank Jr.—who seem to hold their ground no matter what is coming and going around them, but country stars and styles have become almost as disposable as those of pop. Outlaw begat Urban Cowboy begat New Traditionalist all in less time than it took honky tonk to beget rockabilly, or the Nashville Sound to beget country-politain. And rather than evolve in a more or less continuous line, as it did in the past with a few exceptions, such as the bluegrass movement, country now seems more inclined to jump back and forth between purism and pop.

This all occurred because when country music peaked in the Urban Cowboy years, it was enjoying sales comparable to those of rock, and likewise took on many of that music's other characteristics. Because it was more carefully and elaborately produced, for example, it came with a higher overhead and had to be marketed more extensively. The main point, though, is that when country music became massively successful in the Urban Cowboy era, it became less country, and though the cycle has since shifted in a direction more to my personal liking, it's way too late for the music ever to turn back completely; that "particular segment of the population" I mentioned earlier hasn't really existed for a long time, and the music acknowledges that disappearance implicitly.

Right now I'm a country music fan just as I was when this magazine first came into being; there was a period in

between when I flat out wasn't, and I'm resigned to the fact that there will be long stretches in the future when I am not. Cycles are like that. Though my own roots are as much in rock and rhythm-and-blues as in country—in truth, I am one of those "rootless Americans" whose family moved around so much that I don't identify with any one place—it used to disturb me that the music went through phases that left me cold. It doesn't anymore: you take what you can get and the rest of the time you watch *Car 54, Where Are You?* reruns on cable. I've been around the music business long enough now to know that there's music and there's business, and I am always relieved when to my ears the two coincide—because that means there will be more of my kind of music. This is the price of mass success, and I haven't met anyone in the country music industry who's willing to give the money back if he could have it any other way.

For me, in fact, all this talk of cycles is best typified by a nameless Nashville executive who rose to prominence in the late 1970's and early 1980's, when Urban Cowboy was peaking. Without saying so publicly, he made no secret of his contempt for "country" and for the "hicks" who used to sing and play (and listen to) it. He wanted nothing on his label except "classy" stuff, by which he seemed to mean the faceless pop that could be mass-produced just as easily in New



Key transitional figures, Ricky Skaggs, Reba McEntire and George Strait—we covered them all.

York or Los Angeles.

Now anybody who spends much time around the music business in this era knows that you don't become a big-time record exec because you have taste in music—you become a big-time record exec because you're a sharp lawyer or accountant, usually—but his vehemence (and ignorance) seemed mighty excessive nonetheless. And sure enough, I recently received a press release from his label touting one of his new artists in the most florid terms for being "pure country" and able to wash away the bad taste left in our mouths by that awful Urban Cowboy stuff of the last few years. (Did I remember to say earlier that the record biz—all of it, not just the country wing—is utterly shameful? That's part of the fun.)

So, what happened? What happened is that more than a few singers and songwriters and pickers out there got fed up with the increasingly pop-oriented country the business was pushing. So did a few A&R men—A&R men (and, increasingly, A&R women) are the record company people most likely to be in it for the music, particularly the younger ones. The disgruntled artists began making contact with the A&R people most longing for a respite from all that pop glop. When they made a hit or two together, it became apparent that there was a sizeable audience out there feeling

more or less the same way. It was also economics again—country records are cheaper to make than pop, and when country records stopped crossing over, there was less money available for record production. It may have seemed like Travis, Earle, Yoakam and the others came out of nowhere, but they had in fact been chomping at the bit for some time, and their paths were paved by such key transitional figures as Ricky Skaggs, George Strait and Reba McEntire.

The New Traditionalists may by definition be one step removed from the source, but they sure sound better than the pop-oriented artists who are many steps removed. The next wave, of course, will be the pretenders to New Traditionalism, those who pick up on the music not because they have a real affinity for it, but because it's currently good business. When the music then becomes all style—all fashion—and little content or soul, you'll start hearing a lot of grumbling about how archaic and hillbilly it all sounds, how embarrassing it is for our industry. Around that same time, you'll also start hearing a lot of slick new pop music, and the bad New Traditionalist type will have taken a lot of the good ones down with them, though a couple will survive for the long run. As I said, cycles are like that, so we'd better all start getting used to it.

THE FIRST 15 YEARS



Well, Shut My Mouth

by Hazel Smith

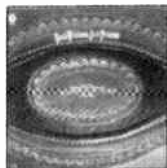
Rochelle Friedman called me on the human telephone informing me that she wanted an essay of a thousand words for the 15th anniversary of *Country Music Magazine*. Friends and neighbors, a thousand words on any topic is only four typewritten pages. To those hundreds and thousands who know and love me and to those of you who only read me, I can't say good morning on four pages! But, try I will. First, let's talk about my editor, Russell Barnard. He's a family man with a lovely wife, Helen, the mother of his three children. She runs the vacuum cleaner, the magazine and Russell while Russell plays tapes by Emmylou Harris and wishes she was there!

Seriously, I am one lucky son-of-a-gun to be associated with a man like Russell. When my hot water heater busted last year, it was Russell who sent me the check to replace it. He's a good man who knows good country music. We are fortu-

nate having a man the calibre of Russell Barnard in the Big Apple putting together a quality magazine for you the fans.

I could write about Bloody Marys and dinner with Willie Nelson, Kinky Friedman and a bunch of good folks at the Peddler or Kenny Rogers, debut of "Lucille" live at the Exit Inn when it was the in-place in Music City. I knew Rogers had a monster record. Often I've wondered if Kenny knew. Don't think so. Then there was the night that Willie and Family were skedded to perform at Vanderbilt. Drummer Paul English could not make a fist much less hold his drum sticks, claiming "some old medicine's made me sicker 'n a dog." So me and Willie's daughter, Lana Nelson, ran all over looking for Richie Albright, Waylon Jennings' drummer, who filled in that night. I reckon we could've titled that song, "Me and Lana Looking for Richie for Paul!"

Tears, fears, years and more



JOHN MORTHLAND'S TOP 15

1. All I Want To Do In Life, Jack Clement
2. Guitar Town, Steve Earle
3. Honky Tonk Masquerade, Joe Ely
4. Charlie, Tompall Glaser
5. Serving 190 Proof, Merle Haggard
6. That's the Way Love Goes, Merle Haggard
7. One's On the Way, Loretta Lynn
8. Lead Me On, Loretta Lynn and Conway Twitty
9. Electricity, Jimmy Murphy
10. Phases and Stages, Willie Nelson
11. Out of Hand, Gary Stewart
12. Billy Swan, Billy Swan
13. Storms of Life, Randy Travis
14. Hank Williams Jr. and Friends, Hank Williams Jr.
15. San Quentin's First Lady, Leona Williams



Emmylou Harris—in a class by herself.



Hazel and Bill Monroe—two of country music's finest. If Hazel told all she knew, she'd be a bestselling author.

LEONARD KAMSLER

tears. This town is an evil mother. When a body needs nourishment, hunger will follow. When there is plenty, there's more than enough. Cry in fear and trembling, then the hit song comes, and the Jaguar, and the house, and the savings book and the credit cards (heaven forbid, giving a hillbilly a credit card is like giving Tammy Bakker mascara—they use it all!), and all the *people* it takes to run one poor little country boy that didn't have a pot filled with peas a year ago. Lordy, lordy, the friends that boy has got. Bankers, lawyers, sports figures, doctors and women out the kazoo. The women have been referred to as band-aids, however, this subject has ceased to have any humor due to current headlines. Anyhow, the years pass, the songs leave the charts and the hillbilly leaves the hearts of the fans. All he's got left is memories and dreams, just like when he started and, of course, more tears.

Let's talk about Rochelle Friedman who claims to be Editor of my People column. Now, if there is a name spelled wrong, blame Rochelle. Since I know everything there is to know about country music, if there is a mistake, this, too, must be the fault of Rochelle. I tell you what, I taught her how to make banana-split cake and turned her on to Randy Travis.

The greatest show on earth was not Ringling Brothers, it was Elvis Presley. Luckily, I was seated fourth row front and center near bass singer J.D.

Sumner's family with a clear view of the King. Elvis floated onto the stage and it literally lifted me out of my seat. Mind you, I do not remember standing. When I came to my good senses, I was standing with my hands upward and outward. Touched my musical G-spot, that boy did!

The historical "Outlaw" album was certified Gold. On hand for the festivities were all four stars, Willie Nelson, Waylon Jennings, Jessi Colter and Tompall Glaser. I think I'm safe to say, this was the only occasion that these four individuals were ever in the same room together. Chet Atkins, at that time, was head of RCA Records and made the presentation. The vibes in the Spence Manor were so heavy with all that talent and all those personalities. During that time I worked at 916-19th Avenue, where the offices of Waylon, Jessi and Tompall were housed. Glaser Studios was housed upstairs. There was a constant stream of "Who's Who" traipsing through the corridors. Shel Silverstein, Kyle Lehnig, Bobby Bare, Harlan Howard, Keith Bilbrey, Kinky Friedman, David Allan Coe, Marshall Chapman, Jon and Jim Hager, John Hartford, Tony Gottlieb, Dr. Hook, The Whites (while they were still The Downhome Folks), Tony Joe White, Johnny Gimble, Chet Atkins, Jimmy Bowen, Bill Monroe, Chubby Checker, Hank Cochran, Gerry Woods, Willie Fong Young, Billy Swan, Jack Clement, Lee Clayton, Johnny Wright, Michael Bane, Patrick Carr, Chet Flippo, Mar-

tha Hume, and on and on and on. Folks from the media, record label, prison and pulpit showed up with ideas to improve or notions to save all the above and for different reasons. As usual, a lot of folks had a lot of ideas that would make or break....mostly money-making notions that would assure that *they* would own the rock. The three female employees were June Johnson, who married Tompall Glaser, Marie Barrett, who married John Hartford, and me who married this article!! It was during this era that the idea to call that wonderful music "outlaw" came to mind. I coined it and the world sang along. Captain Midnite lived at the office. Live-in guru, so to speak.

If I told all I know on Bill Monroe, I'd be autographing a best selling book and he'd be in seclusion! Let me say bluegrass music will be 50 years old come October 1989. Lord willing, Bill Monroe will be 79 the same year. "Two head-strong people too set in our ways" as I wrote in a song titled "Love Ain't the Question (Love Ain't the Answer)" best describes the old man of bluegrass and yours truly. History will prove me right when I say, the good Lord looks after younguns and fools, and He knew the best

thing for Mr. Monroe and me was listen to the fiddle but don't march the aisle. It's harder to say I don't than I do.

Imet Ricky Skaggs and Keith Whitley while they still had zits. I loved their music then and still do. I'm close to Ricky. He is good to me. The morning after he won Entertainer of the Year, he, Sharon and I had coffee. Silence holds tears. We never spoke. My first friends were The Whites. We are still the best friends. If their deserving star should ever rise, there's no telling how big The Whites could become.

Once I went to Johnny Cash and June Carter's house to a party. I had a great time and behaved much better than I ever intended. But they never invited me back. Not to worry, I'm sure heaven won't be a temporary dwelling. Besides, royal couples like Waylon and Jessi and Sharon and Ricky always had a welcome mat for Miss Hazel. To all the above, my family at the house—Billy, Terry, Takako, Adam and Jeremy—and in Carolina there's Mama and Danny, Henry and Amy, Daniel and Glenda, Debbie, Jeff and Emily, Patti and Steve and Lisa; in New York there's Bobby and Anthony and Nashville Sharon. You are my reasons to keep on keeping on. Thank you, God!



HAZEL SMITH'S TOP 15

1. *Same Old Me (and anything else by)*, George Jones
2. *Wanted: The Outlaws*, Waylon Jennings, Willie Nelson, Jessi Colter and Tompall Glaser
3. *Honky Tonk Heroes*, Waylon Jennings
4. *Red Headed Stranger*, Willie Nelson
5. *Ray Sawyer*, Ray Sawyer
6. *That Downhome Feeling*, The Whites / *Old Familiar Feelings*, The Whites—a tie.
7. *Waitin' for the Sun to Shine*, Ricky Skaggs
8. *Pieces of the Sky*, Emmylou Harris
9. *The Weary Traveler*, Bill Monroe
10. *The Original Bluegrass Band*, Bill Monroe with Lester Flatt and Earl Scruggs
11. *Major Moves (and all the rest)*, Hank Williams Jr.
12. *The Golden Era*, Lester Flatt, Earl Scruggs and The Foggy Mountain Boys
13. *Just Me and My Guitar*, Hank Williams
14. *I'm Not Lisa*, Jessi Colter
15. *Floyd Tillman*, Floyd Tillman



Thank Goodness Nashville's Always Going to the Dogs

by Russ Barnard

Thank goodness Nashville is always going to the dogs. It is. And thank goodness there is always some record executive trying to ruin a good country singer with tuxedos and violins and pop songs. And thank goodness there are always a few rebellious, disrespectful-acting, young, know-nothing, disgraceful-looking new performers who say "the hell with Nashville, I'm going to do it my way."

And thank goodness some insensitive insurance company is willing to destroy a Great American Tradition by moving the Grand Ole Opry out of the Ryman Auditorium. And thank goodness some insurance company executive was farsighted enough to realize that a Great American Tradition like the Grand Ole Opry could be saved if it was moved out of that termite-infested fire trap and moved into a modern facility worthy of its name.

And thank goodness that even when a good country singer "goes pop," country fans stick with him till the cows come home and hell freezes over. And thank goodness that when a pop singer "goes country," country fans won't touch him with a fork. And, thank goodness that *The New York Times* even writes about it when country record sales go down hill. And that, even then, there's always some Nashville record producer who is crazy enough to believe that a straight country record will sell and proves it.

Because if all that weren't true, we wouldn't have anything to write about. Country music would have been killed by rock 'n' roll by 1960. Merle Haggard would never have been to the White House. Waylon and Willie wouldn't have saved us from oceans of violins in the 1970s. Ricky, Reba and



My chief consultants: "Cowboy" Jack Clement and the "Paris Cowboy," Spencer Oettinger. Bless you, Spencer. Jack Killion with Waylon at Max's Kansas City, 1972.

George Strait couldn't have saved us from oceans of violins in the 1980's. And Randy, Dwight and Steve couldn't have saved us from oceans of violins again, so that we will be able to listen to The Judds and The Forester Sisters in the 1990's.

And we wouldn't have been able to tally up all the 15-favorite-albums-from-the-last-15-years votes of all of our writers and editors and present to you the *Country Music Editors' Choice* for our Fifteenth Anniversary Favorite Album

Artist Awards 1972-1987 which are listed on this page.

So you see, folks, after all the fussin' and fumin', like all the preceding articles in this issue say in one way or another, it's a never ending cycle...country music born again, and again.



RUSS BARNARD'S TOP 15

1. Red Headed Stranger Willie Nelson
2. My Tennessee Mountain Home Dolly Parton
3. Roses in the Snow Emmylou Harris
4. Blue Kentucky Girl Emmylou Harris
5. Silver Johnny Cash
6. Rockabilly Blues Johnny Cash
7. Storms of Life Randy Travis
8. Dreaming My Dreams Waylon Jennings
9. I Am What I Am George Jones
10. Serving 190 Proof Merle Haggard
11. Waitin' for the Sun to Shine Ricky Skaggs
12. As Is Bobby Bare
13. Honky Tonk Heroes Waylon Jennings
14. Master of Bluegrass Bill Monroe
15. Together Again George Jones and Tammy Wynette / Hank Williams Jr. and Friends, Hank Williams Jr.—a tie.

EDITORS' CHOICE The Top 15

Based on Editors' Album Choices

- Willie Nelson
- Waylon Jennings
- Merle Haggard
- Hank Williams Jr.
- Emmylou Harris
- Ricky Skaggs
- Johnny Cash
- Dolly Parton
- George Jones
- Randy Travis
- Gary Stewart
- Joe Ely
- Steve Earle
- Tompall Glaser
- Jack Clement

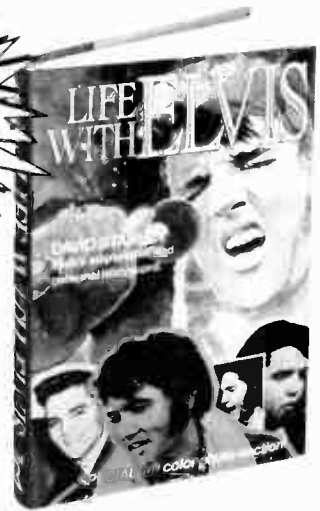
RECOMMENDED READING FOR



WITH ELLIS WIENER AND WALTER CARTER

THE OAK RIDGE BOYS: OUR STORY

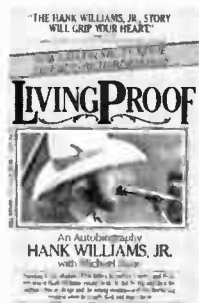
They've weathered more than 40 years of ups and downs and as many changes in personnel. While this great new book offers a complete history of the group, it is the foursome of Duane Allen, Joe Bonsall, William Lee Golden and Richard Sterban that has made The Oaks so worthy of this in-depth look. Each tells his part of The Oaks' story in a no-holds-barred style that's certain to please and surprise fans. Their stories reveal the problems of booking such a diversified group; the trials and tribulations of spending two-thirds of every year on the road; the temptations of drugs, booze, and groupies; and the sheer joy of singing and performing amid the fickle whims of the music business. The recent vote excluding William Lee Golden from the group that shocked the music industry now makes this new authorized biography an even more absorbing story to read. Hardcover...6 x 9...192 Pages...50 B&W Photos. Item No. B20—NOW \$16.95



LIFE WITH ELVIS

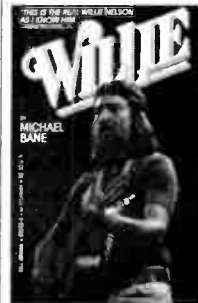
When author Dave Stanley was just four years old, his mother married Vernon Presley. For the next seventeen years, he called Graceland Mansion "home" and knew Elvis as a big brother and friend. In this revealing new book, Dave tells about living at home and on the road with the King of rock 'n' roll. He reflects on the fun times, their crazy escapades, Elvis' moments of glory and his tragic demise. Dave also reveals the darker side of his own life as a member of Elvis' entourage...how life in the fast lane came to a grinding halt on August 16, 1977, when Dave found Elvis' lifeless body lying facedown on the bathroom floor. It's a truly fascinating story. Hardcover...6 x 9/4...223 Pages...14 Pages of Rare Photos. Item No. B2M—NOW \$13.95

THE PAPERBACK CORNER



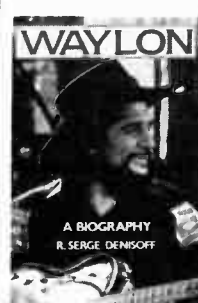
HANK WILLIAMS JR. AUTOBIOGRAPHY

His rise to fame was spectacular. But success had its price...drugs, booze, divorce and hostile audiences. He wanted to die and almost did. Here is this extraordinary story in his own words. "It's a story that goes beyond music, with the honesty of someone who's seen existence stripped of its basics"—Walter Dawson, Memphis Commercial Appeal. Item No. B81—ONLY \$3.95



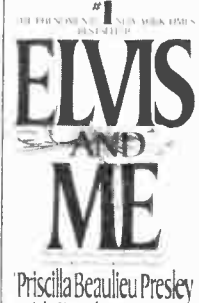
WILLIE

"This is the real Willie Nelson as I know him," says Hank Williams Jr. It's the story of the making of a legend, and the real man behind the legend. The complete story is here. Willie's growing up in the Texas flatlands, the scratching for a bare living, the music, the good and bad women, the ten thousand nights in brawling saloons, everything. It's a must. 253 Pages... Illustrated. Item No. B22—ONLY \$3.50



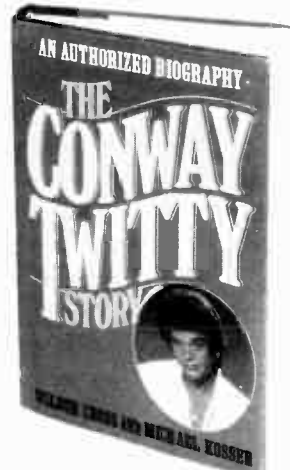
WAYLON

From interviews with Waylon's family, friends and associates, author Serge Denisoff follows Waylon from his rural Texas roots to his current superstar status. As much a story of the music scene as it is a forceful biography, here is his stormy relationship with his record companies and the Grand Ole Opry style establishment. It's must reading for Waylon fans. 375 Pages...50 B/W Photos. Item No. B6A—NOW \$10.95



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Here is the phenomenal #1 New York Times best-seller by Priscilla Presley. It is the intimate story that could only have been written by the woman who lived it. Here is just a little of what has been said about this bestseller: "Elvis And Me is one fast and titillating read"—N.Y. Daily News. "A sad, sweet book...the story it tells is fascinating"—Washington Post. Elvis fan or not, don't miss it. Item No. B3R—ONLY \$4.50



THE CONWAY TWITTY STORY: AN AUTHORIZED BIOGRAPHY

In this colorful, vivid portrait packed with fascinating anecdotes, you'll meet the dirt-poor Southern boy who grew up on a houseboat, and who, by the age of twelve, was writing songs and hosting his own radio show. You'll learn about the athletic teenager who was offered a baseball contract by the Philadelphia Phillies. And you'll discover the wonderful music man who turned his talent into a lifelong career of composing and singing everything from rockabilly and blues to gospel and mainstream country. It's must reading. Hardcover...193 Pages... Illustrated...Discography. Item No. B9G—NOW \$14.95



Sons of the Pioneers Special

In 1988, The Sons of the Pioneers, featured in the September/October Newsletter, celebrate their 55th Anniversary. Fans can catch their shows in Branson, Missouri, or Tucson, Arizona, depending on the season, or hear them on records—there's lots available.

Bear Family has a five-volume series featuring songs from 1945-1950, a one-volume overview featuring songs from 1947-57, an album of Tommy Doss and an album of Roy Rogers with the Pioneers. All available in albums only at \$12.98 each: *Cool Water (1945-46)*, (BFX 15202); *Teardrops in My Heart (1946-47)*, (BFX 15252); *A Hundred and Sixty Acres (1947)*, (BFX 15253); *Riders in the Sky (1947-49)* (BFX 15254); *Land Beyond the Sky (1949-50)*, (BFX 15255); *Sons of the Pioneers (1947-1957)*, (BFX 15071); *Tommy Doss of The Sons of the Pioneers*, (BFX 15225); and *Roy Rogers, King of the Cowboys* (BFX 15124).

MCA still carries two albums of early Pioneers work, *Empty Saddles* (MCA 1563) and *Tumbleweed Trails* (MCA 730). Songs date from the early 1940's; albums or cassettes, \$7.98 each. Pioneers' 1937 Columbia material, including six previously unissued recordings, is available on the *Columbia Historical Edition* (FC 37249), album or cassette, \$11.98.

An economical cross-section of the group's RCA work appears on British RCA's *20 of the Best of The Sons of the Pioneers* (RCA NL 89525), a real steal at \$9.98, album or cassette.

Radio buffs can hear old Pioneers radio shows on a variety of albums. Transcriptions from 1930's shows appear on *Outlaw Records* volumes (CSR 5), (CSR 6), (CSR 7), (CSR 8), (CSR 9) and (CSR 10), \$7.98 each. Pioneers' 1940's shows are available from



the John Edwards Memorial Foundation on *Sons of the Pioneers* (JEMF 102), \$10.98, and their Los Angeles TV and radio shows of 1952-53 on a double album with notes by Merle Travis, *Lucky U Ranch Radio Broadcasts* (JEMF 2201), \$13.98.

Members Prices

CMSA members deduct \$2.00 from the price of every cassette or album offered. Note your membership number on your order.

Jerry Lee Lewis Super Special

In the March/April issue, Rich Kienzle reviewed Bear Family's new three-box set of Jerry Lee Lewis. All three boxes are now available and, in response to members' inquiries, we are offering them to you at prices shown: *Jerry Lee Lewis, The Killer: 1963-1968* (BFX 15210), nine albums and book, \$140, members' price \$99.98; *Jerry Lee Lewis, The Killer: 1969-1972* (BFX 15228), ten albums and book, \$155, members' price \$109.98; *Jerry Lee Lewis, The Killer: 1973-1977* (BFX 15229), eleven albums and book, \$170, members' price \$119.98. Each box includes one bonus free album.

How to Order

Send check or money order to *Country Music Magazine*, Dept. 91087-N, 342 Madison Avenue, Suite 2118, New York, New York 10173. Include \$.95 postage and handling for each item ordered—that's \$1.00 off the regular postage and handling charge.

Other Ideas

If there are other records or trips or other items of interest to country music fans that you would like the CMSA to offer, let us know. Mark your envelope, Attention: CMSA Specials.

MEMBERS POLL/SEPTEMBER 1987

VOTE

Your opinions can help influence record companies, radio stations, record stores, concert promoters, managers and performers. As a CMSA member, you have an organized way of making your opinion known, by filling out the Members Poll. We forward the results of the Polls to those involved in the business of country music who are interested in what fans are thinking and doing, and we publish the results.

Bought Any Good Records Lately?

1. Did you buy any albums (records or tapes) in the last month?
 Yes No
 How many records? _____ How many cassettes? _____

2. Which ones did you like best? List performer and album title.

- a. _____
 b. _____
 c. _____
 d. _____
 e. _____

Your Choice for Album and Single of the Month

3. To vote, list the numbers of your top 5 favorites from the Top 25, page 68.

Singles (list 5 numbers) Albums (list 5 numbers)

Who Can Vote

Only CMSA members are eligible to vote. If you are a member, fill in your Membership Number _____

If you are not a member, but want to join and vote immediately, fill out the poll and enclose a check for \$12 for a one-year CMSA Membership (you get an extra year of *Country Music Magazine* plus other CMSA benefits, too).

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Record Reviews

Steve Earle

Exit 0
MCA-5998

The followup. If you're a new artist with a hit album, it can reduce you to a pool of throbbing sweat. The public and the critics build you up and wonder—even if they don't say it—*can he do it again?* If so, they say you'll endure. If not... That's why I wouldn't have wanted to be Steve Earle. *Guitar Town* was on everyone's short list of top albums of 1986, and in that year of new directions, he was one to be reckoned with. Just the same, he had to do it again.

Earle doesn't fit into the "New Traditionalist" mold with Randy or Dwight. And it's just as well his songs don't hearken back to Hank 'n' Lefty. To his credit, he didn't rehash *Guitar Town*, but went beyond it to capture the confusion and dilemmas of *The Moment*. A concept album in the vein of Willie's *Phases and Stages*, anyone who lives or has lived in a small town or rural area will understand it immediately.

Don't look for any Ernest P. Worrell ("know-what-I-mean") caricatures in Earle's blue-collar America. Like the real one, its scope is broad and life's not simple. These heroes and villains deal with reality their own ways. All is not black and white; there are plenty of gray areas. Some are pitiful; others are brave and still others are frightening. Only great novelists, journalists and songwriters can touch raw nerves and



create such sharp portraits of real people. Earle not only brings them to life, he makes them hit you between the eyes—and in the heart.

I didn't know the confused, displaced trucker of "Nowhere Road," but I lived next to the hot rod junkie Earle lovingly conjures up in "Sweet Little '66," the guy whose entire existence revolves around "blastin' down some back road." Who hasn't known the bittersweet, nostalgic ex-high school jock of "No. 29"? *His* life peaked on the football field, and now he relives his past (and holds off the emptiness) through the younger generations. I also think people like the factory worker who leaves wife and kids to go off on a tear in "The Week of Living Dangerously" are everywhere.

"Angry Young Man" captures the conflicting emotions

of one so alienated by small-town conventions that he lashes out but is plagued by guilt. This one alone could be a hell of a novel (or screenplay) in the right hands. Rootlessness dominates "I Ain't Ever Satisfied," which boasts a line worthy of Bob Dylan at his best: "Saint Peter said, 'Come on in, boy, you're finally home.'/I said, 'No, thanks, Pete, I'll just be moving along'."

The disenfranchised farmer of "The Rain Came Down" stars in a tragedy that plays across this country all too often these days. Romantic desperation dominates both "I Love You Too Much" and the Tex-Mex "San Antonio Girl," done complete with delightfully cheesy Farfisa organ. "It's All Up to You" ends Side Two, sums both sides up and makes them whole.

A footnote: During 1986 Earle took his band The Dukes out on tour. By the time they were ready to record this album they were smoking, and here they propel him along with the sort of raw, snarling conviction Nashville's best studio pickers can't equal. And capturing it all were Tony Brown and Emory Gordy, two of the best producers in the business today, assisted by ex-Duke guitarist Richard Bennett, whose low-slung Duane Eddy twang added so much to *Guitar Town* and does likewise here.

Oh—I should have told you whether *Exit 0* worked or not. Well, you figure it out.

—RICH KIENZLE

Johnny Cash

Johnny Cash is Coming to Town
Mercury 832-031-1 Q-1

Johnny Cash, his formidable legend notwithstanding, has come to be looked upon by some as an artist of the 1960's and 1970's. During the present decade he has been more or less *overlooked* by the record buying audience.

Somewhere along the way, it almost seemed that Cash had lost interest in maintaining any sort of musical rapport with his audience; even *he* didn't seem to be having much fun being Johnny Cash anymore.

In this regard *Johnny Cash is Coming to Town*, Cash's new album and his first for the Mercury/Polygram label, is clearly a "come-back." It's

Record Reviews



apparent from the time, energy and care that have gone into the album's preparation and the amount of hype and promotion lavished on its release that everyone hopes this one will bring Cash's recording career back to life again after a dangerously long time in the doldrums.

As his producer this time around, Cash has called in his longtime friend and associate Jack Clement, a veteran of the business whose brilliantly erratic career has, in recent years, been nearly as out of touch with the commercial mainstream as has Cash's own. This renewed Cash/Clement alliance makes the entire effort seem as adventurous and as risky as a round of blackjack. But with the cards now all on the table, it is clear that even though Cash and Clement haven't drawn a "21" here, they have come up with a solid "18" or "19"—a strong enough hand to keep them at the table for a few more rounds.

Mind you, there are no big change-ups, curve balls or surprise sliders here from Cash. He's still singing with that same familiar, slightly off-key and conversationally droll baritone of his; and he still favors that same tried and true *boom-chunka-boomp, boom-chunka-boomp* trademark Johnny Cash, two-four rhythm that he immortalized with long-ago hits like "Ring of Fire."

The difference this time around is that Cash has obviously been challenged and inspired by a great selection of songs, and by Clement's always imaginative and sometimes downright wacky



arrangements. Listen, for example, to the kazoo and jews harp, played by Clement himself, on Cash's own tongue-in-cheek love song, "I'd Rather Have You." For the first time in a long time, Cash actually sounds like he was able to stay *awake* in the studio for his own recording session, in contrast to his last Columbia album which was produced by one of your gold-plated-megahit producers.

But it is the delightfully eclectic collection of songs here as much as it is Cash's relaxed, sometimes almost casual, renditions of them or Clement's intriguing—if occasionally over-indulgent—production, that makes this album so listenable. Included are moving selections from contemporary songwriting masters like Guy Clark ("Heavy Metal"), Bobby Braddock ("The Night Hank Williams Came to Town"), Elvis Costello ("The Big Light") and James Talley.

Cash also turns in a faithful and inspired reading of the Merle Travis classic "Sixteen Tons" and serves up a couple of worthwhile originals of his own ("I'd Rather Have You" and "The Ballad of Barbara.")

Never mind that the vocal arrangements are at times weighed down by the top-heavy collection of guest artists. Let's just say it seems like Waylon Jennings, Cash's son-in-law Marty Stuart, June Carter alone and June Carter Cash with The Carter Family and nearly every other Carter and/or Cash blood relative or in-law managed to drop by the studio to tape some harmonies.

Johnny Cash is Coming to

Town is an intelligently conceived and executed album that will hopefully win back a few of the record buyers who have turned their attention away from Johnny Cash during the first fickle half of the 1980's.

—BOB ALLEN

Dwight Yoakam *Hillbilly Deluxe* Reprise 25567-1

Just before I sat down to write this review, I received a photocopy of an ad for a newly-consolidated East Coast bank from a colleague at a major newspaper. "After 12 years of being told *hillbilly music doesn't sell*," declares the narrator, "I have a hit record. And that's without compromising my style of music. Or myself."

The voice? Dwight Yoakam. The ad's shaky premise was to tie ol' Dwight's spiky integrity to that of their newly consolidated, renamed bank. "Can you believe," wrote my friend, "that this guy, who spent part of his first album singing about his old granddaddy down in the coal mines, has sold out to a bank?"

I can believe just about anything nowadays. And Dwight hasn't exactly kept a low profile. His acidic comments last year about certain Nashville bigwigs scandalized Music Row more than Kris Kristofferson did when he appeared on the CMA awards in shoulder-length hair and denim back in 1970. Many there are waiting for Dwight to falter so they can pounce. But he's in the driver's seat right now; all they can do is seethe, cuss and spit.

As he did on *Guitars, Cadillacs, Etc. Etc.*, he includes three covers on this album: one each from Lefty ("Always Late"), Elvis ("Little Sister") and Stonewall Jackson (his 1959 hit "Smoke Along the Track"). But while he made "Honky Tonk Man"

his own on the first album, these, particularly "Always Late," sound artificial. Yes, I know "Little Sister" is Top Ten as I write this. No matter. It wasn't one of Elvis' better numbers, either.

I can see Dwight's wanting to do oldies as tributes, but his original tunes are so good that he may not need to do as many in the future. The dense, dark mystery of "Johnson's Love," a Hillbilly Greek Tragedy if there ever was one, shows a creativity and depth his detractors can't minimize. His gentle performance is enhanced by the sharp-edged, sympathetic steel guitar of ex-Buck Owens Buckaroo, Tom Brumley.

"Readin', Rightin', Rt.23" movingly captures the hopes and dreams of rural Kentucky mountainfolk heading north to find work. Though Dwight as narrator seems a detached, even intellectual observer, the images as he delivers them are still vivid and real. "Little Ways" evokes the sound and spirit of early 1960's Buck Owens, appropriate since the album is dedicated to Buck. "This Drinkin' Will Kill Me" celebrates impending cirrhosis. The grim lyrics sung against a gleeful hoedown melody capture the same black humor as Hank Williams' "I'll Never Get Out of This World Alive." "Please, Please, Baby" fills the album's need for one boogie-down number.

Only two originals falter. Lines like "I'll see you walking silently/Through the shadows in my mind" and a reference to the "sunshine of the morning" in "Throughout All Time" evoke 1960's Haight-Ashbury, not Bakersfield. "1000 Miles" seems disorganized and incomplete, derailing what could have been one of the album's best moments.

No matter. The high points are more than enough to convince me Dwight's still on a roll. His hand, the Babylonian Cowboys (great name), have been honed to whiplash intensity. For all this, gui-

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"Long Gone Daddy"
"I Saw the Light"



Hank Snow
"Moving On"
"Now and Then There's a Fool Such as I"

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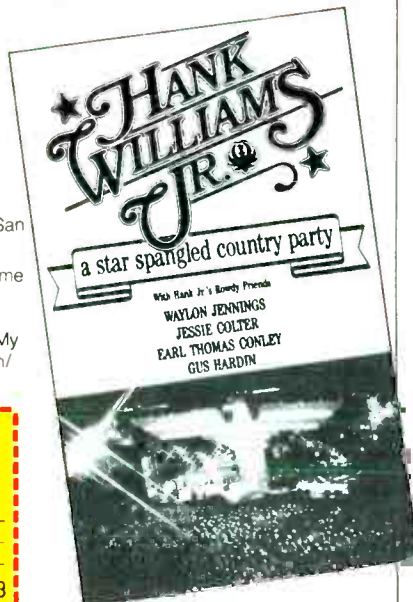
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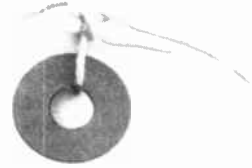
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343236 MCA WAYLON JENNINGS Will The Wolf Survive	349209 MCA VARIOUS ARTISTS TODAY'S COUNTRY CLASSICS	354878 ATLANTIC ORIGINAL MOTION PICTURE SOUNDTRACK "PLATFORM" AND SONGS FROM THE ERA
355321 MCA NANCY GRIFFITH LOVE STAR STATE OF MIND	260638 COLUMBIA CHICAGO'S GREATEST HITS	351718* ELETRA GEORGIA SATELLITES
343012 CAPITOL TANYA TUCKER GIRLS LIKE ME	348979 CAPITOL TINA TURNER BREAK EVERY RULE	354829 COLUMBIA LISA LISA COLE JAR WITH FULL FORCE SPANISH FLY
355305 COLUMBIA JANIE FRICKIE AFTER MIDNIGHT	257279 COLUMBIA Bruce Springsteen BORN TO RUN	357186* COLUMBIA HOTTERS ONE WAY HOME
343004 MCA REBA MCKENTHRE WHOEVER'S IN NEW ENGLAND	348961 COLUMBIA SWEETHEARTS OF THE RODEO	354514 MCA JODY WATLEY
355255 WARNER BROS. MICHAEL MARTIN MURPHEY AMERICANA	335653 MCA BARBARA MANDRELLS GREATEST HITS	357178 CBS ASSOCIATED THE FABULOUS THUNDERBIRDS HOT NUMBER
342972 WARNER BROS. EMMYLOU HARRIS THIRTEEN	348953 WARNER BROS. GARY MORRIS PLAIN BROWN WRAPPER	348318 A&M THE POLICE EVERY BREATH YOU TAKE
354910 WARNER BROS. THE WITTY GRITTY DIRTY BAND HOLD ON	335638 ARISTA THE MANA OR COLLECTION BARRY MANILOW 20 CLASSIC HITS	356873* COLUMBIA THE OUTFIELD BANGIN'
342956 CAPITOL DON WILLIAMS NEW MOVES	348938 EPIC MERLE HAGGARD OUT AMONG THE STARS	344614 DIS FRISK DWAYNE YOKAM GUITARS, CADILLACS, ETC. ETC.
354845 MCA JUDY ROOMAN A PLACE CALLED LOVE	335539 MCA MERLE HAGGARD HIS BEST	356691* WARNER BROS. ATLANTIC STARR ALL IN THE NAME OF LOVE
342360 CAPITOL ANNE MURRAY SOMETHING TO TALK ABOUT	348896 EPIC RICKY SKAGGS LOVE'S GONNA GET YA	236885 A&M CARPENTERS SINGLES 1969-1973
354738 MCA HOLLY DUNN	335109 MCA LEE GREENWOOD GREATEST HITS	356485 PRIORITY ROGER WILLIAMS TODAY, MY WAY
342287 EPIC MERLE HAGGARD FRIENDS IN CALIFORNIA	348599* COLUMBIA RODNEY CROWELL STREET LANGUAGE	187088* COLUMBIA Barbra Streisand's GREATEST HITS
354720 MCA SCHUYLER, KNOBLOCH & OVERTREET S K O	335067 COLUMBIA JOHNNY CASH, MERLE HAGGARD, GEORGE STRAIT, WILIE NELSON, AND THE REST OF THE RANGERS HIGHWAYMAN	356279* EPIC BLINK 182 AND BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN LET IT LOOSE
290171* CAPITOL Steve Miller Band Greatest Hits 74-78	348342 WARNER BROS. CRYSTAL GAYLE STRAIGHT TO THE HEART	138586 COLUMBIA BOB DYLAN'S GREATEST HITS
354480 BAMBURGO INCOMPARABLE— MAN TOYANI ORCH STANLEY BLACK, GOND	334466 MCA GEORGE STRAIT GREATEST HITS	356030 COLUMBIA LACY J. DALTON BLUE EYED BLUES
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354464 MCA THE OAK RIDGE BOYS WHERE THE FAST LANE ENDS	334409 LAUREL 15 TOP TEN HITS OF THE 50'S & 60'S	355628 REALITY VINCE DONOVAN & THE NIGHTMARES PLAY GLENN MILLER DIGITAL SERENADE
342105* COLUMBIA BANGLES Different Light	348227 MCA JOHN SCHNEIDER TAKE THE LONG WAY HOME	357087* ARISTA GRATEFUL DEAD IN THE DARK
354324 BAMBURGO FERRANTE & TEICHER AMERICAN FANTASY	334391* ARISTA WHITNEY HOUSTON	355420 EPIC GENE WATSON HONKY TONK CRAZY
342097 COLUMBIA Barbra Streisand The Broadway Album	348128 MCA LEE GREENWOOD LOVE WILL FIND ITS WAY TO YOU	353920 ELETRA SIMPLY RED MEN AND WOMEN
354175 BAMBURGO PETER NERO THE SOUNDS OF LOVE	SELECTIONS WITH TWO NUMBERS ARE 2-RECORD SETS OR DOUBLE-LENGTH TAPES, AND COUNT AS TWO SELECTIONS—WRITE EACH NUMBER IN A SEPARATE BOX	
341065 PRIORITY FERRANTE & TEICHER A FEW OF OUR FAVORITE ON PAGE	355123* MCA LIBERACE THE BEST OF LIBERACE	355115 JAMELYN PAIN PRINCE SIGN O' THE TIMES
354167 TULLWOOD/EPIC DAN FOGELBERG EXILES	310219 COLUMBIA JOHNNY MATHIS 390211 SILVER ANNIVERSARY ALBUM	353839 CBS INC. & MCA 393835 COL. HISTORIC EDITION THE GOLDEN ERA
340885 ATLANTIC/AMERICA GLEN CAMPBELL IT'S JUST A MATTER OF TIME	352765 392761 COLUMBIA JOHNNY CASH 1958-1986	324350* 394353 MCA THE WHO QUADROPHENIA
354100* CAPITOL CROWDED HOUSE	291864 391862 COLUMBIA ORIGINAL SOUNDTRACK WOODSTOCK	352427 392423 EPIC TAMMY WYNETTE ANNIVERSARY 20 YEARS OF HITS
340729 MCA BARBARA MANDRELL GET TO THE HEART	351387 391383 COLUMBIA THE WORLD'S GREATEST BLUEGRASS PICKERS VARIOUS ARTISTS	311001 COLUMBIA WILLIE NELSON'S GREATEST HITS (AND SOME THAT HE DIDN'T)
354076 COLUMBIA JOHN CONLEE AMERICAN FACES	314997 394999* MCA STEVE WONDER HIS GREATEST HITS Original Master Tapes	351148* 391144 EPIC STEVE RAY VAUGHAN & DOUBLE TROUBLE LIVE ALIVE
340463 CAPITOL THE BEST OF FRANK SINATRA	350173 390179 WARNER BROS. CLASSICS HANK WILLIAMS, JR. The Early Years	319996 399998 MOTOWN MOTOWN'S 25 #1 HITS FROM 25 YEARS
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353649 MCA PATTY LOVELESS	341271 391276 MCA TOM PETTY & THE HEARTBREAKERS PACK UP THE PLANTATION/LIVE!	347187* 397182 SILVER EAGLE THE GREAT ROY ORBISON+ALL TIME GREATEST HITS
252387 CAPITOL THE BEST OF NAT KING COLE	349498* 394481 BAMBURGO LAWRENCE WELK & HIS ORCHESTRAL MEMORIES WITH LAWRENCE WELK	342113* 392118 SILVER EAGLE RICKY NELSON ALL MY BEST
353573 MCA STEVE WARNER IT'S A CRAZY WORLD	342766 392761 COLUMBIA VARIOUS ARTISTS TELEVISION'S GREATEST HITS—65 THEMES FROM THE 50'S AND 60'S	346445 396440 CAPITOL THE BEACH BOYS Made in the U.S.A.— The Greatest Hits
244459 COLUMBIA SANTANA'S GREATEST HITS	345637* 395632 COLUMBIA WINDIE KOSTELANETZ World's Greatest Love Songs	345454* 395459 MOTOWN DIANA ROSS & THE SUPREMES 25TH ANNIVERSARY
	355180 MCA BALL MONROE & THE BLUEGRASS BLUEGRASS '87	353847 COLUMBIA RICKY VAN SHELTON WILD-EYED DREAM
	348094 ATLANTIC ORIGINAL SOUND TRACK STAND BY ME	351486 EPIC ANDY WILLIAMS CLOSE ENOUGH FOR LOVE
	323915 CAPITOL BILLY IDOL REBEL YELL	347757 MCA/COLUMBIA THE KENDALLS Fire At First Sight
	349068 EPIC MICKEY GILLEY BACK TO BASICS	347955 CAPITOL HUEY LEWIS AND THE NEWS FORE
	342438 EPIC YES 90125	



352252. Hank Williams, Jr. —Hank "Live." Includes I'm For Love, etc. (Warner Bros./Curb)

354035. Dwight Yoakam—Hillbilly Deluxe. Little Sister, Little Ways. (Reprise)

355826. Reba McEntire—Greatest Hits. What Am I Gonna Do About You. (MCA)

353250. George Strait—Ocean Front Property. All My Ex's Live In Texas. more! (MCA)

357194. Willie Nelson—Island in the Sea. Title cut, Little Things, etc. (Columbia)

356824. Rosanne Cash—King of the Record Shop. (Columbia)

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319541 ELTON JOHN'S GREATEST HITS	350108* PIA ZADORA I AM WHAT I AM	306241 THE DOORS GREATEST HITS	246968 JIM CROCE THE GREATEST HITS	293597 LED ZEPPELIN Houses of the Holy	305672 ANNE MURRAY'S GREATEST HITS	345231 JOHNNY CASH WAYLON JENNINGS HEROES	336750 EDDIE RABBITT #1'S	347195 JIMMY BUFFETT FLORIDAYS	339812 STEVE WARINER LIFE'S HIGHWAY	286740 LINDA RONSTADT'S GREATEST HITS	293597 LED ZEPPELIN Houses of the Holy	305672 ANNE MURRAY'S GREATEST HITS	353540 RONNIE McDOWELL OLDER WOMEN AND OTHER GALATEE HITS
317990 MERLE HAGGARD & WALLIE NELSON RANCH AND LEFTY	350090 DAN SEALS ON THE FRONT LINE	291278* DOOBIE BROTHERS The Best of the Doobies	287003 EAGLES 1971-1975 GREATEST HITS	344721 LOMEL RICHIE DANCING ON THE CEILING	336222* DIRE STRAITS Brothers In Arms	347195 JIMMY BUFFETT FLORIDAYS	339812 STEVE WARINER LIFE'S HIGHWAY	317990 MERLE HAGGARD & WALLIE NELSON RANCH AND LEFTY	350090 DAN SEALS ON THE FRONT LINE	291278* DOOBIE BROTHERS The Best of the Doobies	287003 EAGLES 1971-1975 GREATEST HITS	344721 LOMEL RICHIE DANCING ON THE CEILING	336222* DIRE STRAITS Brothers In Arms
347161* AMY GRANT THE COLLECTION	339499 19 HOT COUNTRY REQUESTS, VOL. II	346536 THEN & NOW THE BEST OF THE BONKERS	352757 CHARLY McCLAIN STILL I STAY	321380 Barbra Streisand's Greatest Hits, Vol. 2	353490 RAY STEVENS GREATEST HITS	333807 MERLE HAGGARD KERN RIVER	350058 MEL McDANIEL JUST CRAFT SIT DOWN MUSIC	346304 LACY J. DALTON HIGHWAY DINER	352641* STAND BY ME THE BEST OF BEN E. KING AND BEN E. KING WITH THE DRIFTERS	321349 CRYSTAL GAYLE Greatest Hits	353482* GREGG ALLMAN BAND I'M NO ANGEL	347161* AMY GRANT THE COLLECTION	339499 19 HOT COUNTRY REQUESTS, VOL. II
347104 T. GRAHAM BROWN TELL IT LIKE IT USED TO BE	339481 RICKY SKAGGS LIVE IN LONDON	346304 LACY J. DALTON HIGHWAY DINER	352641* STAND BY ME THE BEST OF BEN E. KING AND BEN E. KING WITH THE DRIFTERS	321349 CRYSTAL GAYLE Greatest Hits	353482* GREGG ALLMAN BAND I'M NO ANGEL	347104 T. GRAHAM BROWN TELL IT LIKE IT USED TO BE	339481 RICKY SKAGGS LIVE IN LONDON	346304 LACY J. DALTON HIGHWAY DINER	352641* STAND BY ME THE BEST OF BEN E. KING AND BEN E. KING WITH THE DRIFTERS	321349 CRYSTAL GAYLE Greatest Hits	353482* GREGG ALLMAN BAND I'M NO ANGEL	347104 T. GRAHAM BROWN TELL IT LIKE IT USED TO BE	339481 RICKY SKAGGS LIVE IN LONDON
333625 EMMYLOU HARRIS—THE BALLAD OF SALLY ROSE	349993 JOHN CONLEE CONLEE COUNTRY	314922 The Golden Hits Of The Everly Brothers	337519 HEART	343582 VAN HALEN 5150	291773 The Best Of Peter, Paul And Mary	333625 EMMYLOU HARRIS—THE BALLAD OF SALLY ROSE	349993 JOHN CONLEE CONLEE COUNTRY	314922 The Golden Hits Of The Everly Brothers	337519 HEART	343582 VAN HALEN 5150	291773 The Best Of Peter, Paul And Mary	333625 EMMYLOU HARRIS—THE BALLAD OF SALLY ROSE	349993 JOHN CONLEE CONLEE COUNTRY
347096 Southern Pacific Kilbilly Hill	339325 MEL McDANIEL STAND UP	346296 JANIE FRICKE BLACK AND WHITE	352369 DAVID ALLAN COE A MATTER OF LIFE AND DEATH	321307 AIR SUPPLY GREATEST HITS	353458 BRUCE WILLIS THE RETURN OF BRUND	347096 Southern Pacific Kilbilly Hill	339325 MEL McDANIEL STAND UP	346296 JANIE FRICKE BLACK AND WHITE	352369 DAVID ALLAN COE A MATTER OF LIFE AND DEATH	321307 AIR SUPPLY GREATEST HITS	353458 BRUCE WILLIS THE RETURN OF BRUND	347096 Southern Pacific Kilbilly Hill	339325 MEL McDANIEL STAND UP
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330738 PROFILES II THE BEST OF EMMYLOU HARRIS	349316 WILLIE NELSON PARTNERS	326629 Bruce Springsteen Born In The U.S.A.	346312 BILLY JOEL THE BRIDGE	350272 MARIE OSMOND I ONLY WANTED YOU	346478 MADONNA TRUE BLUE	330738 PROFILES II THE BEST OF EMMYLOU HARRIS	349316 WILLIE NELSON PARTNERS	326629 Bruce Springsteen Born In The U.S.A.	346312 BILLY JOEL THE BRIDGE	350272 MARIE OSMOND I ONLY WANTED YOU	346478 MADONNA TRUE BLUE	330738 PROFILES II THE BEST OF EMMYLOU HARRIS	349316 WILLIE NELSON PARTNERS
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346510 THE FORESTER SISTERS PERFUME RIBBONS & PEARLS	337998 WILLIE NELSON HALF NELSON	345777* PETER GABRIEL SO	345389 GEORGE STRAIT NUMBER SEVEN			346510 THE FORESTER SISTERS PERFUME RIBBONS & PEARLS	337998 WILLIE NELSON HALF NELSON	345777* PETER GABRIEL SO	345389 GEORGE STRAIT NUMBER SEVEN			346510 THE FORESTER SISTERS PERFUME RIBBONS & PEARLS	337998 WILLIE NELSON HALF NELSON
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How the Club operates: every four weeks (13 times a year) you'll receive the Club's music magazine, which describes the Selection of the Month for each musical interest...plus hundreds of alternates from every field of music. In addition, up to six times a year you may receive offers of Special Selections, usually at a discount off regular Club prices, for a total of up to 19 buying opportunities.

If you wish to receive the Selection of the Month or the Special Selection, you need do nothing—it will be shipped automatically. If you prefer an alternate selection, or none at all, fill in the response card always provided and mail it by the date specified. You will always have at least 10 days to make your decision. If you ever receive any Selection without having 10 days to decide, you may return it at our expense.

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CDs and videocassettes also available to Club members. Each issue of the music magazine contains a wide selection of the latest hits and old favorites on Compact Discs. In addition, from time to time videocassettes are also available. And best of all, the CDs or videocassettes you purchase as a Club member will count toward fulfillment of your membership obligation.

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- Black Music* (Lisa Lisa, Jody Watley)
- Country Jazz* Classical* *no 8-Tracks

Mr. Mrs. Miss *no 8-Tracks
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tarist/producer Pete Anderson (who recently left the band to concentrate on production and session work) deserves much of the credit. The ungodly sounds he pulls from his Fender Telecaster are both the perfect foil for Dwight's voice and establish him as today's most innovative picker.

I really hope *Hillbilly Deluxe* sells well enough to keep Music Row's sharks off Dwight's back. May it have a high yield of hits, and provide enough financial security so he won't have to do any more bank ads.

—RICH KIENZLE

Randy Travis *Always & Forever* Warner Brothers 25568-1

You may have noticed that every album I am reviewing in this issue is by someone who had a phenomenal debut last year and is currently sharing credit for revitalizing the country music industry. Randy Travis is no exception; in fact, the success of *Storms of Life*, his hit singles and the heaps of critical acclaim and awards he received gave him the most incredible year of all.

Though his sound is new to many younger people, I have yet to meet anyone he hasn't impressed. Even the stars of the 1950's and 1960's who inspired Randy's music can't say enough good about him. In the autumn of their careers, they see him as flesh-and-blood reassurance that their sound will endure.

But sudden stardom like Randy's can disorient the hardest performer, resulting in hectic schedules and hastily-done followup records. Some manage to overcome these obstacles. Steve Earle outdid himself with his follow-up, *Exit 0*. Yoakam was nearly as good as before *Hillbilly Deluxe*. But, much as I'd like to say *Always & Forever* is even better than *Storms of*

Life, it has problems. We're not talking disaster; in fact, Travis' voice and Kyle Lehning's production are stronger than before. Yet *Storms* relied on innovative songs while this time around the star and producer play it safe—*too* safe, *too* predictable.

The good is good indeed. "Forever and Ever, Amen," penned by "On the Other Hand" composers Don Schlitz and Paul Overstreet, is a witty, well-performed love song underscoring Randy's special rapport with this pair. It fits him so well it deserves to hit Number One. He also handles Manhattan Transfer founder Gene Pistilli's delightful little swing tune "Too Gone Too Long" with the right amount of wry humor.

Randy's original numbers are even more encouraging since they reveal his formidable songwriting gifts. "I Told You So" is a clever, well-paced exploration of the consciousness of one who tries going back—*too* late. The brassy honky tonk celebration, "Tonight We're Gonna Tear Down the Walls," boasts a Western swing/Dixieland arrangement that would do Merle Haggard proud.

For my money "Good Intentions," Randy's and Marvin Coe's heartbreaking and remorseful tale of a son who went bad in spite of himself, is the sleeper. Its knowing feel and his beautifully understated vocal create natural drama and depth, enhancing the song's thoughtful, well-turned lines.

Alas, someone had a fixation on ballads about domestic tranquility in the vein of "Forever and Ever." Three other songs cover similar ground, and four numbers on the same subject on the same album is a bit much for any artist. "My House" and "The Truth is Lyin' Next to You" are both bland and undistinguished. Troy Seals' and Max Barnes' "I Won't Need You Anymore" is "Forever and Ever" without the wit. Dennis Linde's "What'll You Do

About Me" is simply weak, its jarring rock arrangement nearly overwhelming Randy's voice.

My high opinion of Randy remains unchanged, particularly considering his promise as a writer. Lehning remains the right producer for him, and the unevenness of this outing doesn't change that. However, I noticed on the album credits that thanks are offered to Martha Sharp for "finding great songs." Nothing personal, guys, but next time give Ms. Sharp something else to do and pick the songs yourselves.

—RICH KIENZLE

Gene Watson *Honky Tonk Crazy* Epic FB 40644

Except for the fact that his voice doesn't have quite the range or effortless dexterity of, say, a George Strait or a Randy Travis, Gene Watson has always been one of my ideal examples of a honky tonk singer.

For one thing, he's never been embarrassed to take on a good old-fashioned tearjerker or novelty number laden with double meanings—like "Girl, You're Sitting on a Gold Mine," one of his songs from several years ago—and weep, wail, howl and get down with it. And, at least until recently, when he gave up his sideburns and slicked-backed hair style, he looked like the kind of guy whose idea of a good time on a Saturday afternoon was to roll up his shirt sleeves, stick

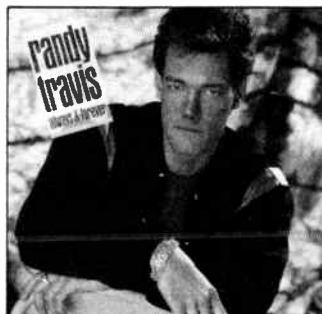
a toothpick in his mouth and slide under his car to change the oil.

In fact, what has always seemed to plague Watson through his career and keep him from rising above second-tier star status was this casualness of his. In his music it seemed to reflect itself in sloppily produced albums, lazy vocal performances and some unimaginative song choices.

Maybe what Watson has needed all along is the right producer. A producer can play a crucial role in creating and sustaining an artist's recording career. For example, if Dwight Yoakam hadn't had the good fortune to join forces with his brilliant producer and former lead guitarist, Pete Anderson, he might still be playing the neo-sawdust bars in the San Fernando Valley. It's also possible to speculate that if George Jones had not had the good luck to hook up with studio wizard Billy Sherrill at a point about a decade and a half ago when his career was on the ropes, even he might long since have faded into oblivion.

And now, in what seems to be a match made in honky tonk heaven, Billy Sherrill is producing Gene Watson, attempting perhaps to see if some of the Midas touch he's used with Jones for so many years can be brought to bear on a younger and only slightly less talented honky tonk crooner.

The results, heard on *Honky Tonk Crazy*, Watson's latest, are impressive indeed. Watson is no George Jones. But he is a gifted honky tonker who knows what white



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man's soul music is all about. And Sherrill manages to coax more richness, depth and texture out of his voice than I can remember hearing on any of the singer's previous albums.

Some of the vocal performances are downright wonderful; in almost unrelenting terms they evoke the grim forlornness of being alone clutching a beer bottle and aching with loneliness on the dance floor in some gritty, dim-lighted boondocks dancehall. On Watson's soul-shivering rendition of "You Took Her Off My Hands"—co-written by Harlan Howard, along with S. McDonald and W. Stewart—the pain and anguish reaches teeth-gnashing proportions. "Ashes to Ashes"—written by J. Chambers and L. Jenkins—is one of those mournful-to-the-point-of-morbid tearjerkers—*praying don't help, so dying's the best I can do*—that only a singer like Watson (or Jones) can pull off.

There are some other great songs, as well. Listen, for instance, to Watson's rollicking vocal on "Everybody Needs a Hero"—written by the distinguished team of Troy Seals and Max D. Barnes—a brilliant little character sketch of a young boy's remembrance of his first idol, a small-town hood called Savannah Slim. Then, of course, there's the title song by the old standby, Harlan Howard, which is simple solid honky tonk music, done in a dependable, no-frills, barroom style.

All in all, Watson's and Sherrill's collaboration on *Honky Tonk Crazy* is one of

those quiet triumphs that probably won't win any awards or garner a huge batch of rave reviews. But it shows a veteran producer delivering the goods once again, and a dependable and near-brilliant singer raising his game to new levels.

—BOB ALLEN

Rattlesnake Annie *Rattlesnake Annie* Columbia B6C 40678

Rattlesnake Annie's devotees do her something of a disservice when they set her up as the savior of country music today. Appearing as it does accompanied by one of the more runaway hypes of recent memory, her major-label American debut proves to be a decidedly mixed blessing. Already a big star in Europe and well-known among a small, hard-core country underground here in America, Annie has a husky alto and great taste in material. She records almost exclusively with acoustic instruments. But she is also an erratic interpreter, and her own songs are a mixed bag.

It's mighty hard to hear any hardship in her reading of "Sixteen Tons," for example, or any humor or any wisdom either. "Goodbye to a River," reputedly one of her top originals, turns out to be precious, corny. There are a couple of other tracks here that seem to be all style, no content. But, hey, "Country Music Hall of Fame," another of her tunes, is a wonderful weeper, with a pedal steel

that will tear your heart out, and it should be on every jukebox in the land. Her interpretations of Lonnie Mack are generally playful while staying right on target, and her reading of "Long Black Limousine" is pretty wrenching itself. While her take on Steve Young's "Lonesome, On'ry and Mean" seems woefully misconceived, it at least does, through both the revamped melody and the emphasis on the references to Shreveport, conjure up the ghost of Hank Williams as explicitly as Young's own version ever did.

No, it's easy enough to see what others see in Rattlesnake Annie, especially coming as she does on the heels of too many years of urban-oriented country dreck. But methinks the reason she has remained so obscure until now is at least partly due to the fact that she is, in several crucial respects, a marginal talent, albeit one with her heart in the right place—and one whose time, no doubt about it, has come.

—JOHN MORTHLAND

K. T. Oslin *80's Ladies* RCA 5924-1-R

I have mixed feelings about K. T. Oslin's debut album, *80's Ladies*. On the one hand, K. T.'s a singer with presence—not necessarily the most powerful voice I've heard, but a singer willing to push hard, to reach for extremes. On this album she turns in consistently outstanding vocal performances, particularly on "Younger Men" and "Do Ya" (which, incidentally, reminds me of the other recent initialed singer, k.d. lang). On the other hand—sounds like a Randy Travis song, doesn't it?—I find the content and feeling of said songs leave me cold. This is what would have been referred to in the Sen-

sitive 1970's as a "woman's album":

*We've been educated
We got liberated
And that's complicated
matters with men
Oh, we've said I do
And we've sworn we'd
never do that again...*

That's from the title song, "80's Ladies," and I think it's fair to say it sets the tone for the rest of the album. Oslin wrote or co-wrote over a period of years, all the songs on this album except one. It's the feeling of desperation, I think, that gets me. I mean, life is hard, men are jerks and oh, god, can any of us ever fall in love again. Love here seems to be trapped in the puppy dog stage, big eyes and broken promises.

When Oslin lets go, the results are very pleasing. Both "Younger Men" and, especially, "Do Ya" crank along at a good pace. In fact, "Do Ya" reminds me of k.d. lang's hard-rocking delivery. Lyrically, "Younger Men" has a hard edge that I wish the rest of the album shared:

*Now I'm staring 40 right in
the face
And the only trouble with
being a woman my age
Is the men my age...*

Of course, I see it from a little different perspective...

Finally, and, I suspect, a major contributing factor to my lack of enthusiasm, is the production by Harold Shedd. In a word, pop. I mean, *pop!* If you're going to try and crack the Whitney Houston market, you better be willing to toss a little of ol' Whitney's exuberance into the ring. Only bubbles go pop.

—MICHAEL BANE

Highway 101 *Highway 101* Warner Brothers 25608

Are you getting tired of people telling you that here's yet another stunning debut album? I mean, after

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all, there's been Dwight Yoakam, Steve Earle, Randy Travis, the Foresters, Judy Rodman, The O'Kanes and who knows who else, all in the last couple of years.

Well, I hope not too tired, because *Highway 101* is, in fact, another stunning debut album. Lead vocalist Paulette Carlson is the woman singer we've been waiting for, and she's backed by what could prove to be one of the most versatile and off-beat bands in country music.

Paulette Carlson is the female equivalent of Randy Travis, a singer with a voice so powerful and so compelling that it demands attention—immediate attention. The first time I heard “The Bed You Made For Me” on the radio, I stopped dead in my tracks, trying to figure out who the singer was. She has the power to dip down deep inside and wail, then shift gears right back to a ballad. She has fire, and that's damned rare.

I first heard of Carlson from another critic-type person during a late night discussion of women country vocalists. Both of us were in agreement that the finest country vocalist we'd heard in years was Maria McKee of the rock group Lone Justice (if you saw her duet with John Cougar Mellencamp on Farm-Aid II, you'd understand). “Have you ever,” my companion said, “heard Paulette Carlson?” At the time I hadn't, but I see what he meant.

What makes Carlson so special is her ability to sing hard, to have a blues edge without losing the country grounding. She can maintain an ironic undertone that lets her sound both tough and vulnerable. I particularly liked her version of Rodney Crowell's “Somewhere Tonight,” where she's home alone while her baby does the town. But it's more of a girl cry-in-your-lite-beer song that it is your usual weeper.

In fact, that little bit of

difference is a hallmark of this entire album. The choice of songs is eclectic, highlighting Paulette's voice and showing a decidedly off-beat sensibility (not surprising, I suppose, considering her band backed up Rodney Dangerfield in his last movie).

“Whiskey, If You Were a Woman” is the hands-down best drinking song I've heard in years. You believe, stone-cold believe, that if whiskey was a woman, she wouldn't stand a snowball's chance against Paulette Carlson. But this is an album full of killer songs. Listen to “Woman Walk the Line:”

*Yes, I'm as good as what
you're thinkin'*

*But I don't want to hold
your hand*

*And I know I'm looking
lonely*

*But there's nothing here I
want to find*

It's just the way of woman

*When she goes out to walk
the line....*

When Paulette sings that first line, the little hairs on the back of my neck stand up.

Another thing I like is the fact that these are strong women songs. The singer may have been hurt, but she knows who she is and what she is. “The Bed You Made for Me” is about hurt and strength, and I for one like to hear those kinds of sentiments. At least three more outstanding songs deserve mention. “Cry, Cry, Cry” would have done Patsy Cline proud; “Are You Still Mine” is a haunting country ballad; “Good Goodbye” rocks on.

The band is absolutely flawless. The instrumentation is perfect, and the harmonies—especially on “Are You Still Mine”—are beautiful, blending smoothly into Carlson's powerful lead. In short, *Highway 101* is one hell of a band, and Paulette Carlson is, in fact, better than Maria McKee.

This album belongs right up there on the shelf with Randy Travis.

—MICHAEL BANE

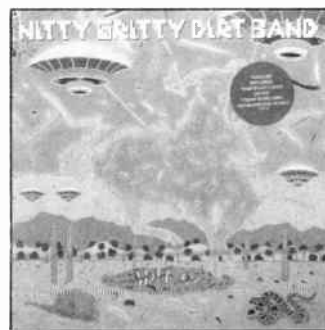
Nitty Gritty Dirt Band *Hold On*

Warner Bros. 1-25573

I never thought much of the idea of the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band as keepers of the old-timey purist faith—to my mind, the only emotion more hollow than nostalgia is nostalgia for a time and place one never knew to begin with. But the NGDB is responsible for one of my guilty pleasures: in the last couple of years, I've actually found myself enjoying those moments when one of their more modern, Nashville-oriented tracks came on the car radio. So I guess that's what I was hoping for when I tried out this album.

I couldn't have been further off the mark.

What we have here is slick, corporate Los Angeles-style country-rock that doesn't rock, or sort-of country without either sincerity or any other detectable emotional commitment. From the heavy-handed arrangement of “Fishin' in the Dark,” the opening cut, to the closing “Tennessee,” which pretty much sums up the aforementioned nostalgia for a time and place etc., this stuff goes in one ear and out the other almost without registering at all. “Dancing to the Beat of a Broken Heart” is the closest thing here to the kind of country weeper I was looking for. Much more typical are such contrivances and clichés as “Baby's Got a Hold on Me,”



“Oleanna” or “Blue Ridge Mountain Girl.” Then you've got your Buffett-like lilting Caribbean travesty (“Joe Knows How to Live”), your nondescript generic country-rock (“Keepin' the Road Hot”), your ersatz Cajun (“Angelyne”) and...there's really no need to go on.

Not to be too harsh, but all of this adds up to a slab of product with no apparent reason for being. Great front cover, though, guys.

—JOHN MORTHLAND

Townes Van Zandt *At My Window* Sugar Hill SH-1020

After all these years, Townes Van Zandt is still, to most people, the guy who wrote “Pancho and Lefty” for Emmylou Harris, later recorded by Willie and Merle. But there's a more fanatical cult that would agree with what Steve Earle says on the cover—that Townes is the greatest songwriter alive today. In these people's view, only his personal disposition has prevented him from becoming a huge star. This album is not likely to make any converts, but it will almost certainly keep that cult happy.

Oddly, for a word-man such as Townes, there's not an arresting, original image on the album, not one lyric so striking it just stops you dead in your tracks. Townes is recycling the old tried-and-trues here, right down to the





Patsy Cline: A Tribute—Leavin' On Your Mind/Tra Le La Le La Triangle/Back In Baby's Arms/Imagine That/So Wrong/You're Stronger Than Me/Sweet Dreams/Why Can't He Be You/When I Get Thru With You/Crazy/Who Can I Count On Lovin' In Vain. LP No. HAT 3008/Cass. No. HATC 3008



Louvin Bros: My Baby's Gone—I Wish I Knew/My Baby's Gone/Blue From Now On/While You're Cheatin' On Me/Lorene/When I Loved You/She Didn't Even Know I Was Gone/You're Running Wild/Plenty Of Everything But You, more! LP No. HAT 3028/Cass. No. HATC 3028



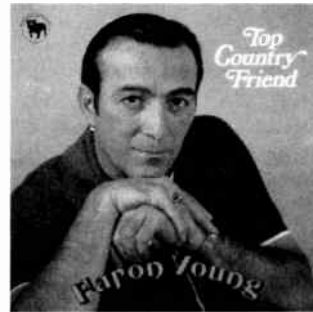
Patsy Montana: Original Hits From The West—I Wanna Be A Cowboy's Dream Girl/Lone Star/Swing The Cowgirl/My Poncho Pony/Back On Montana Plains/I Wanna Be A Cowboy's Sweetheart/Ridin' Old Paint/Good-night Soldier, more! LP No. CSR 3/Cass. No. CSR 3C



Webb Pierce: The Great Songs Of—I'm Walking The Dog/It's Been So Long/Slowly/There Stands The Glass/Even Tho'/I'm Gonna Fall Out Of Love With You/I'm In The Jailhouse Now/Wondering/You Can't Be True/I'm Not In Love With You. LP No. BDL 1026/Cass. No. BDLC 1026



Webb Pierce: Webb!—Sittin' Alone/My Shoes Keep Walking Back To You/You Make Me Live Again/Tupelo County Jail/Falling Back To You/Life To Go/After The Boy Gets The Girl/Pick Me Up On Your Way Down/The Violet And The Rose/I Won't Be Crying Anymore, more! LP No. HAT 3019/Cass. No. HATC 3019



Faron Young: Top Country Friend—If You Ain't Lovin' (You Ain't Livin')/Riverboat/Congratulations/Face To The Wall/Hello Walls/You're Still Mine/Three Days/Alone With You/Country Girl/Back Track. LP No. BDL 1030/Cass. No. BDLC 1030



Bob Wills: The Rare Presto Transcriptions—Draggin' The Bow/Tennessee Saturday Night/Twin Guitar Special/Will You Miss Me When I'm Gone/Bob Wills Boogie/No Wonder/San Antonio Rose/Judy/Tumbling Tumbleweeds, 8 more! LP No. CSR 1/Cass. No. CSR 1C



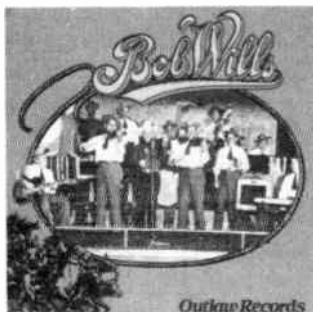
Kitty Wells: Kitty's Choice—Sugar-time/Dark Moon/Jambalaya/Half As Much/Tennessee Waltz/Beautiful Brown Eyes/Your Cheatin' Heart/Seven Lonely Days/Jalous Heart/When The Moon Comes Over The Mountain/Bonaparte's Retreat/My Happiness. LP No. HAT 3018/Cass. No. HATC 3018



Kitty Wells: Original Queen Of Country—Makin' Believe/Poison In Your Heart/I Don't Claim To Be An Angel/After Dark/One By One/I've Kissed You My Last Time/On The Lonely Side Of Town/You And Me (And The Power In Your Heart), more! LP No. BDL 1025/Cass. No. BDLC 1025



Hank Thompson: Dance Ranch—Beaumont Rag/Headin' Down The Wrong Highway/Bartenders' Polka/Bubbles In My Beer/Makes Room In Your Heart (For A Memory)/Summit Ridge Drive/I Wouldn't Miss It For The World/After All The Things I've Done, and more! LP No. HAT 3027/Cass. No. HATC 3027



Bob Wills: More Rare Presto Transcriptions—In The Mood/Sugar Mountain/Eimer's Tune/My Life's Been A Pleasure/Texas Home/Dipsy Doodle/Just A Little Lovin'/Cherokee Maiden/You're The Sweetest Rose In Texas, 9 more! LP No. CSR 2/Cass. No. CSR 2C



Bob Wills: Time Changes Everything—Across The Street From The Alamo/I'm Living In The Middle Of Nowhere/South Of The Border (Down Mexico Way)/Running Bear/Texas Double Eagle/Time Changes Everything/Limehouse Blues, more! LP No. HAT 3024/Cass. No. HATC 3024



Wilburn Bros.: Country Gold—Crazy Arms/I Don't Care/I Don't Love You Anymore/I Wonder Where You Are Tonight/Before I'm Over You/When I Stop Dreaming/I Dreamed Of An Old Love Affair/World Of Forgotten People/I Can Stand It, more! LP No. HAT 3007/Cass. No. HATC 3007



Loretta Lynn: Sings Loretta Lynn—The Minute You're Gone/The Other Woman/Alone With You/Why I'm Walking/Act Naturally/World Of Forgotten People/Color Of The Blues/A Hundred Proof Heartache/I Walked Away From The Wreck, more! LP No. HAT 3023/Cass. No. HATC 3023

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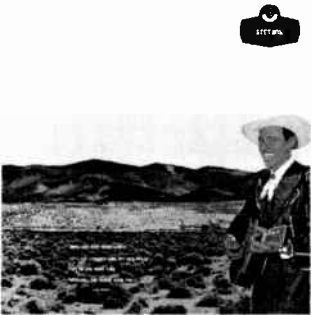
Rose Maddox: Sings Bluegrass—Rollin' In My Sweet Baby's Arms/Down, Down, Down/My Rose Of Old Kentucky/Cotton Fields (Back Home)/Uncle Pen/I'll Meet You In The Church Sunday Morning/Old Stew Foot/Molley And Tenbrooks, more! LP No. HAT 3029/Cass. No. HATC 3029



Faron Young: Sweethearts Or Strangers—I Can't Tell My Heart/You Call Everybody Darlin'/Sweethearts And Strangers/Your Cheatin' Heart/Shame On You/Better Things Than These/I'm A Poor Boy/You Are My Sunshine/I'll Be Yours, more! LP No. HAT 3026/Cass. No. HATC 3026



Red Foley & Ernest Tubb: Red & Ernie—No Help Wanted No. 2/Too Old To Cut The Mustard/Tennessee Border No. 2/Goodnight Irene/Don't Be Ashamed Of Your Age/Kentucky Waltz/I'm In Love With Molly/The Strange Little Girl, more! LP No. HAT 3000/Cass. No. HATC 3000



Ernest Tubb: Favorites—Try Me One More Time/Walking The Floor Over You/Filipino Baby/Let's Say Goodbye Like We Said Hello/Soldier's Last Letter/I Don't Blame You/Stippin' Around/Have You Ever Been Lonely/Till The End Of The World, more! LP No. HAT 3011/Cass. No. HATC 3011



Ernest Tubb: Importance of Being Ernest—It Makes No Difference/I Wonder Why I Worry Over You/Your Cheatin' Heart/I'm Waiting For The Ships That Never Come In/I'm A Long Gone Daddy/All Those Yesterdays/That, My Darlin', Is Me, more! LP No. HAT 3006/Cass. No. HATC 3006



Red Foley Show (With Patsy Cline, Ernest Tubb, Kitty Wells, more!)—Sugarfoot Rag/Winter On The Farm/The Message/Oh, Didn't He Ramble/Everybody's Somebody's Fool/You Must Be Somewhere Else, more! LP No. HAT 3016/Cass. No. HATC 3016



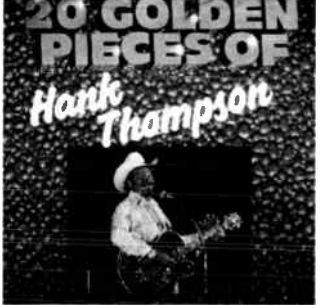
Hank Locklin: From Here To There To You—Let Me Be The One/Please Help Me I'm Falling/Geisha Girl/Happy Birthday To Me/Send Me The Pillow That You Dream On/These Arms You Push Away/It's A Little More Like Heaven Where You Are, more! LP No. BDL 1033/Cass. No. BDLC 1033



Tex Ritter: Streets Of Laredo—Title Song/Blood On The Saddle/Barbara Allen/Bury Me Not On The Lone Prairie/Rye Whiskey/Boll Weevil/Sam Bass/The Face On The Barroom Floor/When The Work's All Done This Fall, more! LP No. BDL 1022/Cass. No. BDLC 1022



Ernest Tubb: The Daddy Of 'Em—All-You're Breaking My Heart/I Dreamed Of An Old Love Affair/I Knew The Moment I Lost You/My Hillbilly Baby/This Troubled Mind Of Mine/Daisy May/There's No Fool Like A Young Fool, 5 more! LP No. HAT 3015/Cass. No. HATC 3015



Hank Thompson: 20 Golden Pieces—Who Left The Door To Heaven Open/When My Blue Moon Turns To Gold/There's A Honky Tonk Angel/Whatever's Left/Green Light/Fair Weather Love/I Recall A Gypsy Woman/Smoky The Bear, more! LP No. BDL 2042/Cass. No. BDLC 2042



Dolly Parton: Love Is Like A Butterfly—Title Song/Cross Your Mind/My Eyes Can Only See You/Highway Headin' South/Gettin' Happy/Take Me Back/Once Upon A Memory/You're The One That Taught Me How To Swing, and more! LP No. MFP 5774/Cass. No. MFP 5774 C

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remake of his "For the Sake of the Song." He's a rambling man, he's gotta leave her, she's leaving him, nothing can replace her love, there's birth and there's death and in between there's a life that's usually wearying and often hardly worth living. But damned if Townes doesn't recycle those hoary old notions with real grace, style and conviction, his weather-beaten voice sounding just as ancient and as timeless as the truisms it mouths. You have to give the guy credit when he can pull that off.

Cowboy Jack Clement is the perpetrator of a sympathetic production job that walks the line between urban folkie and commercial country, and he has assembled a group of sidemen (from Mickey Raphael to Jim Rooney to Charles Cochran) that typifies the various factions being felt in Nashville today. As I said, this is hardly the album to introduce Townes to a larger audience, but albums tend to be few and far between for this man—to his fans, *At My Window* is both long overdue and well worth the wait.

—JOHN MORTHLAND

Chris Hillman, John Jorgenson and Herb Pedersen

The Desert Rose Band
MCA-5991

Veteran musician Chris Hillman was one of the pioneers of the influential California country-rock movement which made its first waves in the music world in the early 1970's.

Hillman was a founding member of two country-rock ensembles which are still widely imitated, even today: The Byrds and the Flying Burrito Brothers. Along the way, he also recorded with second-generation bands working in this same musical ballpark, such as Poco and

Stephen Stills' Manassas. He was also one third of the widely acclaimed trio, Souther-Hillman-Furay, which recorded a best-selling album in 1974. In the years since 1981, Hillman has recorded two widely acclaimed and musically impressive bluegrass-country-flavored solo albums, *Morning Sky* and *Desert Rose* (both for the Sugar Hill label).

All of this is a rather long-winded way of saying that whenever Hillman reappears on the scene in a new musical guise, the results are usually impressive.

The Desert Rose Band, Hillman's newest album, on which he shares front-man billing with two other extraordinary musicians, Herb Pedersen and John Jorgenson, is no exception. In fact, it is one of the strongest works released so far this year.

For one thing, it must be impossible to go wrong when you have one band containing two talented vocalists as distinct, yet compatible, as Hillman and Pedersen. Pedersen has, himself, worked with many of the above-mentioned groups and recorded several splendid solo albums. He's also recorded with both Emmylou Harris and Linda Ronstadt and arranged the harmonies on their recent *Trio* album with Dolly Parton.

With these two sharing vocals on material written mostly by Hillman, leavened with a few oldies like Johnny and Jack's "Ashes of Love," the band emerges with a fresh, exuberant and youthful harmony sound that harkens back to the salad days of groups like Poco, Souther-Hillman-Furay, or even The Eagles of the long-gone "Tequila Sunrise" era when that mega-band was actually as much country as rock.

In recent years, the power duo of Hillman and Pedersen has been appearing frequently on stage. That experience shows on these tracks. Add John Jorgenson and you have three-part harmonies as

flawless as Hillman and Pedersen's duets. Listen, for instance, to the superb Everly Brothers-style blend on both Michael Woody's and Robert Anderson's "He's Back and I'm Blue" and the Dusty Owens classic, "Once More."

Throughout the ten cuts, Hillman, Pedersen and Jorgenson get confident and masterful support from a handpicked collection of musicians who have sprung up out of the same Southern California tradition that gave us Hillman: Bill Bryson on bass, Jay Dee Maness on steel and Steve Duncan on drums.

As if all this excellent music weren't enough, *The Desert Rose Band* also sports some intelligently written liner notes—a welcome feature that is mysteriously missing from most current albums—courtesy of musical historian Paul Clois Stone.

In these notes, Stone refers to the music on the album as, "honest, unadorned, electric California country-western...music that will be around for some time." This is one of those rare cases where the record label-commissioned accolades are not exaggerated. The Desert Rose Band's music is so strong, so convincingly confident and precise in its emotional content and delivery, that the powerful waves of country music's New Traditionalist movement are going to be compelled to part and make way for it.

—BOB ALLEN

Holly Dunn *Cornerstone* MTM ST71063

Holly Dunn is the latest of a string of excellent women singers to come out of Nashville in the last couple of years, working in a style that might be described as country-folk. There's something extremely appealing about the way Holly Dunn handles a

song. At the risk of sounding clichéd—which, of course, is something no self-respecting music critic would ever shy away from—Ms. Dunn conveys a certain modern sensibility and strength, but with a hesitancy that approaches vulnerability.

Take her current hit from *Cornerstone*, "Love Someone Like Me." The woman in the song is strong, but hardly aggressive. A slight hesitancy in the voice belies the strength of the lyrics. The country edge to Dunn's voice makes the song a joy to listen to, which is good, since it's gotten big time airplay.

Dunn and producer Tommy West have wisely avoided the trap of taking Dunn down a pop road. *Cornerstone* is a country album, from beginning to end. Mark O'Conner's string work and Sonny Garish's pedal steel bear special mention. If I have any complaints about the production, it's that I would have punched Dunn's voice up a little. Her voice is not particularly powerful, but it is expressive and carries a warm sincerity—which is what West has concentrated on getting across.

Most of *Cornerstone* is, predictably, ballads, although there are a couple of notable exceptions. "Small Towns (Are Smaller for Girls)" is an upbeat rocker with a message I suspect is all too true. "Wrap Me Up" has a hard-edged rockabilly sound that contrasts nicely against the other ballads. Dunn, by the way, co-wrote or wrote most of the songs on *Cornerstone*.

On the whole, I find the rise of country-folk to be a bit of a mystery. Where did all these women come from? Is there some secret Land of the Coffee Houses out there somewhere, where apprentice singers still have long straight hair and wear black leotards? No matter—*Cornerstone* is a good solid country record, and I suspect Ms. Dunn will be around for a long time to come.

—MICHAEL BANE

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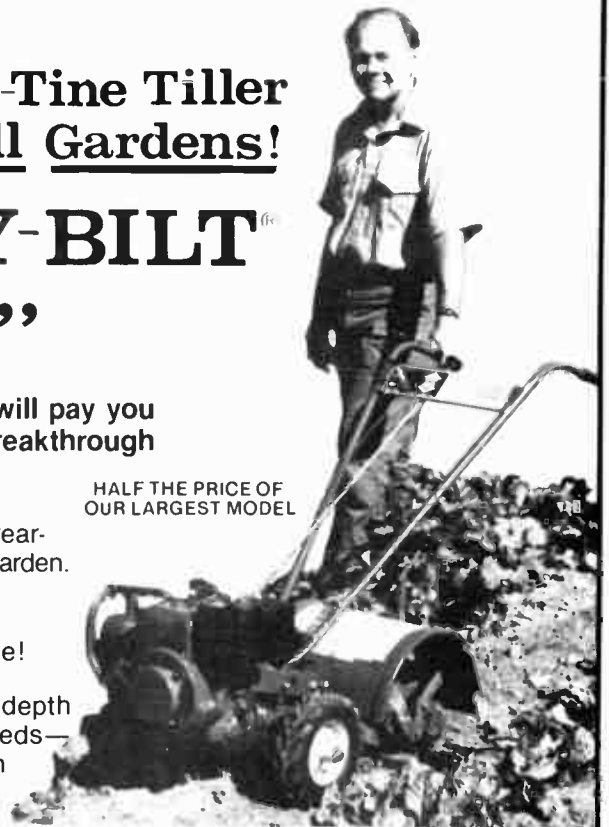
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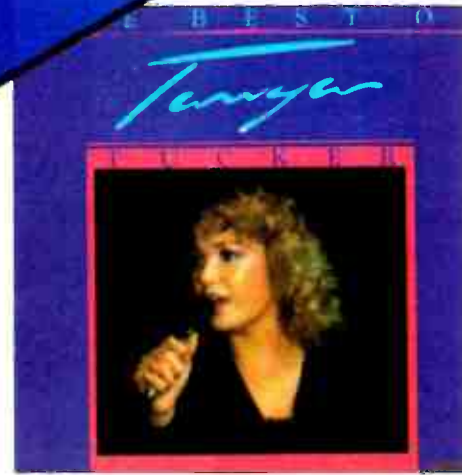
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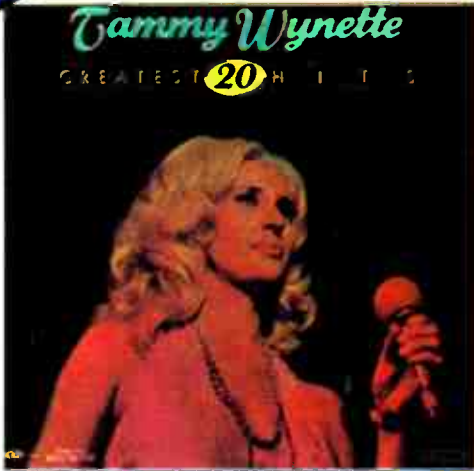
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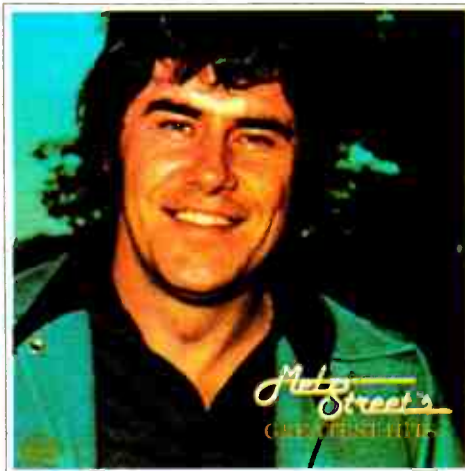
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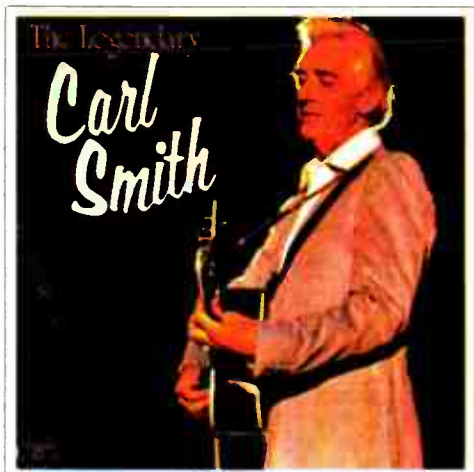
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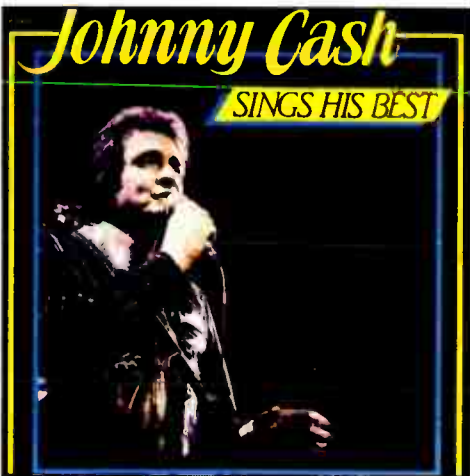
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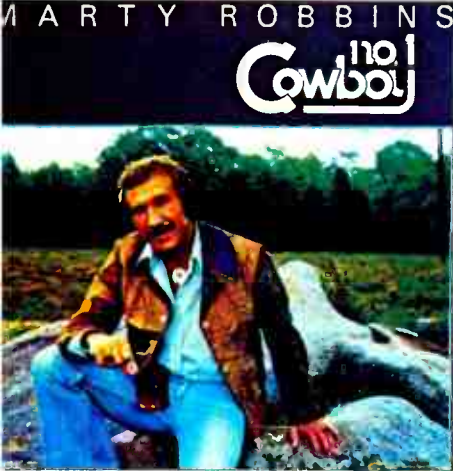
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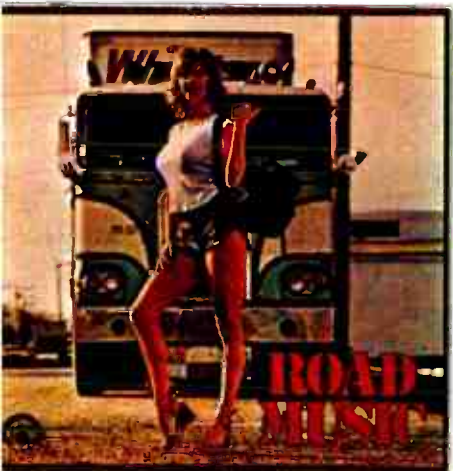
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6. The Judds..... *I Know Where I'm Going*
7. K.T. Oslin..... *80's Ladies*
8. Vince Gill..... *Cinderella*
9. Michael Martin Murphey..... *A Long Line of Love*
10. Dolly Parton, Linda Ronstadt, Emmylou Harris... *Telling Me Lies*
11. Highway 101..... *Whiskey, If You Were a Woman*
12. Restless Heart..... *Why Does It Have To Be (Wrong or Right)*
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14. Hank Williams Jr..... *Born to Boogie*
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16. Kathy Mattea..... *Train of Memories*
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18. Exile..... *She's Too Good to be True*
19. Kenny Rogers & Ronnie Milsap..... *Make No Mistake, She's Mine*
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22. Baillie and the Boys.... *Oh Heart*
23. Dan Seals..... *Three Time Loser*
24. Lyle Lovett..... *Why I Don't Know*
25. Anne Murray..... *Are You Still In Love With Me*

Albums

1. Randy Travis..... *Always & Forever*
2. George Strait..... *Ocean Front Property*
3. Dwight Yoakam..... *Hillbilly Deluxe*
4. Emmylou Harris, Dolly Parton, Linda Ronstadt.. *Trio*
5. The Judds..... *Heartland*
6. Restless Heart..... *Wheels*
7. Reba McEntire..... *Greatest Hits*
8. Randy Travis..... *Storms of Life*
9. Hank Williams Jr..... *Hank "Live"*
10. Sweethearts of the Rodeo..... *Sweethearts of the Rodeo*
11. The O'Kanes..... *The O'Kanes*
12. Anne Murray..... *Harmony*
13. Moe Bandy..... *You Haven't Heard the Last of Me*
14. Kathy Mattea..... *Walk the Way the Wind Blows*
15. Dwight Yoakam..... *Guitars, Cadillacs, Etc., Etc.*
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