FREE GIFT OFFER
See Page 17

Eddy Arnold, the Ideal American Male

August 1974, 75 cents

COUNTRY MUSIC

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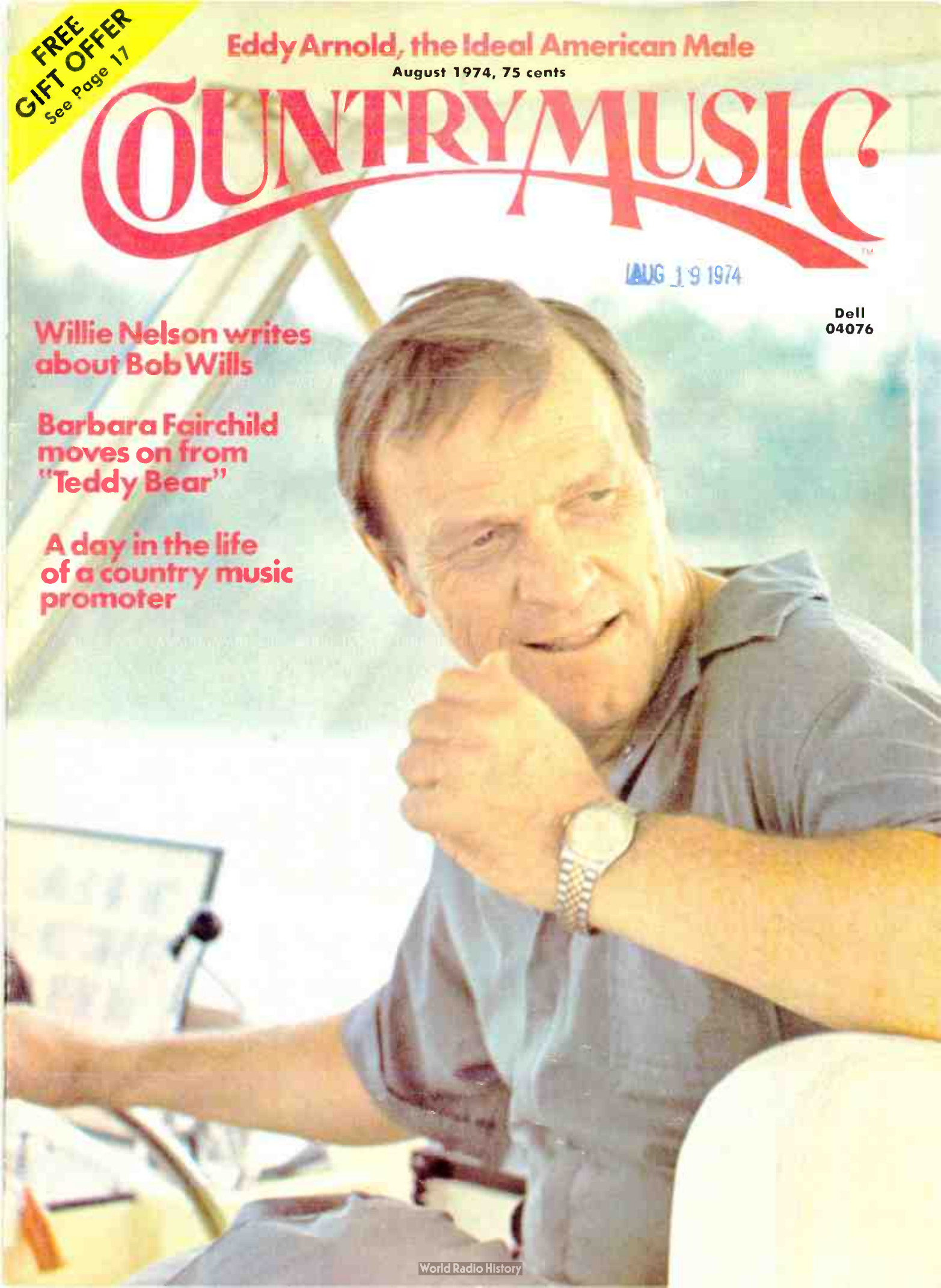
Willie Nelson writes about Bob Wills

Barbara Fairchild moves on from "Teddy Bear"

A day in the life of a country music promoter



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SE 4912

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MGM RECORDS

MGM Records, Inc.
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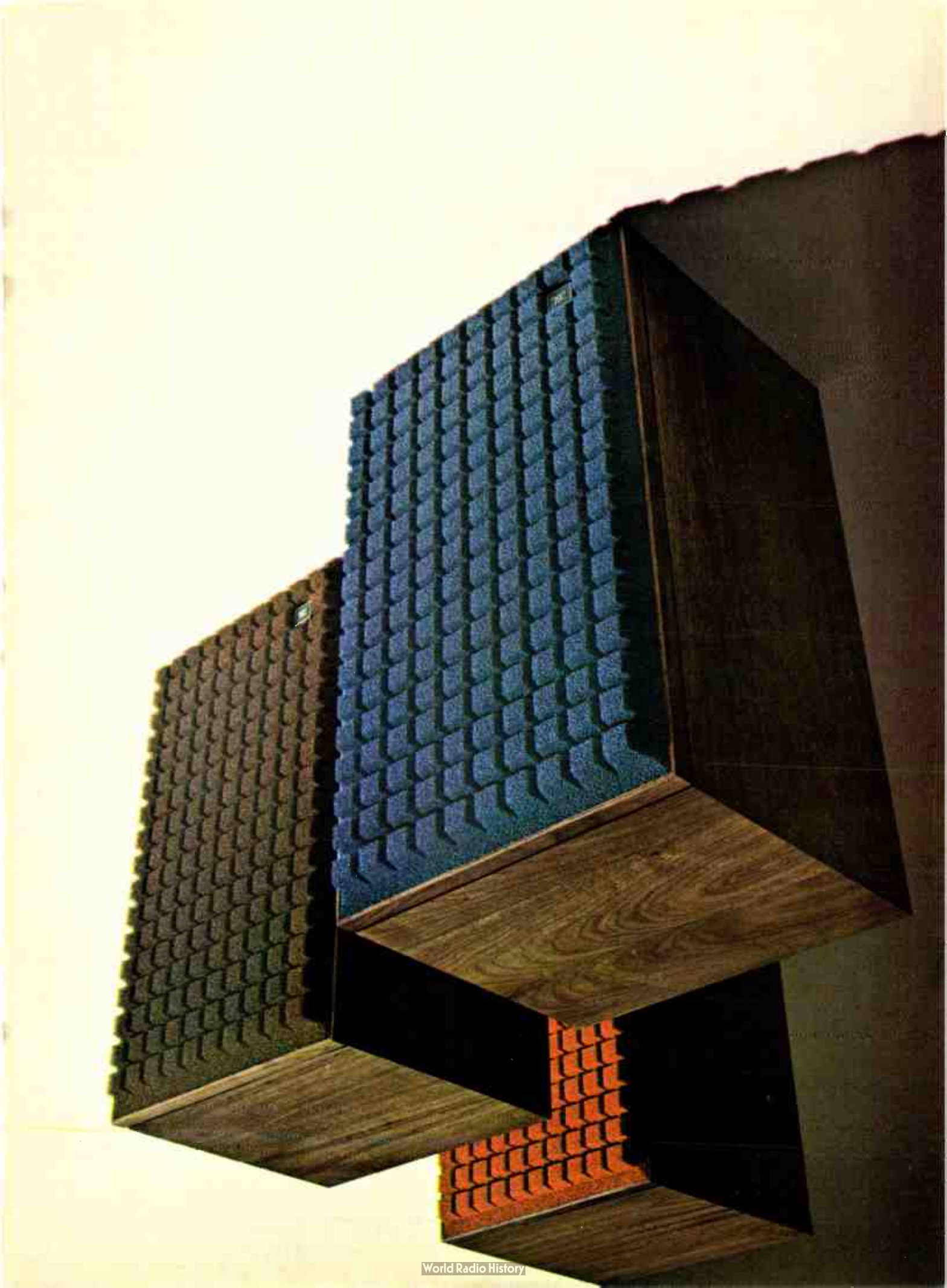

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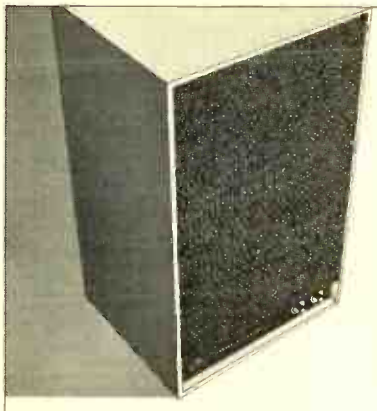
(In two years it became the most successful loudspeaker we ever made, and it's not even an original. It's a copy.)

About five years ago, we developed a new speaker —a studio monitor for the professional recording business. It had the big sound that the studios required, but it was a compact. The size of a bookshelf speaker.



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Volume Two, Number Twelve, August 1974

COUNTRY MUSIC

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IN OUR NEXT ISSUE:

Kris Kristofferson: Nashville, Hollywood and Rita . . .
The Long, Lasting Story of Faron Young . . .
"Cowboy" Jack Clement, Nashville legend . . .

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COVER PHOTO: MARSHALL FALLWELL

Letters

I like your magazine. I think it has a lot of good stories. I especially like the ones written by John Pugh. The reason I like them so much is because he is my brother and I'm proud to have a brother like him. He works hard on every article and I think it's neat how other people write and say how much they like the stories by him. Everybody who reads this, don't think I'm prejudiced and that my brother has anything to do with this. He doesn't even know I'm writing this. That's why I want this printed, to surprise him and tell him he is a great brother.

SARAH PUGH
ROANOKE, VA.

P.S.—Hi, *Tommy!*

I'm enclosing an article on the Kris Kristofferson concert April 12 at our Coliseum. Granted our Coliseum does not have the best of acoustics but since Mr. Kristofferson had appeared here before and didn't like it why the return performance? After all it is people like us who pay good money to go to these concerts and it's people like us who request to see these people and who can also refuse to buy his records. Our own radio station came on later to apologize to us about the actions of Mr. Kristofferson, such as foul language and drinking during the performance. Johnny Cash and the Carter Family, along with many others, appeared here in March and they gave a beautiful performance and played to a large crowd. Corpus Christi has many, many country and western fans and it's people like Kris K. that can lower the opinion of the country entertainers and it's real sad. I've talked to many people who attended the show and I can guarantee that they'll never buy another record of Mr. Kristofferson's. It's a shame too because he's a nice looking young man with a great future.

MRS. JACK CALDER
CORPUS CHRISTI, TEX.

Since we do not have a Kristofferson mailing address, please allow us through *Country Music* to congratulate Kris and Rita on the birth of their daughter. We wish them good health and love. We would also like to say "Thank You" to Kris for the many hours of listening pleasure we get from his albums. We strongly admire his work. He's such a talent. Kris and Rita together make beautiful music on the "Full Moon" album; she's a delight. Congratulations and thank you. Now we want to thank *Country Music* for printing this and for being one terrific magazine.

MRS. ROSE CHITE AND FAMILY
LEVITTOWN, NEW YORK

I hope that country as we know it today will basically stay *country*, and not fall into line with the regimentation of the pop and rock field, and bury this music that you people have worked so hard to bring to us. By this I don't mean that country artists shouldn't sing pop or dress-up their recordings with strings or whatever. That's fine—as long as the song stays basically *country*. My generation (I'm 31) grew up with rock and roll, but what we were hearing in effect when we listened to Elvis, The Everly Brothers, Jerry Lee Lewis, Conway Twitty, etc., was *country*. In between that time when the so-called "acid-Rock" took over 'til present, we were lost because we (now Middle America) couldn't identify with this stuff. This is why, in my opinion, this part of the country is turning to country music. It's what we lost.
Everyone I talk to at work and within my social circle tells me the same thing when I ask them why they like country music. They say: "It's my kind of music—they're singing about me." In this age of "overkill," with Womens Lib, it's a pleasure to hear songs like "A Woman Lives For Love" and "It's A Man's World." And when disrespect for one's country is "chic" or "in," it's great to hear songs like "Okie From Muskogee," "The Americans," and "I'm Gonna Write A Song."
So what I am trying to say is: keep Country, Country. Keep it honest with the Tom T. Halls. Keep it humorous with the Jerry Reeds. Keep it direct with the Merle Haggards. And keep it warm, decent and human with the Lynn Andersons. God bless—and "Keep On Truckin'."

NICK DEMEO
YONKERS, NEW YORK

When I read this statement in the March issue... "Face it. It's difficult for an eleventh grade girl to fall giggly in love with Johnny Paycheck, much less Ray Price," I burst our laughing. You see, I'm in the *seventh* grade, and when Ray Price did a show here in Phoenix in January, I developed about the biggest crush on him a person could have. I'd give anything for him to come back. Just thought I'd write and let you know Ray's fans come in all ages.

GERI ANN SEFTON
PHOENIX, ARIZONA

Thanks, Geri. We've gotten plenty of letters from Johnny's fans, too, regarding that statement. It's like they say... "the older the violin, the sweeter the music..." Ed.

Hooray for *Country Music* magazine, and double hooray for Merle Haggard. We received our first issue in January, and loved it. Since Hag is our very favorite, we enjoyed the February issue even more. We drove to Jackson, Tennessee, in November to see him and haven't gotten over it yet. We especially like the opportunity your magazine gives it's readers to secure albums and tapes that are difficult, or even impossible, to purchase elsewhere. Looking forward to future issues.

MR. AND MRS. JACK SMITH
WALLS, MISS.

People on the Scene

by Audrey Winters

The Killer wages war on the tape pirates . . .
The Reverend Jimmie Snow reveals his marriage . . .
Bobbie Gentry's bluejeans for the Smithsonian Institute . . .

PHOTO: ALAN DAVID WHITMAN

Jerry Lee: "The Killer was here," he said, loud and proud.

Many country artists have been actively engaged in promoting the all-out fight against the sale of "bootleg" tapes by appearing before State legislatures and acting as witnesses in court cases, but **Jerry Lee Lewis** recently took a more direct approach to the problem. The Killer pulled into a gasoline station and noticed a rack of tapes on display. He asked the proprietor who owned the rack, and when told that it was serviced by an unidentified man from the trunk of his car, Jerry Lee took it outside and smashed it. When the station owner asked him what he should do when the man came around again, Jerry Lee's reply was simple and to the point. "Tell him the Killer was here," he said.

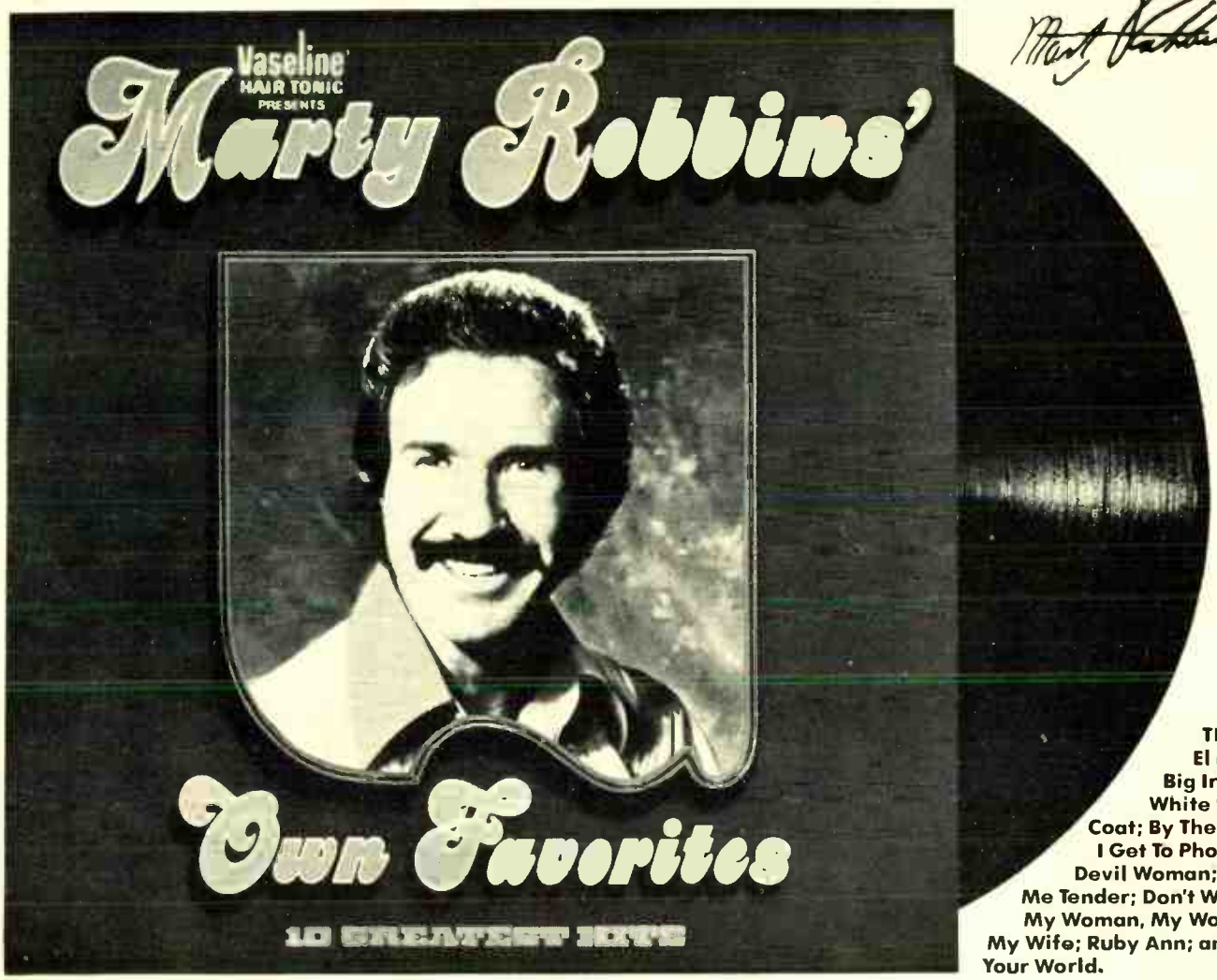
Jerry Lee, loud and proud, continues his visits to the courtroom. The most recent case involved a woman who brought suit alleging that he insulted and slapped her three years ago in a nightclub. She was awarded $1000 in damages, despite the Killer's total denial of the incident.

The Killer's first cousin, **Mickey Gilley,** has what you might call an "accidental" hit on his hands with a number called "Room Full of Roses." "Roses" is the flip side of a single Mickey recorded for juke box play in Pasadena, Texas, where he runs a large Western nightclub and performs every weekend with his band. A Dallas radio station flipped the disc, and within two weeks it had sold over 7,000 copies. Mickey's style is similar to that of his more famous cousin, but he's quick to point out, "I'm not copying Jerry Lee. It's my style too and it always has been. Jerry and I grew up together and started playing piano at the same time." Mickey is under contract to Playboy Records.

Allan Rich, Charlie Rich's 20-year-old son, recently spent a week in Epic Records' Nashville studios with producer **Don Ellis.** Allan's a very talented singer and writer, and he cut several of his own songs in addition to one—"Break Up"—written by his father for Jerry Lee. Rich senior came to town to play piano on his son's sessions, and Allan will be getting a band together and going on the road as soon as the album comes out. He lives in Memphis in his own apartment.

Anita Carter, the youngest of Mother Maybelle's singing daughters, has married Bob Wooten, Johnny Cash's lead guitarist, in a Las Vegas wedding. Johnny and June served as Best Man and Matron of Honor . . . **Jeannie C. Riley** will marry John Rogers, her business manager and sideman . . . **Ronnie Sessions** and **Patti Tireney** are also recently married . . . and the **Reverend Jimmie Snow** has revealed that he and **Dottie Lee** have been married since last December. The Reverend Snow made headlines a couple of years ago by announcing that he and **Carol Cooper,** his wife of 13 years, were divorcing. Carol has a musical career now, singing with her parents **Wilma Lee** and **Stoney Cooper** on the Grand Ole Opry. She also leads her own group of backup singers . . . **Leona Williams** has a new baby boy called Brady Lee, her third child . . . and **Billy Walker's** wife "Boots" just gave her man a touring bus in honor of their 26th wedding anniversary. Actually, she only gave him a down-payment on the bus, but the thought was there.

"You can't find my 'Own Favorites' album in anybody's record store."



TITLES:
El Paso; Big Iron; A White Sport Coat; By The Time I Get To Phoenix; Devil Woman; Love Me Tender; Don't Worry; My Woman, My Woman, My Wife; Ruby Ann; and It's Your World.

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"I think my own personal favorites will be yours, too."

The one that takes care of your hair while it's there.

CHARLEY PRIDE ON TOUR

July 12
Omaha, Nebraska. Coliseum

July 13
Milwaukee Summerfest. Milw., Wisc.

July 14
Rockford, Ill.

July 18-21
Houston, Texas

August 1
Bismarck, N.D. Civic Aud.

August 2
Winnipeg, Manitoba
Centennial Centre Auditorium

August 3
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan
Centennial Auditorium

August 4
Regina, Saskatchewan
Centennial Auditorium

August 6
Calgary, Alberta. Jubilee Auditorium

August 7
Edmonton, Alberta. Jubilee Aud.

August 8
Seattle, Washington. Seattle Arena

August 9
Portland, Oregon. Civic Auditorium

August 10
Billings, Montana

August 11
Spokane, Washington
Spokane Opera House

August 13-20
Lake Tahoe
Harrah's South Shore Room

August 23
Saginaw, Mich.

August 28
Huron, South Dakota
South Dakota State Fair

August 29
Vancouver, B.C.
Pacific National Exhibition

September 15-18
Albuquerque, New Mexico
New Mexico State Fair

September 20-21
Amarillo, Texas. Tri-State Fair

September 22
New York City. World's Fair Ground

September 23-24
Lubbock, Texas
Pan-Handle South Plains Fair

September 27
Memphis, Tenn. Mid-South Fair

September 28
Kansas City, Mo. Civic Aud.

September 29
Waterloo, Iowa
National Dairy Cattle Congress

October 6
Tulsa, Oklahoma. Tulsa State Fair

Dolly Parton has called her new band "The Family Traveling Band." It is made up of two brothers, two cousins and an uncle. Her first date with them will be this month in Salem, Ohio. Dolly will now be booked by American Management, Inc, and **Porter Wagoner** will produce her records. Plans for a South African tour are now under way after "Just Because I'm A Woman" scored a Number One hit there.

Bill Anderson is taping all new Summer shows for his highly successful TV series. He has new sponsers, a new format, new wardrobes furnished by the J.C. Penney Company, and a bunch of new markets. **Mary Lou Turner** will be on all the shows, and will be appearing with Bill on all his road shows.

Jeanne Pruett, who's worked hard for the luxury of her own satin stardom, still hasn't forgotten how to help others. She recently offered her singing talents to raise money for a school in Homestead, Fla. The school is an educational facility for retarded children, and it would have been forced to close if it hadn't been for Jeanne's work.

Jan Howard is back in music with a contract for GRC Records . . . **Bobbie Gentry** made her biggest contribution to pop culture since "Ode To Billy Joe" recently when she was asked to donate her rhinestone bluejeans to the Smithsonian Institute, where they will go on permanent exhibition . . . **Skeeter Willis** is back performing on the Opry with the Willis Brothers after undergoing throat surgery, but her doctor isn't feeling too good. He was bumped by a car while making his way into a restaurant . . . **Hank Williams, Jr.** has passed his 25th birthday. Eleven of those years have been spent in show business. His mother **Audrey Williams** gave him a denim-covered wristwatch . . . "General Hospital" is **Ernest Tubb's** favorite soap opera. He became addicted to it while traveling on the road, and he won't hit the golf course these days until it goes off the television . . . Nashville's Music Row Hall of Fame Motor Inn, located directly behind the Hall of Fame, will soon house the Country Music Association's offices. The Inn will also feature live entertainment and dancing.

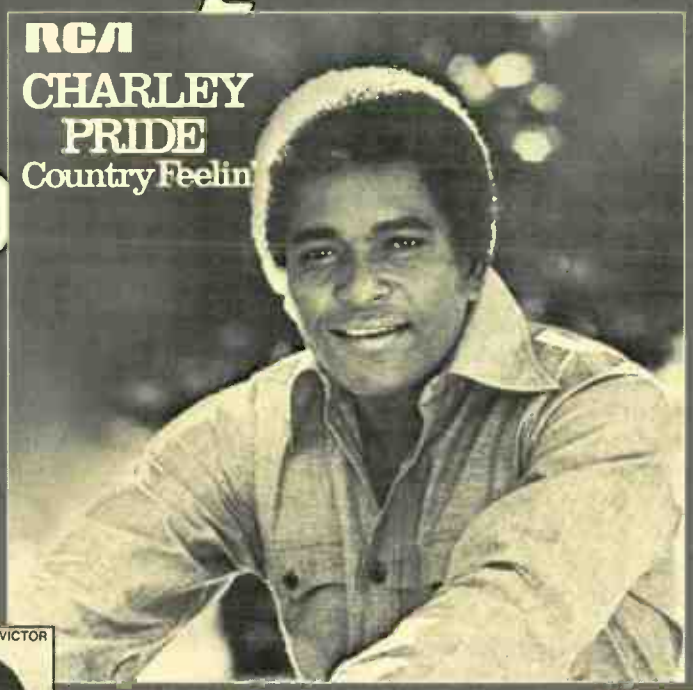
PHOTO: MARSHALL FALLWELL

Jeanne Pruett: She lent a helping hand.

Ray Baker, President of Blue Crest Music, Inc., sold his successful publishing company for half a million dollars. Ray will continue as an employee of the Acuff-Rose Music Company, new owners of the company, for another four years. **Dallas Frazier,** who wrote most of Blue Crest's big hits, has formed his own publishing company. Ray has turned producer, his most recent success being **Moe Brandy's** "I Just Started Hating Cheatin' Songs Today."

Just call **Faron Young** "the little old winemaker" these days. He has a secret recipe, and could well be the most sought-after man about town if his wine is as good as he says it is. "I make the best wine you ever tasted," Faron declares. "Now, I can't drink anymore, y'know. I just sip and taste it. I sent Hank Jr. a bottle with the label reading 'To the great Hank Williams from the world's greatest brewmaster,' and one to Darrell McCall. I signed that one 'From the still of Faron Young.'" Faron is feeling fine after being hospitalized for two weeks. He claims he is so happy to be alive that "I just look forward to seeing the sun shine every morning." ■

PRIDE OF AMERICA



"WE COULD"

APBO-0257

Charley Pride's big single from his new album "Country Feelin'."

APL1/APS1/APK1-0534

RCA Records and Tapes

Country View

by Paul Hemphill

On a steamy night in June of 1949, with some 3,000 truck drivers, route salesmen and small-town haberdashers and their wives sprawled over the church pews of old Ryman Auditorium in Nashville on a routine Saturday night at the Grand Ole Opry—babies crying, exhaust fans groaning, funeral-parlor fans flashing—Red Foley leaned into the microphone and introduced a skinny Alabama country boy making a guest appearance on the Opry.

"And now, making his first appearance on the Opry stage," said Foley, "a young fellow from Alabama by the name of Hank Williams."

Any country music fan worth his salt knows the rest of the story as well as he knows his Social Security number. Hank Williams became the biggest singing star in the history of country music, recording such hits as "Cold, Cold Heart" and "Kawliga" and "Your Cheatin' Heart" which even today are being sung by the most sophisticated pop singers. He also established a gaudy but haunted lifestyle which made him sound like a character in a novel—poor boy makes good, can't handle it, hits the bottle, slides out the bottom—and eventually led to his death. Less than five years after his apocalyptic debut on the Opry, while being driven to a playing date on a New Year's Eve night, Hank Williams died in the back seat of a Cadillac. There were those who remembered one of his last songs, "I'll Never Get Out of This World Alive," and a favorite witticism of his: "Don't worry about anything; nothin's gonna be all right, anyhow."

I was pondering all of this—and re-reading a biography of Hank called *Sing A Sad Song,* by Roger (no relation) Williams—after checking into Montogmery, Alabama, this spring to begin work on a non-

Williams project of my own. Montgomery is where Hank was laid away nearly 20 years ago, and where tourists still go to stand and look at his gravesite in the old downtown Oakwood Cemetery Annex. "The poor guy can't even find peace in death," I was told by a newspaper editor there. "How's that?" I asked. "This spring a guy grabbed a girl, took her out to the cemetery and raped her right there on Hank's grave." It is a sorry sequel, but not entirely unexpected.

A strong case could be made for the argument that Hank Williams had more impact on country music than any individual in its history. There have been many who were pivotal—the Carter Family, Jimmie Rodgers, Elvis Presley (obliquely, in forcing changes) and Chet Atkins (Mister Nashville Sound)—but none so dramatically as Williams. Hank Williams epitomized the damaged country boy, writing and singing what he knew, and stood for an era when country music was still holed up in the Southern outback of roadside diners and county fairs and the Opry and low-watt "hillbilly" radio stations; and yet, so universal were the yearnings and frustrations of his songs, the people in the rest of America and the world finally had to admit that country music when performed by someone as *real* as Hank Williams was a good deal more than what they called "tacky." Hank Williams was a man with soul.

Indeed, there has been no peace for him even in death. His funeral in Montgomery attracted crowds second only to those for John F. Kennedy in American history. Ugly lawsuits followed, involving Hank's first wife, Audrey, and Acuff-Rose Publishing. Hank Williams Jr. grew up and became a star in his own right, although he is at his best when he has the lights thrown off and sings "some of my Daddy's songs" as pictures of Hank Sr. are flashed on a huge screen ("Every time the boy walks into my office I get chills," says one of Hank's old friends).

The house where Hank and Audrey lived in Nashville before their breakup, with the notes to "Your Cheatin' Heart" formed in the ornamental ironwork of the front porch, is a favorite stop on the Opry-sponsored Nashville bus tours. Royalties on Hank's work every year produce about $250,000 for the estate. This spring Hank's second wife helped unveil a State historical monument at his birthplace.

And only the other night, just as a footnote to show the way his name and his work pop up in the funniest places, I was watching a re-run of the television detective series called "Cannon." A highly-trained songwriter had somehow gotten involved in writing rock songs, and had been killed for his efforts and after Cannon had solved the murder the father of the songwriter was heard to rationalize. "You know, I started listening closely to some of these songs he wrote, and I distinctly heard the influences of Beethoven and some of the other greats," he said. "Me, too," said Cannon. "And I thought I heard a little Hank Williams in there, too." ■

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My Blue Eyed Jane
In the Jailhouse Now
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Any Old Time
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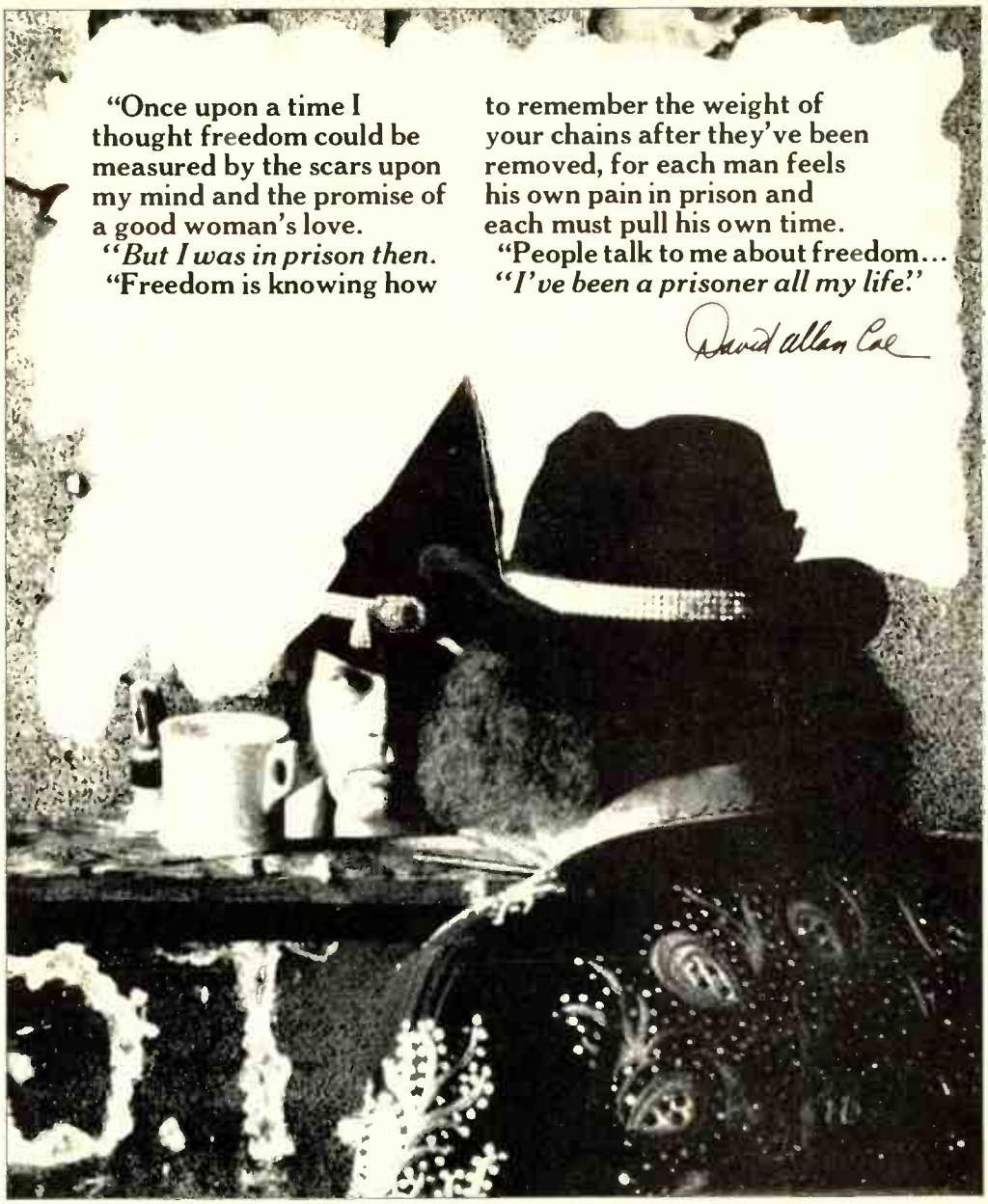

These are the words of David Allan Coe—songwriter, performer, composer of the No. 1 country song, "Would You Lay With Me (In a Field of Stone)." His songs are about the outside world, but they are written and sung with the insight of a man who's been inside; they project both toughness and tenderness.

Meet David Allan Coe face-to-face on his new album, "The Mysterious Rhinestone Cowboy."

On Columbia Records and Tapes

Country News

Louisiana honors Jimmy C. Newman
with three day festival featuring crawfish pies,
Tom T. Hall and music, music, music.

Cajun Music Triumphs At Big Mamou

by Alan Whitman

At 11:30 p.m. the Louisiana State Trooper parked behind a makeshift stage on the Mamou High School football field received a radio message that a plane had been sighted approaching nearby Eunice Airport, about 20 miles away. The crowd of about 750, seated on the grass around the stage, was up later than usual for a Thursday night. They had been waiting since 9 p.m. to see Tom T. Hall, who as a personal favor was making a guest appearance at the Mamou Cajun Festival. Through a mixup in booking arrangements, though, he was inadvertently scheduled to do a special TV taping in Atlanta on the same day. He would be late, but he would be there, as promised. Earlier in the day, Lousiana Governor Edwin Edwards, also a guest at the Mamou Festival, had given authorization to his State Patrol to furnish police escort from the airport for Hall, who, at his own expense, chartered a private jet to bring him here as soon as the TV taping was completed. This was an important occasion for Hall. Along with Governor Edwards, WSM announcer T. Tommy Cutre, Frances Preston of BMI, and Cajun fiddler Gib Gilbeau, he was paying tribute to the man who had given him his first big break several years ago. That man is Mamou native son and Grand Ole Opry star Jimmy C. Newman, in whose honor the Cajun Festival was being held.

At 12:15 a.m. sirens broke through the warm southern Louisiana night as local police and State Patrol cars rushed onto the field, warning lights ablaze, with the featured performer, his band, and a trunk filled with instruments. Minutes later Tom T. Hall was at the microphone, singing one hit after another, interrupting only to swallow some hot Cajun sausage and wash it down with a beer. Over an hour later, Hall and his band were hustled back to the airport to return to Atlanta and make connections for that night's scheduled appearance in Canada. The crowd—many families, many personal friends of Jimmy Newman—left the school grounds slowly, stopping to say a few words of welcome to Newman and his wife Mae, and talking as much about awards and honorary citations that he had received from the Governor, the Mayor, BMI, and CODIFIL (the Council on Development of French in Louisianna), as they did about the Tom T. Hall show, the evening's highlight.

Two days of festivities followed Thursday night's recognition of Jimmy C. Newman and his accomplishments as an entertainer and a Cajun. A street band jam, a *Fais-Do-Do*, was held indoors on Friday night, due to the weather. Saturday morning, a couple was married in an authentic Cajun-style wedding

PHOTOS: ALAN WHITMAN

Jimmy C. Newman, left, thanks his neighbors with a song. A local Cajun band, right, entertains Jimmy at a party.

ceremony, with the bride and groom riding to the chapel in a horse-drawn surrey and a celebration with dancing and beer following the marriage vows. A carnival-like atmosphere pervaded the day's events, with beer-drinking and nail-driving contests, sack races, and a greasy pole-climb with a ten dollar bill waiting for the contestant who reached the top. Cajun musicians performed throughout the day. Jimmy C. Newman's own homecoming concert, capping the three-day event and lasting more than two hours, was held on Saturday night.

Mamou, Louisiana, *Big Mamou,* is located 90 miles west of Baton Rouge and 100 miles north of the Gulf, in the heart of Cajun country. The area was settled by the Acadian French who left Canada for Louisiana in the 1700's: Their French heritage has been kept pridefully intact to the present. Ninety-five percent of the people speak a French dialect, almost pure French; newspapers and radio broadcasts are mainly in French; Cajun songs are sung in French. English, spoken mainly in conversation with "outsiders," is colored with an unusual but pleasant accent. This is the Louisiana of Hank Williams' "Jambalaya," with bayous, gumbos, crawfish, and good fun. To the north of Mamou are piney woods; to the south and east, rice patties. There is very little industry in the area, and aside from those engaged in providing the necessary goods and services, livings are made mainly from rich-earth farms of potatos, corn, cotton, and soybeans, or from employment by oil companies on off-shore drilling rigs in the Gulf. The Cajun lifestyle is uncomplicated, and the people—warm, open, unassuming—find pleasure in simple things like the music which plays such a large part in their lives.

Cajun bands are traditionally composed of two fiddles, a concertina accordian, and a triangle. More recently, Spanish and steel guitars and drums have been worked in. The songs are of life and love, ballads recounting family histories and significant events, very strongly akin to country music, but all sung in French. The musicians all work at regular daytime jobs, but get together frequently in the evening at someone's house for a house dance or jam session. Many dance halls also provide an opportunity for enjoyment of the music, for Cajun songs are upbeat, two-step or fast waltz-style numbers that lend themselves quite readily to dancing. Ethnic interest in Cajun music has recently been regenerated, and some of the more popular Cajun bands play college concerts throughout the U.S. and Canada.

Commercial interests in Cajun music has, however, been virtually non-existent, as Jimmy C. Newman discovered almost thirty years ago when he set out to pursue his career as a country singer. Becoming an entertainer was the only thing he ever remembers wanting to do, from the time as a youngster when he would go with his family to the Saturday matinee movie and watch singing cowboy Gene Autry. He started working with local bands, and then went to Shreveport for the *Louisiana Hayride.* But record company after record company turned him down because he sounded so strange, so much like the Cajun he was. Changing his vocal style to meet the requirements of country music as it was known in the early 50s, he went on to record successful hit songs such as "Cry, Cry Darlin'," "A Fallen Star," "Artificial Rose," "Back Pocket Money," and more. A long involvement with a music publishing company as a business venture soon took most of Newman's time, and his recording work slipped. As he gets back into the role of an entertainer now, recording once again and doing personal appearances, he is concentrating on developing a widespread awareness of and interest in his own Cajun music. Now under contract with the predominately Cajun *La Louisianne* label, his current single (sung in French) is "Las Pas Lacat Potate," which, loosely translated, means "hang in there" (literally, "don't drop the potato"). That seems like an appropriate motto. ■

Down Under Comes Up Country

by Rich Wiseman

The Barn has all the trappings of a first-class American country music nightclub. First, the attractive club—featuring such niceties as a black and red color scheme, illuminated stained glass wall decorations and chandeliers—boasts a solid house band, the Country Playboys. The Playboys strum, pick and drawl their way through such familiar country sounds as "Okie from Muskogee," "I'm a Long Tall Texan," and "Folsom Prison Blues" six nights a week.

Then there's the menu. Definitely catering to the down-home heman appetite, The Barn serves such grub as the "Cattleman's Special T-Bone Steak ("From Marlboro Country, Pardner!"), New York sirloin steak ("Just Like Money in the Bank and Cattle Out West!"), not to mention the Yankee-Doodle-Dandy Hamburger and the Texas Jailhouse Chile ("If Hormel could make it like this they would have retired 100 years ago!").

Last but not least, there's Heath-

PHOTO DANILO NARDI

Australian country: Steaks, beer and bush ballads.

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PHOTO: DANILO NAFDI

Heather With the Feathers" welcomes patrons to Sydney's only country club.

er With the Feather, the spirited hostess who circulates in her 1890's barroom gown, making chatter with the customers and handing out "Have a drink on Heather With the Feather" cards. Where can you find The Barn? In Texas? Maybe Southern California? Guess again, bloke —The Barn's address is 44 Macleay St., Sydney, Australia.

The popular night spot, located inside the Texas Tavern Hotel, happens to be Sydney's one and only full-time country music club (and reportedly the only one in all of Australia). As such, it figures into the rise of country music in "the big smoke" (as Sydneysiders call their city). The Barn is the brainchild of Bernie Houghton, 53, a Texan whose mild manners belie his reputation as a shrewd and ambitious businessman. Houghton, a globetrotter who learned the hotel and restaurant trade from his parents (he, however, disclaims any association with his father's favorite activity—bootlegging—adding: "My dad would turn over in his grave if he knew I was legitimate"), happened into Sydney on a whim seven years ago. Observing that the colorful King's Cross district offered virtually every style of cuisine and entertainment except down-home American, he decided to open shop. Soon afterwards, he bought the old and run-down Copenhagen Hotel, invested more than $400,000 in its renovation, and reopened it as the Texas Tavern in 1968—complete with a Mexican restaurant. Six months later, he opened The Barn.

"When I put The Barn in the Texas Tavern, everyone warned me how the Austrailians weren't going to buy country music," Houghton said. "But I didn't believe them. I was raised on country music, I believe in it. Like the blues, I believe it's an international type of music —people understand it regardless of the language. Even in the Congo I've seen people get out their fiddles and guitars and play it."

Houghton was right—to an extent. The Barn has been a success from the start. But, in truth, a big reason for the club's immediate popularity was the American servicemen who frequented the spot while on "R and R" (rest and recuperation) from the Vietnam war. "American servicemen really lapped up the music," said Illan Tomkins, bass player with the Country Playboys. Tomkins said he was concerned the club would die after the R and R program ended. Of course it didn't.

"I think what saved The Barn was that the Australian girls the American servicemen brought liked what they heard, and came back with their Australian boyfriends," said Johnny Heap, another Country Playboy. Another factor, he added, are the single record hits that have won many converts in the last two years.

The fact that country music has the attention of increasing numbers of Australians is evidenced in ways other than the popularity of the Barn. For example, country music concerts have drawn very well in Sydney in the last two years. Sydney radio has been programming more country music. Two years ago, station 2KA, one of the weaker Sydney stations, became the first station to play a substantial amount of country music (every other song). A year ago, station 2KY began allocating the midnight to 6 a.m. slot for country. Station 2UW began broadcasting country exclusively between noon and 3 p.m. early this year. "Once upon a time you'd have to get up at the crack of dawn if you wanted to hear a country song on the radio," said Heap. "Times have changed."

But while country music is only now flourishing in Sydney, it (at least the Australian brand) has long been popular in the outback or bush (the Australian terms for the country). "Outback country music is popularly known as 'bush ballads,'" said Heap. "The subject matter is virtually the same as American country music, although there is more of an emphasis on the Western than the country. But it's only the names that are really different. We call our ranches cattle stations and our cowboys stockmen." Australia's most popular singer, Slim Dusty, happens to be a bush balladeer. "He's collected 20 gold records since he started recording in 1947," said Heap. "He outsells the Americans, the Beatles, everybody."

But why was it American and not Australian country music that finally caught the fancy of Aussie city people? "It was the personalities of such people as Johnny Cash and Glenn Campbell that put country music over here," suggested one of the patrons in the Barn, a businessman in his early 30s, as he sipped on a Courage, the local brew. "I always got a laugh out of the outback singers, but I appreciate the new country artists. They've taken the realism of country music and polished the verses and the sound."

Judging by the audience at The Barn, country music in Sydney seems to have broad appeal. While a majority of the customers were people in their early 20s, people in their 30s and 40s were much in evidence. There was even a smattering of old people, such as a little Aussie lady in her 60s who sat in a corner of the club with her daughter and son-in-law, tackling a king-sized Australian lobster. "We're thinking of bringing our beds in here, we're that regular," she said.

All in all, it seems safe to say that increasing numbers of city dwellers "down under" are subscribing to the saying on the yellow bumper sticker observed on the full-length mirror flanking the Country Playboys—"Happiness Is Country Music." ■

Tony Douglas Surfaces In Texas

by John Gabree

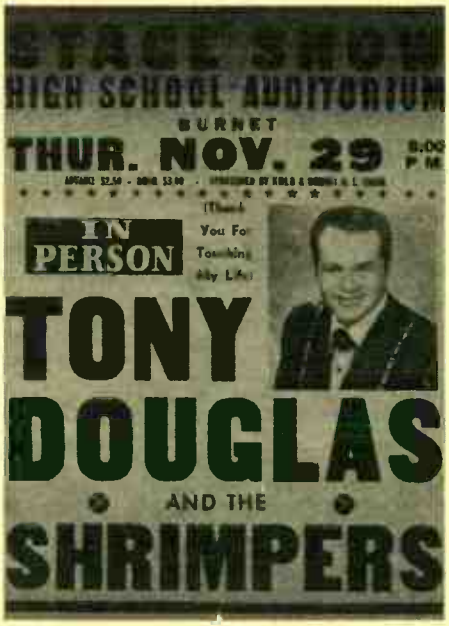
It was an album I nearly threw away without opening. The cover was indescribably ugly: a cowpoke's face with a pasted-on smile

and a five-o'clock shadow staring out from under hair so meticulously pampered that it looked lacquered. He was wearing a garish vaudevillian's suit; Richard Nixon in Spike Jones' clothes and a bathing cap.

The liner notes were worse, full of bad puns and awkward constructions, giving the lp the inside track for the Grammy in incompetency. I'm still not sure why I *did* open it.

The record was marvelous. About half the tunes were standards nicely done, somewhere between Jim Reeves softsoap and Willie Nelson raunch. "Four Walls" was a knockout. So was "Today I Started Loving You Again." The singer had a beautiful voice, and the arrangements were perfect in their simplicity. The biggest surprises were the originals, especially two ballads, "His And Hers" and "Thank You For Touching My Life."

The source of all this magic was one Tony Douglas, a middle-aged Texas country singer with over 70 singles to his credit, most of them limited to the confines of his native state (not as bad as being limited to someplace like Rhode Island or Delaware, granted, but not what an artist this good deserves either). Jody Miller told me that she remembered and liked Tony's "His And Hers," a regional hit of a decade or so ago. Kinky Friedman said he knew somebody who had played a date with Douglas in southeast Texas a couple of years ago. It was rumored that he wouldn't come to DJ Week in Nashville because of the "whoring and drinking," a rumor (unfounded; he did turn up) given some credence by his dropping of the line "so sexy looking" from his otherwise exemplary reading of Freddie Hart's sensuous (and sexy) "Easy Loving," But nobody knew anything more...



"I'm glad I went looking for Tony . . . he's an inspiration . . ."

Burnet is a town of fewer than 3,000 souls nestled in the Texas hill country, and that was where I finally found him. The only thing open after 7 o'clock on a weeknight is a blue Dr. Pepper machine on the town square. Tony Douglas was at the town motor inn, picking at a salad. "I still get nervous before a show and I don't like to eat too much," he told me.

Douglas started performing while he was in the Army in Germany in 1953. Three years later, while working the Cow Town Hoe Down in Fort Worth, he released his first record, "Old Blue Monday," which he wrote. He spent three years with the Louisiana Hayride, finally hitting the road with his own band in 1961. That fall, he hit big for the

first time with a record on Russell Simms' label. "'Shrimping' was released two weeks before the big hurricane that hit the Texas coast that Fall," he said, "but a lot of folks didn't know that and thought I was an opportunist for putting out a song about a storm and shrimpboats. 'Shrimping' sold very well, especially to kids. In fact, we played more rock shows than country that year and we had a lot of standing ovations and encores. That's how the band got its name, the Shrimpers, off that record."

Two years ago, Douglas formed his own label, Cochise Records of Athens, Texas, the happy culmination of years of frustration and neglect at the hands of record companies. "I don't want to sound like I'm poor-mouthing, 'cause I've had a heck of good life. I've made a living out of music, and that's the only thing I've ever wanted to do. I've got a good business, a beautiful family. But it *has* been a struggle sometimes. I've had a lot of trouble getting what I've deserved from some people." In the fall of 1962, Tony released "His And Hers," which sold several thousand copies in his version and several more in a rhythm-and-blues version on the same label. "When I met Jim Reeves the next year he told me 'You missed a million seller. I tried to make a record of that song and I couldn't get it right.'" Tony adds, "I never made a cent on 'His And Hers,' not a penny. It was very frustrating."

"You're The Sweetest Hurt I've Ever Known" hit for Tony the next year, but fame and fortune continued to elude him. By the early Sixties, Nashville had become the dominant force in country music, and Texas and Oklahoma artists were finding it harder to get national attention. Tony travelled with Ernest Tubb for a while, but he couldn't get on any of the big Nashville shows. "The promoters just weren't interested." So Tony played Texas, working clubs and small halls everywhere in the state. "I've been very lucky. There's always been a demand for the band. I expect we'll do 300 to 310 nights in 1974." All this in addition to raising a family; and a publishing company, a production outfit, a record company. It was hearing "Thank You For Touching My Life" on Cochise that persuaded Dot's Jim Foglesong to release Tony Douglas nationally.

After supper we headed over to Burnet's high school auditorium. The lot was full, but it turned out that Burnet's basketball team was at work in the gym. Even so, about 500 people had turned out for the show, not bad for Wednesday night in a small town. Tony introduced me to Bob Watkins, program director of Burnet's 1000 watt daytimer KHLB and promoter of the evening's entertainment. He is running his little station with a lot of style. Watkins kicked off the show with jokes and a Hee Haw-style routine with one of his employes. Next up was a singer who was high on the Texas charts with a novelty number about a barroom brawl between a big redneck and a little man backed up by his 200-pound wife and his dog, who was named something like Vicious. A little man himself, he wound up by announcing that although Vicious couldn't be with us tonight, he had brought along his 200-pound wife, who trotted out from backstage. Al Capp couldn't have imagined it better.

Tony Douglas is not a visually exciting performer. He stands stiffly (though not uneasily) at the front of the stage while the Shrimpers lay down some very funky country rhythms behind him. His energy is projected through his voice, giving each song a dynamic reading belied by his appearance. With his shiny boots (he showed me the custom bags in which he carries several changes of fancy boots and shoes), he looks almost like a caricature of a Fifties' country performer, the same effect that Faron Young and Porter Wagoner have until you hear them sing. But his voice and, more to the point, his act—the well-chosen songs, the flawless arrangements—are superb.

I'm glad I went looking for Tony Douglas. The man is an inspiration. He believes in hard work—he auditions every song sent to him, every performer who knocks at his door. He believes in his music—Watkins told me Tony was working without a guarantee, taking the gate after expenses. He lives his version of right and wrong—one of the members of the band told me they can neither smoke nor drink when they work with Tony.

Dot has just released Tony's latest single "Rainbows, Wishing Wells And Strawberry Pie." I hope it's a hit. ■

The JEMF: An Australian's Historical Legacy

by John Morthlond

It's a very tiny office room, so stuffed with records and printed matter that there's barely space for the three people who work there to gather at once. The first impression a visitor gets is one of chaos, but that notion is quickly dispelled. It's the kind of labor of love that's

PHOTO: EMERSON-LOEW

The JEMF: A gold mine for ethnomusicologists.

found most often on college campuses or in someone's basement.

The John Edwards Memorial Foundation happens to be on a college campus, and some of the overflow *is* stored in someone's basement. Specifically, the JEMF is located on the 11th floor of UCLA's Ralph Bunche Center (known as "the waffle building" due to architectural peculiarities). As part of the Folklore and Mythology Center at UCLA, the Edwards Foundation houses one of the world's largest collections of material pertaining to country music and related subjects.

John D. Edwards was a postal clerk and railroad buff in Cremorne, Australia, who took a real fancy to country music. He started collecting Australian issues of all the American country music he could get his hands on. When he ran out of Australian records to collect, he started buying them straight from America through the mails. He wrote prolifically on the subject of country music, and carried out extensive correspondence with American collectors, musicians, and record company officials.

By 1960, he had accumulated a voluminous collection of music, as well as magazines, taped interviews, and piles of correspondence on the subject—all despite the fact he had never set foot in the United States. He was killed in a car wreck near his home in 1960, at the age of 28. Surely by then he had earned himself an honorary seat in Hillbilly Heaven: Edwards' will stated that he wanted his records, tapes, correspondence, photographs, biographical and discographical compilations, and related information to be preserved for future scholars and historians of country music. Hence, the JEMF, which was incorporated in 1962 under the guidance of Eugene Earle, an American collector with whom Edwards had planned to collaborate on a book.

Edwards own collection provided the nucleus of the JEMF's archives, and the foundation hasn't looked back since. According to Patty Hall, one of the three UCLA students holding down the fort, the JEMF today includes some 15,000 78 r.p.m. records; 800 LP's; about 5000 issues of 500 periodicals; data files on 1500 people and subjects; 75 taped interviews of country music pioneers; 800 song folios; 325 books, including record catalogs and unpublished manuscripts; more than 1000 tapes of music; and countless pieces of sheet music, including several thousand songs from Acuff-Rose. You name it, the JEMF has it.

Access to this material is provided to just about anyone who requests it. Because the material is so academically oriented, the JEMF's most frequent visitors are ethnomusicologists engaged in research projects of their own. Journalists and writers working on liner notes also use the facilities often, and sometimes just plain old country music fans drop by.

"It's weird how many people have come all the way from Japan just to see the Foundation," says Paul Wells, another student worker, as he reaches into the bookshelf. "But look at this. This Japanese writer named Toto Mitsui spent a whole week here going through everything we had about bluegrass. A while later, he sends us this copy of his book, in Japanese. I wonder what it says?"

Perhaps even more weird is the fact that JEMF is able to do all that it does on a yearly budget of just over $10,000! About half of this comes from the Friends of the JEMF, who pay $7.50 and up per year for membership. For this they get free the JEMF Quarterly, a research journal. They also get discounts on other material the JEMF provides.

Aside from the Friends, the JEMF squeaks by on a few grants and outright donations, an occasional benefit, and sales of material to the general public at a slightly higher fee. As Norm Cohen, a chemist in the aerospace industry and the JEMF executive secretary in his free time, puts it: "Our budget should be two or three times what it is to accomplish our goals. We really need, for example, someone knowledgeable on the subject to be able to work there on a full-time basis. As it is, we have three students on a part-time basis and a few volunteers. They are dedicated, but they come and go, because they are students. Sometimes they just don't know enough to get the answer to questions people ask."

And that's not all. "Yeah," Cohen concedes, "It *is* kinda cramped in there." ■

COUNTRY MUSIC

Watch This Face: Guy Clark

Guy Clark sits in a rocking chair and swirls a bourbon and water as he thinks about his life, his music and what he is doing in Nashville. He looks over at Susanna, his wife, who is sitting on the couch, her feet drawn up under her. She is staring out the large window behind Guy, past plants set in a row on the window sill.

Guy and Susanna have led a placid, unhurried existence for the last two years, but that is about to change. Guy will soon be signing a recording contract with RCA.

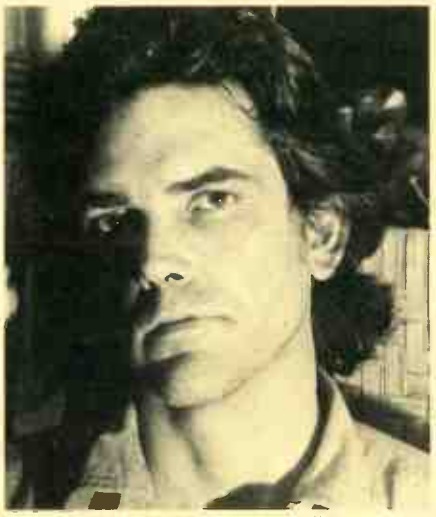
"You know," Susanna says, "if you just take every day off, you never have to work at something you don't want to do. Like I think I'll take the day off and do the laundry, or paint, or take care of the plants. Or just sit. You know? That way, you're always off and you're always getting something done."

"Yeh," Guy says, "I think I'll take the day off and write a song."

It is an early summer afternoon, very mellow in this room which is dominated by the plants, Guy's instrument cases, and Susanna's very skillfully done paintings.

I first heard Guy at the Exit/In, a club in Nashville where everybody in the business goes either to hear music or to be seen. Guy was from Texas, somebody said; a writer for RCA's publishing company; damn good songs. Great, I thought, remembering someone else's comment about Texans in Nashville: "You can't get away from the damn Texans—they're just everywhere." That evening, Guy struck me as withdrawn and aloof. A tall and brooding loner in a cowboy hat, much as you would imagine Captain Ahab to have been had he come from Texas rather than New England.

After that, I ran into Guy and Susanna fairly often around town, mostly sitting quietly by themselves, talking intimately like new



"I do exactly what I want to do."

lovers, but sometimes with a few other people. People that came to be known as Guy Clark's crowd. Of course, Nashville is a town of crowds: Waylon's crowd; Tompall's crowd. And there's nothing wrong with that. It can mean, in fact that a person is a force in the business, someone to be reckoned with. Guy Clark is just such a person—everybody knows who he is, and it's just a matter of time before he makes it.

"What's different between me and other writers is that I came to Nashville with a deal already sewed up. I didn't have to pound the pavements to find something. The deal I signed was on the Coast so the company here pretty much just left me alone. I couldn't have it any better. I do exactly what I want to do."

Guy was raised in Rockport, Texas near Corpus Christi. One of his father's law partners taught Guy to play the guitar, but Guy wasn't in any hurry to get famous. After flunking or dropping out of [illegible]es all over Texas, he mov[illegible]an Francisco where he reb[illegible]tars and sort of marked [illegible]ne. his later twenties, he moved [illegible]to Houston and became a[illegible] for TV station KHOU. After that, he moved to LA where he made Dobro guitars for the Dopera Brothers. On the side, he'd pitched songs to whoever would listen. Finally, in October 1971, he hit pay dirt when Jerry Tieffer, president of Sunbury-Dunbar, heard his songs and signed him to a writer's contract. In the meantime, Guy had another victory—he met and married Susanna. Contract, salary and wife in hand, Guy Clark made the big move to Music City.

Since then, many of his songs have been cut by other artists. "LA Freeway" was a good-size hit for Jerry Jeff Walker. Other of Guy's songs have been done by David Allan Coe, Rita Coolidge, Tom Rush, Chuck Woolery, the Everly Brothers, and of all people, Chill Wills.

One of his best songs to date is called "Desperados," written last summer, which has been cut by five different artists. "Desperados" is about Guy's grandfather. Guy gets up from his rocking chair and ambles across the room to show me photos of the old man. "See," he says, "this is when he was young."

The first verse of the song goes like this: "I'd play the Red River Valley/And he'd sit in the kitchen and cry,/And run his fingers through seventies years of livin'/And wonder Lord, has every well I've drilled run dry/We was friends, me and this old man/Like desperados waiting for a train . . . "

After Clark signs a recording contract with RCA, he will be able to do his wonderful songs, like "Desperados," himself. He will get famous and you will hear him on the radio. After that, when he takes days off, it will be to go on the road or come to your home town with his songs. He'll be working again—that's [illegible]real world, but I hope you'll t[illegible]e the day off to hear him. [illegible]" come home feeling a lot bet-

MARSHALL FALLWELL

PHOTO: MARSHALL FALLWELL

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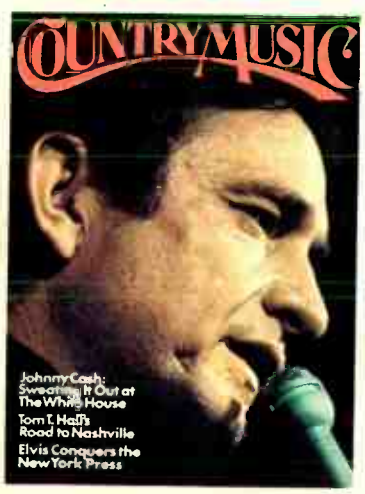

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COUNTRY MUSIC Magazine
P.O. Box 2560
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Eddy Arnold, The Ideal American Male

by Richard Nusser

At 56, Eddy Arnold still carries the aura of the country boy; square-jawed, broad-shouldered, a bit shy, and, of course, soft-spoken. He's worth easily a million dollars, not counting the potential of his considerable holdings in commercial real estate in and around Nashville, but Eddy Arnold just keeps working—cutting records, headlining smart suburban supper clubs that seat 2,000 people (and breaking attendance records), making jingles and television commercials and carefully, *thoughtfully,* entering into new business ventures. "I really don't know anything else except work," he said recently, sitting almost alone in the quiet half-light of a recording studio after a jingle taping, "just working, all my life, to earn a livelihood."

"I guess the difference between Eddy and other artists is that he thinks of himself as a business," said Jim Malloy, Eddy's producer and friend for the past seven years. "He has a certain image and he lives up to it."

Of all the stars that twinkle in varying degrees of brillance throughout the hills overlooking Music City, U.S.A., the star named Eddy Arnold is distinguished from all the others because it has consistently burned brighter and longer, with a richer sheen, than the others. His voice and his personality have come to represent more than just *a* man. Eddy represents, in many ways, The Ideal American Male. Almost single-handedly, he developed the style of music we now call M.O.R.—middle of the road. He has rolled along through some hellish decades, singing love songs all the way. He has kept his following through Sinatra, Tony Bennett, Eddie Fisher, Dean Martin, Tom Jones and Englebert What's-His-Name. Eddy Arnold's smooth, buttery voice, with its careful phrasing and quiet pauses of strength, tapped a root deep down in the soil of American style. As Jim Malloy remarked: "Eddy's an era all in himself."

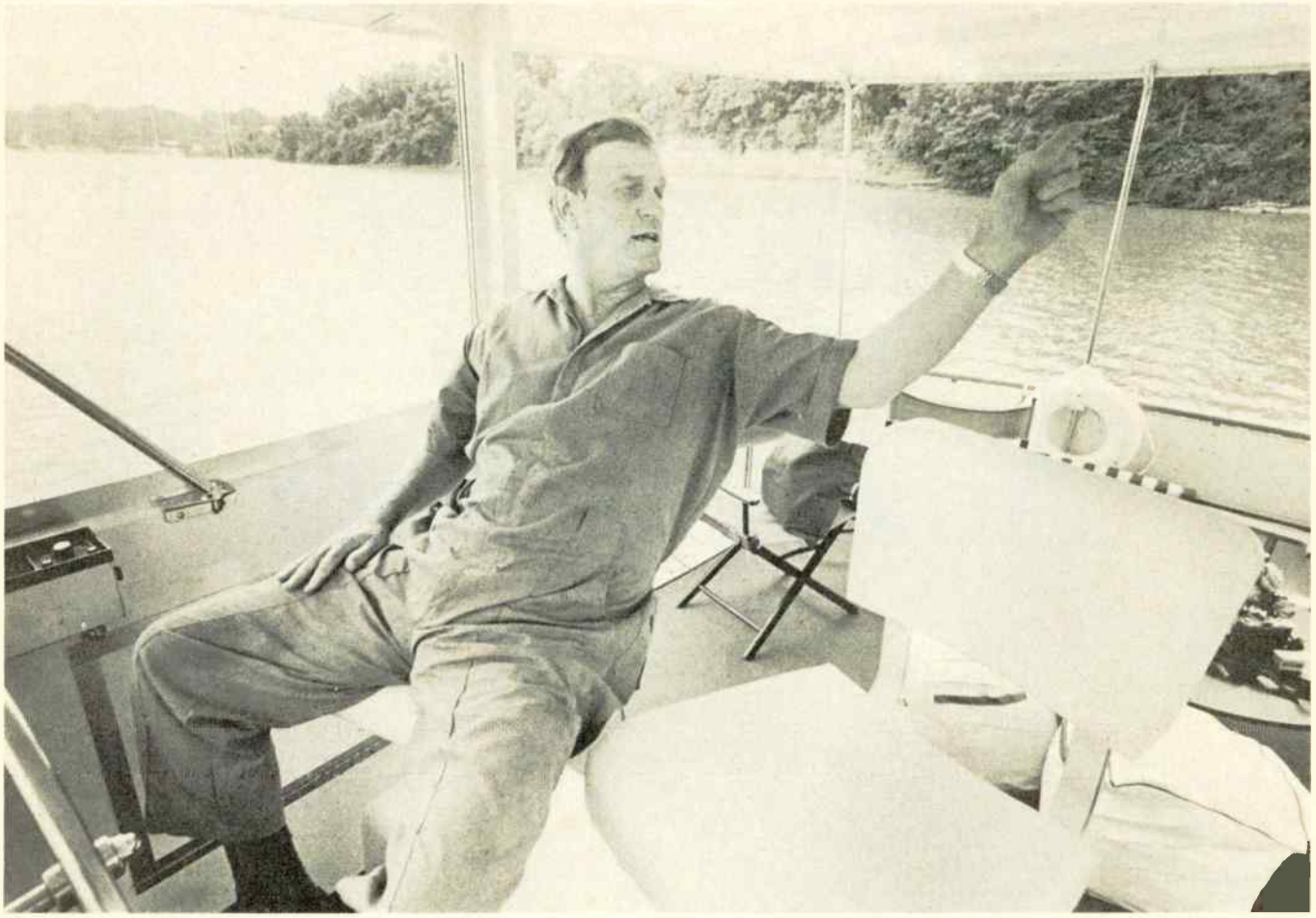
"I think it's identification, in all honesty," Eddy himself believes. "I don't want to be *bragadocious* but I think people identify with me and they think I'm a friend—part *of* them. They want to come and shake hands. They want to touch. Many times I walk on stage to a standing ovation. Well, you know, this comes from getting older, from touring, respect from the people." Malloy, who has been listening to this and nodding his head in agreement, adds: "And 70 per cent of them are women."

"Yeh," Eddy says. "There's always some song that touches their minds that I'm associated with."

. . . He has rolled along through some hellish decades, singing love songs all the way . . .

It's been a long time since Eddy Arnold capped a day cutting cotton by hopping on a mule, with a guitar slung across his back, to ride down a road in western Tennessee to a neighbor boy's house for an evening of playing jigs and reels. Today, sitting on board the "Sally K," his 42-foot cabin cruiser moored at the foot of a sloping one-and-a-half acre Old Hickory Lake plot that is used for nothing but a buffer zone, he reflects on his rural roots, his up-bringing, and all the little things that have made Eddy Arnold . . . Eddy Arnold. Reminded of those cotton-cutting, mule-riding days, his face turns serious. "You know, that life

PHOTOS: MARSHALL FALLWELL



seems like a dream to me. 'Cause now it seems like . . . so long ago. It was so real then, so vivid. But I've lived away from it longer than I've lived with it."

". . . I have always had that horror of winding up broke, of being dependent on someone . . ."

Eddy's father passed away in 1929, when Eddy was 11 years old, leaving a wife, four children, and a pile of bills. America's slide into the Great Depression was just beginning. The New Deal came too late to save the Arnold farm. "When my father died, we lost it all 'cause he was in debt. They came and auctioned it all off . . . plows, livestock, everything." The Arnold family became share-croppers. Eddy didn't like that. "The country boys, you know, most of them have to labor while they're still small, manual labor. And they know what it is to go hungry." Later, he was to remark: "I have always had that horror of winding up broke—of being dependent on someone." By the mid-1930s, Eddy followed his older brothers and sister in deciding to leave the farm. His sister moved to St. Louis. Realizing there would be more work in the city, Eddy joined her there. "I hung around the beer joints and the cafes. I got me a little job on a radio station there. I almost starved to death singing in those little taverns. I could have gotten on the wrong track so easy. I was around, I'm sure, some gang people in those bars, me buying drinks and them wanting me to charge it and all that, but I didn't want that. All I cared about was singing me a song and getting ahead and earning me a livelihood, and getting me a little girl—having me a girlfriend." Eddy met his wife, Sally, in St. Louis. She was jerking sodas in a five and ten cent store. He fell in love. "She looked like Olivia de Havilland," Eddy recalls. "I always thought *she* was a beautiful woman."

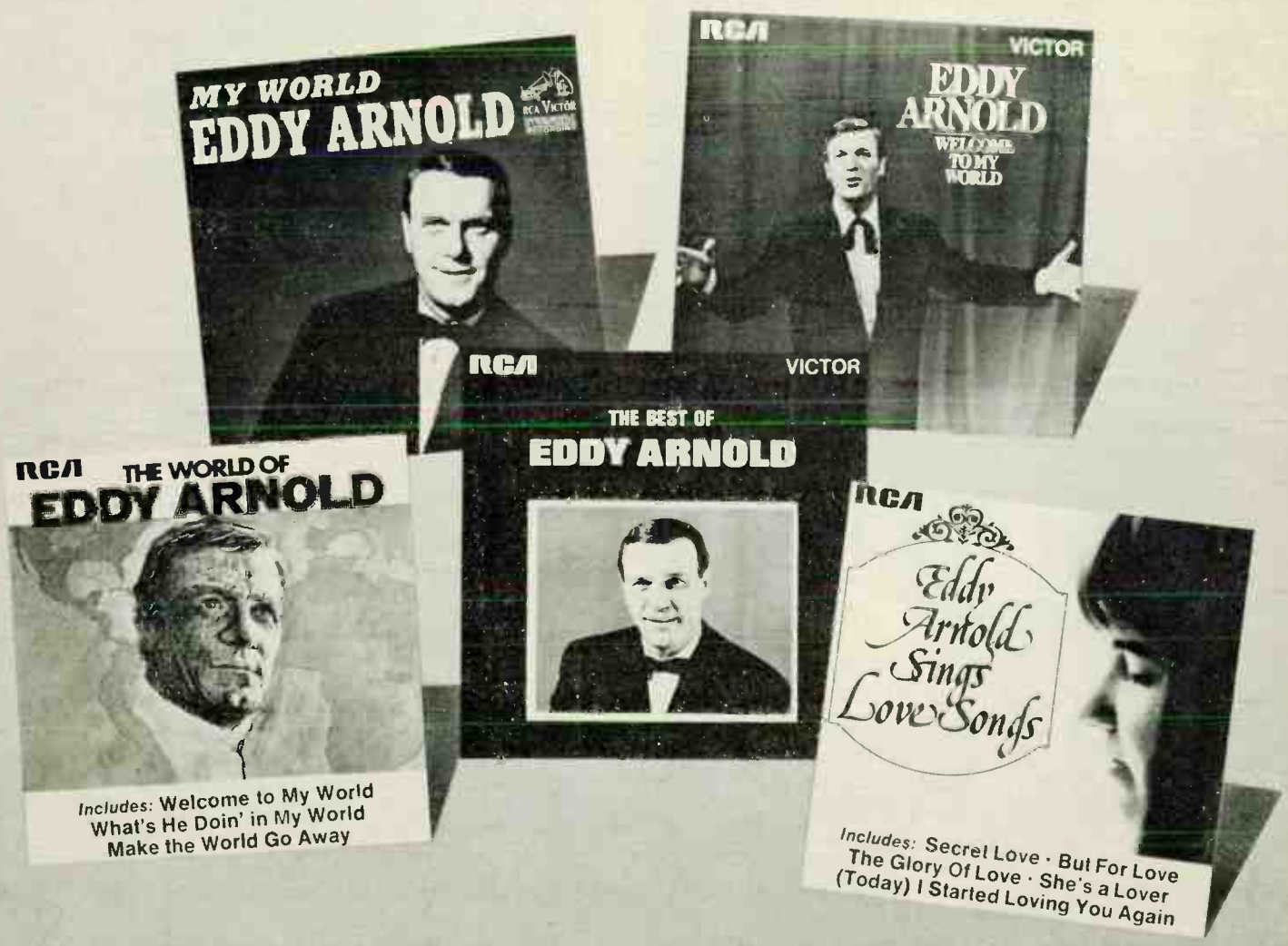
Eddy hasn't changed his tune much since those early days, and his fans seem to appreciate that more and more with each passing year. "I want to tell you," Eddy states proudly, "I had one of the most successful years last year, financially, that I've had in my whole career."

Eddy Arnold's entire career, as singer, businessman, husband and father, has been marked by a steadfast determination to remain ahead, and to remain true to his early up-bringing.

". . . I think it's a wonderful thing to be able to say: 'I'm a country boy, I grew up from the soil . . .'"

"I tell you what I think is important about being a country boy," he says, his eyes narrowing as he lights a cigar and settles down to probing the path of his own existence: "It's wonderful. I wouldn't take anything for my country boy up-bringing. I think it's a wonderful thing to be able to say: 'I'm a country boy, I grew up from the soil.' But it's also helpful—if you're intelligent enough—that although you have this background, you're still capable of learning . . . and I'm not talking about formal education. I'm talking about learning the ways of the world and living in the world. That's the way I feel. At this stage in my life I'm capable of sitting and talking to anyone in any walk of life. I'm not highly educated, but I have a lot of education from experience. I've never let myself remain stag-

If you had a fight this morning, let him hear a love song when he comes home tonight.



RCA Records and Tapes

nant, to just say: 'Well, I'm a country boy and I'm just never goin' learn nuthin' . . . ' and stay in that rut. Or say: 'Well, that guy is rich and *I'm* never gonna be able to talk to him.' No . . . my philosophy has always been, by gum, I'm gonna read enough, and learn enough, so I can sit and talk to that man. That's been my philosophy. I always felt that I'm as good as he is; and he's as good as I am. We're equal . . . "

The sun had drifted behind a cloud and the afternoon had turned into twilight. Around the shores of Old Hickory Lake, other successful businessmen were returning from their jobs in the music industry or other 20th Century pursuits that provide livelihoods for Nashville's working population, and they were sitting on their balconies, enjoying a drink, watching the day fade. The talk turned to affluence, its rewards and pitfalls. Eddy wanted to take the "Sally K" out for a run. Before he did, someone asked what he estimated his net worth to be. "I don't know what I'm worth exactly," he shrugged. "I'm worth a good bit. Yes, I'm a millionaire." Then he went below to change into his "jump suit," a pair of cover-alls, in preparation for casting off his lines, and expertly easing "Sally K" out of her tight berth.

"Boy, he sure can handle this boat," someone sighed as the "Sally K" cleared the boathouse walls with inches to spare. "Wait'll we get out a bit," Eddy grinned. "I'll open her up and you'll see what she can do."

It was my luck, when I jumped in a cab at the airport to get out to Franklin Road to meet Eddy Arnold, to have a cab driver whose hobby was keeping track of "the stars." He was a pleasant, retired man who had an anecdote or tidbit of gossip about most any past or present country performer you can name. I asked him if he knew Eddy Arnold. "Sure, we stood in the same induction line together in World War II right here in Nashville," he said. "Eddy took care of his money," he added. "He's a good businessman, and well-respected."

"I guess it's innate in a man to want to feel a sense of accomplishment," Eddy told me later that day as we drove around the suburbs in his Buick stationwagon, running a couple of errands. "I would suppose that a man has to be creative, otherwise he feels unimportant, unworthy. There are two things, in *my* mind, that make a man successful. He has to be successful in his sex life and in business. And I think that says it for a man. That's the animal part of him. I've been around a good many men who've been successful but they want to feel useful. They could stop, anytime. Hell, they could afford it. But they keep going . . . I've slowed down a lot—but I couldn't be happy just being stale, not moving, not doing anything. I couldn't be happy. It would be awfully dull . . .

"I think as long as a man has energy he has to go on. I always feel I'm creating something. When I create a hit record, I create cash flow—not only for me. I create work for the man who makes the record, who presses it, who ships it, the man at the freight office, right down the line.

"I have to be extra careful not to get involved in too many things," he said. "I'm the sort of guy that business sort of gravitates toward me, if that's the word. My business ability is a kind of horse sense approach. I'm not a well-educated person, as in *formal education*, so I just listen a lot and I don't move too fast. People come to me with deals and I'll just think them over for a while to see what it's all about. I like real estate investments because it's a good hedge against inflation."

Wherever we stopped that morning, Eddy was recognized by passersby. The women smiled knowingly. In the case of other businessmen going about *their* errands, they greeted Eddy with a respectful "hello." Most of his friends are not in the entertainment business.

". . . People come to me with deals and I'll just think them over for a while to see what it's all about . . ."

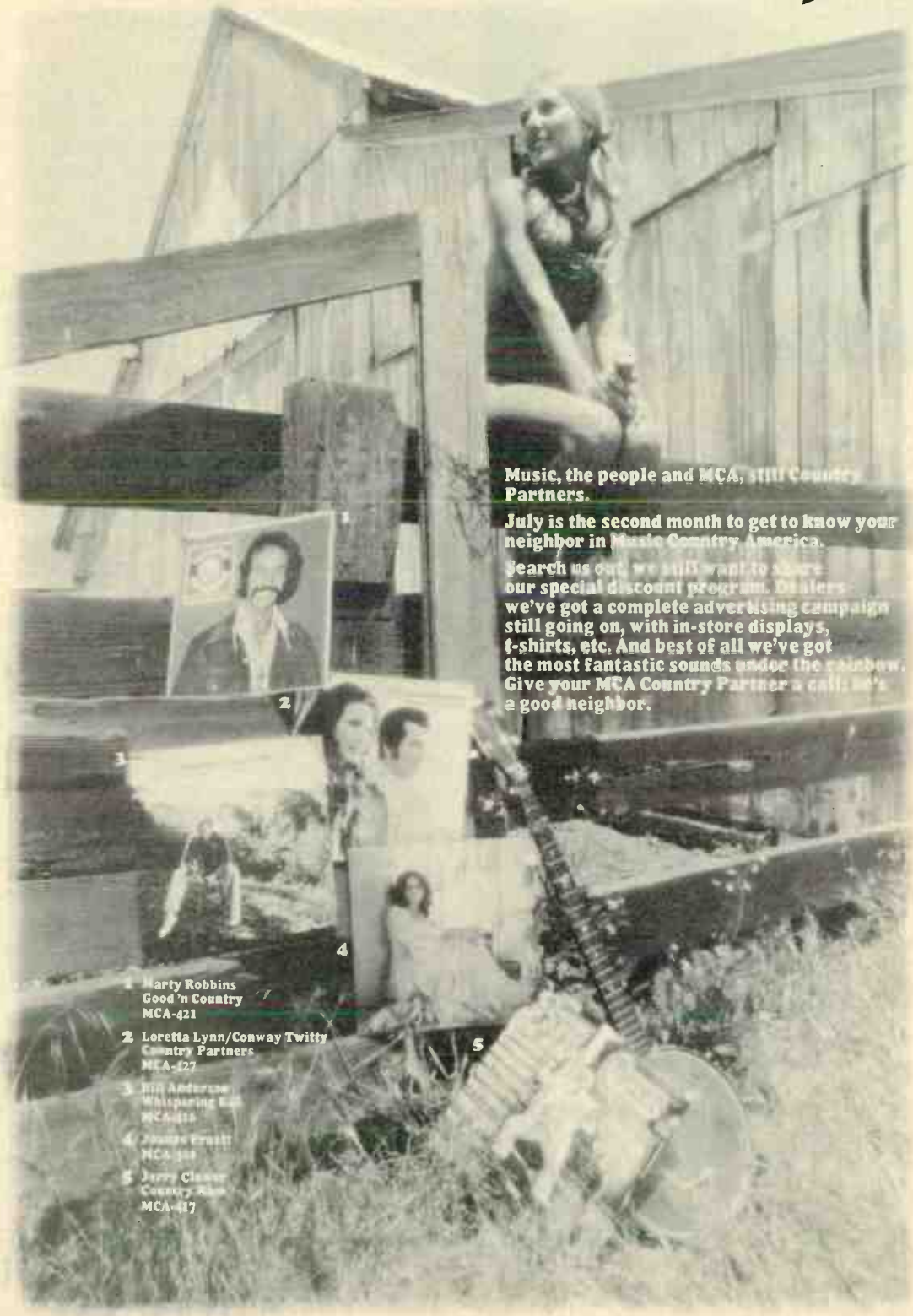
"I have many acquaintances," Eddy noted, "but only a few good friends. And I value the ones I have. For them I'll break my back. I get invited to *umpteen* things. I never go. I know I'm just going to get pushed and pulled and I'll answer the same questions. The questions are always the same at those social functions.

"I enjoy just simple life," he said, threading his way carefully through noontime traffic, giving a little nod here and there to other motorists who yielded on a turn, most of them not knowing who they were yielding to. "Yes. I'm a very simple person when it comes to the things that satisfy me. I'm a very private person. Some people call me a loner. Well, I am, in many ways. Just because I don't want to be in the spotlight all the time. I want to be alone and think . . . *think.*" He savored the word as he said it.

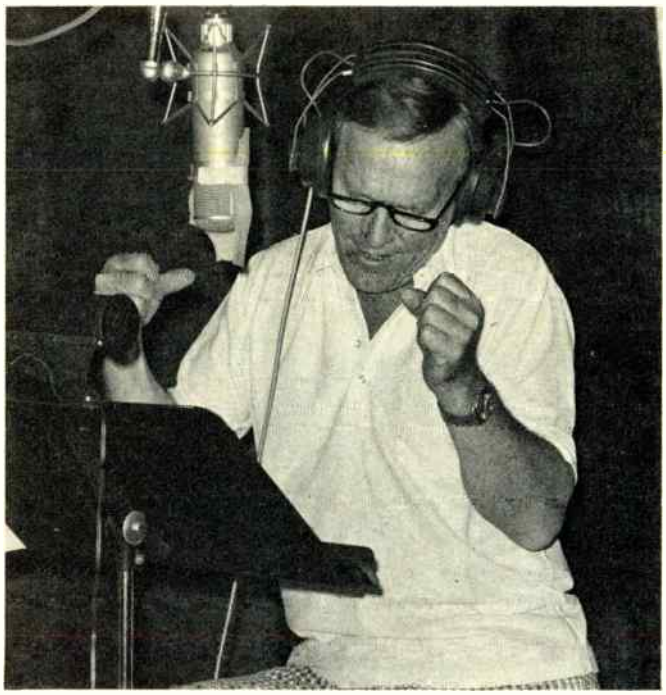
"Is there anything you haven't done or places you haven't been, that you want to get to?" he was asked.

"You know, there's really none," he said. "The thing I want to do most is stay home. I've been trying to get around to doing that for the last twenty years." He laughed. We talked about how other stars are now traveling to Japan. Australia, even Russia. "You see, I don't care if George Hamilton was made King of Russia! *I don't care.* I just want to be King of Granny White Pike!" Granny White Pike is one of Nashville's main thoroughfares.

COUNTRY PARTNERS 9.



MCA RECORDS



"I'd embarass Eddy if I told you everything I think about Eddy Arnold," Jim Malloy told me the next day. "There's not a blemish on him of any kind—from singer to gentleman to father. He's lived a certain image all his life and that's the kind of person he is. I'll tell you what I generally tell people: Eddy's the most perfect Southern gentleman I've ever met. *He's concerned.* He's concerned about everybody that he knows and likes. And he'll do anything to help those people."

The only criticism *I* heard about Eddy Arnold while working on this story was that he tends to get a little impatient sometimes. I was relieved. I was beginning to think he was a saint.

While we were rocking in comfort aboard the "Sally K" one afternoon, the conversation settled on the subject of changing life-styles.

"The thing I've noticed that's been one of the changes has been the lack of family ties," Eddy said. "I guess that sounds old-fashioned. I'm not placing blame, but the family has just sort of disintegrated.

"You see, it used to be fashionable for the woman to stay at home, to hold the family together. She was the *home-maker.* Now most of them are working. I realize some of them have to, but the woman—she's that *pillar.* And whether you have woman's lib or whatever, the woman is gonna have to bear the children. My mother worked, but she worked at home. She was a focal point . . . "

Eddy remarked that sex education was something he was very interested in. "Of course sex was something I knew about before I was a teenager," he said. "I didn't have to talk about it with my parents. I learned it in its natural form. I had not experienced it *myself*—but I had watched the animals. I saw them all: the geese, the cow and the bull, pigs . . . I used to watch the rooster and the hen go around the yard . . . she'd run from him until she caught him . . . "

It was the simple things, he said, that provided him with the backbone of his education: Careful observation and the wise counsel of a mother whom he respected and trusted. "My mother never gave me any reason *not* to trust her," Eddy recalled. "Simplicity and honesty . . . those were the traits I remember."

Later, Eddy told a little story to demonstrate a point about sexuality. "I got a shock last week in the autograph line," he said. "Not a shock, really. A chuckle. This young woman, she looked to be about 30 or 35 years old, came through the line and she leaned over, put her mouth right behind my ear, real quietly, she said: 'I want some of your body . . . ' I said . . . 'Ho!' It happens . . . it happens a lot . . . "

We were invited to a recording session where Eddy was making the soundtrack for a television commercial for Sunnyland products, a Southern-based meat packaging operation. Eddy dubbed his voice over the musical score about six times before he got it just right. Nearly every take was O.K., but Jim Malloy knew when Eddy was being Eddy, and when he was "trying too hard." "Boy, that's hard to do," Eddy remarked once after climbing up to a certain note. Later he said he thought jingle-cutting was more "tedious" than record-cutting, because it's so "exacting."

After the session, we sat around in the studio and talked about the kind of songs he likes to sing. "Positive love songs," Eddy said without hesitation. "No triangles, or things like that. You take 'Bouquet of Roses' and just think of the lyrics . . . 'I'm sending *you* a big bouquet of roses . . . one for every time *you* broke my heart.' See, that's one person talking to another. He's not singing 'croon, June, moon,' rhyming all those things. He's talking . . . one-to-one."

Why has this particular romantic formula typified the kind of music with which he has been associated? "Hell, that's what's on people's mind," Eddy laughed. "Communicating, *one-to-one.*"

"What is *love?*" we asked. Jim Malloy smiled. "That's a tough one," he said. Eddy lit a cigar and settled down to consider an answer. While he pondered, Malloy told us how Eddy had cancelled all his engagements last year after his only son, Dicky, 27, had been seriously injured in an auto accident in Alabama. Other folks had also mentioned this: how Eddy stayed by Dicky's side, nursing and caring for him personally, and making time so they could be together. "That's love," Malloy said. Eddy nodded silently.

". . . Yes. I'm a very simple person when it comes to the things that satisfy me . . ."

"What about love between men and women?" we asked.

"Well, I think the happiest people are people who have had some cross words," Eddy said. "Maybe some pretty tough ones. Ah—but then—they come to terms. They understand one another. That's what I'm talking about: the degree of toleration. That's what love is to me."

Dickey wasn't feeling too well that particular day, and when the session was wrapped up, Eddy was anxious to return home. We had a couple more questions, though, and Eddy seemed to be still in a talkative mood.

"What about the future? Have you ever considered retiring?" we asked.

"Well," he said, "that's a few years off. It's not a *lot*

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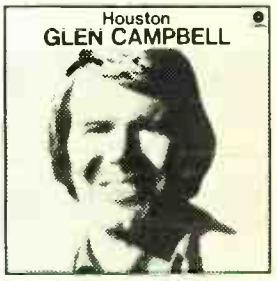

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of years off, but a few years off. I'm gonna work less, and less, and less . . . I'm just gradually cutting it down." Malloy grinned. "I'll tell you why he hasn't gotten around to retiring," he said, glancing over at Eddy. "You see, Eddy will get in a real good mood and Jerry Purcell, his manager, will get with him and say, 'Eddy, why don't we book just a few theaters-in-the-round?' And Eddy will say, 'Well . . . ' hell, and he'll have a few drinks, and he'll say, 'Yeh, that'll be all right . . . ' and Jerry will run right out and tell the whole world and book a whole tour . . . and Eddy will fill those places up. And they'll all make money . . . that's why he can't quit. He's making money for those people. They'll keep calling him and Jerry'll keep coming down and giving him a few drinks . . . "

". . . That's what I'm talking about: the degree of toleration. That's what love is to me . . ."

"Yeh," Eddy said. "But I don't do one-nighters anymore."

"I really enjoy it out there performing," he said later. "I just feel like I'm making them happy . . . "

"I think it's like a certain kind of high," Malloy said. "Oh, yeh," Eddy agreed. "I work hard when I perform. Quietly, but hard. Psychologically, I work hard, to entertain people and hold their attention, and that's part of entertaining. It's all psychology . . . "

Marshall Fallwell took some more pictures then, as Eddy and Jim Malloy made arrangements to get together later in the day. I walked Eddy out to the parking lot into the hot, sunny Nashville afternoon. "Yeh," Eddy said. "I like Nashville . . . I could have moved years ago . . . out to Hollywood, but it's good living here. It's simple. It's all here . . . anything I want, anyway."

He got into his stationwagon, eased it out of the parking space and slipped into a column of traffic. The last I saw him he was turning a corner and heading out Granny White Pike, toward home. ■

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COUNTRY MUSIC

A Tribute To Bob Wills

by Willie Nelson

At the time we go to press Bob Wills is in a Texas nursing home, totally incapacitated by a stroke which happened during the early morning of December 4th, 1973. The "Father of Western Swing" had been directing the last reunion of his Texas Playboys in a Dallas recording studio on December 3rd. Already weakened and confined to a wheelchair by a series of progressively more serious strokes, he had stopped working quite a while before those last sessions, appearing in public only for benefit concerts made necessary by his lack of wealth and high medical bills. It is a tragic irony—all too common in the music business—that one of the stylistic giants of American popular mucis, a man who in his prime was revered and respected as a figure larger than life, finds himself in those circumstances late in life.

Bob Wills is very much a Texan. He was born and raised there, learning his first music from Black jazz and blues musicians, and it was in the dancehalls of Texas that he created Western Swing music. Today, although Western Swing has all but disappeared from the national music scene, it continues in Texas; not only through the old-timers who still play the dancehalls, but through a new generation which is becoming increasingly aware of its musical heritage. And one pivotal figure in that "revival" is Willie Nelson. When Willie—who bases himself in Austin, Texas, and is slowly developing that town into a Mecca for pickers, singers and writers—gets up on a Texas stage and lights into "Bubbles In My Beer," that Western Swing feeling comes all the way back and the kids take notice.

Willie Nelson is an ardent Bob Wills fan and a Texan who, like Wills, is happy to stay in Texas and make a special kind of music you don't find anywhere else. He has a unique perspective on Wills. Having grown up under his musical influence—to which he readily admits—Willie has since spent close to 25 years in country music as a highly respected song-writer and a performer whose brilliance is just now being realized by the lucky people who get to hear him play. Like Merle Haggard, he is concerned to preserve and revitalize the roots of modern country music—and, for that matter, blues and jazz—and to keep the musical innovations of the past alive today by whatever means are available to him. It was no surprise, therefore, that when we asked him to write a story on Bob Wills and Western Swing, he agreed immediately.

Willie did not actually sit down at a typewriter and produce this story, but the words are his—recorded on tape, transcribed and edited by the editor of COUNTRY MUSIC, and approved by Willie. What follows is Willie Nelson's own tribute to a man whose music he deeply respects.

The first time I met Bob Wills was in Whitney, Texas, when I was about thirteen or fourteen. My brother-in-law and I booked him into Whitney—even back then I was into the promotion business. We had a band, and my brother-in-law was the band leader. He'd go around and book all the jobs and everything, and in order to make a little extra money now and then, we'd do a little promoting and rent a hall and put somebody in there. We did that with Bob. It was after Tommy Duncan had left the Texas Playboys, and Jack Lloyd was with them. He did "I Don't See Me In Your Eyes Anymore"—the Charlie Rich song that's out now—and a whole bunch of others. This was in '47, '48, something like that. I got up there and sang a song with Bob, a Bob Wills song.

By then, Bob Wills was already a legend, and there's no way to describe what a Bob Wills show or dance was like unless you were there. That man had the magnetism, or whatever a man has which has every eye in the house glued on him all night long. He just controlled the whole situation all the time. He had good bands and he had mediocre bands, but it didn't seem to make any difference. The people who were there listening weren't really hearing the music that was being played on the bandstand: They were hearing the records, and they already knew them. They knew what Bob Wills was going to sound like before they got there, so it really didn't matter whether he was having a good night or a bad night. The people were such Bob Wills addicts and fans that every night was a good night. It was just indescribable.

The Whitney date was in an outside dance pavilion, a patio-type thing out close to Lake Whitney in the country outside town. There were probably about 1200 to 1500 people—just about the same kind of people you see at the Texas Opry House here in Austin, only their grandmothers and grandaddies; a lot of beer drinkers who like to dance. It really hasn't changed that much. It's amazing to have seen it then and to see it now, to see the same music getting all these

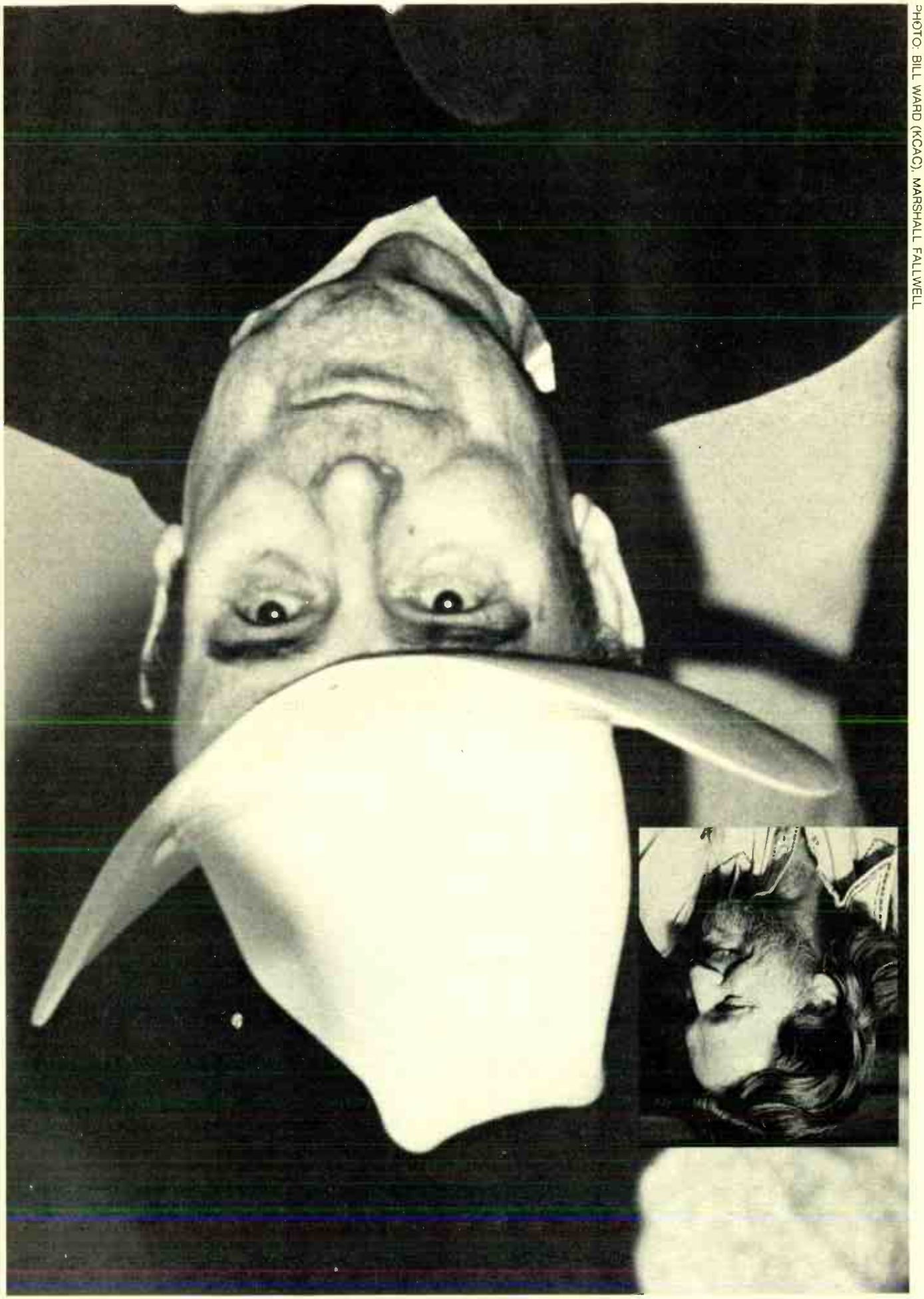

PHOTO: BILL WARD (KCAC), MARSHALL FALLWELL

Trianon Ballroom
Home of
Bob Wills and His Texas Playboys

people stirred up and enjoying themselves the same way they were 25 or 30 years ago. The same songs, even.

The next time I saw Bob Wills perform, he was on the show the first time Charley Pride came to Texas—I brought him into Dallas, Fort Worth, Shreveport, San Antonio—and *then* he was only working as a single. He only had one man with him. This was just a few years ago. He had disbanded his band. Then the last time I saw him was when we worked a date together in Pomona, California. He was in good health then. The years, naturally, were visible, but he still had the spark, the same spirit or magnetism that he always had.

It's amazing to have seen it then and see it now, to see the same music getting all these people stirred up and enjoying themselves the way they were 25-30 years ago . . .

About the time I first met Bob there were several road bands in Texas playing Western Swing. In fact, Western Swing was just about the only kind of music you could hear in the state of Texas. Until Hank Williams came along, it was just Bob Wills. He was *it*. All through my growing-up period, Bob Wills' and Timmy Duncan's music was what everybody listened to down in this part of the country—"Take Me Back To Tulsa," "San Antonio Rose," "Sun Bonnet Sue," all of those.

If you cut up what they call "Western Swing" music, you'll find that there's some jazz and some blues, and maybe that's it. It came from the Black jazz players and blues singers in Louisiana and Texas, and it's definitely a sound that originated in the Southwest. What happened was that men like Milton Brown were using jazz and blues musicians to play the songs that they had written, and it came out Western Swing. The big people back then, before Bob really became popular, were Jack Teagarten, Lightnin' Hopkins, Duke Ellington, people like that. A lot of white people used to go hear Black blues in those days—a lot more than they do now, I guess. It used to be that the white people were the only ones that could afford to go see the Black blues singers unless they happened to be singing in the corner bar or someplace like that. It seemed to me that the blues and jazz were here, and then came Western Swing right in the middle, using musicians out of both blues and jazz.

There were very few, if any, full-time country music stations in those days, so you listened to a station that had country music maybe an hour a day, and the rest of the time it would be playing popular music—"Stardust," "Harbor Lights," "Coming In On A Wing And A Prayer," the pop music of the war years. I knew all of those, plus my mother and my sister were music teachers, so they had all the songbooks with the lyrics to these songs. I used to learn them on guitar from the chord sheets. I was raised up on all kinds of music. Country was the one that was more easy for me to play, and I enjoyed playing it more.

Everyone listened to the Grand Ole Opry on Saturday nights, but the Nashville music never was as popular as Western Swing in Texas. Hank Williams was big, and Lefty Frizzell, but Lefty was from Texas and Hank was from Alabama. For a while, Johnny Horton was real popular after "North To Alaska," but he was from Louisiana—the Louisiana Hayride, which was *another* world. We were all doing *our* thing over here in Texas.

Originally, Bob Wills was a member of Milton Brown's band, the Brownies, until he left and branched out on his own. He was on Blue Bonnet Records back then, a Texas label, and he was the first Western Swing artist to really get national prominence. Milton Brown was

PHOTOS COURTESY DR. CHARLES TOWNSEND FROM "SAN ANTONIO ROSE: THE LIFE AND MUSIC OF BOB WILLS"

killed in an automobile accident just when he was getting ready to do a lot of things. He had a song called "My Mary" and two or three more that were big hits in Texas, but when he got killed, Bob Wills continued on with that same style, improved on it, added more musicians—and the musicians became better, too, as time went on. Tommy Duncan came to sing with him, and he and Tommy turned out to be a very good combination. They started doing "Still Water Runs Deepest" and "The Kind of Girl I Can't Forget," and all those Bob Wills classics like "Faded Lover."

In the early days there were only a few road bands. Of course, there weren't any amplifiers or public address systems, so it wasn't until they came along that there were a lot of traveling bands around Texas.

Competitive wouldn't be a good work for the scene among the various bands at that time. The geography had a lot to do with it: Travelling from one place to another was such a hassle. It was hard enough to get one group into one place on a given night, much less several. I don't think it was necessary, either. I think that one group back then, if it was the right group, could draw as many people and fill a house to capacity as two or three "names" can now. Every band played Bob Wills songs, and there were probably a couple of dozen bands across the state playing Western swing music. There was Adolf Hoffner, Easy Adams, Texas Tophand, Dewey Groom, Hoyle Nicks, Spade Cooley, —he was California Western Swing—and from Spade Cooley there was Tex Williams, who branched out on his own. There was Olie Rasmussen from Nebraska and the Nebraska Corn Huskers. Teddy Wiles was the featured vocalist with his group, and they were practically an exact copy of Bob Wills.

What happened was that men like Milton Brown were using jazz and blues musicians to play the songs they had written, and it came out Western Swing . . .

All of these guys were bandleaders, and it was the same structure as Bob Wills and the Texas Playboys. Usually they'd try to get the exact number of whatever Bob was carrying. If he had two fiddles, everybody else got two fiddles. If he had three, they'd go hire another fiddle player. They wanted to do it like Bob was doing it.

Bob loved it onstage. He had to have loved it, to have stuck with it as long as he did, even until he had his most recent stroke, which totally incapacitated him. But he worked as long as he could, right up to that last recording session in Dallas.

He never took an intermission in his shows. He'd start at eight and play straight through until midnight without a break, and the people would be dancing all the time. He sometimes carried a girl singer with him—Ramona Reed was with him for a while, and Laura Lee McBride—both of them would sing uptempo songs, not ballads, and yodel. He hired himself female yodelers. As far as I know, they were the only extra people he carried with him, except for Tommy Duncan or whoever happened to be his featured vocalist at the time.

Every musician's eye was on him, for the whole four hours of his shows, because at any given time he'd point the fiddle bow at you, and you'd better be ready to know where it was at and jump in and do *something*, whatever. Even though he had his arrangements, which came on in certain places in a song, Bob allowed his musicians to *play*. He'd give them individual breaks and let them do their stuff, play their licks. Other bands weren't doing that at the time. That was Bob Wills' technique. He made individual stars out of everybody on the bandstand, or at least he tried to. On records, he'd mention their names—like "Take it away, Leon," which made Leon McAuliffe famous forever. Bob didn't have to say, "Take it away, Leon." He didn't have to say anything. It's the same way with Ernest Tubb and his musicians. He'd introduce them on record. I thought that was really good.

Betty and Bob Wills with children James Robert Jr., Carolyn and baby Diane in 1950.

Bob didn't do many of the lead vocals—a few, but not many. He was a band leader: He *directed* the band, and he was respected probably more than any other band leader. He was not an easy man to work for—I never worked for him, but I've talked to a lot of the people who did—he was very disciplinary. He had certain things that had to be done, and if you didn't do them that way, then you didn't work for Bob Wills. He was a fair man, though. He'd stand around and smoke a cigar—he always had a cigar and a big white hat. That was his trademark.

The musicians came from a lot of different places. Everybody wanted to work with Bob Wills. His was the band to work with, and there was usually quite a bit of turnover in his band. Quite a few musicians came through there. Then they'd move off into one of the other bands when they stopped working with Bob.

One guy would say, "*This* band was the best," and another would say, "No, he was better in '45," but it's all a matter of opinion. *I* liked his early recordings when he had Elton Shamblin playing guitar. Tiny Moore, a mandolin player, used to work with him, and they did some really good three- and four-part arrangements on some of the songs. It used to be that when you learned a Bob Wills song, you also learned the

Bob Wills, left, and the Texas Playboys ride with Tex Ritter in the 1940 film, "Take Me Back To Oklahoma."

exact arrangement, because the arrangement was so good. They were head arrangements of jazz riffs which the musicians would put together and add three- and four-part harmonies. "Still Water Runs Deep" was one of the best. Now, that was *really* unusual to hear in a Western band. These guys were really good back when they were doing those arrangements. After that one band, it seemed that each group of musicians that worked with Bob would still play the same arrangements that were done when the songs were originally recorded. The arrangements didn't change: They were right off the original records.

The arrangements were a group thing. I don't think Bob had as much to do with it as maybe Eldon or Tiny or Johnny Gimble. The better musicians of the group would usually work out all these intricate arrangements. Bob was not the best musician on the bandstand, by any means, but he just happened to be the best *bandleader* on the bandstand.

"... I was greatly influenced by the Bob Wills organization ... I tried to steal all the hot licks I could from all those good musicians ..."

I have my favorite Bob Wills songs. I've got maybe 25 that I could name off fairly easily, and then somebody else could say, "Well, what about *this* one?" and I'd have to agree. I just like the style, and it really didn't matter too much what he was playing. It was just a good *sound.* I'm sure I have taken a lot of influence from Bob Wills. I was greatly influenced by a lot of the musicians who went through the Bob Wills organization over the years—the guitar players and fiddle players especially. I tried to steal all the hot licks I could from all of those good musicians. In fact, I still do "Bubbles In My Beer" and "Stay All Night, Stay a Little Longer," and I'm planning on doing some more of his tunes. I'm not planning to do a whole album of them: I'll just put one in every now and then, and I'd like to continue doing that forever. There are enough Bob Wills songs that every year I could come out with one or two that the young people haven't heard.

There are still a lot of old guys doing his tunes: they're just too old to change, they've been doing it so long. In fact, there are a lot of places in Texas where Western Swing is still the main kind of music. There are two or three big ballrooms in Dallas that still stick to Western Swing. Dewey Groom's Longhorn Club in Dallas has had the same group of musicians for about 25 years. Then there's the new groups—especially Asleep at the Wheel. Those guys do the Bob Wills songs *exactly.* It's like going back in time thirty years to hear their stuff. I think the young people here in Austin know about him. They know about him through their parents—*everybody* has heard a Bob Wills record if they've lived in Texas any length of time at all—but if you were to ask them, "name me five Bob Wills songs," they probably couldn't do it. But once they hear one on the bandstand, they'll say, "Oh yeah, I know *that* one. I heard my daddy playin' that."

Everyone I knew when I was a kid was a Bob Wills fan. I didn't know anybody who didn't like Bob Wills' music. With his fans, there was a communication. You really had to be there to see how he communicated, and the magnetism, how those people *love* him. And *he* loves *them,* too.

Western Swing really started to get popular in the late 1930s, maybe even the mid-1930s. Bob went into the Army at the peak of his career—he was drafted—and when he came back from the Army, I guess he never really did regain the popularity that he had before he went in. He kind of lost the momentum. He spent too much time in there, and I don't think he liked it too well.

He very rarely worked anyplace but Texas, Oklahoma, and California. He stayed within those few states and didn't try to cover too much territory,

which I think was a good idea. Of course, it kept him from being known in some of the other fields of music. If he'd done national tours and international tours—all the *right* things—then a lot of other people would have been aware of how good he was, but he's known well enough in the country Western Swing area as being a bandleader's bandleader that it doesn't matter if the rest of the people knew about him or not. He was still that great. I don't know how many national hits or international hits or awards he had, but I'm sure it would surprise everyone to know how much his records are selling even today.

I think that whether modern country artists know about Bob Wills or not depends on where they're from. If they're from Texas, it would be impossible for them not to be slightly familiar with Bob Wills. If they came from other parts of the country, it's quite possible that they've never heard of him in all their lives. I would think probably, more country artists don't know about him than do. There's a whole group of people in the country music business that have never listened to a Bob Wills record. Anywhere east of here, his records were never really promoted because they were into a different kind of music altogether in Nashville. It was more bluegrass in Nashville: Rather than coming from jazz bands or blues bands, the musicians came from bluegrass bands.

When Bob went to the Grand Ole Opry for the first time, first of all they didn't want him to use his drums, so he refused to appear. They finally conceded that he could use his drums. Then he went out on the stage, and he had his cigar in his mouth. So then they wanted him to not smoke his cigar on the stage. And he refused again. Consequently, that was the first and only time Bob Wills ever played the Grand Ole Opry, so far as I know. He had to have his drums and his cigar.

I've never heard of Bob Wills refusing help to anyone. I don't think he ever took over the responsibility of managing one talent, taking them by the arm and into the studio, because he was into something else altogether and he really didn't have time for that. When you have an eight or ten or twelve-piece group, it means that you have that many families of three or four or five people each, and you're responsible for their livelihood. Plus there's all the people *they're* taking care of, so one bandleader could come up with a whole group of people to support. If he worked, they ate. If he didn't work, they didn't eat.

"...Bob wasn't what people would call a good businessman. He had more important things to think about, and consequently he's sick and broke today. Still, I think he would rather have it this way..."

As a businessman, I guess he would rate somewhere next to me. He had several managers and agents and bookers, the normal number of thieves who hang around. Bob was too good-hearted to ever accumulate anything: There was always someone there who needed the money at the moment. He wasn't what people would call a good businessman. He had more important things to think about, and consequently he's sick and broke today. Still, I think he would rather have it this way. ■

HOT TIMES IN THE PROMO BUSINESS

BY JOHN PUGH

It has been written that a promoter is a person who can hail a cab and then pay for the ride by convincing the cabbie what a privilege it was to have him as a passenger. In all probability, of course, this would be an impossible trick. But it would be a rare impossibility, for there is little else a promoter cannot or will not do in his arcane profession that calls for him to be equal parts Sigmund Freud, Arnold Rothstein, Dale Carnegie and Henry Kissinger. Verily, many are called but few can cut it. Keith Fowler of Winston-Salem, N.C., is one such person.

Even the most dedicated country music fans have no knowledge of Fowler. They have never heard of him. They have never seen him. They have never read about him. All they have done is make him a very rich man, for Keith Fowler is a major, independent, successful country music promoter. In the course of a year Keith will run around a hundred country music shows in some thirty to forty towns throughout the South and Southwest. He will buy approximately $1,000,000 worth of talent and risk an even greater amount of his own money in preparing for the shows. It is a high-risk game with potential great rewards, but even greater perils. No more than a dozen other men scattered across the country attempt it in tho same way Fowler does. It is no game for those of faint heart, small expertise or thin bankroll. Those that play it belong on the list of protected species.

Today, Keith is going to try something a little unusual, two

PHOTO: ALLAN WHITMAN

shows in two different towns on the same day; a matinee in Greensboro, N.C., then fly the whole shebang on down to Fayetteville (about 80 miles) for the evening show. Such a practice, while seemingly not that complicated, proved disastrous for one promoter. He had 100 people at his matinee, 1,000 for the evening performance, and lost enough to pay Nixon's back taxes. Keith's package on this show includes Charlie Rich, Johnny Paycheck and Barbara Fairchild. All top acts, to be sure, but the number (translate "paucity") of acts tells quite a bit about the changing nature of his business.

Up until about 1970 a promoter got six, eight. hell, maybe even ten acts together for a show and presented a veritable musical smorgasbord for his audience; something for everyone, from Jerry Lee Lewis to Stonewall Jackson. A few years ago, however, artists started increasing their asking prices to what almost all promoters see as astronomical levels, leaving the promoter with two choices: either raise his ticket prices or cut down on the number of acts. Promoters did both. But there is one catch in raising ticket prices, and that is that they can only go so high before a diminishing returns effect sets in. (The biggest drawback in promoting is that while all a promoter's expenses are constantly increasing, his product—tickets—must remain at a fixed price if he is still to attract customers.) So now the number of acts have been cut to a bare minimum. To compensate, promoters must fight to get one of the handful of superstars that will insure a show's success. The newest of those superstars is Charlie Rich. "He's actually more middle of the road, but he's still the biggest kick country music's had in years," said Fowler.

Fowler remains calm and composed . . . Fairchild's failure to show up, seemingly a catastrophe, is met with a shrug . . .

The emergence of Rich emphasizes another fact of life in the promotion business. A good promoter, a *smart* promoter, can and will do more than just book an artist on a show. He will work with the artist and build him in his towns, judging when and how to expose him even to the point of deciding his spot on the show and how much time to allot him. A promoter judges acts the way a market analyst judges stocks, trying to ascertain which ones are coming on strong, which will need more time to develop and which are mere flashes in the pan. It is this early spotting of winners that gives a promoter his greatest satisfaction. Fowler was working Rich long before he had "Behind Closed Doors." The people remember it, and so does Rich.

Hence, today's show will be a financial success. A promoter knows seven-to-ten days after his advance tickets have gone on sale if he's got a winner. The turnout today is even more surprising considering the Sunday ban on gasoline sales, which has wreaked havoc on many a Sunday show.

But the gas shortage not only fails to hold down Fowler's crowd: Someone reports to him that there will be a Home Show across the street and a children's theatre performance in the same building, both starting at the same time. And he wonders, "Where are they going to put all the cars?" and in doing so illustrates the *bete noire* of all promoters: the pre-show chaos and confusion that all promoters must suffer through. A promoter can have a sell-out, he can have the most cooperative acts imaginable, he can have a perfect show put together, but still he can almost dread going to the auditorium because he knows

PHOTO: ALLAN WHITMAN

he will be made to endure at least an hour, maybe more, of scenes like this:

"Keith, Paycheck's boys say they've never worked with these kinds of mikes before. Can you show them what to do?"

"Keith, where's the dressing room?"

"Keith, we need some backstage passes."

"Keith, we're going to need more mikes."

"Keith, we've sold some seats which have obstructed views."

"Keith, you have a phone call."

"Keith, can you come here and show me what to do?"

It starts the moment he walks in the door. No matter that there are sound men, building personnel, stage hands, etc., who could all handle these details. It is Keith Fowler's show and therefore everyone insists that Keith Fowler handle his problem, however trivial. A promoter, despite all his playing for big stakes, despite all his weekly dealing in tens of thousands of dollars, despite all his overtones of rugged individualism and personifying the ultimate free enterpriser, despite all this, a promoter is in many ways as much a detail man as any cost control accountant. On this particular show there is one more detail to worry over. It is getting near showtime and no one has heard a word from Barbara Fairchild.

Most country music promoters exhibit certain characteristics in fitting with their lone-wolf natures. Among them are an almost paranoid close-mouthedness (no promoter wants his failures publicized, but most of them don't even want anything written about their successes), chronic crepe-hanging (some promoters have been running "my last #$%¢& show" every week for the last five years), and a stoic imperturbability.

He will ponder such matters as weather, gas supplies, the state of the economy and the headliner's current marital difficulties . . .

Imperturbable Fowler remains calm and composed throughout his three-hour ordeal. Fairchild's failure to show up, seemingly a catastrophe, is met with a simple shrug and an order to tell Paycheck to fill out the first half. The fans in the obstructed seats have the option of either moving to seats behind the stage or else (ho hum) getting their money back. And even Rich's not having arrived at 12:30 for a 1 p.m. show is answered by, "He doesn't go on till three."

The show itself is a rousing success, even by a promoter's standards. For a promoter wants to do more than put on a show, sell tickets and count his money. Way down deep, down past all the talk about grosses and draws and percentages and all the other facts and figures, underneath all the cold, hard business acumen lies an unquenchable Santa Claus complex. The supreme goal of every promoter is to give the people an experience they'll never forget; to turn them into a frenzied, screaming, howling, orgiastic mob building towards a collective climax that will blow the roof off. When that happens, and only if that happens, does a promoter permit himself to say he had a good show.

It happens. The way the fans react to Rich makes Fowler think he's back in the rock and roll days when he first started promoting. They storm the backstage area (to no avail): They stand outside and scream Rich's name incessantly: They form a wedge and block his

car upon his exit. Keith Fowler looks upon all this mayhem and he knows he has accomplished his purpose past his wildest dreams, and for the first time all day he permits himself a smile.

It wasn't always this way for Keith Fowler. He started out promoting rock and roll acts back in the late '50's, getting acts like Bo Diddley to play a small town armory somewhere for a few bucks. Several years later rock and roll died out and Fowler discovered such things as how you could *buy* a country act outright, whereas you had to *bid* on a rock act; that you didn't have to put up a deposit on a country act; that the Nashville agents were straighter, friendlier, more helpful, more appreciative—even more thrifty, brave, clean and reverent than rock agents—and that he didn't like the way a rock act might abruptly cancel out on a six show tour, costing him $36,000 and making him wait six months to get his deposit back. So it has been country music for the last 13 years, and you won't find a man more in love with country music, more appreciative of what it has done for him, or more awed by its leaps-and-bounds growth than Keith Fowler.

On to Fayetteville. Paycheck and crew have left early in their bus, Rich's entourage is flying over in his private plane, and Fowler and three others fly over in a little four-seater. Throughout the flight Fowler talks of how he sure would like a drink when he lands. One wonders if the booze is to be a reward for a job well done in Greensboro or to brace himself for another round of "Keith, Keith, Keith" in Fayetteville. Probably a little of both.

On arriving in Fayetteville, Fowler speeds to the auditorium to find —*voila*—no Paycheck. "I looked down from the plane and I thought I saw a bus by the side of the road," says the pilot with just enough conviction so that you can't be entirely sure he isn't joking. "Well, we're not doing bad," replies Fowler. "We lost one completely, and we got one run off in a ditch. That's two out of three." It is decided to run out for a quick bite before the second push starts.

Back at the auditorium Fowler finds that—*voila*—not only has Paycheck arrived, but so has Fairchild. Seems she worked in Houston last night, caught a plane after the show, finally got to Greensboro at 4 a.m. and left a wake-up call that was lost in the shuffle of the motel shift change. But no matter. She is here now, and that is what counts.

. . . he is in the most perilous business of them all—trying to out-guess the public.

Fayetteville is not as bad as Greensboro. There is still the pre-show demand for Fowler's services and Fowler's alone, but it is not nearly as relentless as before. It is also not as good. The size of the crowd is fine, but nothing to write home about. Their reaction is enough to warm any promoter's heart, but it is far from the earlier pandemonium. Mostly, the whole affair is just on a smaller scale. The goods, the bads and the in-betweens of Fayetteville are just lesser goods and bads and in-betweens than in Greensboro. Still and all, it is enough to bring the day's second smile to Fowler's visage.

The day's take brings the third smile: 8,700 people in Greensboro, 5,400 in Fayetteville, and at ticket prices of $6-$5-$4 one can calculate that Fowler grossed in the neighborhood of $70,000. Not a bad day's work at all. Tomorrow he will be back at his deck trying to insure more days just like this one: trying to decide whether it would be a good idea to put Johnny Rodriguez with Merle Haggard and then who would be a good girl singer to go with that combination if he did; mulling over a slow advance in Mobile, and then wondering whether the advance in Memphis might justify two shows; being informed that the Louisville Civic Center is booked solid for the next three months, and then calling Nashville and finding out that so-and-so has just gone up another $1,000 on his price. He will have to ponder such other matters as weather, gasoline supplies, the state of the economy, and a headliner's current marital difficulties, and he will always have the knowledge that he is in the most perilous business of them all—trying to out-guess the public. In that particular game it doesn't take too many wrong guesses to spoil the fruits of a few right ones. But Keith Fowler wouldn't have it any other way. ■

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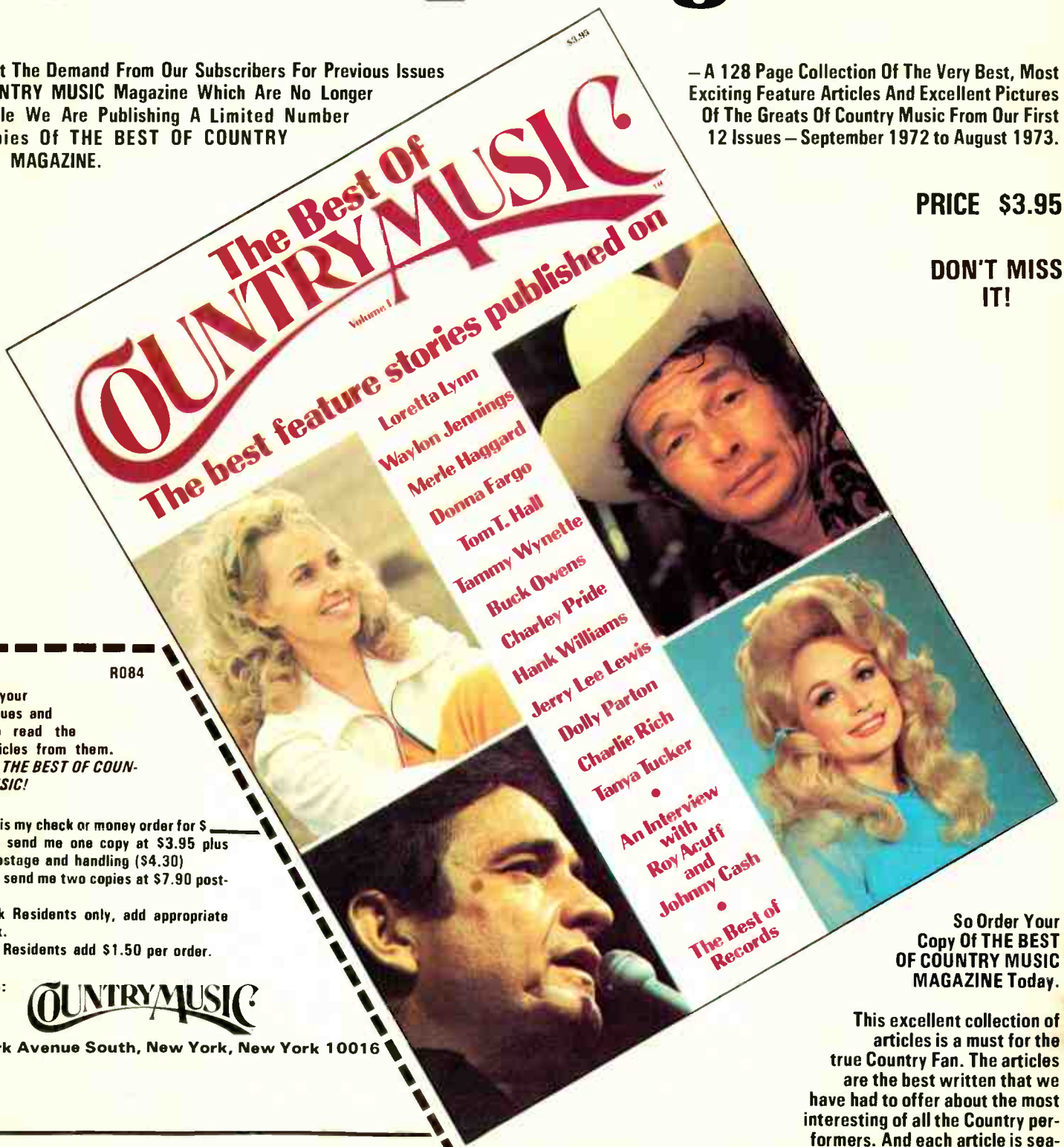

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Records

Dottie West . . . Cal Smith . . . George Morgan . . .

Dottie West
House of Love
RCA APL1-0543 (record)
APS1-0543 (8-track tape)

I think one of the reasons I like Dottie West so much, both in person and on record, is that the Coke commercial she wrote, sang, and turned into a hit ("Country Sunshine") is just the plain truth. Dottie West is really a country girl who likes the simple things and will always be perplexed by the faster, more complicated ways of life. Maybe we all are, and maybe that's why country music, and gals like Dottie West, are perennial favorites.

Her l- album, *House of Love*, ced by Billy Davis, s be listened to because songs on it reflect the worries, bewilderments and joys we all feel at one time or another. The style of the album is Dottie's style: Simple, straightforward music, no showing off, no gimmicks.

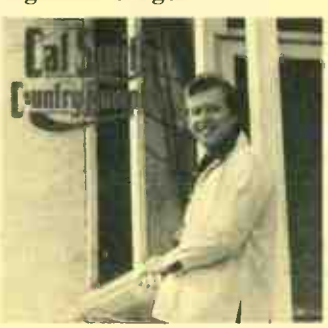
The title song, Kenny O'Dell's "House of Love," paints a pretty picture of the good life we all desire. Fortunately, Dottie seems to have found it with Byron, her husband and drummer. "Lay Back Lover" is the fervent plea of one lover to another to "lay back and enjoy it, let it happen." "Last Time I Saw Him" tells the story of a girl who can't believe her boyfriend won't be back. Dottie makes it work, but I wish she'd done Dolly Parton's "Down From Dover," which I think is a better song with the same theme.

Willie Nelson's "I Still Can't Believe You're Gone" is the best cut on the album, in my opinion. It's a good album altogether, a fine follow-up to *Country Sunshine*.

MARSHALL FALLWELL

Cal Smith
Country Bumpkin
MCA-424 (record)
MCAT-424 (8-track tape)

Dear Cal Smith,
You don't know me but I've been one of your fans for a long time, and when "Country Bumpkin" topped the charts I was really looking forward to the album. Well, now I have it and it ain't exactly what I was expecting. It's good all right but there just ain't enough of Cal Smith on it. I mean, you sing *great*, real soulful and real relaxed —but there's lots of cats in Nashville who sing great. The thing I always liked about your singles was the feeling of a real guy behind the mike singing . . . a guy with likes, dislikes, opinions and tastes that were pure-dee his own. So what I was expecting was a record full of songs that reflected the personality that's in your voice. All I got was just a hint in the song "Country Bumpkin," another glance in Bill Anderson's "Between Lust And Watching TV," (I hope he keeps giving you those good songs he's too clean-cut to sing) and a suggestion from "Jesus Is A Good Boy" and "I Just Came Home To Count The Memories." Really super stuff. So it makes me sad that the rest of the record is just covering chart songs.



Now I don't mean to imply you don't sing them great, but what can you see of Cal Smith in a cover of "Behind Closed Doors," or Tom T's "I Love," or Bob McDill's "Amanda"—or covering your fellow MCA artists' Conway and Loretta, with "Love Is The Foundation," "They Don't Make 'Em Like My Buddy," or "You've Never Been This Far Before?" We get the craft and the taste and the skill that you have—but none of the soul.

I hate to suggest it but this record seems to be one of those Nashville Specials run out to follow up a hit single; to get some *product* on the racks. Now it's a good product, but it's only part Cal Smith, so I'm only part happy with it. I'm looking forward to your next record. Hope it's a lot more Cal Smith and a lot less Bradley's Barn. If it is, you gonna eat 'em up, cowboy. Until then I remain, your fan,

DAVE HICKEY

George Morgan
Red Rose From The Blue Side Of Town/Somewhere Around Midnight
MCA Records 422 (record)
MCAT-222 (8-track tape)

A smooth one, is George Morgan; a simple direct approach with just a touch of falsetto, part yodel, to set him aside, although this trademark gets inserted sparingly.

When he sings Hank Snow and Betty Jean Robinson's "Red Rose From The Blue Side Of Town" he fits comfortably in the broad, older tradition of the genre, unrequited love from the wrong side of the tracks for the lady in the mansion on the hill, ah yes! Illicit love unspoken and barely hinted. However, the other title song of the album, "Somewhere Around

Midnight," is the newer, freer approach to country music lyrics—the motel room is booked, the lies uttered, and everyone gets down to it . . . but, of course, the old morality is triumphant in the end. "Passion turned to love . . . somewhere around midnight," croons George, and we all breath a sigh of relief.

George straddles these two approaches throughout the album—much unrequited misery is contained therein. Even on "Mr. Ting A Ling (Steel Guitar Man)" is the mournful side of life considered. "My street's a dead end, no neighbors, no friends," sings George when singing about finding his new love. One cut, "I'll Always Be Blue," written by George and based on the traditional "Over The Waves" melody, probably sums up the general mood of the album.

The steel guitar player on the album is Little Roy Wiggins, and George features him on every cut. Like the singer, Mr. Wiggins is also a smooth one.

IAN DOVE

Johnny Gimble
Fiddlin' Around
Capitol ST-11301 (record)
(8-track tape not available)

Merle Haggard and Johnny Gimble, the latter one of country music's finest fiddlers, have been making sweet music together for some time. It is only natural that Hag himself would have produced Johnny's latest album on Capitol, *Fiddlin' Around.* Haggard also wrote the liner notes for the album. In them he states: "This lp is certain to become a collector's item." I agree with him.

Fiddlin' Around was cut in Nashville late one evening in July of last year. Hag's musicians were used (it was after a Haggard recording session), and in most cases, there was only one take on each song. "The best things I do on fiddle or anything else just happen all of a sudden," Johnny told me. "People say, 'Hey, do that thing you did last night,' and I don't know what they're talking about. I don't want to do the same thing again."

The songs on this album are either traditional, like "Beaumont Rag," standards like "Thanks, Bob" (a medley of Bob Wills' tunes), or Gimble's own compositions. "These are just things that friends of mine have always wanted me to do. We had a lot of fun. Hag has been playing fiddle for a while, so he was guest fiddler on a couple of the tunes."

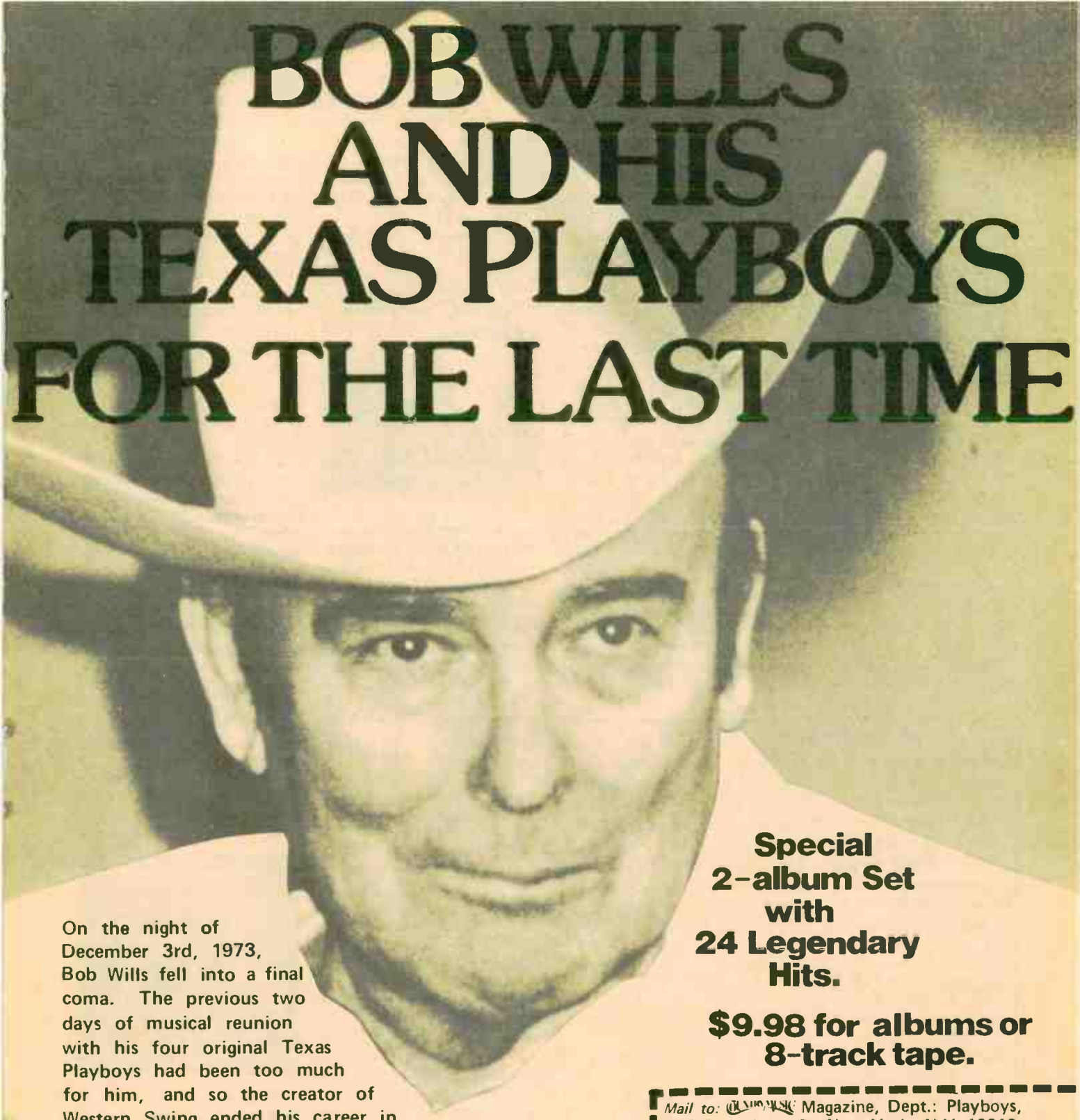
I can't pick a favorite on this album because everything is good. Johnny Gimble singing harmony with his own fiddle line on a couple of tunes just knocks me out, though. This album is as good as seeing Johnny play live. He has this little smile on his face like he's about to play something for you that you haven't heard before. *Fiddlin' Around* is like that.

MARSHALL FALLWELL

Billy "Crash" Craddock
Rub It In
ABC ABCX-817 (record)
GRT 8022-817 (8-track tape)

I don't know Billy "Crash" Craddock, but with his past hits—"Knock Three Times," "Dream Lover," "Sweet Magnolia Blossom"—and his current album on ABC, "Rub It In," I sure would like to get to know him. I think we'd

BOB WILLS AND HIS TEXAS PLAYBOYS FOR THE LAST TIME



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have a lot in common. He likes country; I like country. He likes rock 'n' roll; so do I.

Now, hold it, country fans. If you stop to think about it, a great many recent country hits have been versions of old rock tunes. Everywhere you look now, you hear echoes of the fifties. "Crash" Craddock isn't by himself out on the end of that limb. "Rub It In," the album, is a sweet mixture of fine rockabilly and straight country. The ability to weave both styles together successfully shows how versatile "Crash" and his producer, Ron Chancey, are, and how little notice they take of labels like "country" and "rock." "A good song is just a good song," they seem to be saying.

My pick for the lp's best cut is "Ruby Baby," the old Lieber/Stoller song from the days when hair-cuts were crew and socks were bobby, although the title song is mighty strong. "Crash" is at his best when he croons sexy, slinky songs like "Walk Your Kisses" and "Ruby Baby." Which is not to say he can't sing a ballad, because he can. "Home Is Such A Lonely Place To Go," by Jerry Mundy and D. Morris, is a perfect example of that.

As usual, the production is excellent and the musicianship superb. It is to "Crash's" and Ron Chancey's credit that they give new pickers exposure—Lisa Silver's fiddling is right up there on a par with Buddy Spicher's. This album gets an A+.

MARSHALL FALLWELL

Lester "Roadhog" Moran and his Cadillac Cowboys
Alive At The Johnny Mack Brown High School
Mercury SRM 1-708 (record)
MC8-1708 (8-track tape)

Now if there was ever any doubt that in the music business it ain't how good you are but who you know, this group called Lester "Roadhog" Moran and his Cadillac Cowboys is all the proof you need. As you probably remember, they been hanging around with the Statler Brothers lately, and probably from lack of anything else to do, or maybe a little payola—Lester and the Cowboys appeared on the Statler Brothers "Country Music: Then And Now" album. And they were *terrible*.

If I didn't know how serious the Statlers were, I'd say this album was some kind of uptown put-down—or downtown send-up. Even if it isn't, this record is only good for laughs. It's kinda pitiful but when you consider what a sycophant this Moran person is—I don't mind a bit laughing at him for forty-five minutes.

DAVE HICKEY

David Allan Coe
The Mysterious Rhinestone Cowboy
Columbia KC 32942

David Allan Coe is moving along. This, his third album and his best, is not centered on his background of 20 years in penal institutions, from reform school to penitentiary. His very first album, a couple of years ago, was all prison, with such tracks as "Penitentiary Blues," "Oh Warden," "Death Row" and "Cell Number 33," evidence of what David Allan was working out of his system and what Shelby Singleton thought was down-home commercial appeal. On this new album, "River" and "The 33rd of August" make reference to life behind bars whereas "Atlanta Song" is all about life *in* bars.

Despite the rhinestone cowboy's success in songwriting—he composed "Would You Lay With Me In A Field Of Stone" for Tanya Tucker—only six of his own songs are included on this album.

"The 33rd of August," written by Mickey Newbury, to whom Coe dedicates the album, is a long one and the strangest on the album, establishing a weird meditative mood as a steel guitar whines and underlines Coe's singing in a most uncountry manner. It sounds a total break-a-way from the formats Coe has previously been applying and is light years away from the traditional

"Old Grey Goose" that Coe includes but doesn't much change, and even the clever but conventional "A Sad Country Song."

The Mysterious Rhinestone Cowboy shows a consolidation of Coe's talent with more than a hint of new direction—down non-country roads.

IAN DOVE

Doc & Merle Watson
Two Days In November
Poppy PP-LA210-G (record)
PP-EA212-G (8-track tape)

Doc Watson is an original. He's a star, but you get the

DON GIBSON'S FAVORITES

Don Gibson is what's called an "entertainer's entertainer," and he's proud of it. He was especially flattered when Loretta Lynn told him that she has every one of his records. Don didn't start collecting his own records until after he was married, but he does know which are his personal favorites: *Girls, Guitars and Gibson, Rings, I Wrote A Song, Spanish Guitars* and *Sweet Dreams* on RCA, and *Snap Your Fingers,* his current album on the Hickory label. Here is Don's list of his favorite other albums:

Ray Charles	Ray Charles In Person	*(unavailable)*
Django Reinhardt	Django 1935-1939	*(unavailable)*
Mantovani	To Losers Everywhere, U.S.A.	*London X-598*
The Beatles	Abbey Road	*Apple SO-383*
Loretta Lynn	Here I Am Again	*Decca 75381*
Barbara Fairchild	Teddy Bear Song	*Columbia KC 31720*
Tammy Wynette	Tammy Wynette's Greatest Hits	*Epic BN 26392*
Dolly Parton	The Best of Dolly Parton	*RCA LSP 4449*
Merle Haggard	The Best of Merle Haggard	*Capitol SKAO 2951*
Lefty Frizzell	The Legendary Lefty Frizzell	*ABC 799*
George Jones	George Jones' Greatest Hits	*Musicor MS 3116*

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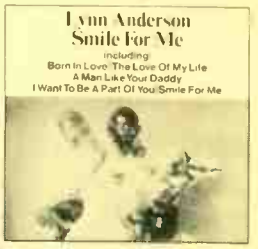

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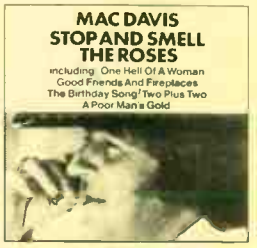

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☐ CS 9827 Johnny Cash at San Quentin
☐ CS 9639 Johnny Cash at Folsom Prison
☐ CS 9478 Johnny Cash's Greatest Hits, Vol. I

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☐ C 30106 For The Good Times
☐ GP 28 The World of Ray Price
☐ CS 9470 Ray Price's Gr. Hits, Vol. 2
☐ CS 8866 Ray Price's Greatest Hits

BOOTS RANDOLPH
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☐ ZG 30963 The World of Boots Randolph

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☐ KE 31933 The Best of Charlie Rich

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☐ G 30881 World of Marty Robbins
☐ C 30571 Marty Robbins' Gr. Hits, Vol. III

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☐ C 32268 Dueling Banjos

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☐ CS 8737 Greatest Hits

CONNIE SMITH
☐ KC 32581 That's The Way Love Goes
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Doug Kershaw . . .

impression that he can't be bothered with that: it might interfere with his music and his quiet life in Deep Gap, N.C. *Two Days In November* is a slice of that musical life: warm, relaxed and humorous. Accompanied by his son, Merle, on guitar, and a band that includes Jim Colvard, guitar; Joe Allen, bass; Jim Isbel, drums; and Chuck Cochran, piano, Doc picks and sings his way through a variety of traditional, bluegrass and country tunes that have one thing in common: Doc's obvious affection for them all.

Traditional music is represented by a lively version of "Fishin' Blues," featuring fine unison harp and guitar playing. There's also new arrangements of "Poor Boy Blues" and "Lonesome Moan" that give Doc and Merle a chance to show off a bit on their guitars. These are just warm-ups compared to the virtuoso picking on the instrumentals: a medley of "Little Beggar Man" and "Old Joe Clark," which father and son play in perfect unison, and "Doc's Rag." "The Train That Carried My Girl From Town" is Doc's entry in the fastest-bluegrass-guitar-solo sweepstakes, while "Kinfolks In Carolina" pays tribute to Merle Travis, Merle Watson's namesake and a long-time favorite of Doc's. Superb versions of "Snowbird" and "Kaw Liga," round out an album that should be a delight to country music lovers of all persuasions.

MARK VON LEHMDEN

Doug Kershaw
Mama Kershaw's Boy
Warner Brothers BS 2793 (record)
M8-2793 (8-track tape)

"Mama Kershaw's Boy" is the Cajun fiddler's seventh album for Warner Brothers. It enjoys the same high points—but suffers the same flaws—as its predecessors. It is an uneven attempt to preserve a musical heritage that might otherwise become extinct by endeavoring to make it appeal to a mass au-

dience. While Kershaw sings, he is not primarily a vocalist—and while his biggest hit, "Louisiana Man" has had little trouble selling millions of records in over 900 different versions, many of his other tunes sound too much alike to give Kershaw the distinction of being ranked among country's more inventive songwriters.

The live Kershaw is one bundle of excitement, however. But somehow, this has never been successfully translated onto a disc. This album also severely limits Kershaw the artist, allowing him only one instrumental track, confining his virtuoso musicianship to the fiddle. That's a pity, 'cause he's an accordian-playin' genius.

All we're trying to say here is: 'C'mon Doug, give us a taste of the real *you,* playing real down-home Cajun music, so people can get close to that culture instead of having to listen to watered-down Cajun-pop. We want the real thing. Dish it out next time, Doug.

ROBERT ADELS

Country Music Magazine
Best Bets for August in Records and Tapes

Why search high and low—or have to wait for—the latest releases to reach your record shop. Why waste gas, time, and money? We've rounded up this month's cream of the crop of latest releases or those about to be released and laid them out in a row. You pick 'em! We'll ship 'em! Can you think of an easier way to shop. We can't.

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Bob Wills and His Texas Playboys

Bob Wills and His Texas Playboys

The Bob Wills Anthology
Columbia KG-32416
(no tape available)

For the Last Time
United Artists UA-LA216-J2
(no tape available)

From a distance, the whole concept would look quite unfeasible: the seemingly incongruous mixture of old-line country, black blues, Tin Pan Alley pop, Louisiana jazz, and Mexican mariachi that came to be known as western swing is nothing short of being one of the most refreshing, most popular and most significant phenomena in the annals of American music. Of the many who worked their alchemy toward the creation of western swing, none was more influential or possessed of more musical courage than James Robert Wills, the smiling fiddler from Turkey, Texas.

Bob Wills' recording career spans almost forty-two years and almost six hundred records, and while no two albums could ever attempt to convey the breadth and depth of such a career, *The Bob Wills Anthology* and *For the Last Time* have done remarkably well insofar as capturing its essence is concerned. The albums, both two-record sets, amount to a forty-eight-song, two-and-a-half-hour feast of Willsian *joy* (which, after all is said and done, remains the key element in Wills' music).

Following a two-year stint with the Light Crust Doughboys, Wills formed his original Playboy group late in 1933. Within another two years, Bob Wills and His Texas Playboys had made their recording debut on the Brunswick label, a soon-to-be subsidiary of Columbia Records.

The epitome of Bob Wills' musical heyday, and therefore of western swing in general, *The Bob Wills Anthology* contains enough exquisite licks, musical sucker punches, sprightly lyrics (embellished throughout by Wills' familiar, high-pitched *ahh-ha*), and all-around effervescence to keep the most casual Wills fan in grins and stomps for seasons to come. Here all those seemingly incongruous ingredients can be heard in harmonious merger. Never, not for a single bar, does the crazy mixture that is western swing seem affected in Wills' work; whether it's the jivey nonsense of "That's What I Like 'Bout the South" or a surprising arrangement of Jimmie Rodgers' "Blue Yodel #1," it's almost impossible to escape the freewheeling joy that keeps this music glued together.

It was there, that freewheeling joy, in the Texas Playboys' first Brunswick session that resulted in "Mexicali Rose" and a trio of other cuts included on this album, and it was still there in "Brain Cloudy Blues," the 1946 song with which *The Bob Wills Anthology* concludes.

Not surprisingly, it was *still* there in December of 1973 when Bob Wills and His Texas Playboys got together in Dallas to record *For the Last Time.* This album, Bob Wills and His Texas Playboys' final musical reunion, was brought to fruition thanks to producer Tommy Allsup. While visiting in Nashville early last year, Wills had expressed an interest in returning to the studio, and Allsup, who had worked with Wills on some recordings done for Liberty in the Sixties, lost no time in going to work on the details. If he had, *For the Last Time* might never have seen the light of day, for Wills suffered a severe stroke on the night before the final session and his doctors say he cannot possibly regain consciousness. On the sessions in which Wills performed, however, it's more than obvious that his musical vision was as clear on that December day last year as it was thirty-eight years before.

Many of those who had played with Wills on the historic cuts included in *The Bob Wills Anthology* showed up almost four decades later for this last Texas Playboys album. Vocalist Tommy Duncan, who passed away in 1968, is one sad no-show, but the vocal duties are more than aptly handled by such old hands as Leon McAuliffe and Leon Rausch, not to mention some newcomer to the Playboys' roster by the name of Merle Haggard. The Hag, who has paid tribute to Bob Wills in his *A Tribute to the Best Damn Fiddle Player in the World* album and who is presently the proud owner of Wills' fiddle, can be heard having the time of his life singing *"We're the Texas Playboys from the Lone Star State"* on "Playboy Theme." But although Merle plays fiddle in the Playboy ensemble in addition to singing on three selections, the standout fiddler here is definitely Johnny Gimble, a Texas Playboy since 1949 who can also be enjoyed on Willie Nelson's two latest albums and his own recent *Fiddlin' Around.* As far as Leon McAuliffe's singing is concerned (or Al Stricklin's piano playing or Smokey Dacus' drumming, for that matter), just compare the 1973 version of "That's What I Like 'Bout the South" with their original 1938 version on the Columbia *Anthology.* These guys don't get old, they get better.

These albums are more than just good music. They're Bob Wills and His Texas Playboys, the beginning and the end. Wills and the Playboys may have had some strange ideas about country music, but they sure as hell proved that those ideas worked. An unqualified *ahh-ha!*

NICK TOSCHES

Other Recent Album Releases

Loretta Lynn	Love Is The Foundation	*MCA 355*
Marty Robbins	Have I Told You Lately	*Columbia C-32586*
Bob Luman	Still Loving You	*Hickory 4508*
Johnny Carver	Double Exposure	*ABC ABCX 812*
Olivia Newton-John	If You Love Me Let Me Know	*MCA 411*
Earl Scruggs Revue	Rockin' 'Cross The Country	*Columbia KC 32943*
Danny Davis' Nashville Brass	Bluegrass Country	*RCA APL1-0565*
David Rogers	Hey There Girl	*Atlantic SD 7306*
Muleskinner	Bluegrass Jam	*Warner Bros. BS 2787*
Jim Ed Brown	It's That Time of Night	*RCA 1-0572*
Mel Street	Two Way Street	*GRT 8002*
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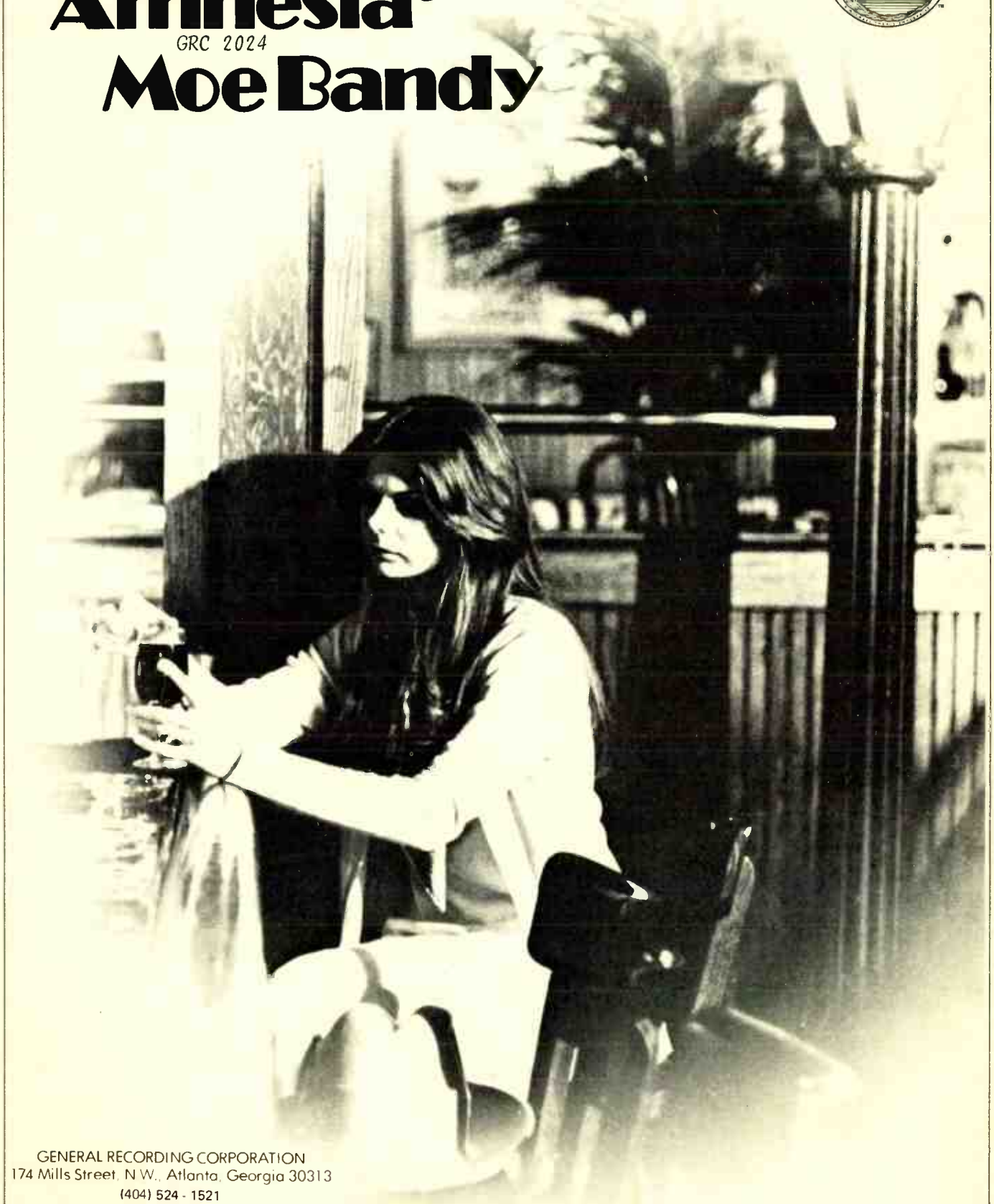

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Barbara Fairchild Moves Up From "Teddy Bear"

by John Gabree

Barbara Fairchild is high-stepping around the performing area, the microphone in her hand binding her like a mother's cord to the musicians playing on the low platform stage. Beaming a seemingly irrepressible smile, she sings the songs that made her famous. "My teddy loved me all the time," she sings, "And never changed his mind, back when I was Baby Doll," pressing the flesh with the audience as she moves, smiles rippling out in concentric circles from wherever her hand touches the crowd.

Barbara is the featured artist at the 1974 Eastern States Rodeo at the exposition hall in West Springfield, Mass., and the reason she is stepping so high is that she is being careful in case the cattle and horses haven't been.

"I love playing rodeos," she tells a visitor later at the Holiday Inn. "The people are so nice. They really appreciate what you are trying to do. And it's so much more relaxed than other kinds of dates, though I like those too." Barbara is worried about a cowboy who was kicked in the head by a steer just before she went on. "They said he's going to be all right, but he sure looked bad when they carried him out." He looked bad all right. He had been slammed to the ground and kicked squarely in the side of his head. Adrenalin bounced him up and to the side of the arena where, looking desperately over his shoulder to make sure he was safe, he crumpled into unconsciousness. Unlike a lot of rodeo crowds, the New Englanders were anything but bloodthirsty. In fact the accident seemed to depress them, and there was a noticeable easing of tension when Barbara came on.

"Could you tell how off we were?

PHOTO: BILL BARNES

PHOTO: JOHN GABREE

For 'Baby Doll' Reggie (Reggie Allie, Barbara's lead guitarist) started the band in the key for 'Teddy Bear,' which was too low and then did 'Teddy Bear' in 'Baby Doll's' key, which was too high." She is told that no one noticed. "Well, anyway, I just kept singing."

... She is young enough to be still full of youthful zest, experienced enough to have polished her act to a deep glow ...

Barbara Fairchild has just kept singing for a long time, nearly her whole life. She is, to use a promoter's phrase, "a great little performer," young enough to be still full of youthful zest, experienced enough to have polished her act to a deep glow. She started singing almost 20 years ago in Knobel, Arkansas, a town of about 340 people, "When she was just five years old," her father, now a St. Louis truck driver, has written, "she said, 'Daddy, I want to be a singer and someday be a star; will you help me?'" Her family became deeply dedicated to helping her reach her goal. "The first songs I ever did in public were in the annual talent show at the school in Knobel," she remembers. "I sang 'Easter Parade' and 'Here Comes Peter Cottontail,' It was seven years before I won that contest. I did 'A Little Bitty Tear Made Me Cry' and 'Fool No. 1.' I sang the same songs at a big show, 2000 people, that Fourth of July. That was the scaredest I've ever been, at least until the CMA awards. When I came off there was a soldier standing there in his uniform and he told me that was the most beautiful thing he'd ever heard, and I just busted up crying. He felt really bad and kept apologizing, the poor guy." And the other big event? Last year Barbara performed a "country girl medley" at the annual awards ceremony of the Country Music Association with Tanya Tucker, Barbara Mandrell and Jeannie Pruett. "Here were all the people I had respected and admired for years, sitting right in front of me. I could see 50 stars in spite of the spotlight. It was incredible."

Although she is only 23, it has been a long road to success for Barbara Fairchild. At thirteen she was doing a lot of radio and television work in and around St. Louis, where her family had recently moved. At fifteen she signed a record contract with Norman Weinstraw's Norman Records in St. Louis. "A Brand New Bed of Roses" was her first single. Two years later she and a friend Ruby Van Noy, journeyed to Nashville in an attempt to sell some songs they'd written. With the good luck of those meant for stardom, they showed their songs first to a publisher, song-writer and producer-manager named Jerry Crutchfield.

"They brought in a tape," Crutchfield remembers. "I liked the singing, and a couple of the tunes were

PHOTO: JOHN GABREE

"Barbara approaches each song individually and with respect."

promising but not very commercial. I asked them to go home and come back when they had five or six that were commercial. Instead they showed up a few weeks later with 16 or 17, some of them *very* good. I signed them up and Barbara recorded a couple of singles for Kapp Records. They made the charts, but not very high. Nothing much was happening.

"I had been pitching the songs to Billy Sherill at Columbia, and whenever I'd play him a demo he'd say, 'Who is that girl? I want to record her,' so we left Kapp and I took her over to Billy." Sherrill signed Barbara and became her producer, but the successful formula still evaded her. Sherrill is as good as there is in Nashville, but he has his ways of doing things and they just didn't suit Barbara. Her style is looser, less formal than most of Billy's acts, especially his biggest. Barbara says, "Tammy Wynette is wonderful, and it's a mistake for me to try to make records like hers." Eventually Crutchfield took over production from Sherrill. "Everything Barbara did made the charts, but there were no big hits," he remembers. "Billy produced 'A Girl Who'll Satisfy Her Man' and 'Find Out What's Happening' and I did 'Love's Old Song' and 'Loving You Is Sunshine': All of them came in in the 20s. But 'Teddy Bear' was the one that did it."

Barbara says: "I came in with 'Teddy Bear' just as we were recording a new album, and Jerry told me I didn't have it down well enough to do it. So I made him promise that it would be on the next album, and when we started working on it I said, 'We're going to do 'The Teddy Bear Song' like you promised.' It was written by a big old cop from St. Louis, Don Earl, and Nick Nixon, a great singer back home. I knew it was going to be a hit, but Jerry wasn't so sure. The first single from the album was 'A Sweeter Love,' but d.j.'s started playing "Teddy Bear,' so they released that next."

"The lp with 'Teddy Bear' came out in September, 1972." recalls Crutchfield, "and we asked the d.j.'s to let us know what to release next. Jim Clemmons of WPLO in Atlanta played the cut once and got so many requests that he called to let us know that 'Teddy Bear' was the one. The single came out in November. It went right to Number One and stayed on the charts for six months. We didn't have to release another single until the next Fall." Since "The Teddy Bear Song," there have been two more monster Fairchild hits, "Kid Stuff" which followed it to Number One and "Baby Doll"

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PHOTO: JOHN GABREE

"...she has not made children's songs her stock in trade..."

which got stuck somehow at Number Two. Her current single is "Standing In Your Line," the first she has written for herself, from an album of the same name released last month (*ed. note: July*). The lp has three other songs written by Barbara Fairchild, and her songs have been recorded by Loretta Lynn, Liz Anderson, and others.

"I guess if I had to be known as one or the other, singer or songwriter, I'd rather be a singer, though I love them both. They're very different but they have the same purpose, to entertain people," says Barbara who finds in any case that the strain of being on the road cuts into her writing time. Barbara is working 17 to 20 days a month, according to her manager, and counting traveling time, that doesn't leave room for much else. "She has worked almost constantly since 'Teddy Bear'," adds Crutchfield. "Most performers like to lay off a little when they get very big, but Barbara says the more she's busy the happier she is."

"The thing I find hardest about being on the road," Barbara confides, "is being away from my daughter." Tara Nevada—the name is a combination of the name of Scarlett O'Hara's mansion in "Gone With The Wind" and that of a well-known Western state—is 18 months old, and Barbara is so into being a parent that she even drags out the inevitable wallet picture. Earlier this year Barbara and her husband, St. Louis d.j. Mike Hanes, were divorced. "We still love each other very much and we've become really good friends," she says, following a pattern that has become quite common among divorced and separated couples. "We didn't belong together. It just didn't work out." Barbara misses Nashville whenever she leaves and she looks forward to getting home.

"I try to get to St. Louis as much as I can, too," she continues. "I still have a lot of friends there." Her father, Ulys, still works there and commutes back to Knobel on weekends to be with her mother, Opal. She also has a brother, a truck docker, and a sister who is a housewife living around St. Louis. "People ask my brother what he's doing working if he's related to me. People don't understand that you have to make it enormously big before you make a whole lot of money. Besides, he doesn't want to be supported by me. He likes what he's doing."

In West Springfield, Barbara's two loves—work and children—came together fruitfully. The second afternoon of her run, the promoters of the rodeo took her and the band for a visit to a nearby home for retarded children run by the Shriners. "We brought them all teddy bears and they were so happy. This afternoon one of the children's mothers came up to thank me for visiting. She said her son couldn't talk about anything but the fact that he'd met a new friend who'd kissed him and given him a teddy bear. He was a beautiful child. They were all beautiful children."

"The Teddy Bear Song" is the finale of Barbara's every set at

the rodeo. While the band riffs behind her, she hands out a dozen or so teddies to the children hugging the fence to look at her. "He's been trying at every show for three days," she said before the matinee on Sunday, pointing to a cute eight-year-old. "I'm going to try and see he finally gets one."

The free teddy bears notwithstanding, one of the surprises about Barbara Fairchild is the extent to which she has *not* made songs for and about children her stock-in-trade. Many performers in pop or country—it was a hit in both—would have followed "The Teddy Bear Song" with a

"...People don't understand that you have to make it enormously big before you make a whole lot of money..."

syrupy flood of cloying singles and albums with children as the motif. She has wisely chosen to follow up the interest in the tune with material that appeals to the same fans, but her songs are emphatically for and about adults, including the wonderful "Baby Doll," and her lp's avoid the child angle completely, except for those cases in which the "child" singles are included. In fact, one of the marvels of her records is that so many of the songs are new and interesting, it being the habit in a lot of Nashville studios to flesh out albums with copies of other people's hits. Equally interesting is that a clear majority of these tunes are written by Jerry Crutchfield, including, he modestly failed to note, all her hits but "Teddy Bear." Most of the others were written by Barbara herself, or come from her friends Ruby Van Noy, Don Earl and Nick Nixon. Barbara also sometimes tackles songs, like Don McLean's beautiful and pessimistic "Vincent," that are not normally associated with country music.

In the last three years she has developed a style of her own, turning a not especially distinctive voice into a uniquely expressive instrument. But she is the opposite of artists, from Tammy Wynette to Jerry Lee Lewis, whose mannerisms make every song sound the same. Barbara approaches each song individually and with respect. No one in country can give better readings of good songs than she can. These same qualities that make her so open and loving, her terrific warmth and energy, are the keys to her success as a performer.

A tribute to Barbara's wit comes from San Lovullo, producer of TV's "Hee Haw." "Just at the time 'The Teddy Bear Song' came out, Barbara was on our show," he reports. "During a break in the taping, while we were setting up new camera angles, she suddenly slipped a tooth out, rolled it around in her mouth, and put it back in. She must have a bridge or something, but we didn't know about it and it cracked us up in the control room. We asked if she'd do it again, and we taped her wiggling that tooth around. She also sang 'Teddy Bear' toothless and did 'Pfft You're Gone' the same way.

"I'm very high on this girl, Lovullo continues. "Her imagination falls in line with what we do. She often comes up with creative production ideas. And whatever the quality of the particular take, she sings her heart out. She is also an excellent Gospel singer. Barbara was a guest on the Gospel show I do up in Canada, and she was terrific. She has a way of really getting to you."

There are two sides to Barbara Fairchild: the professional who gives her all in front of hot television lights, and the pushover for kids. There aren't more than a few people in the business of performing who are as comfortable with themselves as she is. Try to think of another beautiful woman who would risk looking ridiculous in public, let alone on national TV. She is enormously attractive, yet she is the kind of person who can touch you when you meet without turning it into a come-on. She has put in years of dedicated hard work to get to

"...There aren't more than a few people in the business who are as comfortable with themselves as she is..."

the top of a tough business, yet she hasn't lost her capacity to have a good time. "I'm awfully proud of her," her mother once wrote on an album cover. Any mother would be. ■

The Country Hearth

by Ellis Nassour

"I stay so busy traveling that when I *am* home, with all the mail piled up, the time spent with the children, and the planning for the next record session, I hardly have time to look for and use recipes!" said Tammy Wynette. "I just go in the kitchen and *cook*."

"And it tastes like it, too " blurted George Jones, the man around the couple's 20-room, $500,000 home in Nashville's Franklin Road section.

"*Now,* honey!" admonished Tammy.

"I'm only kidding. I'm only kidding!" replied Jones, who promptly left the huge kitchen.

"For a family that loves country food, it's very hard for us to eat on the road," said Tammy. "George loves beans of all kinds, ham, and anything sweet. We have an electric range and oven on the showbus, and George'll just go in there and whip up a pot of beans and surprise us all. As soon as we finish a date, I call ahead to home to make sure Mama (Mrs. Foy Lee) has the fixings for a pot of beans ready and waiting. That's the first thing George wants.

"We are all vegetable nuts," continued Tammy. "A meal around here usually consists of beans, cornbread, salad, meat, and, another of George's favorites, home fries. Don't let me forget dessert! With vegetables and desserts, we could easily do without meat, I think."

Tammy and the couple's older daughters love to cook. The songstress uses recipes, some original and others from Mrs. Lee and fans, for her fancy desserts.

"Cooking," Tammy said, "like in a lot of families, is one way of our spending time together and talking. I could teach Tina (9 years old) to cook if George would keep her out of the recording studio. She already steals the stage from us. And now that she's made a record, Georgette (3 years old) has decided she wants to be a singer, too. I guess I'm going to have to face it, I have competition around here!"

Tammy Wynette

Here are Tammy's favorites:

HAM AND DUMPLINGS
(A favorite of George's)

2-3 lb. ham (canned okay)
2-1/3 cups chicken broth (canned okay)
1/3 cup raisins
1 onion
2 clove sticks
2 stalks celery (preferably, with leaves)
1/2 bay leaf
1 carrot
1/4 cup flour
1/3 cup butter (melted)
1 tsp. salt
Dash pepper

Prepare ham (if canned, do not remove gelatin but spread prepared mustard over it) for baking—40 minutes at 350° for use in this recipe. When ham is about ¾ done, remove from oven and allow to cool. Slice thickly and then dice into large squares. Place the onion sliced in half with a clove in each slice, celery, bay leaf, carrot, and raisins in pot with broth. Bring to a boil. Blend flour and butter into a paste and stir this into the simmering broth. Add diced ham, salt, pepper and dumplings*. Cook 10-15 minutes, medium heat, covered. Serves 5-6.

*Dumplings: 2 cups biscuit mix; ½ tsp. each dried or chopped mint, thyme, rosemary, tarragon, and chervil; ⅔ cup milk
Combine herbs and mix with milk and stir. Beat dough with a fork til stiff (about 15 times). Drop mixture by tablespoons into broth (do this on a few seconds, staggered interval basis).

TAMMY'S HOME FRIES

1-2 peeled potatoes, sliced
Salt and pepper, to taste
1 onion, chopped
Slice fat (or 2 tbls. butter)
1/3 to 1/2 cup corn meal
2 cups milk

Coat potatoes in corn meal. Salt and pepper. In skillet, place the fat (or butter). Put in potato slices and brown on both sides. When brown, pour the milk in and bring to a boil. Serve with breakfast or with steaks.

GERMAN CHOCOLATE PUDDING

14 oz. bar German Sweet Chocolate
1/4 lb. butter
3 eggs, separated
1 cup powdered sugar
1 pt. whipping cream
1 tsp. vanilla
10 oz. box Vanilla Wafers

Melt butter and chocolate together. Add to beaten egg yolks, stirring in ⅔ cup of the sugar. Chill 30 minutes. Then fold in whipped cream. Beat egg whites, spiked with vanilla until they stand in peaks. Add remaining sugar into the egg whites and fold this into the chocolate. Crush wafers very fine and line a 9x9" deep dish with part of the crumbs. Spread 2 cups of the chocolate over crumbs, then add another layer of crumbs—repeat until all the mixture and wafer crumbs are used. Sprinkle top with crumbs. Refrigerate 24 hours before serving. ■

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Hi-Fi Corner

by Michael Marcus

Watch Out For Those Words

In another month or so, we'll be into the big hi-fi buying and selling season, and the audio equipment wheelers and dealers will fill the newspapers with all kinds of enticements to pull your dollars into their stores.

Most of the people who sell legitimate quality hi-fi components will give you real information in their ads, but stores that push the cheaper stuff—consoles, compacts, portables, and such—have a habit of throwing you a lot of meaningless and deceptive words. We'll try to help you sort them out.

Solid-state: Instead of using tubes that break and burn out, modern electronic equipment uses things like transistors, diodes, and integrated circuits. With tubes, the electrons flow through a gas; with transistors the electrons flow through a solid material called a semiconductor. Yes, solid-state is better. However, no hi-fi equipment or radio has used tubes in years, so if someone is pushing solid-state as a competitive advantage, it's because he has nothing else to say and just wants to fill up space.

Professional: This word is usually attached to things like 8-track recorders or $40 record changers, but no matter where you see it, it's a lie. No professional recording studio uses 8-track. No radio station uses a record changer.

Full-size: You'll usually see this description attached to record changers with platters measuring only 10 or 11 inches in diameter. While calling these full-size (because they are bigger than mini-changers with 7-inch platters) is half-way legitimate, remember that lp records are 12 inches in diameter, and a platter less than that size can hardly be considered full-size. Actually an 11-inch platter is usually big enough for decent sound, so they shouldn't have to lie to us.

With the old inflated power ratings you could get a "220-watt" stereo console for around $179. Under a new Federal law, the phony watts should disappear; 200 real watts will run around $800 for just a power amplifier, like this beautiful brute from Technics. We'll tell you all about it, and all the other new components, in the next couple of issues.

Sliding Controls: Most mixing consoles in recording studios have sliding controls rather than knobs to change the volume and tone because the slider settings are easier to read. That's fine. Lots of home equipment has sliding controls to look sexy, but most are not very well made and attract a lot of dirt and dust and gook, which makes them noisy and prone to wear out. In general, if you can choose between slides and knobs in something selling for less than, say, $200, take the knobs.

Built-In FM Antenna: It might seem like a great convenience not to have to string new wires or tap into your TV antenna in order to pick up FM, but no built-in antenna can be very good. Built-in antennas and "line-cord" antennas are a definite *dis*advantage.

4-Channel Ready: This usually means nothing more than that the receiver has tape output and input jacks that can be connected to an external amplifier and a 4-channel adapter or decoder. Any stereo receiver is 4-channel ready whether they say so or not.

Giant Speakers: This usually refers to the size of the wood or cardboard boxes that holds the individual speakers, and is not a real indication of the sound quality.

Some time last year we tried to sort out all the different kinds of watts that various hi-fi makers have invented to make you think that their products are more powerful than anything else you can buy. We explained that most honest component manufacturers used the conservative "RMS" method, but that less scrupulous companies used ratings like "IHF," "EIA," and "IPP" that could result in numbers up to ten times as large. We warned you to read and listen very carefully if some salesman offers you a 500-watt stereo system for less money than someone else's 75-watt number.

Well, it looks like the anguish is about over. Last spring the City of New York ruled that all hi-fi advertising in that city must use RMS, and starting in November the Federal Trade Commission will make RMS mandatory all over the country.

All of a sudden most amplifiers and receivers and consoles and car stereos will seem a lot weaker than they used to. They'll sound just as loud, but the numbers will be smaller. Most respectable receivers will be touted as having somewhere between 10 and 40 watts, and the cheapie consoles which used to carry inflated ratings in the high hundreds will drop to one or two.

So don't worry when you start seeing all those small numbers this fall. There's no less power, just less confusion. And if big numbers really make you feel good, there are some *real* 500 watt amplifiers on the market. If you have a thousand bucks or so. ■

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