

July 1976, One Dollar

COUNTRYMUSIC

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SPECIAL ISSUE

The Country Bicentennial

The History Of
Country Music,
Part One

Country's Russian
Birthday Party:
Roy Clark In The USSR

The All-Time
All-Star Hit Parade

Waylon/Jessi
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"Why Grandma, what big eyes you have!" cried Little Red Riding Hood.

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"And what big ears you have!"

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COVER PHOTO OF DOLLY PARTON &
CENTERFOLD PHOTO: LEONARD KAMSLER

Letters

I would like to comment on the article entitled "The Country Music Book Report" by Nick Tosches (April COUNTRY MUSIC), wherein he reviews publications on country music and its people. When he gets to John Cash's book "Man in Black," he uses such words as "mushy," "pop catechism" and suggests it is not an honest account of the man's life. Okay, he's entitled to his opinion, but here's mine.

Don't mess around with this man's honesty. It had to be a pretty difficult task at best to try to reach back and remember clearly how he felt about things that were happening at a time when his mind wasn't all that clear. So, if there are any flaws in the account, and I don't know that there are, it's not a matter of honesty. He wrote it the way he remembers it and that's honest enough for me.

As for "pop catechism," this book was not written for its pure entertainment value. There was a purpose behind it and since it has already received an award from the Laymen's National Bible Conference, I assume it is serving its purpose. As John said, if it helps only one person to turn his life around, it will have been worth the effort.

As for "mushy"—how about "feeling" instead. I feel sorry for anyone who can't see the feeling and caring in Johnny Cash. We should all care as much.

MILLIE UNTERBERGER
PITTSBURGH, PA.

I think your story on Freddy Fender by Roxy Gordon in your March issue was really sick.

Who does Freddy Fender think he is that he can go around trying to knock Johnny Rodriguez by saying "Rodriguez won't speak Spanish around 'gringos.'" I think Freddy is trying to say that maybe Rodriguez is ashamed to speak Spanish. Why is it that I have personally heard Johnny speak Spanish in a coliseum full of gringos, Indians, Chicanos, etc., at the New Mexico State Fair in Albu-

querque, New Mexico and I'm sure it hasn't been the only place. Not to mention announcements and commercials on radio. Hasn't Fender ever learned that it is very rude for Chicanos to speak Spanish when there is only one gringo around?

After all that stuff Freddy says about being so proud of being a Chicano, I never heard Rodriguez change his name to make his music sell.

Well, Baldamar Huerta, how do you explain that?

LAURA HERRERA
ALAMOGORDO, NEW MEXICO

I'm writing to congratulate you for a job well done on the story "Big Don" (April COUNTRY MUSIC). This should have been addressed directly to Mr. Patrick Carr, himself . . . but I hope you will pass along our appreciation of this masterpiece in journalism to the credit of a *real* man, whose music speaks for itself. If this is a new trend with respect to the type of audience the more serious artists attract, then I'm especially pleased to be amongst your latest subscribers! We may not be out "glad-handing" as fans or forming "high-pressure" friendships to promote them, but we *do* buy their records and expect to see the kind of publicity they deserve as most generous compensation. May Don Williams continue to set his own relaxed pace for the continued improvement of country music and its all important image.

SUE ERWIN
SAN JOSE, CALIF.

I am an avid reader of your magazine. I enjoy it immensely, particularly the "Letters" section, finding out how other people feel about the C&W artists and their material. There is one thing about the "Letters" dept. that I have noticed, however. I have never seen a letter from anyone in prison published. If you don't have a policy of prohibiting the publication of such letters, I would forever be in your debt, if you would print this one.

I am incarcerated in a Georgia prison serving a life sentence and have served 8½ years to date, and would like to correspond with some C&W lovers.

I am 31 years of age, blond hair and blue eyes.

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Every time there is a TV special about the Grand Ole Opry, you can be sure of seeing some, if not all, of the following "super stars": Loretta Lynn, Johnny Cash and family, Roy Clark, etc., etc.

When you visit the Grand Old Opry in Nashville, Tenn., who do you see? I have visited there the past three summers and I saw: Billy Grammer, Skeeter Davis, Stu Phillips, Jimmie Newman, Charlie Walker, etc., etc. I have never seen any of the "super stars" and I rarely hear them on the Friday and Saturday nights when I listen to the Grand Ole Opry.

Maybe there are two hillbilly heavens. One for the super stars and one for the faithful regular members of the Grand Ole Opry who are always there to entertain you.

K. CARSON
ANNAPOLIS, MD.

As a bluegrass music lover, I find it very difficult to locate the music and artists I like, unless I travel a hundred and fifty miles. The local stores just don't stock but a few artists. I think part of this problem is poor distribution. For example, I first heard Larry Sparks and the Lonesome Ramblers on a local bluegrass program in Poughkeepsie, New York, and became an instant fan. But after useless searching was unable to find any of his records, until I was in Nashville at the Earnest Tubb Record Shop where I found one album, *Footsteps of Tradition* on King Bluegrass records. This kind of talent deserves better distribution on a major label.

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RCA RECORDS

People on the Scene

Freddy Fender Barred From New Zealand
Glen Campbell & Sarah Davis To Wed
Has Roy Clark Gone Pop?

by AUDREY WINTERS



Photo: Charlyn Zelnik



Photo: Charlyn Zelnik



Photo: Arthur J. Maher

Red Steagall, Willie Nelson, Jeannie C. Riley,
Glen Campbell and Sarah Davis.

Poor **Freddy Fender**. New Zealand's Prime Minister of Labor and Immigration refused to allow him into the country for a 10-day concert stint, because of his 15-year-old marijuana possession conviction. Even a telegram from the Governor of Louisiana saying Freddy had been granted a full pardon last September from Louisiana (where he served 3 years for the charge) didn't soften the hard-nosed New Zealanders. Maybe the colossal Freddy Fender Day homecoming planned for Freddy in San Benito, Texas will soothe his damaged ego. Another Texas extravaganza in the works is the **Red Steagall** Celebrity Golf Tournament to be held in Ker-ville at Rod Kennedy's Quiet Valley Ranch. **COUNTRY MUSIC** commissioned a giant trophy for the event, and publisher, **John Killion** will be on hand to present the award, July 1.

Glen Campbell says he and **Sarah Davis** (**Mac Davis's** ex) will marry just as soon as they get their respec-

tive divorces. Professionally speaking, **Jeannie C. Riley** and producer **Shelby Singleton** are back together. Jeannie refers to the years apart as "five years of my career wasted."

Dottie West invited several friends to hear her oldest son **Morris**, 22, and his rock band perform at a local Nashville club. Dottie's producer **Chips Momen** was there and decided to record them. **Brian Ford**, son of **Tennessee Ernie**, is working at Opry-land this year in the Country Music USA show. **Frank Sinatra** will also put in a performance at the Grand Ole Opry this summer. Sinatra's publishing company, Frank & Nancy Music is located in **Faron Young's** new office building.

Loretta Lynn celebrated her birthday April 14. Loretta who's out promoting her autobiography, "Coal Miner's Daughter," is one of the youngest looking grandmothers of five around. **Sarah Jones** received an unusual gift for her birthday from her

manager's lawyer—500 lbs. of Purina dog chow. Too bad she had already given away her English sheepdog.

Best wishes for a speedy recovery to **Kenny Price**, recouping from extensive abdominal surgery, and to **Jerry Lee Lewis** who is seriously ill. Jerry Lee commits himself for hospital treatments during the week, and goes out on the weekends to play his tour dates. **George Jones** subbed for **Loretta Lynn**—temporarily on the sick list—on a tour with **Conway Twitty** and **Mickey Gilley**. Dot Recording artist **Eddy Raven** also needed some medical attention. He required several stitches from a cut he got while working on his air conditioner, burnt his other hand on an electric stove, and then poked himself in the eye. All this in one day. They say he uttered a few choice Cajun words that day.

Tom T. Hall who cancelled all personal appearances to work on his book on songwriting, is back on the road. Tom T. reports he's lost 15 lbs., "around the stomach" and has added a fiddle player to his band. **Augie Meyers**, former member of the **Sir Douglas Quintet** now has his own group of musicians called the Western Head Band. **Doug Sahm**, the Quintet's leader is back with producer **Huey Meaux**, recording with ABC/Dot. Also back on the recording scene is **Jimmy C. Newman**, singing Cajun songs with **Shelby Singleton** producing. Jimmy who raises cattle just a few miles outside Nashville says he wouldn't live any other way except on a ranch. And **Roy Clark** is going pop. Boston Pops, that is—on two telecasts with **Arthur Fiedler**.

Willie Nelson is all heart. He staged a show at Gilley's Texas club to keep a songwriting friend from going to jail—this after offering to pay the \$6,000 lawyer's fee outright. The show was a huge success, and Willie's friend is back writing. ■

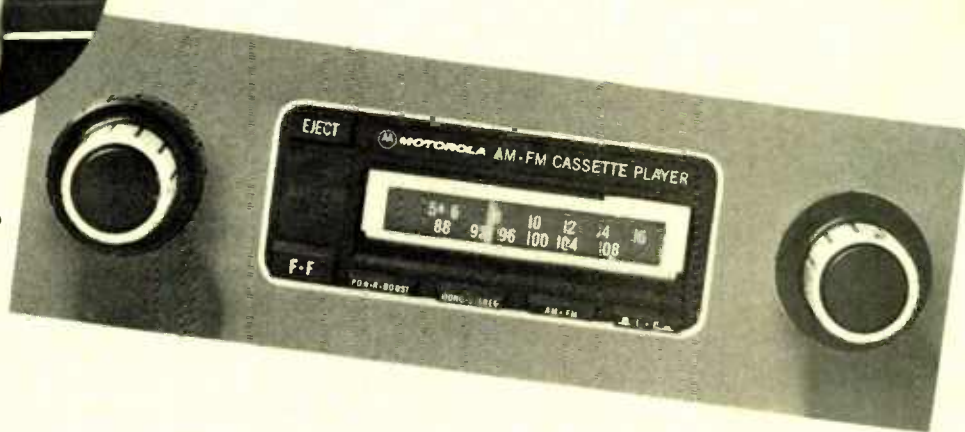
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Loretta Lynn (left), Bobby Bare.

Tammy's Got A New Love
Outlaws Are Certified Gold
Broadway Goes Country

by HAZEL SMITH

From Music City, U.S.A. . . the only city that I know where fruit is something that is edible, and not referred to as anything but . . .

Out of the blue, *Country Music's* own prestigious editor, Mr. Patrick Carr, flew in. He businessed and pleased it all over town with the likes of Tompall, Jack "Cowboy" Clement and his lovely Sharon, Steve Young (who has a forthcoming RCA LP in

the making under the master auspices production of Roy Dea, who also produces Dickey Lee, Dotts, and Gary Stewart), Country Music Foundation's Doug Green, and me, naturally. All the biggies include the magazine writing lady.

"A Boy Named Sue" type of song titled "One Piece at a Time" is Johnny Cash's latest effort for Columbia. "Looks like a 'Big John,'" says his

producer Don Davis.

Speaking of "A Boy Named Sue" makes me think of the immortal (maybe I should omit the "t") writer of the song, Shel Silverstein, who has been away from Music Row and Tennessee for two months, but will be in town before the sun comes down. It's so great having Shel around, talking, singing his new tunes . . . and when he is away, he is surely missed.

Merle Kilgore dropped by my office and told me that he was going to definitely be on the Hadocol Caravan. Hadocol is an elixer tonic that was popular back in the 40's, and they're revising it.

I understand from my sources that Tammy Wynette's new love is 22 year-old Rudy Gatlin, who is one of her backup singers . . . At least, her love at the moment, and that is subject to change by the time this is printed. Tammy is out of the hospital and back on the road again after suffering a severe case of Hillbilly Exhaustion.

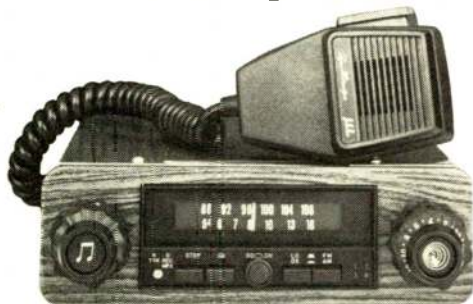
Also off the puny list from same Hillbilly Exhaustion is Loretta Lynn who won the law suit against her former associates, the Wilburn Brothers. The straw that broke the camel's back, and favored Loretta was the fact that she claimed that Doyle Wilburn put her through embarrassing situations by being drunk in public and causing scenes. Hillbillies do know how to have a good time.

Back from North and South Dakota is Bobby Bare after performing there four weeks! Off the road and into the recording studio to get down some tunes to follow his biggie, "The Winner."

My friend, former Opryland performer, Debbie Allen called from LA. She's on Jim Stafford's road show.



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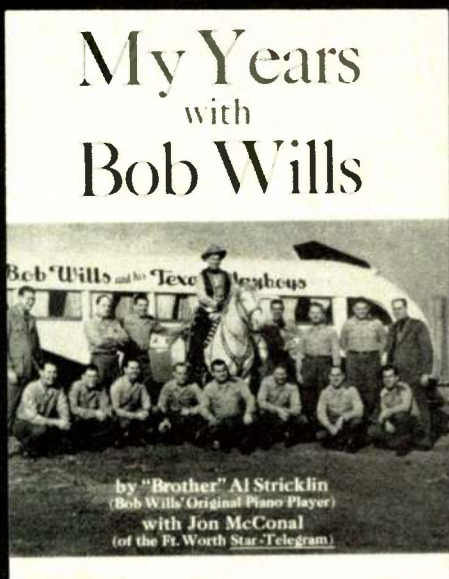
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"I'll Get Better"*



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The *Outlaws* lp by Waylon, Willie, Jessi and Tompall has been certified gold, meaning sales are in excess of 500,000. Also *The Red Headed Stranger* album by Willie has been certified the same color.

Cal Smith, who I have adored since his days with Ernest Tubb, in the studio making phonograph records.

Me and Don Williams stopped in the middle of the street off Music Row and said howdy. Almost didn't recognize Don ... 'cause he was driving a car and not his usual pickup truck. Anyway, we had traffic blocked, and the only ones enjoying the encounter was me and Don.

Backstage, Opry, Dottie West and Hubby Bryan Metcalf holding hands and smiling like lovers ... and it ain't spring that brought this on, they been at it all winter, fall, and summer.

Johnny Cash, June Carter and entourage in the European area. Son-in-law Jack Routh is along as well as his lovely wife Carlene. If you haven't met those Rouths, then you've missed a treat. Their new baby, John Jackson, is growing like anything, and being who they are they don't have to be real and down to earth like me and you, but they are.

The Ray Stevens/Webb Pierce riff about Webb's building a ramp in his yard for tour buses has Webb winning again. Webb loves the tours that Ray hates, and wants rerouted. The entire episode has been funnier to me than Hee Haw, especially the aged line that Webb said, "That's what Ray gets for moving across the street from a star!"

Willie Fong Young and Fred Burch have just made a famous deal with Epic Records to produce an lp of songs taken from their forthcoming southern musical opera, "Up on the Mountain." This is the first Nashville based musical and is slated to open in your New York City Broadwayish area in late summer or early fall. And Willie, lest you forget, you did promise Ms. Hazel a trip to the big apple for the premiere, and I'm counting on this! I've been sitting here 'bout ten seconds figuring out a way to say how proud I am for these good ole boys.

People who haven't called more recently are: Elvis Presley, Frank Sinatra, Hank Williams and Tex Ritter. Delete last two, sometimes I get carried away. With love to all, especially everybody in Caswell Country, N.C., where my Granny Phillips lives, and the lady just turned a ripe 85 years young. ■

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THE ORIGINAL CARTER FAMILY - ANLI-1107 \$2.98
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JOHNNY CASH - C33087 SPECIAL \$2.98
Precious Memories; Rock Of Ages; Old Rugged Cross; Softly And Tenderly; In The Sweet By And By; Just As I Am; Farther Along; When He Rode Is Called Up Yonder; Amazing Grace; At The Cross; Have Thine Own Way Lord.

COUNTRY HITS OF THE '40s - SM 884 \$2.98
Smoked Smoked Smoked (That Cigarette); Tex Wil-Wakeley; Divorce Me C.O.D. (Merle Travis); There's Nothin' Slipin' Around (Margaret Whiting); Jimmy A New Moon Over My Shoulder (Tex Ritter); Pistol Packin' Mama (Al Dexter); Mule Train (Tennessee Ernie Ford); You Are My Sunshine (Jimmie Davis); One Has My Name, The Other Has My Heart (Jimmy Wakely); I Love You Because (Leon Payne); Oklahoma Hills (Jack Guthrie).

COUNTRY HITS OF THE '50s - SM 885 \$2.98
Sixteen Tons (Tennessee Ernie Ford); Gone (Ferlin Husky); A Satisfied Mind (Jean Shepard); The Wild Side Of Life (Hank Thompson); Loose Talk (Freddie Hart); Young Love (Sonny James); If You Ain't Lovin' (You Ain't Livin') (Faron Young); A Dear John Letter (Jean Shepard/Ferlin Husky); You Better Not Do That (Tommy Collins); Don't Let The Stars Get In Your Eyes (Skeets McDonald).

18 KING SIZE COUNTRY HITS - CS-9468 \$2.98
Signed, Sealed And Delivered; Cowboy Copos; I'll Sail My Ship Alone; Moon Mulligan; It's Raining Here This Morning; Grandpa Jones; Rainbow At Midnight; Carle Brothers; Seven Lonely Days; Wayne; Why Don't You Haul Off And Love Me; Wayne Rainey; Death Of Little Kathy Fiscus; Jimmy Osborne; Blues Stay Away From De, Delmore Brothers; Slow Poke; Hawkshaw Hawkins; Tennessee Waltz; Cowboy Copos; Sweeter Than The Flowers; Moon Mulligan; Mountain Dew; Grandpa Jones; I'm The Talk Of The Town; Don Reno & Red Smiles; Next Sunday Darling Is My Birthday; Clyde Moody; Lonesome 7-203; Hawkshaw Hawkins; Death Of Hank Williams; Jack Cardwell; How Far To Little Rock; Stanley Brothers; Money, Marbles And Chalk; Pop Eckler.

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LES PAUL AND MARY FORD - SM 11308 \$2.98
The World Is Still Waiting For The Sunrise; How High The Moon; Whispering; The Best Things In Life Are Free; Lover; Bye Bye Blues; Deep In The Blues; The World Is Waiting For The Sunrise; I Really Don't Want To Know; Walkin' and Whistlin' Blues; How Deep Is The Ocean (How High Is The Sky); I'm Forever Blowing Bubbles; Vaya Con Dios.
TENNESSEE ERNIE FORD - SM-2097 SPECIAL \$2.98
Try Me One More Time; No Letter Today; Born To Lose; Don't Rob Another Man's Castle; There'll Be No Tearsdrops Tonight; Worried Mind; No One Will Ever Know; Funny How Time Slips Away; Sweet Dreams; Tears On My Pillow; May You Never Be Alone.

LEFTY FRIZZELL - CS-9288 - SPECIAL \$2.98
I Love You A Thousand Ways; Saginaw, Michigan; Mom And Dad's Waltz; Release Me; She's Gone, Gone, Gone; Always Late; I Want To Be With You Always; The Long Black Veil; Shine, Shine, Shower; A Little Unfair; If You've Got The Money, I've Got The Time.

JOHNNY HORTON - CS-8779 SPECIAL \$2.98
Honky-Tonk Man; Goodbye, Lonesome, Hello Baby Doll; I'm Coming Home; I Got A Hole In My Pirogue; She Knows Why; They'll Never Take Her Love From Me; Ole Slow Foot; I'm A One-Woman Man; Sleepy-Eyed John; Everytime I'm Kissin' You; The Wild One; Honky Tonk Hardwood Floor.

JOHNNY HORTON'S HITS - CS-8396 SPECIAL \$2.98
The Battle Of New Orleans; Sink The Bismark; When It's Springtime In Alaska; Whispering Pines; North To Alaska; The Mansion You Stole; I'm Ready If You're Willing; All For The Love Of A Girl; Coann Cha (The Brave Horse); Johnny Reb; Jim Bridger; Johnny Freedom.

STONEWALL JACKSON - CS 9177 SPECIAL \$2.98
Don't Be Angry; Life To Go; Waterloo; Smoke Along The Tracks; Second Choice; Why I'm Walkin'; A Wound Time Can't Erase; Leona; Old Showboat; I Washed My Hands In Muddy Water; Lost In The Shuffle.

SPIKE JONES - ANLI-1035 - SPECIAL \$2.98
Cocktails For Two; William Tell Overture; Chloe; My Old Flame; The Glow Worm; None But The Lonely Heart; Laura; The Man On The Flying Trapeze; You Always Hurt The One You Love; Der Fuehrer's Face; Dance Of The Hours; Hawaiian War Chant (Ta-Hu-Wa-Hu-Wai).

THE LOUVIN BROTHERS - SM 1061 SPECIAL \$2.98
The Family Who Prays; Born Again; If We Forget The Lord; Satan Lied To Me; God Bless Her (Cause She's My Mother); Love Thy Neighbor As Thyself; Preach The Gospel; Just Rehearsing; Pray For Me; Satan And The Saint; Swing Low, Sweet Chariot; Make Him A Soldier.

BILL MONROE AND HIS BLUE GRASS BOYS - 16 GREATEST HITS - CS-1065 SPECIAL \$2.98
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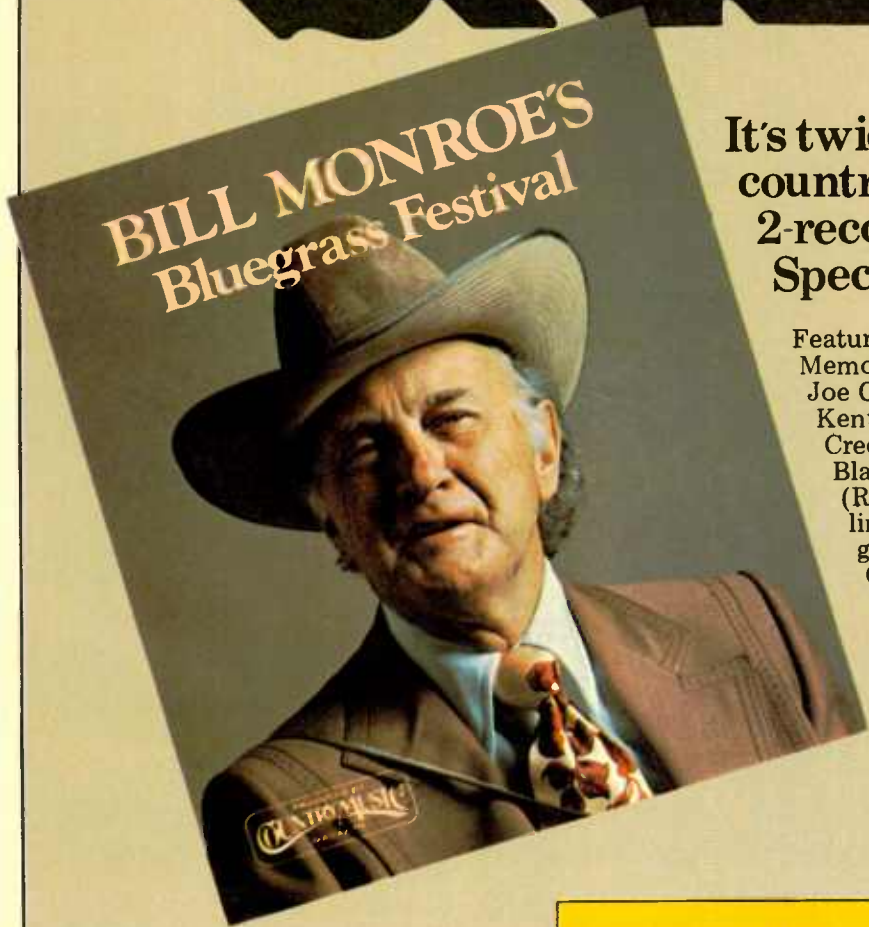
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COUNTRY NEWS

Johnny Cash Rides the Cotton Belt

Johnny Cash, springtime, and a one-of-a-kind Southern Pacific/Cotton Belt train, "The Johnny Cash Bi-Centennial Special," arrived in Cleveland Co., Ark. all in one day—along with some 12,000 enthusiastic visitors.

The towns of Rison (pop. 1214) and Kingsland (pop. approx. 300) concluded their Pioneer Crafts festival March 20 with ceremonies and a parade to honor Cash, who was born at nearby Crossroads, Arkansas.

Neither town boasts a depot—ceremonies were held at rail crossings. When Gov. David Pryor, on hand to proclaim "Johnny Cash Day," dubbed the singer the state's "favorite native son," Cash smiled broadly and said, "Thank you very much, but maybe you'd better not let Glen Campbell hear you say that."

At Kingsland, Cash and his immediate family boarded "The Sunset," the private/business rail-car of Southern Pacific president, Benjamin Biaggini. Other relatives, state and local officials, and the press filled the remaining six cars for the nine mile trip to Rison. The red, white, and blue Spirit of '76 Engine #3197 glided the load of deadheads (non-paying passengers) over tracks welded smooth for the occasion, along the Saline River bottoms, through woodlands flecked with dogwood blooms.

"Everything's smaller than you remember it from childhood," commented Cash during the ride. Despite recent his-and-her bone breaking incidents during their Jamaican vacation, both John and June Cash appeared tanned and radiant. Even Cash's usual somber black attire looked festive—with vivid red, white and blue embroidered eagles adorning the jacket.

With the Rison crossing signal still flashing red, Johnny along with his parents, June, and John Carter Cash,



Photo: Ed Phellan

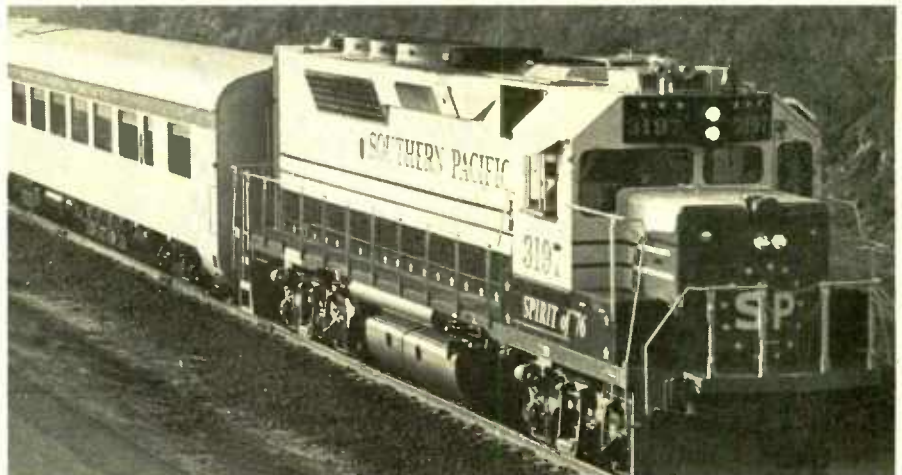


Photo: South Pacific R.R.

A concert, and a ride on the Spirit of '76—part of Johnny Cash Day festivities.

climbed into a handsome horse drawn buggy to lead the parade. An hour later the last float reached the football field at the end of Rison's six-block main street, where the Cash troupe presented an outdoor concert.

Johnny sang his hits, assisted from time to time by June, whose father was once a mail clerk with the Southern Pacific. Son, John Carter exchanged a few quips with his father and then joined in on the spirituals with Helen and Anita Carter and Johnny's daughter Rosie.

There were no standing ovations—since most of the audience were obliged to stand throughout the show—but a brand new Johnny Cash song, "Ridin' The Cotton Belt Line," brought a tremendous reaction from the crowd.

After the reunion here the Cash family left for another clan gathering, this one in Dyess, Arkansas—where the Cash family moved when Johnny was three years old—a town which also claims the singer as their own.

NELLE PHELAN

SUMMER '76 COUNTRY

Summer—when country music leaves the stuffy concert hall and takes to the great outdoors—has always been a special time for country music lovers, and this Bicentennial summer look for a truly revolutionary number of outdoor concerts and special events. As a service to our readers, COUNTRY MUSIC has compiled a list of some of the larger festivals which will be taking place this season.

May 27-30: Kerrville Folk Festival & National Yodeling Contest, Quiet Valley Ranch, Kerrville, Tex. Contact: Rod Kennedy, Box 1466, Kerrville, Tex. 78028.

June 4-5: Bluegrass Canada '76, Courtcliff Park, Ontario, Canada. Contact: Court Weaver, Courtcliffe Parks, Ltd., Carlise, Ontario, Canada LOR 1 H0

June 9-13: Fan Fair, Opryland, Nashville, Tenn. Contact: Fan Fair, 2800 Opryland Drive, Box 2138, Nashville, Tenn. 37214. Registration fee is \$25.

June 16-September 6: Festival of American Folklife, Washington, D.C. Contact: Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. 20560.

June 17: National Collegiate Fiddlers' Festival, East Texas State University, Commerce, Tex. Contact: Richard Harrison, NCFD Director, Dept. of Eng., Kilgore College, Kilgore, Tex.

June 17-19: 8th Annual Old Time Fiddler's and Bluegrass Convention, Chilhowie, Va. Contact: Vance M. Yeary, Old Times Fiddlers and Bluegrass Convention, 214 Hulldale Ave., Marion, Va. 24354

June 17: 4th Annual National Collegiate Fiddlers Festival, East Texas State University, Commerce, Tex. Contact: George Maguire, Student Union Building, E. T. Station, Commerce, Tex. 75428

June 19-20: Annual Bean Blossom Bluegrass Festival, Bean Blossom,



Photo: Mel Root

Ind. Contact: Monroe Bluegrass Talent Agency, 726 16th Ave. So., Nashville, Tenn. 37203

June 24-26: Lester Flatt's Fourth Annual Mt. Pilot Festival, Lester Flatt's Bluegrass Park, Pinnacle, N.C. Contact: Lester Flatt, P.O. Box 225, Nashville, Tenn. 37202

June 30-July 1: Red Steagall Celebrity Golf Tournament & Gala Ranch Show, Riverhill Club & Quiet Valley Ranch, Kerrville, Tex. Contact: Kerrville Music Foundation, Box 1466, Kerrville, Tex. 78028

July 1-4: Annual Berryville Bluegrass Music Festival, Berryville, Va. Contact: Carlton Haney, Box 7A, Ruffin, N.C. 27326

July 2-4: Bluegrass Festival, Walker, West, Va. Contact: John Cox, Rt. 1, Walker, West Va.

July 2-4: Kerrville C&W Jamboree and World Championship Steel Guitar Contest, Quiet Valley Ranch Kerrville, Tex. Contact: Rod Kennedy, Box 1466, Kerrville, Tex. 78028

July 3: Northern California Shotgun Webb Country Music Jamboree, Chico, Calif. Contact: Cherry Talent, P.O. Box 3445, Chico, Calif. 95927

July 4th: Willie Nelson Picnic,

Gonzales, Tex. Contact: Lana Nelson, Buda, Tex.

July 4-5: Statler Brothers' Happy Birthday U.S.A. Picnic, Staunton, Va. Contact: Happy Birthday U.S.A., P.O. Box 266, Staunton, Va. 24401

July 31-August 1: Brandywine Mountain Music Convention, Nathaniel Newlin Grist Mill, Concordville, Pa. Contact: The Brandywine Valley Friends of Old Time Music, Box 3504, Greenville, Del. 19807.

August 6-14: Georgia Mountain Fair, Hiawasse, Ga. Contact: Jimmy Taff, Publicity Chairman, Georgia Mountain Fair, P.O. Box 444, Hiawasse, Ga.

August 14-15: 4th Annual N.Y.C. Bluegrass and Old-Time Country Music Band Contest and Crafts Fair, South Street Seaport, New York, N.Y. Contact: Doug Tuchman, Bluegrass Club of New York, 417 E. 89th St. New York, N.Y. 10028

August 20-22: 10th Annual Gettsburg Bluegrass Festival, Gettsburg, Pa. Contact: Carlton Haney, Box 7A, Ruffin, N.C. 27326

August 27-29: Second Annual Bluegrass Festival, Walker, West Va. Contact: John Cox, Rt. 1, Walker, W. Va. 26180

September 2-5: 12th Annual Labor Day Bluegrass Festival, Camp Springs, N.C. Contact: Carlton Haney, Box 7A, Ruffin, N.C. 27326

September 3-5: Kerrville Bluegrass & Country Music Festival and Southwestern Bluegrass Band Championship, Quiet Valley Ranch, Kerrville, Tex. Contact: Rod Kennedy, Box 1466, Kerrville, Tex. 78028

September 3-5: The 5th Annual Delaware Bluegrass Festival, Gloryland Park, Glasgowl, Del. Contact: Brandywine Valley Friends of Old Time Music, Box 3504, Greenville, Del. 19807.

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COUNTRY NEWS

Floyd Cramer's Candy Pants ~ A Matter of Taste

Dolly Parton has sung about her coat of many colors and Carl Perkins sang about his blue suede shoes, but Floyd Cramer's new RCA single is probably the first country song about underwear. Not only that, but "Candy Pants," (the name of the single and the panties) are a first in themselves. They're edible.

You heard right. Candy Pants, manufactured by a Chicago-based firm called Cosmorotics, are billed as "the one and only 100% edible pants." They come in three flavors—banana split, wild cherry and hot chocolate—and are held up at bikini level with red licorice drawstrings. Retailing for \$5.50 (\$2.75 wholesale), the FDA-approved yummys have been test-marketed in New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, and Bloomington, Indiana with such success that Cosmorotics is unable to keep up with the demand. The only problem wearers have encountered so far is that if the pants are not eaten within 24 hours after being removed from the packaging, they become brittle and fall off.

Pianoman Cramer admits that his new song is a gimmick released in the hope of capitalizing on the success of the pants. The actual tune, written by Jerry Reed and Randy Goodrum, is a ragtime sort of melody and was recorded about eight months ago as an instrumental. Then Cramer heard Johnny Carson talking about Candy Pants on the "Tonight Show" and suggested to Reed that he put words



to the instrumental they had recorded. They took the song to Chet Atkins, who produced it with the help of Chips Moman.

Now however, Cramer, an amiable easy-going sort of man, seems a bit baffled. Several country radio stations have refused to play the single because of the subject matter, and one major news service withheld a story about the song from its news wires. So we now have the unique situation of people like Floyd Cramer and Chet Atkins finding themselves in the middle of a censorship controversy.

An X-rated country song?

"It's not X-rated," says Cramer. "It's all in other people's minds. If they ban it in Boston, it'll be a hit."

MARTHA HUME



Pig Robbins (center) was named Nashville's studio musician of the year by the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences.

"Blind Man" Takes Kenny Off the Bench

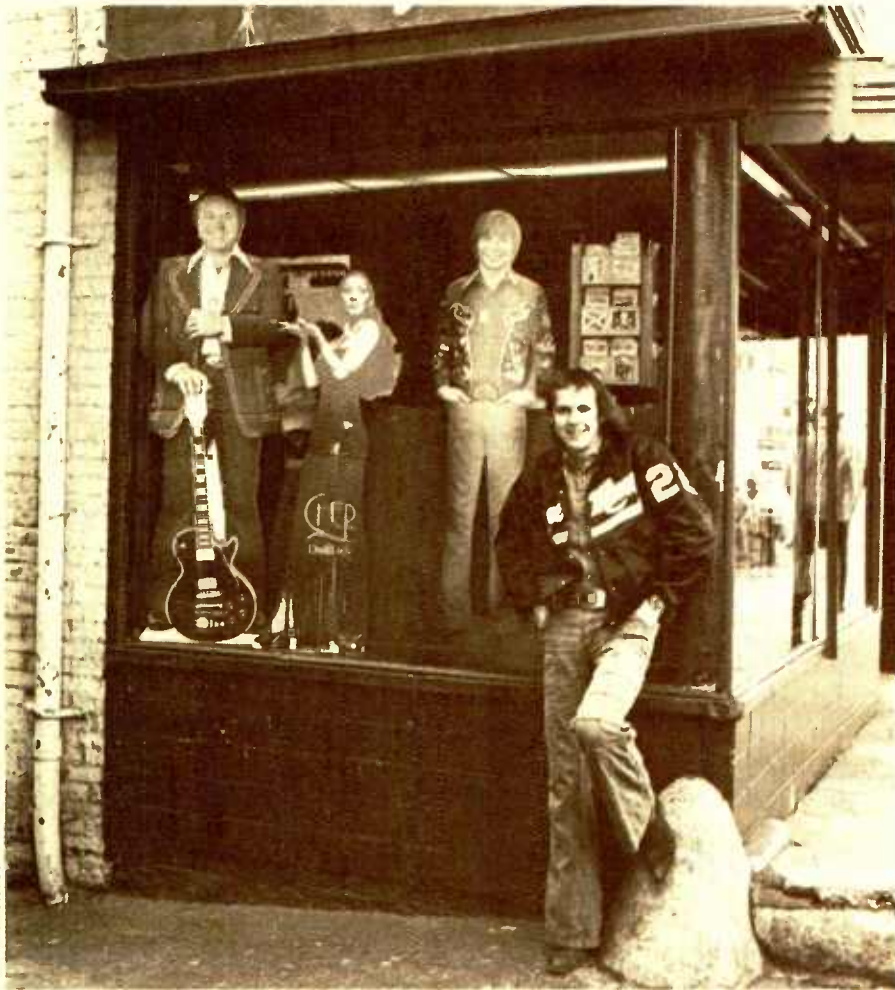


Photo: John Miller

Kenny Starr window shops for stardom at Ernest Tubb's Record Shop.

Kenny Starr believes in following his emotions. When he listened to a demonstration tape called "Blind Man in the Bleachers" it brought tears to his eyes and he cut it believing it would have the same effect on people everywhere. He was right. The same folks who gushed over Bobby Goldsboro's tear-jerker "Honey" were more than ready to shed a few over the saga of the kid who is impelled to football glory by the death of his father. Very implausible, but America loves to hear it just the same. Suddenly people all over the country are saying "Who is Kenny Starr—he made me cry—and what else has he done?"

For a young guy, Kenny Starr has been around a long time. The singer/songwriter/guitarist formed his first band, "The Rockin' Rebels," at age nine, and played all the clubs in and around his home-town of Burlington.

Kansas, with that and a series of other rock groups. When he turned sixteen he graduated to country music, playing local gigs with a band called "Kenny Starr and the Country Showmen." At around that time Kenny entered and won a Wichita radio station's talent competition. Local concert promoter. Hap Peebles who saw Kenny perform in the amateur Wichita show featuring Loretta Lynn and Conway Twitty. After the show, Loretta offered to assist him if he came to Nashville, and Kenny wasted no time. He joined Loretta's road show, and with her help got an MCA recording contract. And now six years later, Kenny, at the ripe old age of 23, has a full-fledged hit on MCA, that has given birth to the popular *Blind Man in the Bleachers* album.

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RADIO FORUM

KWAM: Memphis Radio Goes Progressive

Gary Powell is justifiably smug—he'd just followed a record by Hank Williams Senior with the latest release from the Who, a rock group who's roots are as far from Nashville as Powell's shoulder-length hair and walrus mustache are from your stereotyped country music disk jockey.

Pairing Hank and the Who aren't the only bizarre things going on at Memphis, Tennessee's KWAM. As of August, 1975, KWAM, a 100,000 watt FM station, became the first full-time progressive country station in the southeast, joining KOKE in Austin and KAFM in Dallas in the looser,

album-oriented format.

The change from straight—"hard"—country to the looser format was not without much gnashing of teeth, reports 24-year-old program direction Powell. Nor was it a hasty decision.

"We spent about a year researching KOKE, drawing up facts and figures to present to the management," Powell says. "After all, the station was doing pretty well, and they sure as hell weren't going to take the word of some long-haired freak about what to do with their radio station."

A few things helped tip the scales, not the least of which were the facts

that KOKE and KAFM were making money, the trade publication charts were top heavy with the new progressive artists and Memphis just plain had a glut of country music stations.

So last June, with the station's blessing, KWAM went progressive.

Perhaps a stab at definition is in order here. If there is such a thing as progressive country music—and lots of people like Gary Powell are banking that there is—it exists as an outgrowth of the present popular state of country music. Country music radio programmers are finding it harder and harder to cope with success. Larger audiences are met with increasingly smaller playlists, freezing out new artists and all but the most established "name" stars.

Not surprisingly—since the same thing happened to rock radio in the early 1960s—the demand for a more flexible outlet grew up almost overnight. Call that outlet progressive country radio.

KWAM changed their playlist to include heavy doses of Emmylou Harris, the Marshall Tucker Band, Jimmy Buffett, Linda Ronstadt, Jerry Jeff Walker, lots of Waylon Jennings and Willie Nelson, and Doug Sahm, while continuing to play such standards as Haggard and Dolly Parten.

The results have been gratifying. The first rating surveys under the new format, taken only two months after the shift, showed KWAM holding their own, loosing a few older listeners, but gaining a few younger. Powell—who encourages listener telephone reaction—believes even the older listeners are coming back around.

"From what I can tell from the phone, we're picking up listeners," he says. "What we're doing is playing the good artists that weren't getting played anywhere else. Maybe they were too country for the rock stations and too rock for the country stations."

The most requests, are for early Willie Nelson ("Yesterday's Wine" and "Phases And Stages"), with early western rocker Gram Parsons following close behind. Publicity has been strictly word of mouth, and, all in all, Powell has no complaints.

"I figure the format is still ahead of its time in Memphis. Not much, though—maybe six months," he says. "If we keep playing it, it's going to click, and we're going to be the first on it."

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Photo: Charlyn Ziornik

Alvin Crow

"A lot of people when they think of Austin, they think of Willie Nelson starting something here," Alvin Crow said, narrowing his bloodshot eyes into red slits in the afternoon light. "Lemme tell you there was a lot going on here before Willie moved. He came because there was already something going on here."

Yep, before Asleep at the Wheel. Jerry Jeff, or Willie got the notion to seek refuge in the capital of progressive country, Alvin, fresh from Amarillo, was struggling in the then-dominant folk scene, helping set fire to a hard country movement fermenting underneath, along with a small circle of musicians that included Dotsy and Freda and her Firedogs. Now, sitting around the kitchen table of his minispread in the ranchland south of town, the pale twenty-five-year-old Okie is putting down a couple of Pearls, his favorite beer, and setting the record straight. An outspoken, brash upstart, the five-string fiddler with the forty-year-old cracker's voice fronts the Pleasant Valley Boys, a seven piece group that is more regressive than progressive, and the first locally-weaned band on the verge of breaking out of the town's tight-knit live music scene into the C&W big time.

Having already sifted through a now defunct grouping of Pleasant Valley Boys, followed by the Neon Angels,

and having regained his harp player, Roger Crabtree from Waylon Jennings, Alvin currently heads a double-bladed attack, giving the cosmic cowboys a clear cut alternative to country rock and luring old-timers out of the woodwork for music "that's danceable. You can do the old Texas Two-step, shottish and waltz to it all."

The willingness to innovate in order to keep the dance floor full has thrown a few obstacles in the way. Though his independent release of singles met with strong regional support and one off-the-wall doo-wop number, "Nyquil Blues" crossed over to FM rock radio stations on both Coasts, his recent premiere album (which includes a cameo duet between Alvin and Texas Playboy, fiddler Jesse Ashlock) was bankrolled out of his own pocket, placing him in a populist position he relishes.

"When I took my record up to Nashville and talked to some of those guys, they said, 'Well, that's not commercial.' I said, 'Yes, it is.' According to their theories, calculations, and methods of making music, that's not commercial. According to my theory playing to those people live and seeing if they're liking it, it is. Texas is a live trip," he explains. "Nashville's a recorded trip. The difference between the two is if it wasn't for the people that come out and pay to hear the music, there wouldn't be an Austin scene."

In spite of the Establishment, doubters, and "Yankees" betting against him, Alvin stays a cocky Texas rebel, biding his time with the confidence of an eggman counting hatched chickens. Already plans are formulating for adding more fiddles, perhaps a piano, or whatever else might sound pleasing to the band.

"If we were a progressive country group rather than a country-western group, I'd think we need to happen right now, because that's what's hot," he half-smiled, chewing off the last threads of a toothpick. "But country music's been around a long time and it's not going to run off anywhere."

And neither is he.

JOE NICK PATOSKI

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ROOTS & BRANCHES

Part One

In The Beginning

by BILL C. MALONE

Probably the hottest issue on the country music scene in this, our Bicentennial year, is the question of what is (and what is not) "country music." In our February issue, we dealt with the question from a modern viewpoint in "Country '76: What Is Happening To Our Music?" by Martha Hume. Now, with this first part of the COUNTRY MUSIC "Roots and Branches" series, we embark on a more complete analysis of what country music is, where it came from, how it developed, and where it's going.

"Roots and Branches" will take the reader from country music's origins in colonial America, through its various permutations, and into the music of today. As the series progresses, the reader will find that country music has always been a music which has borrowed heavily from other cultures and traditions, but which, at the same time, has managed to preserve a style that originated far back in our history. While borrowing from every conceivable source, country music became a major form of pure American music.

"In The Beginning" was written by Bill Malone, Professor of History at Tulane University, author of *Country Music U.S.A.*, and editor of the new book, *Stars of Country Music*. Dr. Malone is a respected authority on the history of our music, and it is appropriate that his article on pre-recorded country be the first in our series.

Over The Water, Into The Hills

Country music can trace its history as an industry back about fifty years, when radio and recording combined to provide performing outlets for rural folk entertainers. The music itself, however, owes its origins to the very earliest days of American history when British immigrants began arriving with their storehouse of ballads and folk-songs, instrumental tunes and dances, and performing styles. In their movement across the Southern frontier, these diverse British peoples intermingled their often dissimilar songs and styles to the point that not even the most highly-trained folklorist can distinguish conclusively between English, Scottish, Irish, or Welsh tunes.

The British also came in contact with other ethnic and racial groups from whom they drew musical sustenance.

German settlers moved from Pennsylvania down through the Shenandoah Valley and into the Southern hill-country bringing their musical preferences with them. In southwestern Louisiana, the French-speaking settlers, the Cajuns, contributed songs like "Jole Blon" and "Colinda" as well as distinctive instrumental styles which still surface in country music today. In south central Texas, Mexican-Americans and settlers of central European derivation (Germans, Poles, Czechs) preserved much of their musical inheritances and influenced the Anglo music around them. Western Swing and its derivatives have always shown the influence of these diverse southwestern ethnic styles.

And everywhere in the South, blacks contributed songs, styles, and dances which have affected the entire course of American popular music, while also enriching country music. Such enter-

tainers as Jimmie Rodgers, the Delmore Brothers, Hank Williams, Elvis Presley, and Charlie Rich, who have displayed their indebtedness to black musical styles, were part of an interchange that began in the early colonial period when white servants and black slaves shared their musical preferences.

Southern folk music, then, the ancestor of modern country music, was British at its core, but it drew heavily upon other folk legacies which derived from other parts of the Old World.

Rocking The Baby, Plucking The Strings

Southern folk music, of necessity, developed primarily in the home, or as a medium of community expression. Everywhere, from Virginia to Texas,



the house party prevailed, and the fiddle reigned as the king of instruments. A solitary fiddler often provided the only musical accompaniment for an all-night dance, but other instrumentalists were added as they became available. As late as the early twenties, a fiddle and a five-string banjo constituted a band in the Southern mountains, while in the Southwest, fiddle and guitar combinations of the type with which Bob Wills began his career, were the basic country band units. Anyone who could make music was welcome at such community gatherings as house raisings, quilting parties, molasses makings, barn dances, family reunions, country fairs, and political rallies. And where two people could be

found who could play instruments, a band was born.

Although highly important at house parties or at other social functions, more often music was a highly personal, non-spectator-oriented phenomenon. People sang in their homes, at work, or while rocking the baby. The rural Southerner's first introduction to music often came through his mother, and the impressions made in infancy would last a lifetime. While women may not have been prominent or highly visible in the early days of commercial country music, their influence has always been profound. The number of contemporary country singers who testify to the musical influence of their mothers is legion.

restrained individualism of the frontiersman by reminding him of the omnipresence of God and of the ultimate punishment that awaited the transgressor. Religion tended to be otherworldly, an attitude that made its way into scores of songs such as "This World Is Not My Home," and "Farther Along." Must rural Southerners learned or were encouraged to sing under church auspices. In fact, a large percentage learned directly through a method known as the shape note system, which was carried through the South by teachers who held singing schools in even the most remote and isolated communities.

The shape note system, a method using circle, rectangular, diamond, and triangle symbols to indicate musical pitch, was introduced in New England in 1800, and spread to Pennsylvania, down through the Shenandoah Valley, and finally as far west as Texas. Not only did a method of musical instruction flower, (still preserved today in its purest form by the Sacred Harp singers of the deep South), a body of publishing houses and professional composers also emerged as a consequence. By the 1920s publishing houses such as the Vaughan Publishing Company of Lawrenceburg, Tennessee, and the Stamps-Baxter Publishing Company of Dallas, Texas, were distributing thousands of paperback hymnals and were sponsoring quartets which became household names throughout the Southland. Thus, the first commercialization of country music might have originated through the churches.

Another religious phenomenon, developing parallel to the shape-note tradition, fed songs into the American folk song bag. These were the great religious revivals of the nineteenth century. Beginning with the Kentucky camp meetings of the early 1800s, with music which was generally the product of unknown folk composers, and developing later in the city revivals as the conscious creations of professional composers, gospel songs were deliberately simple in structure, emotional in nature, and geared to the tastes of a people who had little formal musical training. The melodies of such songs often came from folk or popular sources. Earlier, when he and his brother Charles were reprimanded for using such material in their creation of songs for the Methodist movement, John Wesley allegedly replied by saying, "Why should the Devil have all the good tunes?"

A Vast, Lonely, Terrifying Environment

And what were the song preferences of the Southern rural people? The old songs encompassed the gamut of emotions to which the settlers were prone, but the predominant mood was one of sadness. The penchant for sad and mournful songs was part of the cultural legacy brought by the original British settlers, but this tendency was accentuated by the American environment. The "lonesome songs," as they were called in the mountains, mirrored the lives of a people caught up in a vast, lonely, and often terrifying, environment. They found both drama and psychological release in songs that described how Willie "picked a stick up off the ground and knocked that fair girl down," and many could even identify with the bold highwayman who boasted, "I robbed it, yes, I do declare, I made myself ten thousand there."

With the passage of years, the British songs receded from memory, and were replaced with native songs that reflected life in this country more accurately. In the nineteenth century sentimental parlor songs filtered in



from the cities telling stories of young girls who died for love, orphans who died out in the snow, and of poor old mothers who yearned for their wandering boys.

Spreading The Word With The Shape Of A Note

No influence, however, was more important in shaping the attitudes of rural Southerners and the music they made than religion. Religion in the rural South was evangelical and fundamentalist Protestant, and for many years it did much to temper the un-

Man Maketh Music, Music Maketh Money

Southern rural music never existed in a vacuum, as it always interacted with other musical styles that lay around it. And, though no full-fledged commercial system existed through which the music could be widely distributed, it was never divorced from commercialization. Whenever a person displayed musical talent, his community made demands on his services—and those services were generally rewarded in some way. For centuries, folk musicians and singers had occasionally found profit-



able outlets for their art as tavern singers, street performers, ballad composers and vendors, or as fiddlers for house parties or community functions. Fiddle contests have been documented in Virginia as early as the 1730s, and one can assume that where there was a contest there was also a reward.

Folk musicians also found employment in the traveling shows that roamed through America in the nineteenth century. Fiddlers, for example, sometimes provided the only musical accompaniment for the early circuses, and they also played for the Punch and Judy puppet shows and, of course, in scores of medicine shows which roamed all over America. Fiddling, in fact, was often used to attract crowds and sell products. The famous Parson Weems, whose chief claim to fame lies in his having created the George Washington-Cherry Tree story, roamed up and down the Eastern seaboard in the late eighteenth century, playing his fiddle and warming up the crowds to whom he then sold books and other products.

The pre-radio commercial history of

country music has not been thoroughly researched and is therefore rather shadowy, but there is good reason to believe that Southern folk entertainers sometimes found employment in the major show business forms of their day. The tent repertoire shows, the minstrel shows, and vaudeville troupes certainly used folk material; they may have hired folk talent as well. We know for example, that some famous country performers like Uncle Dave Macon were appearing in Southern vaudeville theaters as early as 1918.

The Sound Of The City Starts Calling

Whether Southern rural musicians actually performed in professional formats or not, they unquestionably learned from popular and urban sources. A vigorous interchange between town and country has always existed in the United States, even though the city has been irresistible in exerting its influence throughout the countryside. Country music, therefore, has never been purely rural in either style or origin. As the frontier gave way to settled communities, and as rural life became more economically secure, rural people were able to buy sheet music, piano rolls, song books, guitars, parlor organs and pianos and, after the 1880s, phonograph recordings. They also received mail-order catalogues which introduced to them the material allure of the city, as well as to new developments in musical instruments and song styles. A diversity of popular music styles, from Hawaiian rhythms to Swiss yodeling to jazz, and a wide range of sentimental and humorous songs made their way into rural homes where they were often absorbed or adapted to fit the basic rural framework.

Country music has been ultra-eclectic in its adoption of diverse musical styles, but also conservative in its tendency to preserve such styles long after they have lost favor in other regions of the country. Such songs as "The Little Rosewood Casket" and "The Baggage Coach Ahead," which were written by professional composers and aimed at a Northern, urban market, have endured among socially-conservative Southerners who cherish them as native Southern rural tunes.

On the eve of its commercial discovery in 1920, country music was a composite genre that reflected many impulses and traditions. It was the product of a society that, though rural, was already in the process of change

and was torn by conflicting loyalties. The people who created and nourished the music were a people in transition, in transit from the farm to the city and from agriculture to industry. Even when they remained on the farm they could not help but be aware that they represented a way of life and an economic existence that was considered unprogressive, unrespectable, and somehow out of the mainstream of national development.

A steady procession of economic forces, beginning with the railroad, and extending through the lumbering, textile, coal, and petroleum industries, weakened the power of agriculture and persistently removed the Southern people from their old social moorings and placed them in a new context which they may have welcomed but could not always understand.

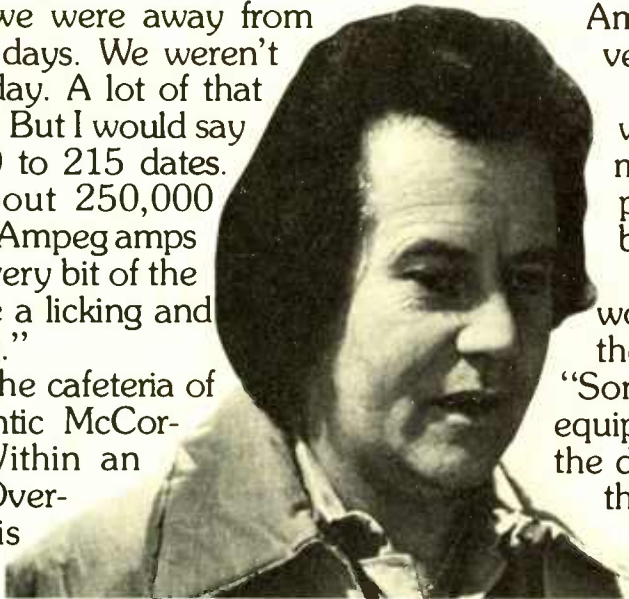
The Southern rural community, which constituted the core of country music's first audience, was a society of people who clung to rural values while progressively abandoning the rural mode of living. And the more they abandoned their rural pasts, the more they romanticized them. Caught between two worlds, the rural society from which they were being dislodged and the urban-industrial world to which they could not readily adjust, they were prepared to nourish a music which embodied a similar ambivalence. Country music was destined to be an art form which glorified the old home place and the assuring values which it supposedly represented, while at the same time extolling the drifters and rambling men who sought escape from such a confining existence. ■



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



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

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

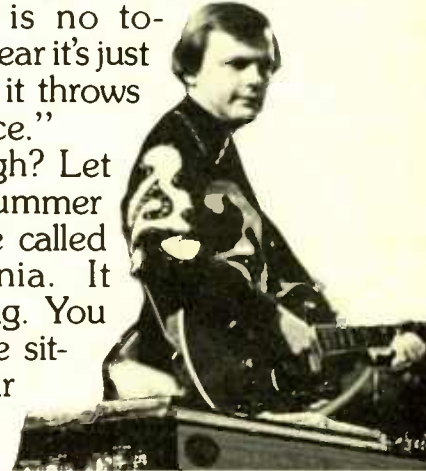
"Bob Rippy has already cleaned up his Well, I was on stage and all of a sudden lightning started dancing across the sky. Within minutes there was a cloudburst. I mean it rained like somebody unzipped the heavens. Our electrical equipment was totally, absolutely soaked. We didn't have time to dry it off.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

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



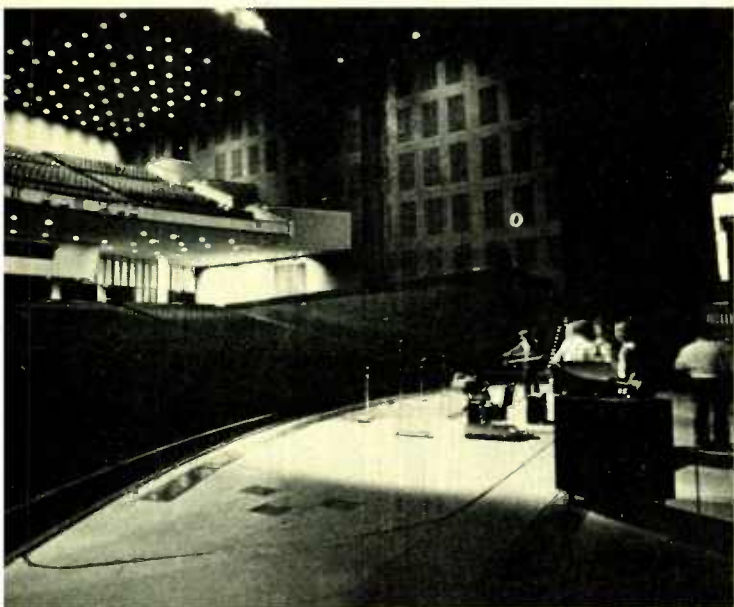
"Smiley Roberts cleans up his act."

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



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Tommy Overstreet
The Nashville Express



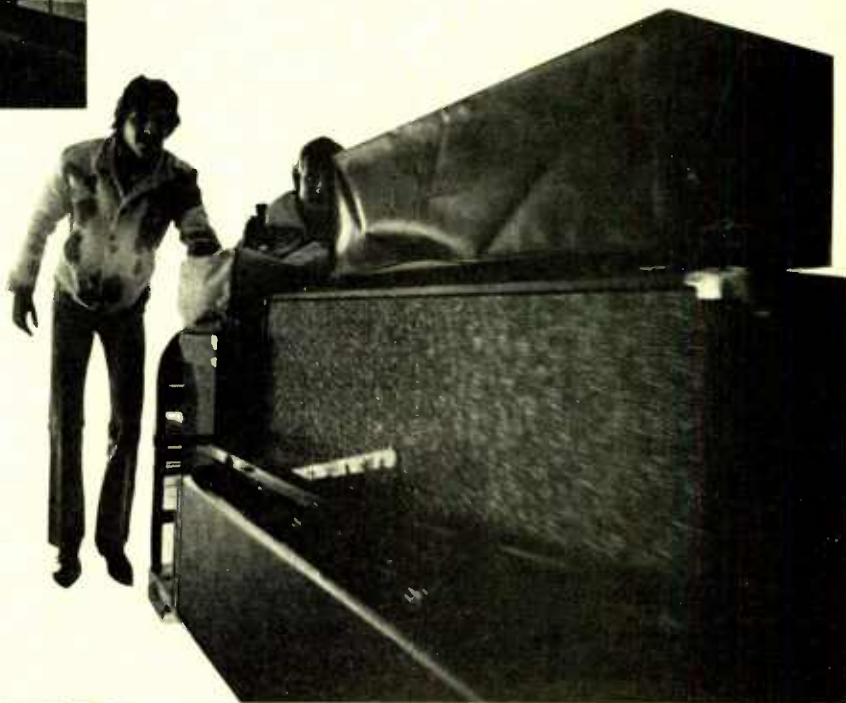
me all the highs I want. And a lot of bottom. It's not a booming bass bottom, not a thud like another amp I could name. I use a heavy reverb for a violin effect. I use it in combination with the fuzz tone and it gives me a kind of simulated eight or nine violins playing. If I didn't have Ampeg to give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

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

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IN AMERICA'S BIRTHDAY
YEAR, ROY CLARK TAKES
THE PEOPLE'S MUSIC
TO RUSSIA

SUPER PICKER MEETS SUPER STATE

by CHRISTOPHER S. WREN

Moscow, January 28th, 1976: A procession of black Volga sedans rolls up to the entrance of the 3,500-seat theater in Moscow's massive Rossiya Hotel, disgorging those Soviet officials and wives who have enough pull to siphon off the best tickets. . . . Police-men, bundled against the cold in heavy blue greatcoats, try to control the crowds while desperate young people beg for a "lishny billet," or spare ticket. . . . Inside the theater, a woman preparing to sell a small stack of Russian-language programs is slammed against a wall by a mob of customers. She flees to the administrator's office with a hard core of buyers in pursuit. In this Bicentennial year, country music has hit the U.S.S.R. again, and this time, it's bigger than ever. . . .

To be sure, country music has already been sold to Soviet audiences: George Hamilton IV came here first in early 1974 with his flattop guitar and some tapes of country classics, and that fall, Tennessee Ernie Ford led a group from Opryland (which some Russians said they found flashy but not altogether authentic)—but Roy Clark is the first to headline his own show here, and his success echoes far beyond the sounds of his rippling five-string banjo. "They told us we could have played for two more weeks to capacity audiences," Clark said after his two-and-a-half week tour of Riga, Leningrad and Moscow. The estimate of one American Embassy official was more like four weeks.

Roy Clark opens in Moscow (big photo) and picks across the USSR. In the bottom left inset photo, he's with Jim Halsey and US Ambassador Stoessel.





Photos: Kathy Ganswich

Pravda Reviews Mr. Clark

The members of the "Country Show" include the most popular singer and musician of the American show business, Roy Clark, his partner Buck Trent, the vocal-instrumental ensemble "Oak Ridge Boys" and the ensemble "Shugah." They perform songs of the American farmers and cowboys.

The compositions of this genre, which has been named "country" (in Russian it could be translated as rural or village music), are now enjoying great success in the United States. There is nothing surprising in the fact that in our time—a time of political and economic crisis in the capitalist countries, giving birth to public uneasiness, lack of confidence in the future—the Americans listen with pleasure to songs about love, about the joy of work, a peaceful life; these are the eternal concepts that are near and dear to everyone.

"Plant a seed," goes one of such compositions, "look after it, and you'll have a beautiful flower grown. If everyone would plant a seed of love, lit by the sun—then the world and mankind would become even more beautiful." Thus unpretentiously but sincerely the song expresses a striving for peace and honest work by lots and lots of ordinary Americans.

The artists of the Roy Clark Country Show advantageously differ from the "idols" of vulgar commercial western entertainment, both in repertoire and manner of performance. They represent a special independent trend of easily accessible, popular music—"country music"—which relies on the centuries-old national traditions. It is not accidental that some of them don't have special musical education and come to the stage exclusively out of love for singing and making music on the guitar, piano and banjo. The "country audience" is not a select public of fashionable concert halls of New York and Boston, but rural toilers and workers of the southern "depths" of America and sometimes even simply passersby. From this trend, by the way, there arose in the 60's the famous songs of protest which denounced violence, wars and social injustice. Actually, "country music" preaches broad humanistic ideals—about good and evil, and what should be done so that all people on earth would live under a peaceful sky.

One of the numbers of the Oak Ridge Boys group goes as follows: the first part of the song is sung in the manner which was widespread 20 years ago, and the second in contemporary rhythm. The style of the performance has changed, a new fashion for the clothing and length of hair has arrived, but the words remained as previously, which they say to a

sweetheart, and the admiration of a man for the beauty of nature and fullness of life has not passed. The close connection with the musical creations of the people of the American south, the rich traditions of the vocal-instrumental type of music-making which exist in that country, precondition a natural easiness and an indisputable culture of performance of the artists of the country show.

The highlight of the program is the performance of Roy Clark. In the sounds of his banjo is present, it seems, the very spirit of the talented and industrious American people with their dynamism and love for a mischevous joke, which helps to bear all the troubles of life and softens the most exhausting labor. It is not for nothing that Clark, having started his career with performing at small clubs, is today the United States' leading performer and comedian of "country music," giving nearly 300 concerts a year, a participant and leading figure of the most popular television broadcasts.

The program of the Roy Clark Country Show winds up with the fiery "Malaguena" which Clark performs on the guitar like a virtuoso. This folk melody seems to remind once more: if from the stage their sound, even in a contemporary style, the songs and dances of those who live by their labor and dream of happiness, they will inevitably find a response in the hearts of the listeners.

The participants themselves of the Country Show, as they told the Pravda correspondent, are delighted by the reception which is shown them by the Soviet spectators. Yes, even a decade ago, it would have been difficult to imagine: rural, almost amateur artists from those areas of the United States which we habitually call "bear's corners" are performing in the Soviet capital, easily establishing natural contact with the public. The hall accepts the jokes of the guests, as they say, "in mid-air," and this is not inhibited even by the peculiarities of the southern dialect in which the artists from across the ocean speak and sing.

In one of the songs, sung by the ensemble, they tell about a train, which carries from Florida to the north fruit, turkeys and various things, in which the fertile land of this state is rich. Figuratively speaking, one could say that today this train makes stops at Moscow, Leningrad and Riga. The American guys and girls sings here of their striving for peace, happiness and love. And this is the best confirmation that people of good will always understand one another.

N. AGISHEVA

Country music has enjoyed a blessing of sorts from Soviet authorities, who frown on rock music as decadent and remain suspicious of the religious motives of gospel (though modest amounts of the latter get by under the label of "people's church music"), for the Kremlin is prepared to admit country music on grounds that it speaks for the American working class. This made it all the more ironic that the Soviet bureaucrat was able to get the tickets to hear America's blue-collar sound, while the Russian worker couldn't afford it.

But Roy Clark and his colleagues (Buck Trent, the Oak Ridge Boys, and Sugah, Roy's 3-woman backup troupe) came to push songs, not ideologies. According to Clark's manager, Jim Halsey, the tour—"a year and a half in the making"—came about after Clark invited a Soviet trade delegation visiting Spokane to fly down to Las Vegas and see his show. Clark paid their air fare and the Frontier Hotel, where he was performing, picked up the Russians' tab for rooms and meals. The Russians liked what they heard, a cultural officer from the Soviet Embassy in Washington followed up with a visit to a performance in Pittsburgh, and the show was picked as part of the Soviet-American cultural exchange agreement. The troupe was asked to make the tour for free, sandwiching it between their other engagements.

The 13 performers, plus Halsey, Clark's wife Barbara and a sound team arrived with 5,400 lbs. of baggage, instruments and audio equipment in tow. They also brought 3,000 Roy Clark pictures, 5,000 Roy Clark lapel buttons, 2,164 Clark (no relation) candy bars and fistfuls of baby blue guitar picks. And they found themselves with some mixed emotions about the Soviet Union.

Mark Ellerby, the drummer with the Oak Ridge Boys, had served as a U.S. Army medic in Vietnam. "I was a pseudo-pacifist and didn't think I'd have a feeling," Ellerby recalled. "But when I got here it gave me a cold chill. There was fear, but some anger too. All the guys who'd gotten hit flashed through my mind. But it passed quickly."

Word of the show's arrival spread beforehand, partly through the popular Russian-language broadcasts of Voice of America but also in the word-of-mouth fashion that functions in the absence of a free press.

(Continued on page 60)



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COUNTRYMUSIC

STARS OF THE MONTH





JULY: WAYLON JENNINGS & JESSI COLTER

The All-Time A

by JOHN MORTHLAND



ROY ACUFF: At a time when country was evolving into country and western, Acuff stuck to the traditional, mountain style and became one of the biggest stars of them all. His name then became synonymous with the Grand Ole Opry.



CHET ATKINS: Considered country's leading guitarist hands down, Atkins is also one of the industry's prime movers; if the development of the Nashville Sound can be attributed to any one person, it would have to be him.



JOHNNY CASH: "The Man in Black" has been modern country music's strongest link to folk tradition, and his galvanizing stage presence and vocal style appealed to both young and old, rural and urban.



GLEN CAMPBELL: In 1967, when country music was starting to make consistent inroads on the pop charts, Campbell came up with the country-politan sound that turned the trick once and for all. Today, he's still as big as ever.



GENE AUTRY: Though he started as a fairly conventional hillbilly artist, his fame came as the biggest—and probably the best—of the singing cowboys. His overwhelming popularity confirmed that country's western elements were there to stay.



CARTER FAMILY: A.P., Sara and Maybelle were among the first country artists to make records, and thus defined for the rest of the world just what traditional Appalachian music was all about. Their nasal, close-harmony singing and guitarist Maybelle's melodic flat-picking influenced all who followed.

PHOTOS COURTESY COUNTRY MUSIC FOUNDATION: ROY ACUFF, JOHNNY CASH, GENE AUTRY, CARTER FAMILY, LEFTY FRIZZELL, GEORGE JONES, UNCLE DAVE MACON, BUCK OWENS, JIMMIE RODGERS, ERNEST TUBB, BOB WILLS, HANK WILLIAMS. COURTESY RCA: CHET ATKINS JOHN R. VAN BEEKON; WAYLON JENNINGS YVONNE HANNEMAN LORETTA LYNN. COURTESY MCA: BILL MONROE. UPI: ELVIS PRESLEY. PAUL LEVIN; MERLE HAGGARD. WSM: PATSY CLINE

11-Star Parade



PATSY CLINE: Though Kitty Wells preceded her as country's leading lady, Patsy became country's first true female superstar by crossing over onto the pop charts in the early Sixties.



MERLE HAGGARD: A staunch individualist known as the "Poet of the Working Man," Haggard caught the tone of these times, and told his own story as well, through his precise, evocative songs. He has also shown great perception as a sort of country music historian.



GEORGE JONES: For all his ups and downs, George has never failed to deliver the hits, and he has never been anything less than one of the purest, most moving country singers ever to step before a microphone.



KRIS KRISTOFFERSON: Kris was the right person in the right place at the right time. His early-Seventies songs set new standards for writers, and opened the doors for a whole generation of country talent.



LEFTY FRIZZELL: Though not an innovator in the strictest sense of the term, Lefty was quite simply one of the very best writers and singers of the honky tonk era.



WAYLON JENNINGS: Though his notoriety has come only in the last few years, Waylon has been turning out hit records for nearly a decade now. He is the figurehead for one of the most important musical movements of the Seventies.



LORETTA LYNN: For being the first woman CMA Entertainer of the Year, for her strong songwriting and singing, and for her inimitable class and tough-minded ways, Loretta epitomizes female country soul.

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UNCLE DAVE MACON: A walking storehouse of traditional music, an adept banjo player, a consummate entertainer, and one of country music's leading clowns, Uncle Dave was the first major star on the Grand Ole Opry.



BILL MONROE: The founding father of bluegrass and still its leading exponent after all this time, Monroe has become an institution in his own right.



BUCK OWENS: In the early Sixties, Buck forged the "West Coast Sound" that offered Nashville its first real challenge. With their dance beat, plaintive vocals, and shrieking instrumentation, his records helped keep country close to the honky tonks.



ELVIS PRESLEY: The country boy who beat the city slickers on his own terms, Elvis has come to symbolize 20th Century American popular music in all its aspects.



MARTY ROBBINS: Western forms experienced a big resurgence in the late Fifties and early Sixties thanks to this teen idol and his story songs. He had one of the most impressive strings of hits of that whole era.



JIM REEVES: He possessed such a smooth voice that when Reeves left traditional country instrumentation behind, he became the music's first real international superstar, as popular overseas as he was at home.



JIMMY RODGERS: A railroad bum and a true rake, "The Singing Brakeman" is widely recognized as country's first superstar. Though versatile enough to take in jazz and pop, it was the mournful "blue yodels" that became his trademark.



ERNEST TUBB: The inventor of honky tonk and popularizer of electric guitar, a distinct vocal stylist, and one of country music's leading ambassadors, Ernest has distinguished himself as a pioneering musician and an all-around good guy.



HANK WILLIAMS: His songs and performances speak so eloquently for themselves that Hank is an absolute shoo-in for anybody's country hall of fame. "The Hillbilly Shakespeare" brought country music into the modern world, and vice versa.



BOB WILLS: One of the most revolutionary acts in all of American popular music, Wills and His Texas Playboys put the western in country and western. They also contributed the swing, the dance beat, and the swashbuckling good spirits that are still felt today.

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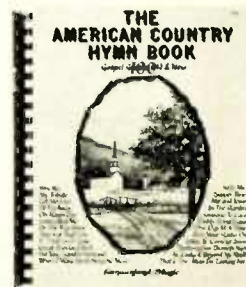
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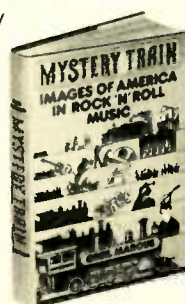
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The Moon Shines Bright

Mr. Ralph Mooney Is The Best Damn Steel Player In The World

by KEN STAMBAUGH

If there is indeed a Hillbilly Heaven as we've all been led to believe, then surely the angels play steel guitars instead of harps. Since angels are also wise, they probably try to sound like Ralph Mooney. "Moon," as he's always called, is likely very unenthusiastic about the idea of auditioning for such a heavenly band right now. He prefers to play steel with Waylon Jennings and the Wailors, who've been known to favor a more down-to-earth approach to the whole business.

There are two ways to describe Moon's approach to steel guitar. You

Ralph Mooney—a man with a history of inventing new licks and turnings. When he was growing up, there was nobody to copy.

can be objective and say that he's mastered the art of the *concise* run and solo. His playing fills in the gaps; when he takes a break, it doesn't override the others' playing; it forms a better unit. Precise picking blends into the whole, understating just how good Moon can be. He can also be described in terms with which all truckers and CB operators instantly identify—"Mercy, he puts the pedal to the metal and lets 'er whine." Which is true. However, Moon can shift through more musical gears than any diesel going up a mountain pass.

Distinctiveness and originality have always been a part of Moon's playing. As a matter of fact, his playing is what made the "Bakersfield Sound" of Buck Owens and Merle Haggard. At the time, Moon was living in L.A. and was merely making up licks as he went





Mooney on stage with Waylon Jennings. "Jessi's more country than Waylon," says Moon.

along. Owens would get him in the studio and say, "Let's get a new lick, Moon." Moon would try one and Buck would say, "That ain't gonna get it, Moon." So Moon would make another one until Buck was finally convinced. "You see," says Moon, "I was forced into it."

The whole story started earlier. Wynn Stewart was about to go on Capitol records, so he asked Moon to come up with a new sound. Not being aware of how difficult that was supposed to be, Moon just went ahead and did it. The main attribute of this sound was increased pedal work, creating pitches and tunings that hadn't been heard before. At this time Moon was also working for Skeets McDonald and Wanda Jackson, also on Capitol. Buck Owens heard all this and liked it (naturally), and that plaintive, strident steel soon became the most identifiable element in the Bakersfield Sound. At this time Wynn Stewart had a young bass player named Merle Haggard who also liked that playing, as did a lot of record

buyers. Moon might have become more famous, but he was reluctant to tour, as he had a growing family. Eventually he moved back to Las Vegas and played around there (on steel, I better add). Waylon Jennings, reasonably unknown at that instant, heard Moon at the Nugget and swore that he would have Moon pickin' for him someday. It appears that he kept his word.

Some people might think that the story just recounted sounds a little exaggerated. Actually, it's understated. Moon has had a *history* of inventing new licks and tunings. When he was growing up, there was nobody for him to copy. Bud Isaacs had only made two recordings using a pedal steel sound. What little Moon heard, he liked. Using ash wood and coat hangers, he chiseled out a steel guitar (using coat hangers for pedals came under the theory that if a pedal breaks, you can always find a coat hanger). Moon added a top string and a little high string to the guitar. He also came up with special pickups and

the aforementioned tunings. Later, Fender traded him a new steel guitar for the old one so that they could experiment with the pickups. Moon got his old one back after two years and put it in his shed. Somehow, due to combustion and the enclosed area, the guitar caught on fire. Moon buried it out in back of his house in Vegas.

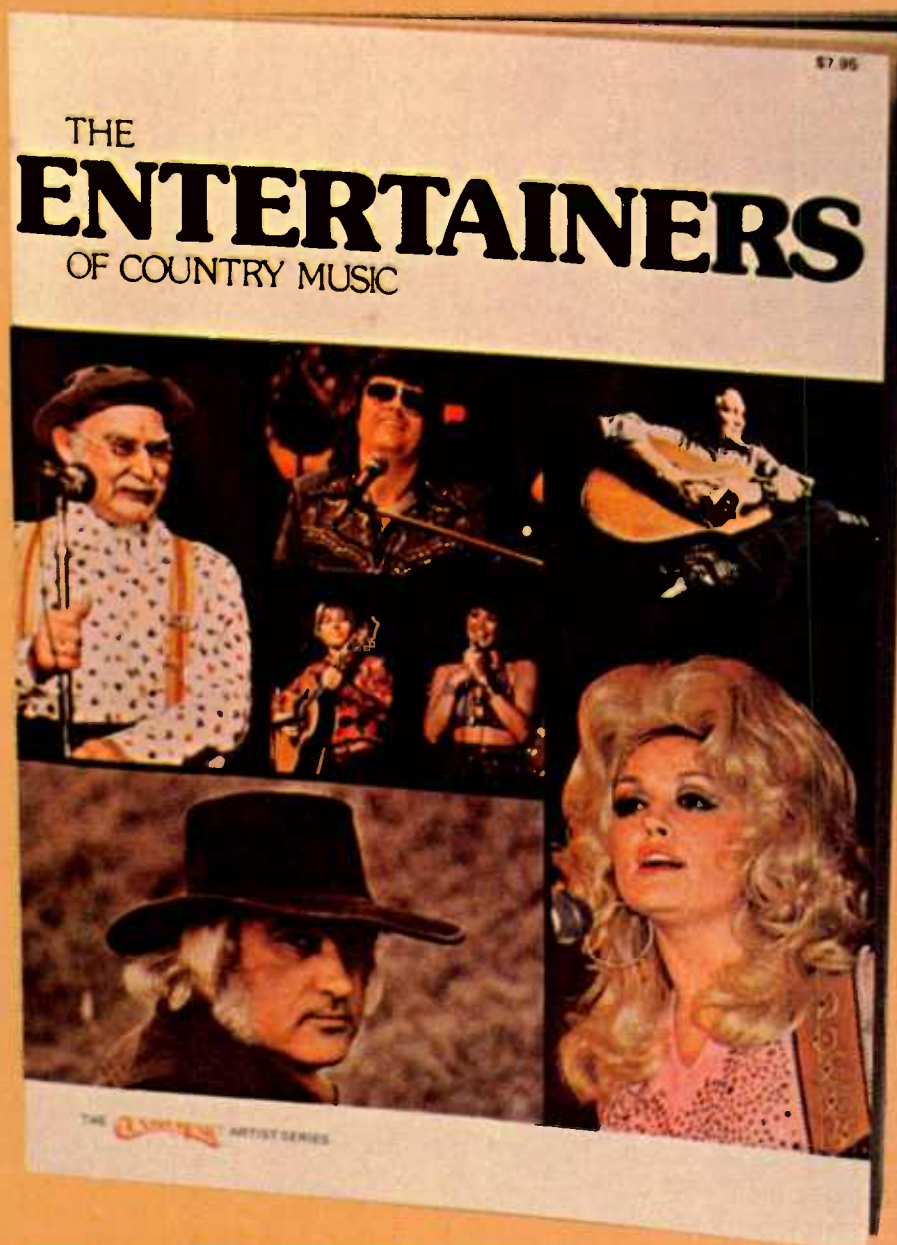
Moon's late lamented guitar created quite a visual impression on some people. When Wanda Jackson first saw it, Moon was supposed to play it on one of her sessions. She refused to let him use it until he demonstrated how well he could play on a homemade musical instrument. After that most people were so intent on listening that they forgot how it looked.

After accompanying Wanda Jackson, Wynn Stewart and Buck Owens, Moon played for Merle Haggard. He was even persuaded to go on a three-month tour, during which time he stole Hag's bus twice. The first time he was homesick, and it was about

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37° below in Minnesota. Fortunately for Merle, there was a big snowbank at the motel, and Moon didn't know how to drive the bus, so it stayed in the parking lot. Moon's driving ability had improved by the second time in Abilene, but he was thwarted once again. When he joined the Waylor, Waylon instructed the bus drivers not to leave their keys in the bus. Today, Moon doesn't even have a key to get on the bus. Perhaps Waylon isn't being overly cautious.

After the stint with Haggard ("I don't understand how he put up with all of it,") Moon moved to Texas to play in Wynn Stewart's band again. Frankly, though, they weren't getting much work. Sam Coleman advised Waylon that Moon might be available, so Moon went over and visited Waylon and Jessi when they played in Ft. Worth. Most of the time Waylon was just cracking jokes, so Moon figured he wasn't needed and left after an hour. Being a smart country boy who didn't want to appear over-anxious, Waylon waited till he got to Austin to call Moon up and ask him to play. Being a smart country boy who knew where his future might be,

Moon nonchalantly said, "Hell, yeah! I thought you'd never ask me!"

Even if he had never played steel, Moon would be famous as the writer of one of country music's all-time standards, "Crazy Arms." The feeling behind the song is a true story. In 1951 Moon resided in Las Vegas, playing steel in clubs and acquiring a drinking problem. This continued until his wife, Wanda, left him and went home to her mother in Los Angeles. Moon immediately started out with the lines, "Blue ain't the word . . ." Moon did go to L.A. to get her, and they are still very happily married.

These days, no alcohol is allowed in their household out of deference to Miz Moon (that's what everybody, including Moon, calls her). On the road Moon still drinks some, notably Seagram's Seven, but he doubts that he'll ever write another "Crazy Arms." As he explains it, "That came from the heart. I'm not really a songwriter. I've had other songs done; I write them all the time. I'm ashamed to present them because after writing a monster, I hate to present something that's not really good." This also

applies to his playing, as anybody with ears can tell.

Today, Moon is happy to be on the road with Waylon. The kids are grown, and Moon has fun telling or playing jokes. He has contributed, "The Moon is high and so am I," to the lore of country music. One semi-practical joke has to be related, too. Moon was in Canada and Hank Snow was on the show. Before the show, Moon found a mannequin and in an inspired fit of humor, put his own boots and clothes on the dummy, including a hat. The carefully out-fitted impostor was put in Hank Snow's dressing room, in the bathroom, in an obvious position, standing up. Nobody got to use the rest room, thinking it was occupied. Finally Moon broke down and told Hank. Somebody must have been relieved to hear the news. The dummy was then moved to a closet on the Waylor's bus, which broke down, causing everybody to board Hank's bus to Montana. The Waylor's bus was fixed and brought across the border empty except for the driver, who told the customs inspector that nobody was on the bus with him. As a routine check, the customs



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Moon can shift through more musical gears than any diesel going up a mountain pass.

inspector searched the bus and nearly had a heart attack when the dummy popped out of the closet.

On the serious side, Mooney said that the most basic changes he's noticed in country music are in the rhythms. "We still put the same notes in, really." The Waylor's also back-up Jessi Colter on tour, which prompts a question about the differences in playing steel for Jessi and for Waylon. "Jessi's more country than Waylon, believe it or not. She's a genius on piano. There's just a different feel; you can hear it in her singing. She's a gospel type singer."

On the road, Moon is Jessi Colter's favorite conversation partner. Waylon is Jessi's favorite singer. Moon does not sing; his guitar does.

Moon and Waylon express great admiration for each other when not together in the same room. In each other's presence, they are true modern cowboys who would rather hit a bad lick than accept a compliment in public. So they argue whenever one of them can express a viewpoint that the other can feel contrawise toward. This causes people who don't appreciate the finer rudiments of country debating to gossip. *That* causes Moon and Waylon to laugh. Nobody wins these

arguments; they just shift topics when the subject is exhausted.

On most nights, Moon is probably the best steel player in the world. But don't ask him about it; he'll blush and tell how great Curly Chalker and Lloyd Green are. Then he'll add, "Bud Emmons plays the truest notes, Jimmy Day plays with the most feeling, and Bud Isaacs, when he wants to pick, is still great." For opinions on Moon, ask Waylon ("The greatest"). Ask Johnna Yurcic, Waylon's manager, ("He's Superpicker"). Ask old friends Roger and Pattie ("Call him Supersteel"), or ask Richie Albright, drummer for the Waylor's ("One of the highlights of my musical career has been working with Ralph Mooney"). The Waylor's (Duke, Rance, Richie and Crank) affectionately call him "The Old Dude." His fans just call him Moon.

Shot Jackson (the "Sho" of Sho-Bud) once said a steel guitar could not be played in the tuning Moon uses—in which case we have heard a divine miracle, and praise the Lord. Or, for skeptics, we have all been under the influence of a drunken hallucination, in which case I don't intend to sober up for long. Face it: the Moon just shines. ■

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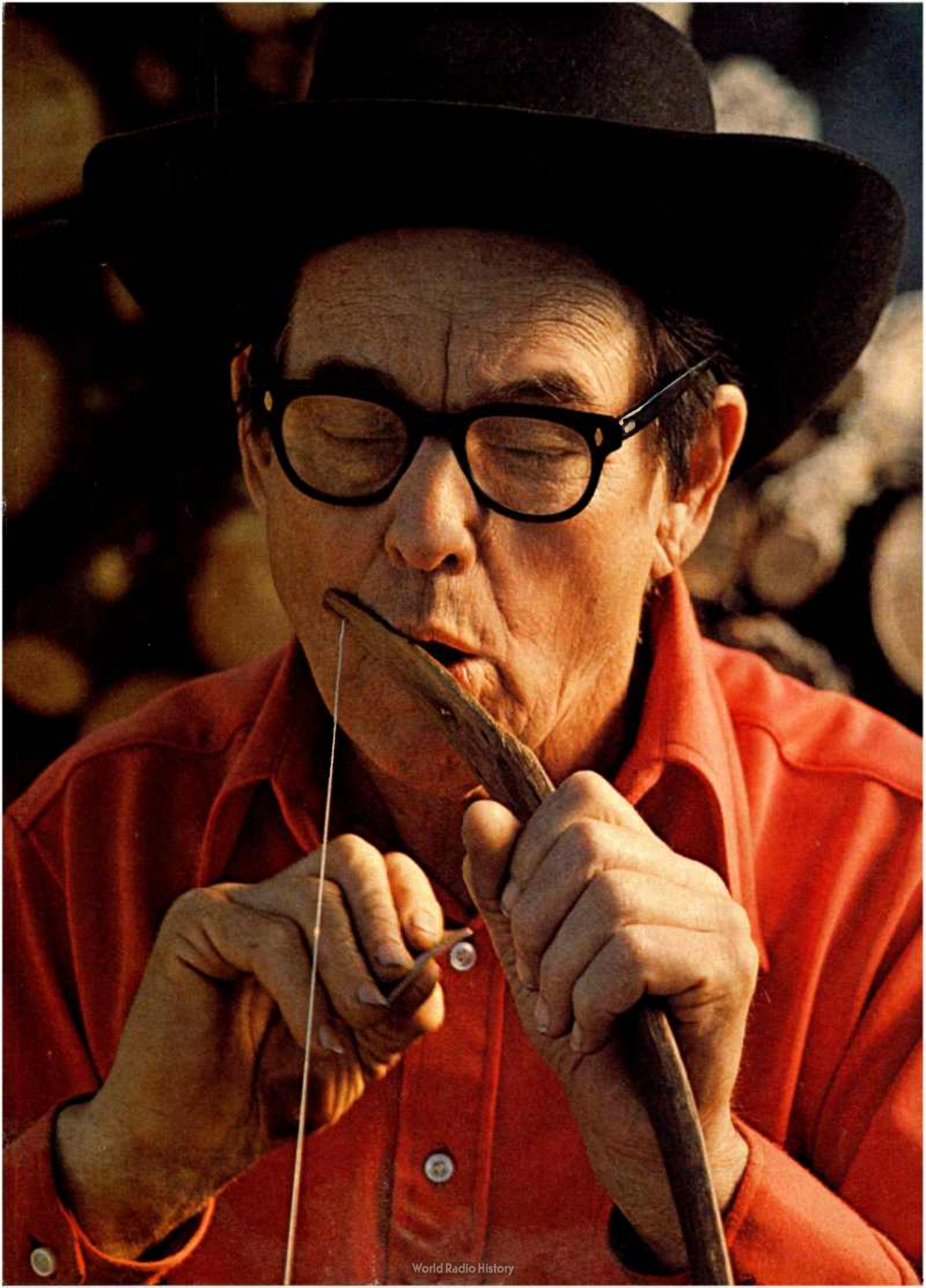
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JIMMY DRIFTWOOD

by NELLE PHELAN

MOUNTAINS, MUSIC & MAGIC

Thirty people—more or less—are coming for Sunday lunch at the old stone house Jimmy and Cleda Driftwood built, stone by stone themselves, in Timbo, Ark. That's "more or less" because besides the crew from Eastman Kodak here to do a spread for "Applied Photography," a group of Rackensack musicians, this reporter and a photographer (who were included only the night before), Jimmy keeps inviting anyone who happens by to "come on in!"

The host, who's best known for his song "Battle of New Orleans," bounds in and out of the back door, greeting each new arrival. "Before you come inside, you have to promise you'll make yourself at home."

Inside, Cleda is cooking. She's one-quarter Cherokee, and this morning, moving with incredible grace in moccasins and a long, red dress, she looks more like the princess Mooshatanio in Driftwood's song than a third grade teacher at Mountain View Elementary School—the role she fills on weekdays.

The musicians begin to arrive—some 24 of them—singly and in family groups. They range in age from 7 years to 83. And no one needs to tell them to make themselves at home. They fill the kitchen-den, (already furnished with an overwhelming collection of musical instruments) with their dulcimers, autoharps, harmonicas, guitars, fiddles and banjos.

It's noisy, but no one seems to mind. Above the din, Jimmy answers questions about the artifacts and antiques which crowd the living room. "You know I used to be a school teacher, and I still like to teach," he says. "Let me tell you about our apple trees. They are direct descendants of those that grew at Appomatox . . ."

We are an attentive group of students. But for a few minutes my mind wanders from the subject. *Country Music* has ex-

Jimmy Driftwood keeps the old sounds alive—with a pickin' bow (developed from the archer's longbow) and with a ballalaika donated by a Russian fan.



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His enthusiasm is contagious and you find there's still another Driftwood. Driftwood the salesman—the peddler of dreams and visions. And his open hearth-open heart approach has no boundary line.

“Even with the success we've had at the center, only a small percent of the public will actually hear our music. That's why I'm so happy about these college tours we're making with the Rackensackers . . . it's a great thing to take our music all over the country . . .”

We talk on into the night. In the mountains, night is almost tangible. The darkness is heavy—but peaceful. On the Driftwood Ranch the peace is enhanced by Jimmy's concern for every tree and creature living here.

“I wish you had been here early enough to see the four black coyotes on the hill this morning.” He's excited just remembering them. “They say you have to hunt quail or they become diseased. But I've got more quail on my land than I've ever had. And none of them are going to die of lead poisoning.”

The future of his land concerns him. “We would like to know someone would take care of it—and people could keep on enjoying it. You know, I just hate the thought of polluting the earth. When I was

a kid . . . there was a cemetery on the hill above a spring, and I never felt like I could drink that water.

“Cleda and I have talked about it. We want to be cremated. And what we would like . . . if we could be sure it was handled right . . . is to have the ashes of the first of us to die saved, and mingled with ashes of the last—then scattered . . . together . . . out on the hills.”

He stares into the fire for a moment—as complex a man as you could ever hope to meet. His talents have led him down many paths, but always in the same direction—along his own Wilderness Road to the next challenge, the next promise that lies ahead. Really, there is only one Jimmy Driftwood. And he doesn't want you to leave without a song.

“This is a love song,” he says, tuning up his ‘Grandpa Guitar.’ The curious old handmade pine instrument is dark with age, but the sound is still mellow.

The wood is burning down in the fireplace, sputtering and purring. The glow picks up the highlights of Cleda's long, black hair, as she moves slowly back and forth in an old high-back rocker.

“It's a love song. But it's a little different . . .” And softly, in a barely audible harmony, Cleda begins to sing along with him . . .

*Scatter my ashes o'er the mountains,
Let me sift down among the leaves,
Soon I'll be blooming on the hillside,
Speaking the language of the trees.*

The elms and oaks have been my dear companions,

The maples know I've always been a friend,

And when my dust has settled down around them,

They'll open up their doors and take me in:

(So scatter my ashes o'er . . .)

The violets have often heard my love song

*The honeysuckles know my heart is true,
And when you feel their fragrance in the moonlight,*

'Twill be my way of saying “I love you.”

(So scatter my ashes o'er . . .)

Sometimes you'll hear me whisper in the zephyr

Sometimes you'll hear me singing in the winds,

And when you hear me sighing in the pine trees,

You'll know for sure a true love never ends.

*So scatter my ashes o'er the mountains,
Let me sift down among the leaves,
Soon I'll be blooming on the hillside,
Speaking the language of the trees.**

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