

September 1976, One Dollar

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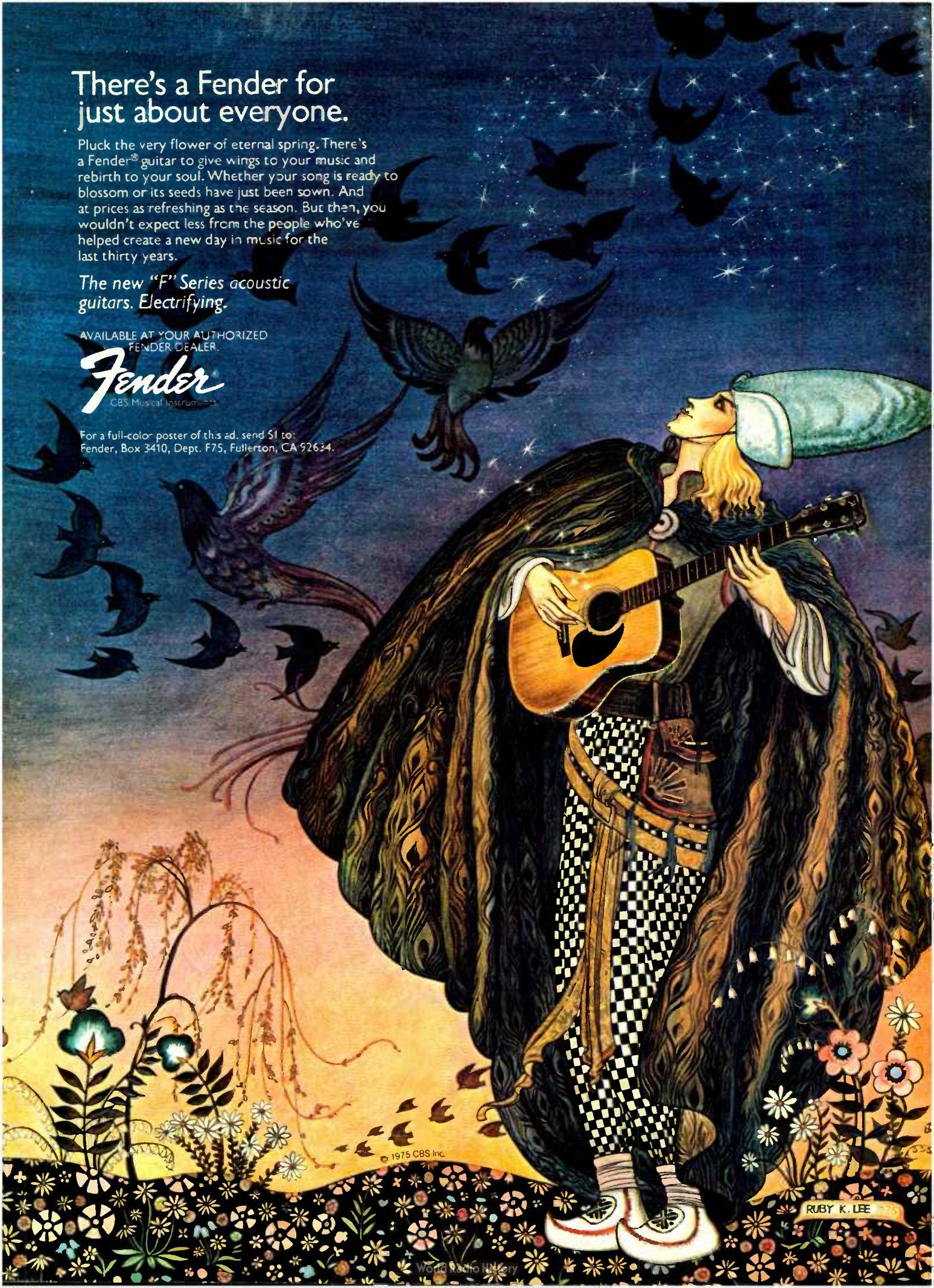
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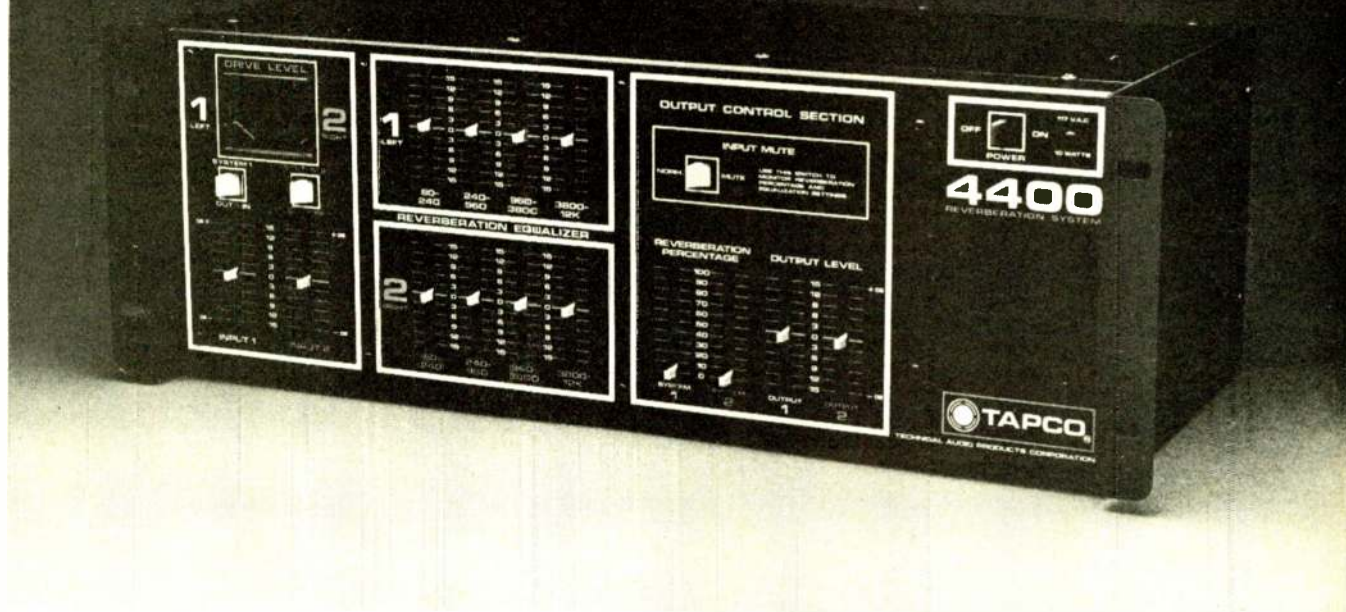
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# COUNTRY MUSIC

Volume 4, Number 12, September 1976

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COVER PHOTO: COURTESY, WARNER BROS.  
CENTERFOLD: GLOBE PHOTOS

## Coming Next Month:

Tammy Wynette\*\* Larry Gatlin\*\* Freddie Hart\*\*  
Mae Davis Centerfold\*\* Billy Joe Shaver\*\*



# People

## on the scene

by AUDREY WINTERS

**Tammy Wynette's** been very sick with an inner ear infection and bronchitis that she developed in England. Ex-hubby George Jones helped her out with her shows in Beaumont, Tex., and New Iberia, La. To add to her misfortune, a fire broke out in Tammy's 20-room Nashville home, doing an estimated \$100,000 worth of damage. The fire marshall said arson is suspected, and a full investigation is under way. . . . But things are not all bad. For Tammy's 34th birthday, George surprised her with a gold Thunderbird. Tammy and George keep appearing together, but close friends say nothing's brewing.

**Dottie West** recently played country hostess to **Emmylou Harris**, who was in Nashville to tape a guest spot on **Dolly Parton's** TV show, Dottie served a real down-home meal of pinto beans, ham



Emmylou Harris

hocks, turnip greens, mashed potatoes, cornbread and banana pudding. **Dolly** is taking the summer off from appearances and TV taping, for a rest. "When you know you've gone the limit and then try to do more, you're a fool," explains Dolly. . . . Look out for **Tanya Tucker** on your tube. She taped the **John Davidson** show and will be on the **Johnny Cash** TV Special this fall.

**Buck Owens** has been recording in Nashville, likes our Music City pickers. Buck, who has broken his 20 year relation-

ship with Capitol, has joined Warner Bros.

**Don Gibson** is now represented by Nashville's Top Billing Agency. Don's new Hickory release is "Doing My Time."

**R.W. Blackwood** of the **Blackwood**



Don Gibson

**Singers** has signed with Capitol.

**Archie Campbell's** as handy with a paint brush as he is with a microphone. He recently had a showing of his water colors at Nashville's United Artists Tower. . . . **Nat Stuckey's** also got a way with a paint brush—the home fix-it kind. He's been busy putting the finishing touches on an addition to his house, which he'll use as his writing nook.

**Billy Jo Spears** is involved in a game of musical houses. She just bought a Spanish home from her producer **Larry Butler**. Butler then bought Epic/Columbia producer **Billy Sherrill's** home. Sherrill, in turn, purchased a new home on Woodlawn Blvd. . . . **Freddy Fender's** bought a new house in Champion, Tex.

**Wayne Kemp** is all smiles over his song, *One Piece at a Time*, which has been a giant hit for **Johnny Cash**. He's also very happy with **Emmylou Harris'** recording of his *Feeling Single—Seeing Double*. Looks like Emmylou might record a duet with **Buck Owens**. Emmylou's single, *Together Again*, was written by Buck.

**June Carter** left \$200,000 worth of

jewelry in a hotel room in British Columbia during a concert tour with husband, Johnny. A maid found the jewelry and turned it over to local authorities. Johnny turned a copy of his book *Man in Black* over to the maid, along with a check for \$500.

**Jack Green** and **Jeannie Seely** were two of the slickest dressed performers at the Eighth Annual International Festival of Country Music in Wembley, England. They both wore white outfits decorated with rhinestones and a golden eagle, topped by red white and blue capes. . . .

**Brenda Lee's** off to Japan again. She's been touring there for the past ten years, and her songs are best Japanese sellers. . . . **Freddy Fender** is making his first trip to Europe. He'll be doing concerts and television appearances in Holland,



Nat Stuckey

Germany and England. . . . **Nat Stuckey** and his wife, Anne, will soon be off on a cruise aboard the U.S. Mardis Gras, bound to San Juan and Nassau.

**George Morgan's** widow, **Anna**, has married old family friend, **Paul Trainer**. Paul, an accountant, is a former priest, and is said to have christened some of the Morgan children. . . . **Joni Lee**, daughter of **Conway Twitty**, has named her band "The New Deal." Band members include her new husband **Chris Prater** on drums, **David Stout** on bass, **Larry Black** on



# Are you missing half the joy of your guitar?

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

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

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

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

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A **KAMAN** COMPANY

guitar and **Raymond Hughey** on piano. . . . Hee Haw's **Lulu Roman** and husband, Gary, are expecting. Lulu has had a lot of bad publicity about drugs, but that's all in the past. She's given it all up for the Lord. She hasn't taken drugs in three years and says she's happy for the first time in her life.

**Wanda Jackson** also has had a deep religious experience. She says it was a big decision to give up singing in night clubs two years ago, when the experience occurred. She now only plays auditoriums, rodeos and fair dates, and is busier than ever. She's always sure to include gospel tunes in her act.



Mickey Gilley

When **Mickey Gilley** completes the song *My Flame Is Out Burning Another Honkey-Tonk Down*, his piano goes up in smoke. It literally brings down the house.

**Jerry and Homerline Clower** gave their son Ray, an honor graduate of Mississippi State University, a brand new Dodge truck. **Tandy Rice**, Clower's personal manager, threw in a gift certificate for a year's supply of gasoline. . . . **Johnny Cash** is also now a college man. The Man in Black put on a cap and gown to receive an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree from National University in San Diego, Calif. In conferring the degree, Dr. David Chigos, the university's president, said, "Johnny Cash's dedication and professionalism have inspired millions throughout the world."

**Sherry Bryce** is flying high. She's joined MCA, has a new single out, *Pretty Lies*, and has recently married **Jack Sanders**, a business associate of the Jim Halsey Agency in Tulsa, Okla., and owner of some radio stations. They were married while circling Las Vegas in an airplane chartered especially for the occasion. The couple plan to live in Wichita, Kans. when they are grounded.

**Kitty Wells** hosted the opening day ceremonies of the Tennessee Bicentennial Arts Celebration at the War Memorial Plaza in Nashville. The Queen of Country Music performed along with husband

**Johnny Wright** and son **Bobby Wright**, co-star of TV's "McHale's Navy" . . . . **Willie Nelson's** Annual 4th of July Picnic was held after all. Also, plans for the Kutztown, Pa. Good Times Arts and Music Festival are going full speed ahead. The lineup includes the likes of **Freddy Fender**, **Tammy Wynette**, and **Emmylou Harris**. There are camping facilities near the Fair Grounds where the event will take place labor day weekend.

Opryland is really going places. The City Planning Commission approved further development of the complex to include a luxury hotel and convention center. . . . **Cledus Maggerd** made his debut at the Opry recently, and got a rave reaction from the audience. **Roy Acuff** was backstage that night. He's still recuperating from his heart attack, and is not quite ready to go onstage yet. Acuff's doctor says that Roy might be performing within two months, however, if he continues to progress at the current rate. . . . **Grant Turner**, "The Dean of Opry Announcers" was overwhelmed by a surprise birthday party at Tootsie's Orchid Lounge recently. Among those gathered were **Jeannie Seely** and husband, **Hank Cochran**, Turner's fellow Opry-announcer, **Hairl Hensely**, **Fiddlin' Sid Harkreader**, one of the Opry's earliest featured performers, and the staff of Ernest Tubbs's Record Shop. Turner, 64, said "I tell you, they sure pulled a good one on me, it was the biggest surprise I've ever had in my life."

**Ramona Jones**, (**Grandpa's** wife), joined musicians from the Ozark Folk Center, in Arkansas, to provide some



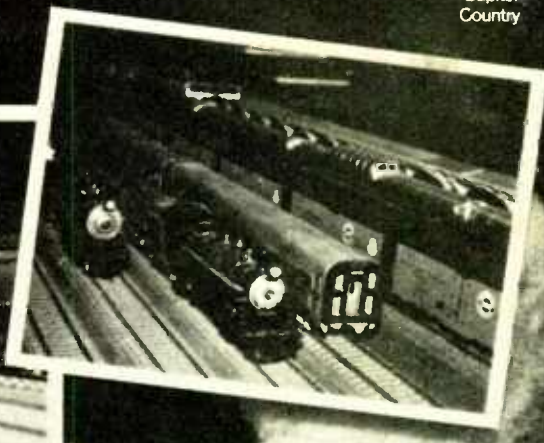
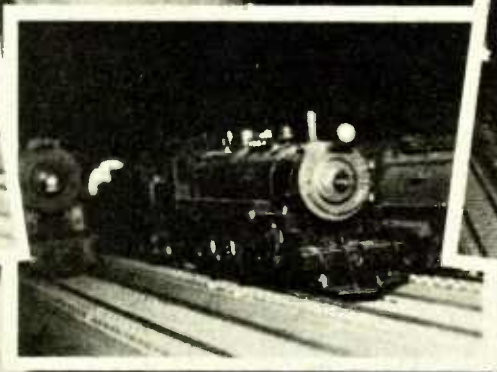
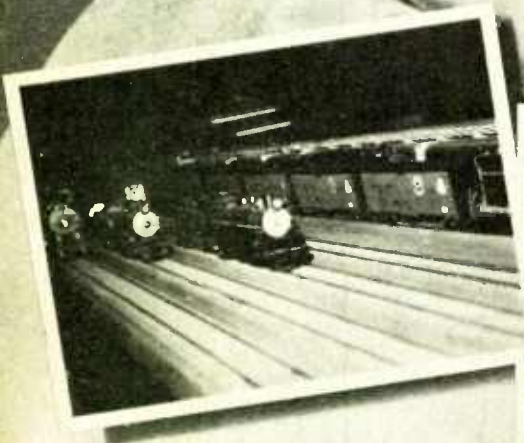
Ramona Jones

good ole mountain music for **King Carl XVI** of Sweden during his bicentennial visit to the U.S. The setting was strictly jet set luxury at **Debbie** and **Winthrop Paul Rockefeller's** elegant Winrock Farm, high atop Petit Jean Mountain. The menu and entertainment, however, were strictly down home. There was barbecue meat, turnip greens and cornbread, and pecan pie. The king had seconds on everything, and took home gifts of Ozark handicrafts, including a cornshuck doll and a Terry Denton woodcarving. ■



MY LOVE AFFAIR  
**MERLE HAGGARD**  
AND THE STRANGERS  
WITH TRAINS

This is Merle's tribute to railroads and their place in America's heritage. Includes Red Lane's "The Coming And The Going Of Trains", Ronnie Reno's "Union Station", Dolly Parton's title song, and Merle's current hit single, "Here Comes The Freedom Train".





# Hillbilly Central

by HAZEL SMITH



Left to right: Johnny Cash, Freddy Fender; Bill Anderson and Mary Lou Turner; Tompall Glaser.

Friends and neighbors, if you plan to journey to Music City in the immediate future, I advise you to bring your air conditioner. It is hot. Why it's so hot that a couple of chicks went swimming in the nude at one of the local pools, and that caused a splash!

**John R. Cash**, one of the better good guys was so happy with his producer, **Don Davis** finding him the hit song, *One Piece At A Time* that he gifted him with a brand new, black 'n shiny '76 Fleetwood Cadillac. . . . **John Hartford** in Music City doing some recording with the **Dillard's**. Remember them from the old Andy Griffith TV show? . . . And wouldn't you know, producer, **Ron Huffkin** and **Shel Silverstein** escorted **Dr. Hook** to the European area for a knock 'em down and drag 'em out six weeks. Glad to see that their LP *A Little Bit More* got some good country reviews. 'Course all my loyal readers know that my self-penned song, *Bad Eye Bill* is on the LP.

I saw **Bobby Bare** dining at Irelands with RCA Records head honcho, **Jerry Bradley**. By the way, Bobby caught a big fish last week, and got his picture in the paper. . . . **Chuck Glaser** in Glaser studio doing a little production on **Bob Shane**, who was formerly with the **Kingston Trio**. By the way, Chuck is recuperating nicely following a massive stroke in February '75. Chuck told me, "My wife Bev went into the chapel and prayed at St. Thomas Hospital. I know that her prayers were heard, because they had performed the last rites when I was admitted."

**Jerry Reed** and a bunch of other great folks saw an advanced showing of the new Burt Reynolds flick, *Gator*, also starring Jerry Reed. Good movie. And Jerry had a good role and done good.

**Connie Eaton's** getting married, and besides, she called my office today!! . . . Hear **Jeannie Pruitt's** talking to WKDA's

Program Director and man-about-town, **Mike Hanes**. Jeannie is an Alabamian, very pretty and just as unpretentious as me. Love to hear her rap. She talks a mile a minute.

Me and **Porter Wagoner** stopped at the same red light over here on the corner of Demonbruen (call me if you can't pronounce that word), and 12th. Porter was combing his golden locks which may or may not be store bought (the color that is). What the heck!!! I went platinum, so Porter can do what he wants to do.

**Bill Monroe**, who is busier'n a set of jumper cables at a country funeral these days, what with all the bluegrass festivals, bought himself a Silver Eagle bus. . . . Well, **Waylon** done it!! Yep, **Waylon Jennings** and lovely **Jessi Colter** broke all records for yesterday, today, and tomorrow at Harrah's at Lake Tahoe. Seems the fire marshall wasn't there and they let in too many people. So **Elvis**, sorry honey, they broke your record too.

The brand new Ernest Tubb Record Shop just off Music Row is looking mighty fine these days, and by the time you read this, I'm sure that the world famed Midnight Jamboree will have moved to the new location from Lower Broadway. Jamboree announcer, **Grant Turner** says that **Ernest** and son **Justin** will continue their record orders from the old location, and of course fans will still be able to purchase recordings at the historic site. But the Saturday night picking, grinning and singing will be from the new locale, along with the selling of records.

Met **Gwen** (Mrs. **Hank, Jr.**) **Williams** at Headmasters where she and other music City lovelies like **Jessi Colter**, **Tammy Wynette** and **Ms. Hazel** have their hair done. Gwen may be the ex-Mrs. **Williams** by the time you read this. . . . Is **Tom T. Hall** going to record a bluegrass LP?? Heard that! Following the successful

S-E-X-Y (my mama won't let me say that word) duets of **Bill Anderson/Mary Lou Turner**, lovely **Mary Lou** has a S-E-X-Y single . . . on MCA, naturally. . . . **Jessica James** and **Joni Lee** are MCA recording artists who are pretty daughters of MCA recording artist (naturally) **Conway Twitty**. . . . *Love Me To Sleep Tonight* on Republic Records by **Mike Yager** should be picked up by a major-major label. Good singing, great song.

**Loretta Lynn's** son, **Ernest Ray Lynn** traveling on the road with mama and picking guitar and singing these days. . . . The original **Carter Sisters**, **June**, **Helen** and **Anita** are performing with the **Johnny Cash** show these days, doing the old Carter Family songs that we all know and love. I cannot remember not loving country music, and I certainly cannot remember not loving the Carter Family songs. And it saddens me to know that **Mama Maybelle** isn't feeling the best these days.

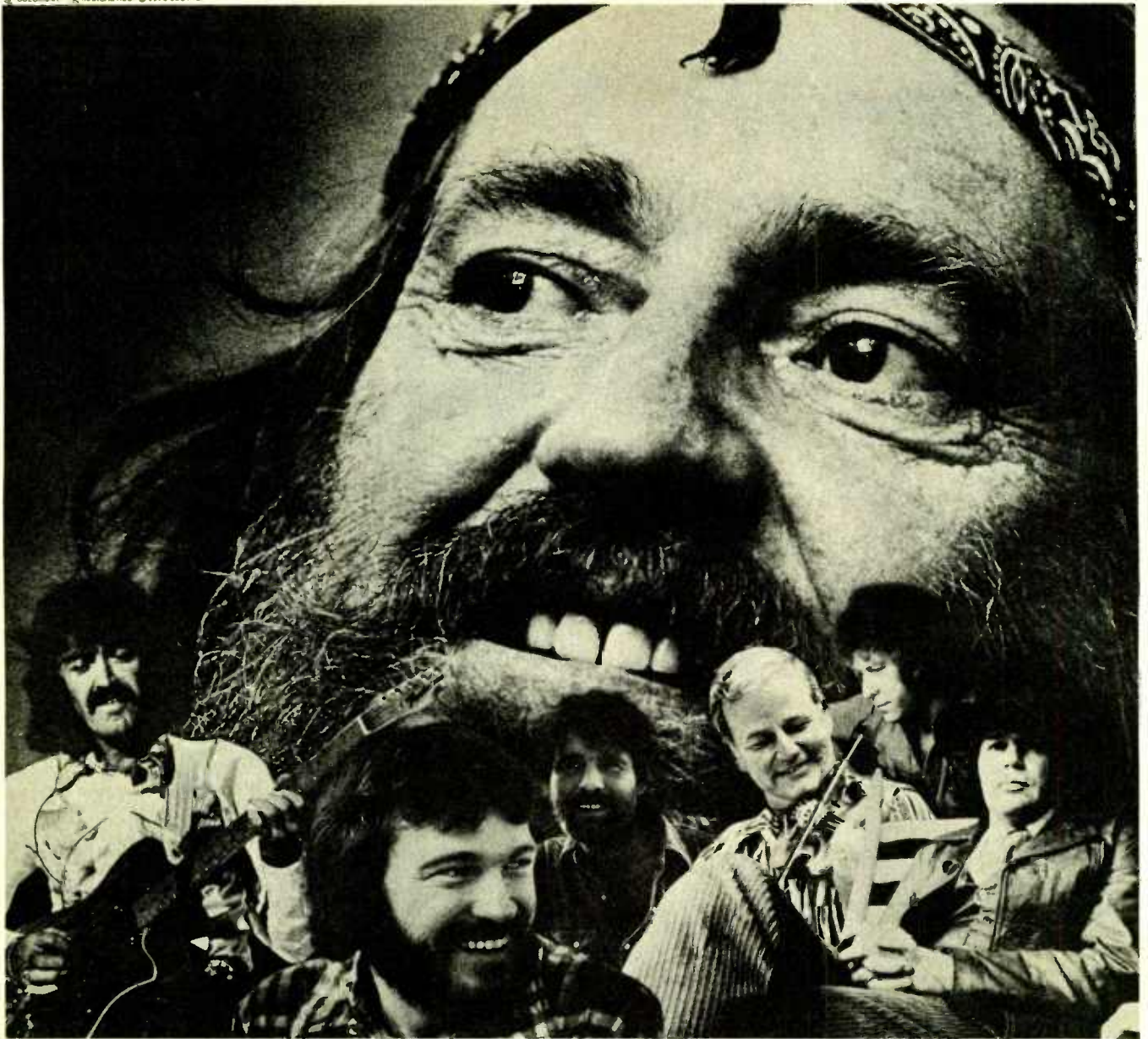
Can you believe it!! **Freddy Fender** doing a Christmas LP already!! That's the word I get from **Lee Merson**, who ought to know. He is good friends with **Huey Meaux** and **Mickey Moody** who produce and engineer Fender's sessions in your Houston area.

**Jack "Cowboy" Clement** performing at Exit/In, dedicated a song to his soon to be ex-brother-in-law, **Waylon Jennings**. Yep, looks like there might be an end to the Sharon/Cowboy episode. Another good thing comes to an end. . . . **Larry Gatlin** is a great writer and performer. Could be the next **Kristofferson**. . . . **Bill Monroe** records live bluegrass LP. . . . His second Monroe amazes me. His energies are endless.

**Buck Owens** records in Music City for Warner Brothers. First Music City recording in five years. **Tompall** doing new LP. **Waylon's** new LP out by this reading.

(Continued on page 63)





Left to right: Jody Payne, Milton Carroll, Bill Callery, Johnny Gimble, Darrell McCall, David Allan Coe. Representation by Neil C. Reshen

**WILLIE NELSON**  
**THE SOUND IN YOUR MIND**  
 including:  
 I'd Have To Be Crazy  
 If You've Got The Money I've Got The Time  
 That Lucky Old Sun  
 Medley: Funny How Time Slips Away - Crazy - Night Life

**MILTON CARROLL**  
**BLUE SKIES**  
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 You Don't Know What You Got Till You Lose It  
 Sing All Night (Life's A Twisting Road)  
 Good Old Rock & Roll

**DAVID ALLAN COE**  
**Lone Star Records Redneck**  
 including:  
 Free Born Rambler  
 Family Reunion (Lined On the Run)  
 When She's Got Me Where She Wants Me  
 Dakota The Dancing Bear (Part I)

**BILL CALLERY**  
 including:  
 The First Showboat (with Luke Jacked Lover)  
 Lory: The Pot Can't Heat The Kettle Black

**A label just for Willie and his friends.  
 Columbia/Lone Star Records and Tapes.**





## Charley Pride Digs Chinese Food

"I have been lucky—blessed in fact," beams country super-star Charley Pride, "on the number of truly fantastic cooks in my family. First and foremost, there was my mother. She was a whiz at almost every Southern delicacy you can name—from fruit preserves and pies to collard greens and black-eyed peas and cornbread. Every time I have a sweet potato pie I think of her! My dad is also an excellent cook. But please don't let me forget my wife Rozene! She's more than a good cook. She's creative in the kitchen and is not afraid to use her imagination. Rozene had a good teacher, though—her mother. It's a wonder they just don't roll me down the road! But then all mothers and wives are good cooks, right?"

Charley and Rozene live in a beautiful 12-room contemporary house on one acre of land in suburban Dallas, with their three children, Dion, and Angela, and Kraig who graduated high school last year. The Prides share their roost with their dogs, a Yorkie and a German shepherd.

Rozene says that the only thing her husband "enjoys more than eating when he gets home from the road is just sitting in his easy chair and watching television." For relaxation, Charley also goes out annually for spring training with a ball league in Florida (he once played baseball for Memphis and Detroit in the Negro American League). Rozene spends much of her spare time bowling (she has participated in several Dallas and regional tournaments) and, of course, cooking.

"Charlie comes from Sledge, Mississippi," she says, "so you can please him with anything really Southern. But I have also discovered he has a weakness for Chinese food. So I try to combine the two."

### ROZENE'S CHINESE CHICKEN SALAD

One frying chicken—marinated, baked, and shredded.

Use this basic marinade recipe:

1 cup soy  
 ½ cup sherry  
 1 clove of minced garlic  
 ¼ to ½ cup sugar  
 1 tsp. minced ginger

Combine all ingredients. Marinate meat several hours or overnight.



Charley Pride's family always enjoyed good cooking. So his wife, Rozene, has had a pretty tough act to follow in that department. Here are her favorite Chinese dishes.

by ELLIS NASSOUR

For the chicken salad:

Shredded chicken  
 4 green chopped onions  
 6 to 8 rakkyzd (scallions)  
 2 tsps. white sesame seeds  
 1 tsp. sesame oil  
 1 tsp. dry mustard  
 1 tsp. holsin

Mix ingredients thoroughly, then add ½ lb. won ton (optional).

### SWEET & SOUR BAKED BEANS

1 can (1 lb. 11 oz.) New England-style baked beans, undrained  
 1 can (1 lb.) dark red kidney beans, drained  
 1 can (1 lb.) green lima beans, drained  
 2 small (5 oz.) cans dried lima beans,

drained  
 8 slices bacon  
 4 large onions  
 1 tsp. salt  
 1 tsp. dry mustard  
 ½ to 1 cup brown sugar  
 ½ tsp. garlic powder (optional)

Pan fry bacon till crisp and drain. Peel onions and cut into rings. Place them in skillet. Add sugar, mustard, garlic powder, salt, and vinegar. Cook 20 minutes, covered. Add onion mixture to beans, then follow with crumbled bacon. Pour into 3 qt. casserole. Bake in moderate oven (350°) for 1 hour. Yield: About 12 servings.

### SWEET & SOUR PORK

1 lb. pork, cubed  
 1 green bell pepper  
 1 yellow onion  
 1 carrot  
 1 small can pineapple chunks  
 ¾ cup cornstarch  
 ¾ cup flour  
 2 tsp. oil  
 1 tsp. soy sauce

### Marinade

½ cup sherry  
 ½ cup soy  
 3 tsps. cornstarch

Marinate pork for at least one hour. Cut pepper and onion into inch squares. Slice carrot thin. In a paper bag, coat pork with ¾ cup flour and ¾ cup cornstarch. Deep fry the pork (in a wok, if possible) and set aside in warm oven. Stir-fry pepper, onion, carrot, and pineapple in oil for 1 minute. Remove from wok, drain and pour over pork cubes. Serve meat and vegetables with rice and a bowl of sweet-and-sour sauce\*.

### \*Sauce

¾ cup sugar  
 ¼ cup soy  
 ½ cup plus 2 tsps. red wine vinegar  
 ¾ cup water  
 3 tsps. cornstarch  
 ½ tsp. garlic powder

Mix all ingredients. Cook over low heat till thickened, stirring constantly. ■



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# Country News

## Hank Williams Day In Ala.

The Third Annual Hank Williams Memorial Celebration, held near Hank's birthplace in Georgiana, Ala., drew an enthusiastic crowd of more than 6,000 fans. The crowd got a chance to mingle with friends and relatives of their late hero, and whooped and hollered during day-long concerts—mostly local talent—generously sprinkled with Williams' tunes. The highlight of the event, was the arrival of Hank's son, Hank Williams Jr., who treated the crowd to an hour of picking and singing. It was only Hank Jr.'s second public appearance since his near-fatal fall from a Montana mountain some months ago. Hank seemed in fine spirits as he signed autographs, and posed for pictures beside the historical marker commemorating his father's birthplace.

ELAINE HOBSON MILLER



Hank Williams Jr.

## JIMMIE RODGERS' PAL IS OUT OF PRISON

Raymond E. Hall, the man who says he wrote a number of Jimmy Rodgers' songs, is out of prison and living in Memphis, Tennessee. Hall, now 73, was featured in our February, 1975 issue, in a prison interview describing his friendship with Rodgers in the twenties and thirties.



Photo: Charlyn Zlotnik

That story jogged the memories of many readers, among them Memphis

songwriter, Daisy Bobb. "I used to hear my mother talk about Jimmie Rodgers and a Mr. Hall," Ms. Bobb relates. "My mamma knew Jimmie Rodgers because her father was a railroad man like Jimmie was. I wrote to Mr. Hall and found out it was the same man." The songwriter eventually volunteered to be Hall's sponsor, thus facilitating his release.

Currently, Hall's more recent songs have been brought around by Daisy Bobb to the offices of Johnny Cash, Charley Pride and others. As for his claims on the Rodgers material, Hall's attorney, Kenneth Mahand, says "we're making an investigation." ■

## Watch This Face



### THE MARSHALL TUCKER BAND

While armies of Nashville musicians are burning prayerful candles with the hopes of putting a cross-over country hit on the pop charts, the Marshall Tucker Band, one of the South's premier rock groups, has accomplished exactly the opposite. Their *Fire on the Mountain*, a tribute to fellow southern rocker, Charlie Daniels, was an instant success on the country charts. There's also the recent Hank Williams Jr. album, featuring the Tuckers' Toy Caldwell pickin', and two Marshall Tucker standards, *Losin' You* and *Can't You See*. Not to mention a gold record for the *Marshall Tucker Band* album.

Bassist Tommy Caldwell (Toy's brother) feels the group—which hails from Spartanburg, S.C.—did not attract its country following by accident:

"Country pickers have always known that there really wasn't any difference in the music. Everything we say, write and play is country-tinted. That's our roots.

MICHAEL BANE



## OPRY STARS GO COMMERCIAL

Hank Snow, Faron Young, Jan Howard, and Jean Shepard are the Fender Musical Instruments' singing spokesmen on the company's Grand Ole Opry radio commercials for the 1976-77 season. The commercials will give the four artists a chance to show off their own talents as well as Fender products, tackling tongue-twisting lyrics such as these: "Pick the guitar that picky pickers pick," and "picky pickers pick a Fender."

Each of the four stars was selected because of his great popularity in the country music field. Hank Snow, the "singing ranger," has been one of the best-loved country performers since the forties—his first appearance on the Grand Ole Opry was in 1950. Jan Howard first appeared on the Opry in the early '60s and has had a substantial string of hits. Jean Shepard, with 23 albums to her credit, is also a frequent performer on the show. Faron Young has recorded 500 songs in 22 years and can be seen on a wide range of national television shows, ranging from interviews on NBC's *Today* to country-western specials in both the United States and Canada.



Hank Snow sings for Fender

Hank, Jan, Jean, and Faron will display the virtues of five Fender products—electric guitars, electric basses, banjos, amplifiers and the new Fender steel guitars, in the commercials.

## Channing & Pierce Team Up

Carol Channing, one of the brightest stars of the Broadway stage, has gone country. The "Hello, Dolly" girl was in Nashville to record an album with none other than Webb Pierce.

"I'm really delighted," says Carol. "Anyone can find common ground with Webb. He's such a nice person."

While in Nashville, Carol and Webb appeared on the Captain Kangaroo TV show,



Left to right: Bob Keshan (Captain Kangaroo), Carol Channing and Webb Pierce.

singing "Tennessee," a new Pierce song which will be on the album. The dynamic duo even did a medley together on the Grand Ole Opry.

Carol does not think all this is so unusual.

"I think I have a right to sing country," she maintains. "It's inside me. My father was from Augusta, Ga. He knew the songs from the Georgia pines. I learned to sing by singing with him."

## CALLING ALL COUNTRY COOKS

Here at *Country Music* we're trying to put together a good, essential recipe book for down-home country cooking—the traditional and not-so-traditional country dishes that could just disappear in the next twenty years or so. We need your help in this project. We've already gotten many recipes from the stars of country music. Now we're looking for *your* recipes.

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**KATE SMITH - ANLI-1135 SPECIAL \$2.98**  
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# Conway Fulfills a Dream

For one day during the month of May, Conway Twitty brought joy and smiles into the lives of an Edgewood, Kentucky, family which has been plagued with tragedies.

Mrs. Marion Smith has gone through three operations for cancer; her daughter Anna, 29, and son Kenny, 15, are terminally ill with muscular dystrophy and have been crippled since they were infants; and Mr. Smith died last year of cancer, leaving the family in debt with no money for bills, food, or medical care. The ramshackle Smith house was also further endangering Anna and Kenny's life span.

Conway read in the National Enquirer of how readers donated money for a new home, trust funds, and medical attention (to date over \$165,000 has been raised—the money is administered by a Kentucky bank). Twitty heard that he has been the bedridden Anna's life-long idol. With his own daughter Joni seriously ill in a Nashville hospital, Conway understood even more the desperate plight of the Smiths. Enroute to a concert date in Cincinnati, the singer detoured his \$180,000 tour bus through Edgewood to pay a surprise visit to Anna, who is paralyzed from the neck down.

Anna, who was laying in her bed gazing out of her window, was in a state of shock when she saw the bus with Twitty's name emblazoned on it pull up outside the house.

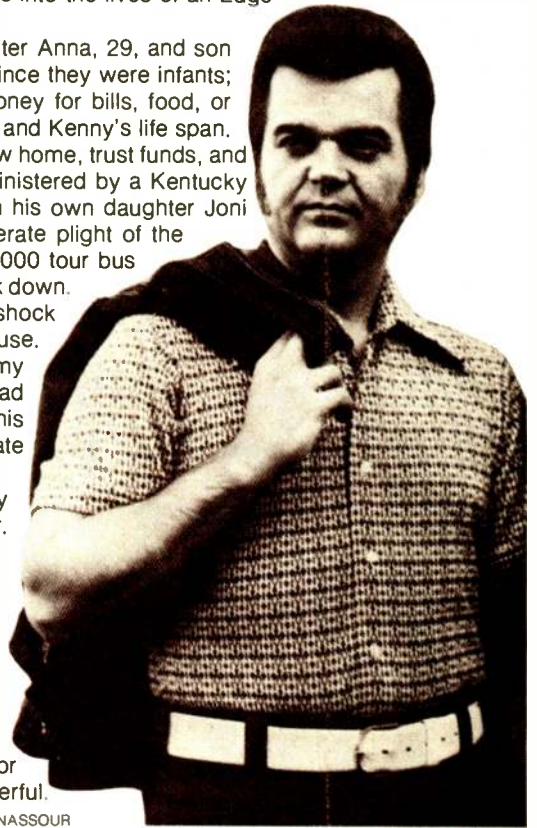
"Conway, Conway!" she exclaimed. "Is that really you? I can't believe my eyes!" When Conway calmed the shrieking Anna he told her, "Honey, I just had to come see you." He kissed Anna and presented her with a gift of tapes of all his records. Then he pulled out his guitar and played Anna's favorites in a private concert for an hour.

"How would you like to sing along with me?" Conway asked Anna. She gladly joined him in a duet of *Don't Cry, Joni*, the song Twitty recorded with his daughter. "Hey, this gal has a good voice!" Conway said as Anna beamed.

"I just never expected to meet Conway Twitty in our living room," Kenny explained. "Anna's eyes were popping! I've never seen her so happy. It was fabulous! This guy has got to be a great man."

With tears running down her face, Anna said, "I'll treasure this day for the rest of my life! It's been wonderful. I still can't believe it."

ELLIS NASSOUR



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## Soap Double Contest



Actress Mary Kay Place (left) plays Loretta on TV. At right, is look-alike Susan Miller.

and country fans thronged to the saloon's First Annual Mary Hartman Look-Alike Contest. The biggest hit that night—getting even more audience reaction than the numerous Mary Hartman's on view—was Susan Miller, who came as Loretta Haggers—Mary's country singing neighbor. Susan not only looks like Loretta, she took on all the soap queen's mannerisms as she sang country-style versions of *Born to Lose* and *Tom Dooley*. A country girl from Paris, Tex., Susan is Loretta's biggest fan:

"I think Loretta is the purest, most sweetest person on the show. I identify with her."

The Mary Hartman mania stalking the country reared its head recently at the Eagle Creek Saloon, a popular San Francisco country music club. Hundreds of TV

The judges agreed. She walked off with \$50 and a kitchen TV set—the better to watch her idol on.

HOWARD KLEIN



From being nervous and pregnant and poor in Butcher Holler to living with wealth and fame as the queen of country music—this is Loretta's own story...

# Loretta Lynn

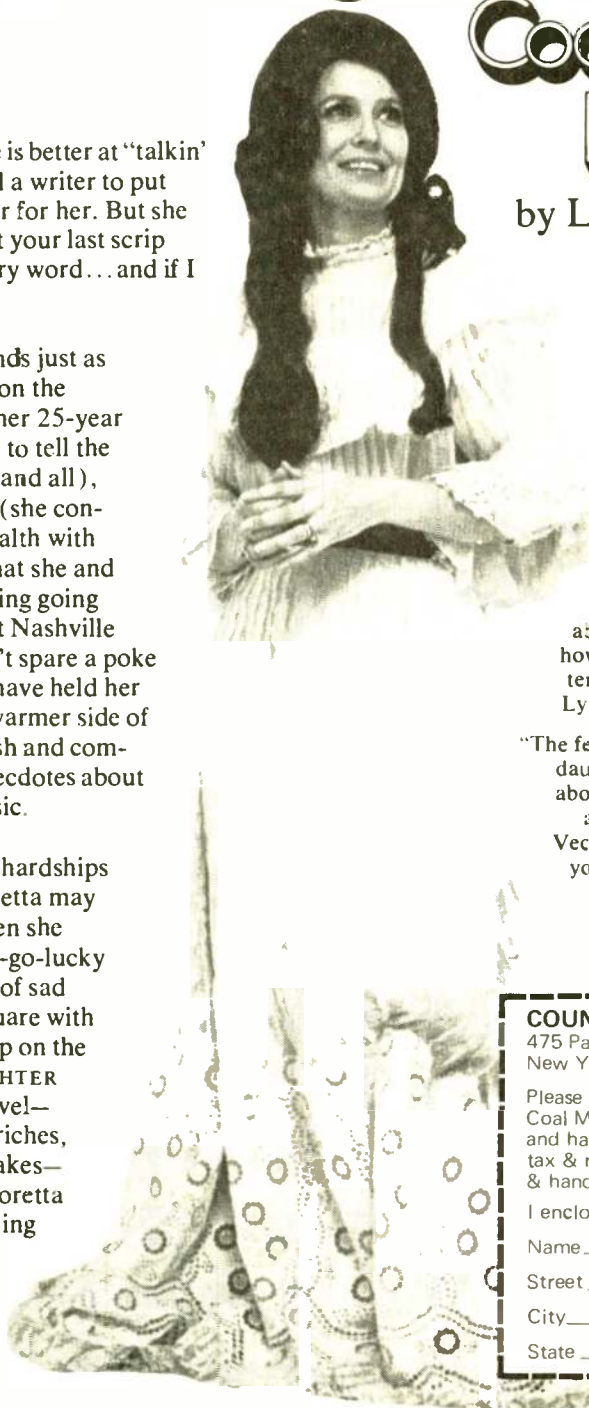
## Cool Miner's Daughter

by LORETTA LYNN  
as told to  
George Vecsey

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

The result is a book that sounds just as honest and saucy as the lady on the records. Loretta talks about her 25-year marriage to Doo (he told her to tell the total truth about him—faults and all), about her medical problems (she confesses she was ruining her health with aspirins), about the gossip that she and Conway Twitty have something going besides friendship, and about Nashville behind the scenes. She doesn't spare a poke or two at people who would have held her back, but she also depicts a warmer side of Nashville life that isn't all cash and competition and tells scores of anecdotes about the big names in country music.

Every reader will gasp at the hardships this lady has known, and Loretta may surprise a few of her fans when she says "I'm not really as happy-go-lucky as I appear. I've known a lot of sad times in my life that don't square with that lady you saw clowning up on the stage." *COOL MINER'S DAUGHTER* almost reads like a classic novel—deprived childhood, sudden riches, the temptations and the mistakes—but above all, we really see Loretta Lynn as she sees herself—willing to take the good with the bad and turn it into a song.



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"The feisty, tell-it-like-it-is coal miner's daughter from Butcher Holler talks about growing up dirt poor, hungry and sexually ignorant.... George Vecsey wrote this down for her, but you'll hear her voice all right, that strong, high mountain twang... real and earthy—like Loretta."—*Kirkus Reviews*

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## FAN CLUB SCENE: TEX RITTER



Left, Cathy Martindale, Mae Axton. Rt., Texas Jim. Below, show at Roundup.



Members of Ritter's old roadshow joined fans at 3rd Roundup, held April 24th.

Tex Ritter, the late songwriter and singing cowboy of stage and screen, was always one of the most well-loved performers in America. His fan club, which was formed in 1968, and continued on after Tex's death in 1974, is testimony to the loyalty

Tex inspired. Texas Jim Cooper, the club's founder, recalls, "when Tex Ritter died on January 2, 1974, we did not know if the club could continue. But the overwhelming response of the members who wrote and talked to me was for going

ahead, for Tex." Jim pledged to do that.

Jim and the club have been true to their word. The club annually participates in Fan Fair in Nashville and represents Tex at nostalgia film festivals. In 1974 the club held its First Annual Tex Ritter Roundup and Reunion. Texas Jim reports the crowd was "small, but loyal, eagerly watching the Ritter films and listening to guests like the great Al Dexter praise their friend." Thanks to the success of the first roundup, the Second Annual Tex Ritter Reunion, held August 9, 1975, drew an enthusiastic crowd. 500 fans came to watch more Ritter films, and hear him honored by a host of guest speakers, including Tex's son, Vanderbilt law student, Tom Ritter, and Tex's nephew, Ken Ritter, the Mayor of Beaumont, Tex. Spud Goodale, Pete Martinez, and Leo Cherry — members of Tex's roadshow of the 40's and 50's—were also on hand.

The club's dues are \$2 a year in the U.S., and \$3.50 overseas. Members receive an 8x10 photo of Tex, and three journals a year. If you're interested contact Texas Jim Cooper, President, Tex Ritter Official Fan Club, 2001 Williams Lane, Carrollton, Tex. 75006.

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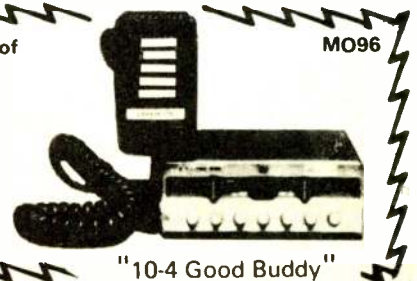
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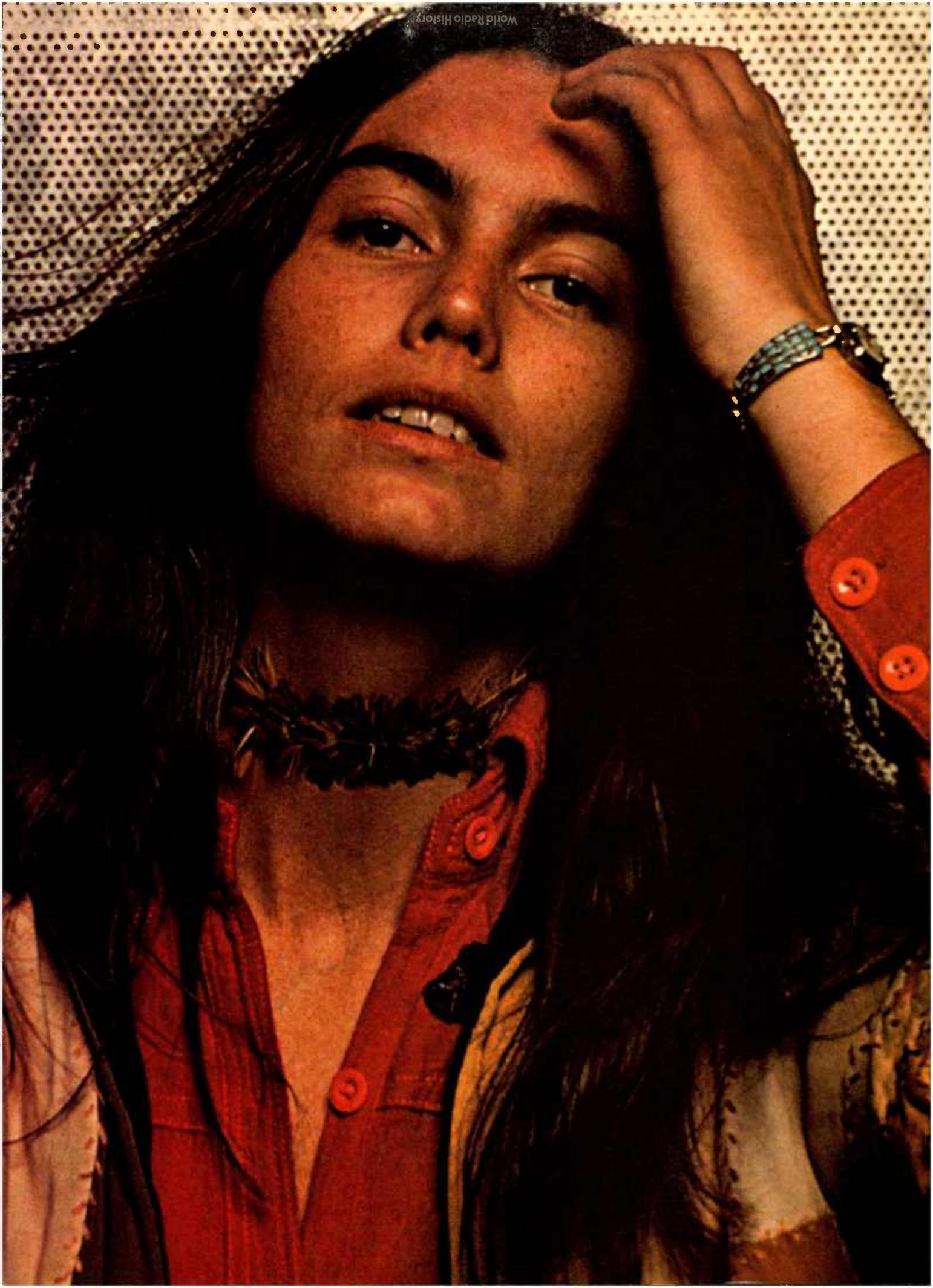
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seas), despite the fact that he died in 1964.

But even with the glorious successes of these singers and stylists, the 1950s, in general, wasn't the strongest decade for Texas music. The southeastern sound reigned through the first half of the decade, while rock and roll devoured the second.

The sixties saw an upturn, however. Willie Nelson, a native of Fort Worth, and at the time a member of the Nashville songwriting establishment, was producing songs like *Hello Walls*. Buck Owens—from Sherman—was bringing the sound of the fiddle and steel guitar back to his early classics like *Excuse Me*. Roger Miller (Ft. Worth) with a style very similar to jazzy scat singing, had hits with *Dang Me*, and *King of The Road*. Jimmie Dean (Plainview) again brought country music to national attention with his television show and his big hit *Big Bad John*. Waylon Jennings (Littlefield) was beginning to attract attention as the decade progressed. But the significance of this period was that while the country music establishment flirted more and more aggressively with pop sounds, the foundations were being laid for yet another revolution in the music—a revolution spearheaded by Texans.

Willie Nelson made the break with Nashville in 1970. Although he was doing well as a songwriter, his records weren't selling. He returned to Texas to straighten out his life. 1970 also saw the first official recognition of an "underground" song when Texas songwriter, Kris Kristofferson won a CMA award for *Sunday Morning Coming Down*. Waylon Jennings, with his rock-influenced beat and his unconventional ways, added to the waves being made by Nelson and Kristofferson, and soon the designation, "outlaws" was given to the loose group by the press. Almost by accident, the Texas capital of Austin became the capital of the country outlaw nation as well, when Willie decided to settle there. His first Fourth of July Picnic in 1972 served notice on country music that the times, once again, were changing.

Throughout Texas today, new and old country-music forms mingle in a pulsing, stomping tempo. While recording is an important part of this in cities like Houston, Tyler, Austin and Dallas, the emphasis seems to be on live music. All over the state, but especially in Austin, clubs and outdoor concerts draw crowds of fans



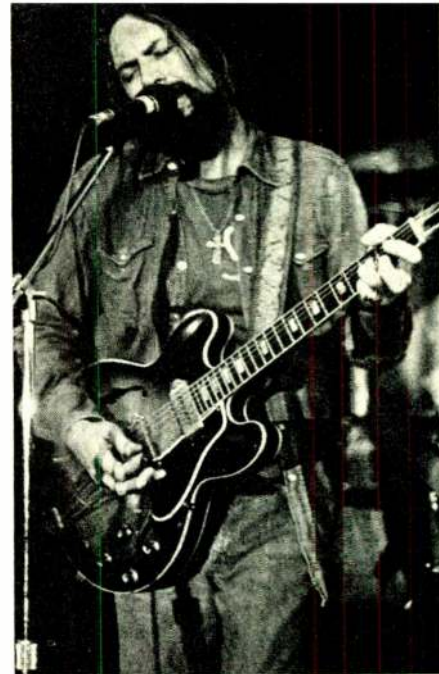
Opry star, singer, Barbara Mandrell was born in Houston.

that are possibly the nation's most enthusiastic. In Austin, the accent is decidedly on the new "progressive" sound, with its associated outlaw image, rebellious lyrics and often rock-tinted instrumentation. This progressive sound is heard more and more frequently outside the state and is especially appealing to youngish country fans.

Austin has become a breakout point for this new and revolutionary country sound. With the Armadillo World Headquarters, which is Austin's answer to the once prospering Fillmore West, the town has become a haven for established acts as well as would-be writers, singers and performers. This new melting pot for the ever rich and diversified country sounds is responsible for such acts as Kinky Friedman and The Texas Jewboys, Clifton Chenier, Lightin' Hopkins' gut level blues, and Flaco Jimenez' Tex-Mex conjunto polka-powered sound which may be Austin's answer to the glitter band style. Austin is the mecca of the Texas music renaissance, and it's one of the most exciting music centers of America.

The current success of the "outlaws" is proof positive that their style of country music has gained widespread acceptance. Witness the phenomenal success of Willie Nelson's *Red Headed Stranger* LP, and of the *Outlaws*, an LP he made with Jennings, Jessi Colter and Tompall Glaser.

Non-outlaws from the Lone Star State are making the country music scene jump as well: Freddy Fender



Augie Meyers is back in Austin, blending r&b, rock, and country.

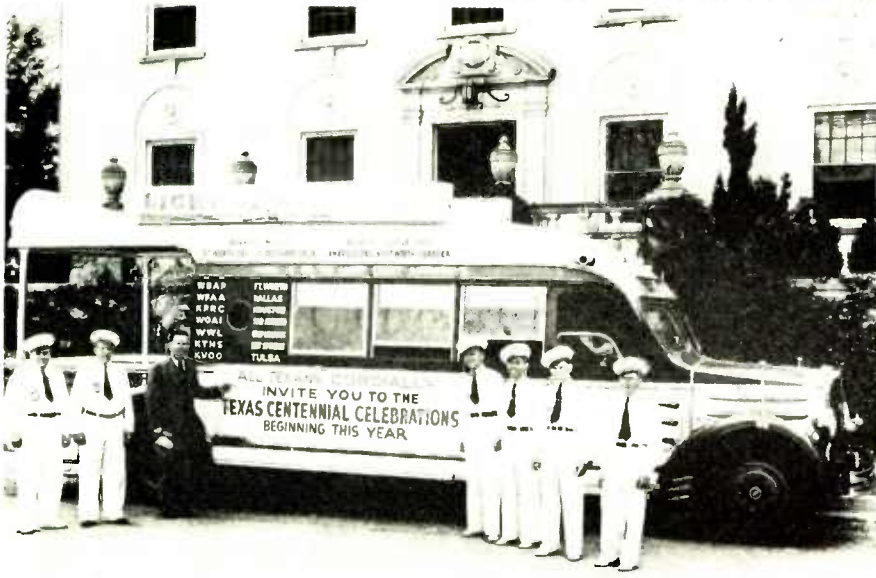
(from San Benito) has taken Johnny Rodriguez' chicano image one step further and brought the Tex-Mex conjunto sound out of the closet, at last. People like Moe Bandy and Mickey Gilley prove that honky tonk still lives. And the sound of western swing has been reborn, with ex-Texas Playboys Tiny Moore and Eldon Shamblin touring with Merle Haggard, while ex-Playboy Johnny Gimble burns up Nashville studios with his red hot swing fiddle. In fact, a group of ex-Texas Playboys has reunited, and are now making limited appearances, while younger groups based in Austin recreate that sound: Asleep at the Wheel, Alvin Crow and the Pleasant Valley Boys, and Marcia Ball and the Misery Brothers most prominent among them. Then there are events such as the various festivals staged by the Kerrville Foundation.

But for every fan of the new Texas music, you'll find at least one other who remembers dancing to the music of Bob Wills or Al Dexter. For every lover of the Tex-Mex sound, you'll find another fan who will tell you Ernest Tubb and his ilk are the only real country singers left. And for every bearded rebel who freaks out on pot-filled lyrics you'll find a middle aged soul who digs only Lefty Frizzell.

So Texas Music is nothing new. Without it, country would be something far different from the sounds we know today. No doubt, millions would love country just as they do today, and country music would have survived without Texas. But we're sure glad it hasn't had to. ■



# Texas Music Hall of Fame



Here is one of several manifestations of the Light Crust Doughboys. The group is a Texas institution going back to 1931, when co-founded by Bob Wills and W. Lee "Pappy" O'Daniel. Other early Doughboys included Leon McAuliffe, the great steel guitarist, Milton Brown and Sleepy Johnson. Johnson later became a Texas Playboy as did McAuliffe. McAuliffe eventually formed his own successful band. Milton Brown later led the short-lived Musical Brownies. The Doughboys, which still perform, have been backed almost continuously by Burrus Mills, which sponsored the group's early programs in Ft. Worth.



The singing brakeman, Jimmie Rodgers, became a professional singer when poor health forced him to leave his railroad job. He began recording for RCA in 1927 and quickly became the era's top record seller, and country music's first superstar. Even in those dollar-short Depression times, people by the millions shelled out their dollars for his disks. While many of those recordings dealt with diverse themes such as *Everybody Does it in Hawaii* and *Sleep Baby Sleep*, the ones best remembered today are the mournful ones such as *Waitin' for a Train*, *Travelin' Blues*, *Blue Yodels No. 1 through 12*, and *T. for Texas*. A true pathfinder for country musicians, Rodgers inspired a whole generation of followers—men like Lefty Frizzell, Ernie Tubb and Hank Snow, to name just a few.



Bob Wills, still the acknowledged king of Texas music, refined and popularized western swing with his mixture of Dixieland jazz, big-band swing, country fiddle music and Negro blues. He created and led the famed Texas Playboys in a career that spanned the '30s, '40s, '50s and '60s. The band, based in Oklahoma, California, then Texas was one of the most professional ever. Bob's own fiddle style is now widely imitated.



Ernest Tubb, noted for his deep-toned delivery, was a pioneer of the honky tonk sound, and popularized the electric guitar on the Grand Ole Opry. He added that instrument to his band to be heard over honky tonk dins. In a single year, 1948, Tubb had 7 top-10 hits, plus a near miss. He still tours extensively with his band, the Texas Troubadors, and has one of the most loyal followings in music.





Gene Autry, idolized singing cowboy of the '30s, '40s, and '50s, is back recording for Republic Records in Nashville. A prominent Nashville businessman, he's come a long way from the tenant farm in Tioga, Tex., where he was born. In 1929, Autry turned to show business, because he lost his job as a telegrapher. He rapidly became a recording star, doing both traditional cowboy songs, and compositions of his own, including "That Silver Haired Daddy of Mine," and "Dust." In 1934 he moved to Hollywood, and pioneered an entire industry of singing westerns. Autry, 69, is a member of the Nashville Songwriter's Association's Hall of Fame and Country Music Hall of Fame.



Vernon Dalhart was country music's first recording star. Dalhart studied voice at the Dallas Conservatory of Music, and then went to New York to help launch the commercial country music industry with his first recordings. *The Wreck of the Old 97*, and the *Prisoner's Song* in 1924.



Al Dexter was catapulted to national fame in the mid 1940's with a recording of his song, *Pistol Packin' Mama*. Dexter, born in Jacksonville, Tex., formed the highly popular *Texas Trooper's* in the '30s. Though retired, Al can still knock 'em dead with his version of *Pistol Packin' Mama*.



Tex Ritter was a natural to gain fame as a movie cowboy, and singer-songwriter in the Western mode. He was born on a cattle ranch in Panola County, Tex., a setting much like the movie westerns he later starred in. He started out wanting to become a lawyer, but he left college in the 1920's, to perform on radio shows in New York, including the original *Lone Ranger* radio series. He went on to star in more than 50 western movies. He died in 1974, at the age of 68.



Floyd Tillman, born in Ryman, Oklahoma, moved to Post, Tex. as a child. A prolific songwriter (his hits include *I Love You So Much It Hurts*, *It Makes No Difference Now*, and *Slippin' Around*), Floyd is one of the most enduring artists on the Texas music scene. In the '30s he put his mandolin, banjo and guitar skills to work in Post honkytonks. In 1935 he moved to Houston, playing western swing with the *Blue Ridge Playboys*. Tillman, one of the first country musicians to play an electric guitar, is today a key figure in Austin.



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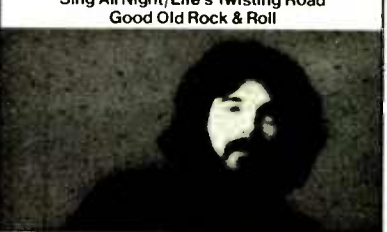
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Jim Reeves' mellow rendering of country ballads has kept his records in demand long after his death in a 1964 plane crash. The former Panola County farm boy's hits included: *Mexican Joe*, *Four Walls*, and *He'll Have to Go*.



One of country music's finest religious-song groups is the Chuck Wagon Gang, formed in Texas back in the 1930's. Like many Texas musicians, they created a vivid new style of presenting their music, by blending religious songs with heavy doses of western music and country. The result was copied by many.



Lefty Frizzell, the son of a Corsicana oil driller, was influenced by Jimmie Rodgers, but in turn left his mark on Willie Nelson, Merle Haggard, and Stoney Edwards to name a few. His hits, stretching from the 50's to the 70's included, *I Want to Be With You Always*, *If You've Got the Money, I've Got the Time*, *I Can't Get Over You*. Until his death last year, Lefty was turning out great records, primarily using songs he'd written himself. His popularity never regained its early peak, however, despite his awesome talent.



A native of Franklin County, Bill Boyd grew up as an honest-to-goodness cowboy, could rope, ride and sing at an early age. Began singing for pay in his teens, later had a radio show on WRR, Dallas, that ran from 1932 into the '60s. He recorded for RCA for over 20 years, turning out over 300 records with his group, the Cowboy Ramblers. Titles include *Homecoming Waltz*, *Shame on You*, *Drifting Texas Sand*, *Lone Star Rag* and so on. Yet, he is probably known to far more people as a star of western thriller movies than as a singer. Well into the post-World War II era, his adventure movies were mainstays on late-night TV shows throughout the nation.



Eldon Shamblin (left) and Tiny Moore are two of the many Texas Playboys still making country music. Shamblin set the style for western swing rhythm guitar, using a smoothly flowing bass line. Moore gives out with great licks on fiddle and electric mandolin. Both these fine musicians now tour with Merle Haggard.





Program Director, Frank Baker, also puts in time as a DJ.



Outside (left) WRCP looks calm. Inside, Manager Mills (left) and Program Director, Baker, say it's another story.



Another busy day at WRCP for Mills and his secretary, Mona.

# WRCP Takes Philly Country Out of the Closet

by BOB GALLAGHER

Would you believe—with country music the biggest thing since canned beer, in Philadelphia country music is something people listen to “behind closed doors.” Well it’s true. But Philly radio station WRCP FM has gone a long way in bringing country music out of the closet.

WRCP (104.5 FM on the dial) has had its all-country format since September, 1967 when it shed the call letters WJMJ and a middle-of-the-road format.

Matt Mills, WRCP’s manager, has been in country radio for nine years. He spent three years at WEEZ, in Chester, Pennsylvania before joining WRCP as a salesman six years ago. Mills, who was promoted to manager in January, 1975, finds Philadelphia’s “closet country” phenomena puzzling. “It’s strange, in these sophisticated seventies, those who like classical music admit it—but they just can’t muster the courage to say they like country music.” Mills met scores of people who say, “Yes, we like country music but don’t tell anyone.”

Nevertheless, in or out of the closet, Philly country music fans are plentiful—and WRCP is doing its best to reach them. And with great success.

WRCP has formed a club called “Country.” It boasts 10,000 members. These are the people who are called by telephone on special promotions, and who have an opportunity to win prizes. Noting that many country music devotees also are CB enthusiasts, the station recently offered a WRCP car sunvisor with CB lingo printed on it. Within 10 days after the promotion started, 2,000 visors had been requested.

Another important part of WRCP’s country campaign are station sponsored trips to places like Nashville, Wheeling and Daytona. Right now, they’re planning a flight to Hawaii.

Frank Baker, the station’s program director, plus a DJ, thinks the efforts have gone far in drawing out the “closet listeners.”

Baker converses easily. His air approach is conversational and on a one-to-one basis. Says he never thinks of

talking to a big crowd. And yet, during his 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. air stint, he commands one of WRCP’s largest audiences.

WRCP has six full-time personalities. Baker describes his staff as warm and friendly, but breezy in spots.

“We all run ‘tight boards,’” he explained, “but we do it without the stereotyped rock and roll screaming.”

Mills and Baker agree that country music is here to stay and that country music fans are the best kind.

“Country music has been good to WRCP,” Mills stated. “And we believe that we have been good to the country music listener. Our audience is loyal to us and to our sponsors.” He points out that there are some 8,000 radio stations in the United States and that about 2,500 are country music.

Mills often wonders what would happen if ad agency media buyers ever discovered just how powerful a sales tool WRCP really is.

“We’re doing well,” he muses. “But it would be profitable and fun solving that kind of problem.” ■



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# BUDGET RECORDS: THERE'S GOLD IN THEM THERE BINS

by RICH KIENZLE

Back when I was around 17, my musical tastes leaned toward such downhome blues shouters as Lightnin' Hopkins, John Lee Hooker and Howlin' Wolf, which created a problem. Finding their records in Western Pennsylvania was about as likely as finding an orange grove in Antarctica. One afternoon I was trying to kill some time in the local record mart, and found there was a half hour of time on my hands and nothing left to look through—except the budget record bins. *No way*, I thought, could there be anything worthwhile in there. But against my better judgment I started sifting through the bins and was immediately shocked to find *legitimate* albums by Lightnin', Hooker and Wolf on a budget line label.

What, you ask, is the connection between the above anecdote and country music? One reader of this magazine summed it up last year in a letter to the editor:

*"Have you checked your bargain bins lately? Albums that you used to have to send to Nashville for at great expense are now being offered at 99¢ to \$1.99! If you want to build a library of the finest honest country music... try a bargain counter."*

A bargain album is usually one of two distinct types: cutouts or budget line. Cutouts are older (and occasionally newer) albums that were originally released at full price and that, for one reason or another, have been de-

leted from the record company catalog and are being sold at reduced prices in the interest of liquidating the stock. They get their name from the clipped corner, notch or small hole in the sleeve. Budget line releases are created by two very different types of record companies. Several of the major record companies maintain special labels on which they release older recordings by their artists at low prices. There are also small independent budget labels which will pay another record company for use of its releases, a process called leasing.

**Cutouts.** Trying to determine everything available on the bargain market at a given time is practically impossible for a number of reasons. For one thing, some cutouts aren't official, but are merely unsold items dumped into a bargain bin by a record dealer who's either sick of looking at them, needs the space or both.

Among the "Official" cutouts to look for are those releases dropped from the catalog when Decca became part of MCA three years ago. *Hittin' The Road* and *On Tour*, both fantastic live Ernest Tubb albums recorded in the days when Cal Smith and Jack Greene were apprenticing with the Texas Troubadours, with vocals by both, were among those dropped. Among the other Tubb albums deleted were *Ernest Tubb Sings Hank Williams*, a sacred album, a live *Midnight Jamboree* and four superb al-

bums by the Texas Troubadours that feature country jazz instrumentals so hot they almost melt the vinyl. There were also albums by Loretta Lynn, Webb Pierce (including *The Wondering Boy*, his first 12" LP), the two-record *Bill Anderson Story*, a Bob Wills set, and others by Kitty Wells, Wilma Burgess, Red Foley and Warner Mack. These "heirlooms" can sometimes be found in the budget bins—if you look carefully.

Columbia/Epic deleted a ton of albums about a year ago, among them some classics that should be in everyone's collection: *Greatest Hits* of Little Jimmy Dickens, Johnny Horton, Ray Price, Carl & Pearl Butler, The Chuck Wagon Gang, Stonewall Jackson, Tammy Wynette, David Houston, Carl Smith, Marty Robbins, Johnny Cash, Lefty Frizzell (virtually the same album recently released as *Remembering...*), and Bill Monroe. The Monroe set features selections recorded from 1945-49 when Lester Flatt and Earl Scruggs were with the Bluegrass Boys, making what many consider to be the definitive bluegrass music. There's Ray Price's tribute to Bob Wills, *San Antonio Rose*, an album of Flatt and Scruggs's historic 1962 Carnegie Hall concert, Johnny Cash's *Folsom Prison* and *San Quentin* albums, *16 King-Size Country Hits*, which contains songs leased from King records, several of Charlie  
*(Continued on page 60)*

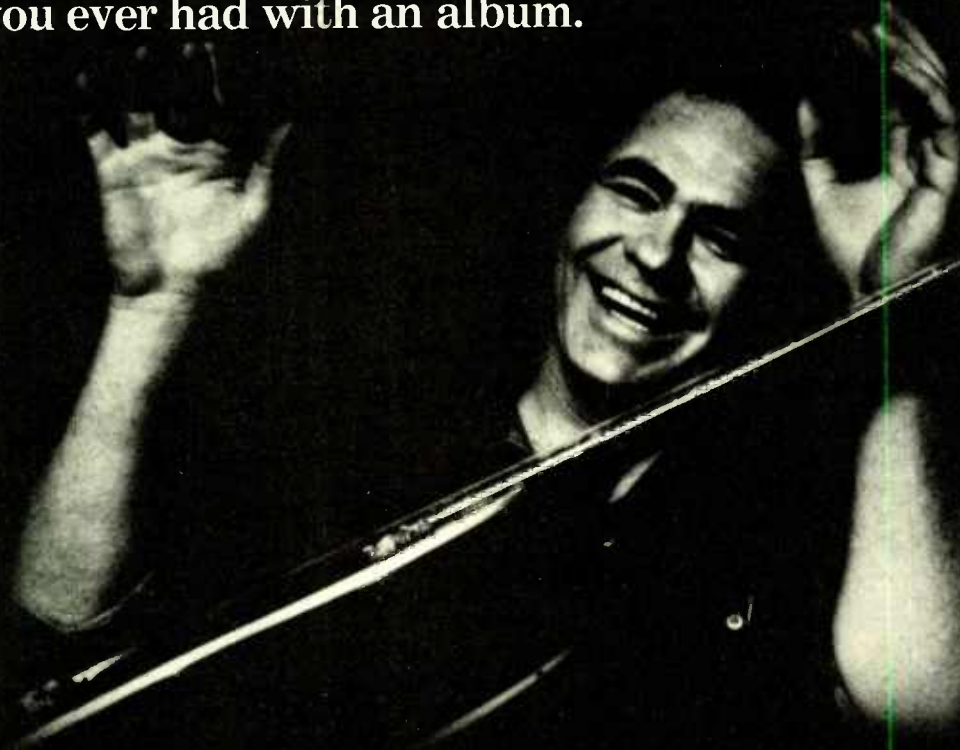


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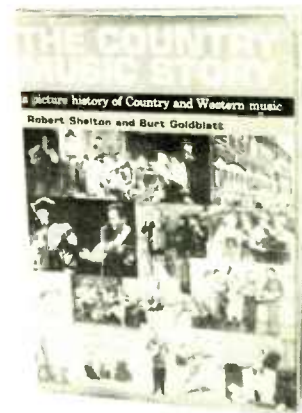


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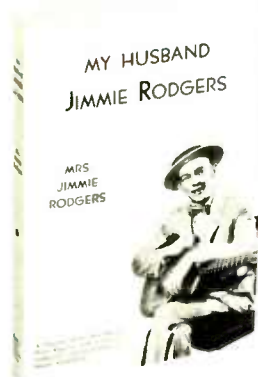


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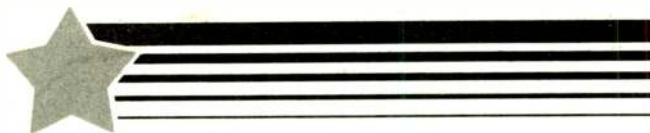


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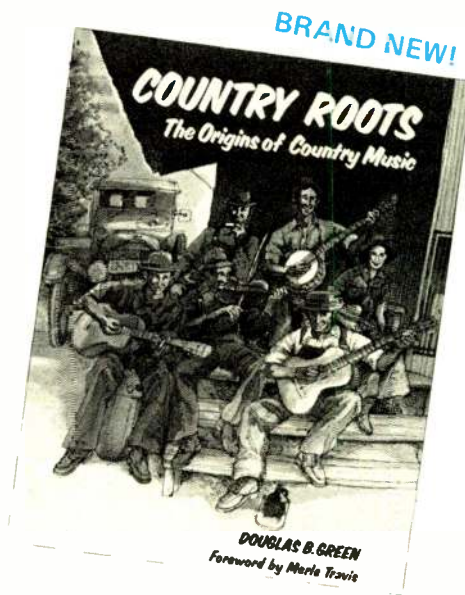


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# Eddie Rabbitt

by ARTHUR J. MAHER

He wrote a million-seller for Elvis, a top hit for Ronnie Milsap, other great tunes for Tommy Cash, George Morgan, the Louvin Brothers, Willie Nelson and Lord knows who else. Now he has recorded five straight hits.

**E**ddie Rabbitt was still feeling overwhelmed last time I spoke to him. He'd just returned to Nashville from Los Angeles, where a number of top management firms had said they'd like to handle him. Plus, his new single on Elektra, *Rocky Mountain Music*, had jumped onto the Cashbox charts in 71st place, the highest new entry for the week—and was slated for 48th place the following week.

That's damned fast progress, especially when you consider that it's only his fifth single release. His fourth, *Drinkin' My Baby Off My Mind* hit number one on all the industry charts, and was still on the charts when *Rocky Mountain Music* began its meteoric climb. To make things even nicer for Eddie, both tunes are from the same album, which is also named *Rocky Mountain Music*, and which contains only songs written by Eddie.

The new hit is a haunting number about a woebegone family that splits up, as Eddie's did when he was a little boy. His mother and father divorced, but have remained friendly. There's little brother in the song who "was never quite right" and a sister who "married a soldier and moved to Toledo." Eddie's real-life brother had a nervous breakdown after serving in Viet Nam. There's no real-life sister, but there was a girl-on-the-block back home in East Orange, N.J. She didn't necessarily marry a soldier, but did move away.

The Rocky Mountain music referred to in the song's lyrics is a reminder of Eddie's father, who in real-life played Irish music at pubs and dancehalls in New Jersey and New York City while working days at an oil refinery.

So the song is symbolically autobiographical. But that's not unusual for Eddie, or for any other songsmith who gets really intense about his material. "For all songwriters that get down into the nitty-gritty of a song," says Eddie, "you take a lot out of yourself and out of the exper-



iences you've had and you try to imagine this thing like a soap opera. You look at it and you just try to see what's happening in the song. You try to watch the characters move. There's a lot of concentration in it, and a lot of knowing how to stage things. . . almost like a director of a play. You're staging a whole scene, but you've got about 16 lines in a song to open your play, tell the story and close the curtain."

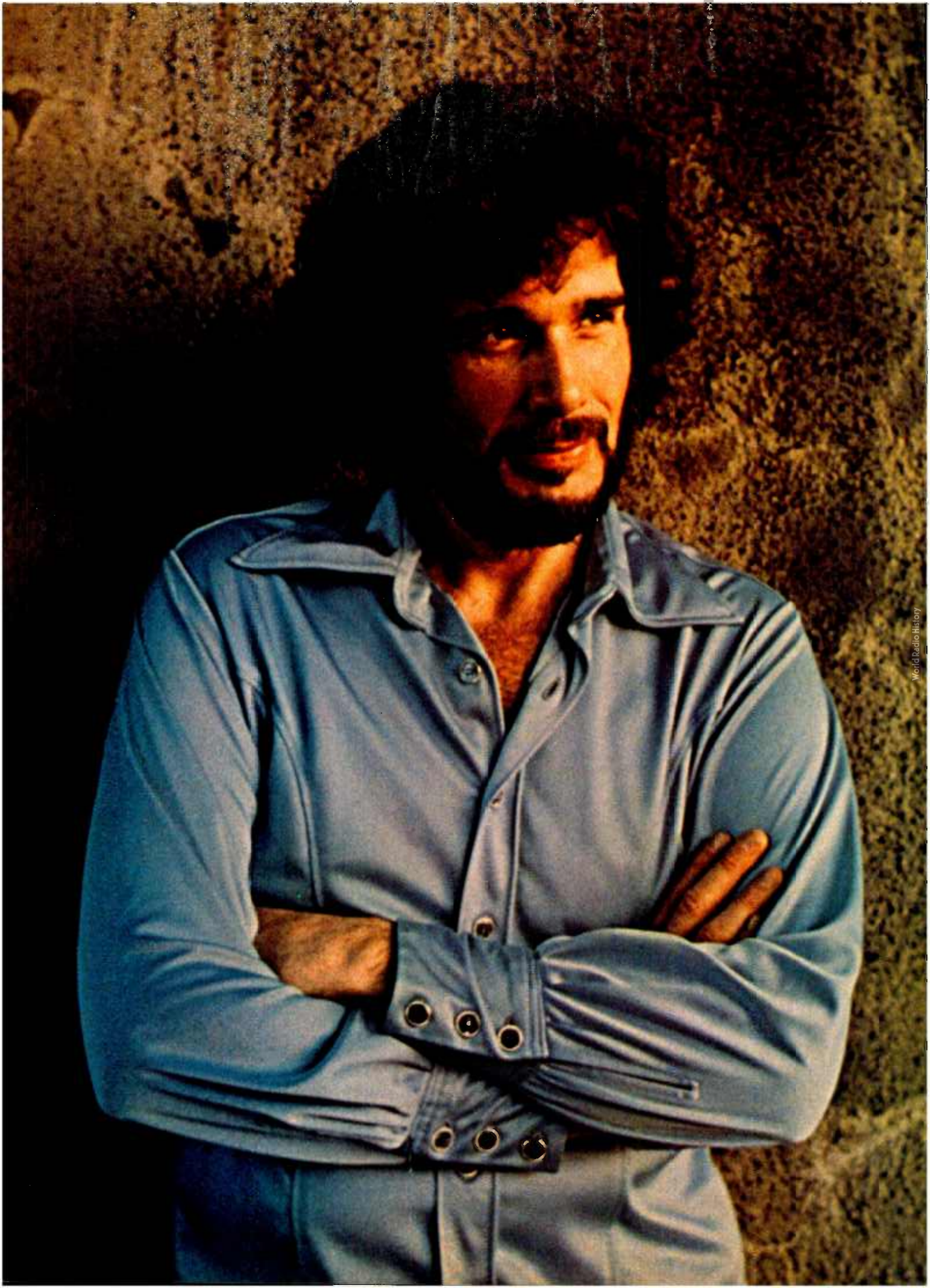
Whatever it is a songwriter does in 16 lines, Eddie Rabbitt does it well. By the time he started recording his own songs, other artists had scored big hits with songs he'd either written or co-written. Elvis Presley's 50th million-seller, for example, was an Eddie Rabbitt tune, co-written with Dick Heard during a rainstorm in Kentucky and titled, oddly enough, *Kentucky Rain*. Ronnie Milsap's big hit, *Pure Love*, was written by Eddie alone, as was Willie Nelson's *X's in Texas*. Other artists who've recorded his material include Tom Jones, O.C. Smith, George Morgan,

Charlie Louvin, Anita Bryant, Jack Greene, Archie Campbell, Jean Shepard, Billie Jo Spears, Roy Drusky, Ray Pillow, Tommy Cash, Bobby Lord, Sammi Smith, Conway Twitty and Vernon Oxford. The list is much longer, but that should give you some idea.

Despite this impressive success, Eddie did not start out with a burning passion to write songs. "The writing came almost as an afterthing," he says. "I'd been playing around the clubs up in Jersey. I'd made up some tapes (to play for record companies) of me singing songs. But they were other people's songs, and when I took that tape around, they said 'that's fine, but do you have any of your own songs to sing, because these have already been hits?' I said 'No,' and they said, 'You're just gonna have to write some because nobody's gonna give an unknown performer songs.' So I became a writer out of necessity."

But like all writers, Eddie discovered that writing can be a very emotional ex-







perience. "Writing a song can be a lot of different events, moodwise. I've had fights with my little gal (Janine, to whom he's engaged) and been very low and depressed about the whole thing. Maybe it was my fault. . . and I just sit down and pick up the guitar and things just flow out. Then you can turn around and be real happy and write a sunshine-and-cookies kind of song."

As you might expect, *Rocky Mountain Music* came out of a sad mood in which Eddie was thinking about his family. *Drinkin' My Baby*, written with Even Stevens, came out of a happy mood, but had no connection with any particular baby that had to be expunged from his mind. *Pure Love* was written when Eddie had met Janine. He was on a happiness trip, liked Kaptain Krunch cereal quite a bit (with Half 'n Half), felt good about things in general, and put it all down in the song.

Three songwriters have served as inspiration and guide to Eddie—Harlan Howard, Hank Williams and Hank Cochran. (There have been others, of course, but those three were most important.) Howard wrote such hits as *Heartaches by the Number*, *Pick Me Up on Your Way Down*, *Busted* and *The Deepening Snow*. Cochran wrote *Make the World Go Away*, *Just My Funny Way of Laughing* and *I Guess it Doesn't Matter Anymore*. And

Williams, of course, wrote *Your Cheatin' Heart*, *Cold, Cold Heart*, *I'm So Lonesome I Could Cry*, *Half as Much* and a host of other top songs.

\* \* \*

Eddie Rabbitt's involvement with country music goes back to his early childhood. "I used to listen to a lot of country music when I was real small. I remember hearing *Back in the Saddle Again* by Gene Autry." Which would, in New Jersey, mean that Eddie was listening to Don Larkin's Home Town Frolic on station WAAT, in Newark. Since his father was an Irish musician (both parents were born in County Mayo, Ireland and migrated to the U.S. in the early '20s) he was exposed to much of the music out of which American country originally grew. His father was a fiddler, but when Eddie was tried on that instrument things didn't look promising. "It gave me chills all the way up my arm, with the strings vibrating, and I just couldn't get into it."

"I picked up a guitar when I was about 13, in the Boy Scouts. We went on a weekend camping trip. . . and the scoutmaster came out with this pretty old Martin guitar. . . Boy, I was just mesmerized. I still remember that moment."

Eddie then took some lessons from the Scoutmaster, eventually bought his own guitar, and that was it for a while. He continued to play, but with no particular

goal in mind, other than playing at parties and such. Eventually, he started singing professionally almost by accident.

He had quit school at 17 to work, and a few years later was going to night school. On one of the last evenings before graduation, he was sitting with other students in a night spot called Six Steps Down. "And I mean it was just a hole in the ground," Eddie recalls, "with just one little bar and a little stage in back. This night we went in there and the piano player got ticked off about something and walked out. So I got an idea in my head, 'cause the guy's (owner) got no music, and I play the guitar, you know. . . so I said to the owner, 'Look, I play country music. . .'"

And that was the beginning, in 1964. Something almost out of a Hollywood movie on how a star is born. But things didn't break wide open, by any means. From Six Steps Down at \$14 a night, Eddie went on to play at clubs and truck stops all over his part of New Jersey, where there has always been lively interest in country music. Four years later, he was doing fine by local standards—all of \$25 a night—but realized he had to make a break with the circuit he was on or stay the rest of his life, hoping to be discovered.

In 1968, he went to Nashville. There, he joined the throng of young hopefuls, old has-beens and other people struggling on the fringes of country music society. But unlike many of them, he's been blessed with enough writing success, before stardom, to keep him in reasonable comfort—at least in the last couple of years. Finally, there was a recording contract. His first three records all got on the charts, each higher than the other. Then, *Drinkin' My Baby* smashed through to No. 1, *Rocky Mountain Music* leaped well up, and that's where things are as of press-time for this issue.

How does it feel to be on the verge of stardom? As I said before, Eddie was still overwhelmed last time I spoke to him. But one rather touching thing that came up in our conversation was how pleased Eddie Rabbitt is with the reaction of his folks. "I take these big ads home. . . some of the big slicks I have. . . and I show them to my folks, and I can see the pride in their eyes. They go around talking about me, and when I'm home, I go down to the grocery store for them and someone says, 'Oh, you're Eddie. You're the son that sings. Your parents talk about you all the time.' I feel good giving them something to boast about. That's the biggest kick in a way—seeing what they do with a little bit of stardom in the family."

That sort of thing is nice to hear from a guy who's about to make it big. And it's not a big humble trip, either. Eddie talks very much from his inner feelings, just as he writes from his inner feelings.

Come to think of it, maybe that's the secret to making it big in country music, where it's feelings that count. ■

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# RECORDS

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## Charley Pride

Sunday Morning with Charley Pride  
RCA APLI-1359 \$6.98  
RCA APSI-1359 (tape) \$7.98  
Star rating: ★★ ★

This is Charley Pride's second album of sacred songs. The material here is all well chosen, and Pride exhibits a looseness of approach which is all too rarely found in religious albums. Many singers release such records as obligatory gestures, but *Sunday Morning*, like Charlie Rich's recent



gospel album, is one that is good music first and gospel music second. *I Don't Deserve a Mansion* is an especially fine performance that should wear as well as the best of them.

NICK TOSCHES

## Johnny Cash

One Piece at a Time  
Columbia KC-34193 \$5.98  
CA-34193 (tape) \$6.98  
Star rating: ★★ ★★ ★

I thought Johnny Cash's last few albums disappointing. And Cash may feel the same way, for on the back of this album he writes, "Like your prodigal kessin' kin, Here I am back again."

And he is back. The first time I heard *One Piece at a*

*Time*, I knew that. Here was the old Cash, the Cash who forged that old strident Sun sound, the Cash who sang of gentle things in a tough voice. *One Piece at a Time* is reason to celebrate Cash anew. He



hasn't lost anything, just been waylaid, and he's back harder than ever. It's likely that you're already acquainted with the title song, but listen up good to the rest of what's here, especially Cash originals *Committed to Parkview* and *Daughter of a Railroad Man*.

NICK TOSCHES

## Willie Nelson

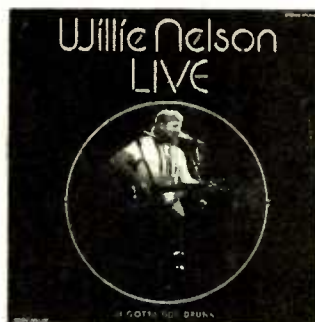
Willie Nelson Live  
RCA APLI-1487 \$6.98  
No tape available  
Star rating: ★★ ★★ ★

In the 1960's, when Willie Nelson was with RCA, he cut an album at Panther Hall in Dallas called *Country Music Concert*. It was a great, but soon went out of print, and fans and collectors have sought it eagerly ever since. Now, RCA has reissued that album under the title of *Willie Nelson Live*.

Willie's classics are here: *Mr. Record Man*, *Hello Walls*, *Half a Man*, *Touch Me*, *My Own Peculiar Way*, and others. There is also an improbable

but perfect performance of the Beatles' *Yesterday*, plus *I Gotta Get Drunk*, Willie's masterpiece of compulsive fun, not in the original album.

Don't be misled by that long-



haired, bearded, T-shirted Willie on the album cover. This is *Country Music Concert* with a new name. If you don't already have it, get it.

NICK TOSCHES

## Conway Twitty

Now and Then  
MCA MCA-2206 \$6.98  
MCA T-2206 (tape) \$7.98  
Star rating: ★★ ★★ ★

A lot of country singers who started out singing greasy-haired, hip-twitching rock-and-



roll denounce their beginnings as they get older. Not Conway.

The first side, and the front

cover, of *Now and Then* is Conway Twitty as is, and the material here, highlighted by his recent hit single *After All the Good Is Gone*, is Twitty the mellow, rough-edged king of lovelight country. On the back cover of the album is a photo of a pompadoured, surly-lipped Twitty furling his velour collar, and the music on side two corresponds with remakes of those way-back-when Twitty hits: *It's Only Make Believe*, *Lonely Blue Boy*, *Mona Lisa*, and others. *Now and Then* is a mess of good music and, in its own way, a courageous record.

NICK TOSCHES

## Steve Young

Honky-Tonk Man  
Mountain Railroad Records LP-1 (Not available through Country Music)  
Star rating: ★★ ★★

Steve Young is a country singer who deserves much wider recognition than he's known. *Honky-Tonk Man* isn't Steve's first album, but it's by



far his best. The material here ranges from originals such as *Alabama Highway* and *The White Trash Song* to ageless pieces such as Johnny Horton's *Honky-Tonk Man*, Bob



Wills' *Brain Cloudy Blues*, and Hank Williams' *Ramblin' Man*. The approach is strong and refreshing, accented by fairly unbelievable Dobro work by Cal Hand.

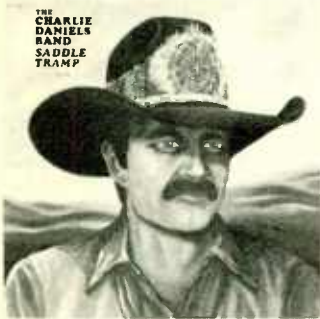
Since it's on a fairly obscure label (albeit the largest in Cambridge, Wisconsin), *Honky-Tonk Man* will not make Steve Young a star. But it's the music that matters and Steve Young's music is available to be heard. Listen up.

NICK TOSCHES

### The Charlie Daniels Band

Saddle Tramp  
Epic PE-34150 \$5.98  
EA-34150 (tape) \$6.98  
Star rating: ★★ ★

This is an album of very loud, very raucous, very unorthodox country music. Louder even than Little Jimmy Dickens, who, in case you aren't aware, makes



the Allman Brothers sound like a chamber quartet. This is also an album of very good music, but the likes of which you won't hear on the Opry's Saturday night show, ever.

NICK TOSCHES

### Grandpa Jones/Brown's Ferry Four

The Grandpa Jones Story  
CMH-9007 \$9.98  
CMH-8-9007 (tape) \$9.98  
Star rating: ★★ ★

Those who think of Louis Grandpa Jones only in terms of *Hee Haw* might mistakenly pass this album by. *The Grandpa Jones Story*, however, is definitely not a rube joke set to banjo, but a two-record set of some of the most important and listenable music made after World War II. This is the Grandpa Jones who made records for the King label, records by himself and records with the

likes of Merle Travis and the Delmore Brothers (under the collective name Brown's Ferry Four) *The Grandpa Jones Story* is a set which every serious



country fan should hear. (Available through separate ad on page 25.)

NICK TOSCHES

### Elvis Presley

From Elvis Presley Boulevard, Memphis Tennessee  
RCA-APLI-1506 \$6.98  
APSI-1506 \$7.98  
Star rating: ★★ ★

The King is back on the scene with an LP that will be a country and pop hit. Interestingly enough, this is the first time the King has put his production talents to use. But then again, who would be better than Elvis to capture himself on record. The package is stocked with some very fine ballads. Kicking off the first side is *Hurt*, a powerfully rich tune with a very full ar-



angement that highlights Elvis' usual vocal dynamics. *Never Again*, and *Blue Eyes Crying In The Rain* follow as strong ballads with a very fine adaptation of *Danny Boy*, rounding out the side. Side Two kicks off with *For The Heart*, a dynamite rocket in the Elvis tradition. His vocal accompaniment is solid and features J.D. Sumner and Stamps Quartet, Kathy Westmoreland and Myrna Smith. Highlighting the side is

# ALBUM OF THE MONTH

### Billy Swan

Billy Swan  
Monument PZ-34183 \$6.98  
PZA-34183 (tape) \$7.98  
Star rating: ★★ ★★ ★

Billy Swan's music is a sublime mix of tradition and invention. It is a music that draws from country, rock-and-roll, and Swan's own hawk's-eye view of the universe; a music that breathes new energy into classics such as Hank Williams' 1949 *Wedding Bells* and Warren Smith's 1956 *Ubangi Stomp*, and hammers forth some of the most brilliant original songs of today.

This is Swan's third album, and it is work of his usual caliber. In *Your True Love* and *Blue Suede Shoes*, two Carl Perkins oldies, Swan continues

his everlasting homage to rockabilly. Perkins, who guest-picks here, declared Billy's *Blue Suede Shoes* the definitive version of that perennial.

The original songs here are among Swan's finest. *Love You Baby*, *to the Bone* and *Vanessa*, both coauthored with Dennis Linde, pulse with a power that many artists crave but few attain. *Number One*, which Swan wrote with his wife Marlu, is a love song that swaggers instead of cloys, and includes the great opening line: "You were conceived at the right time."

Many have tried to weld musical past to musical present. Billy Swan has succeeded, and this album brims with the glory of that alchemy.

NICK TOSCHES





a rendition of the Andy Williams hit of a few years back, *Solitaire*. Some of the other ballads on the second side are a bit slow moving and might have been replaced by some more uptempo material. All in all, however, the LP is another fine addition to anyone's collection which will be enjoyed for many years to come.

MICHAEL DAVID

**Tommy Roe**

*Energy*  
Monument PZ-34182 \$6.98  
PZA-34182 (tape) \$7.98  
Star rating: ★★

Tommy Roe was making country-rock music back in the early sixties when no one else was, and he had hits with



it too. After he left ABC a few years ago (a move he regretted

almost immediately), Tommy vanished from the public eye. *Energy*, his first album since 1972, should help him reappear.

Like Roe, *Energy* avoids pretension and gets the job done. The songs here are all pleasant, and in some cases (the title cut for one) astounding. Felton Jarvis produced the album, which makes Roe that producer's only client besides Elvis—obviously the equivalent of knighthood.

NICK TOSCHES

**Ronnie Milsap**

20-20 Vision  
RCA-APLI-1666 \$6.98  
APSI-1666 (tape) \$7.98  
Star rating: ★★

Ronnie Milsap burst onto the country scene and took it by storm. His previous three albums have all done exceedingly well, and this, his fourth for RCA, is filled with the emotionally-charged material we've all come to expect from him. The title cut is a moving ballad with a current of irony riding through it. *Lovers, Friends and Strangers*, and *Lovesick Blues* are two ballads that will sing themselves right into your heart. *What Goes On When The Sun Goes Down*, a hand-clappin' toe-stompin' ditty is

one of the strongest cuts on the album. *(I'm A) Stand By My Woman Man* is also a strong piece of material. Ronnie's



vocal richness particularly lends itself to this sort of uptempo ballad.

MICHAEL DAVID

**Ray Stevens**

For The Record  
Warner Bros. BS-2914 \$6.98  
(Not available on tape)  
Star rating: ★★

Ray Stevens has always been an artist with a great deal of musical appeal. His records cross over from country to pop and back again. This flexibility of material makes the sound of Ray as welcome in a car driving through Nashville as it is driving through New York. Stevens has put together a

new package that sings with all the sensitivity we have learned to expect from him. *Cornball* and *Gimmie A Smile* are two pleasing ballads that are driving and full. A bluegrass based rendition of Billy Preston's *You Are So Beautiful!* is one of the strongest cuts on the album. *Om*, a tune penned by Ray, was recorded live and is



his testament to a higher consciousness. *Country Licks* is gonna give you kicks and should be his next single.

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# EMMYLOU

(Continued from page 26)

Emmy and I are just gonna go out there and pick and sing and have a *big time* and everything's gonna be just *fine*."

In fact the taping goes better than fine. Linda sings *I Can't Help It (If I'm Still In Love with You)*, and the girls sing *Silver Threads and Golden Needles*, and *Bury Me Beneath the Willow* together, and then, after two false starts, Emmylou stands head on to the camera and sings Dolly's *Blue Ridge Mountain Boy* so beautifully that I get all blurry and wish our mutual friend Townes Van Zandt was here, since Townes (with the aid of tequila and other medication) had once listened to Dolly's single of *Blue Ridge Mountain Boy* 2000 times in succession.

Today, Emmylou's version would have been the best 2001 any one could ask for.

It is not until midnight that Emmylou discovers that Dolly has returned the favor. We are sitting in the semi-darkness of Porter Wagoner's studio listening to the tapes of Dolly's new album. Dolly and Emmylou and Dottie West, who had just dropped in, are sitting on the couch. Brian, in his standard fashion is lying on his back on the carpet under the enormous speakers. Dycus and I are leaning against the burlap wall so we can see Porter in the control room. In his tinted aviator glasses and his new mod haircut, Porter looks happy and relaxed, content to be off the road for the first time in twenty years.

When the fourth cut starts, Dycus pokes me in the ribs and nods toward Porter and I glance up to see this enormous catfish grin spreading across his face. Then I glance at Dolly, who is looking expectantly at Emmylou as the lyric starts:

*I don't want hear no love song  
I got on this airplane just to fly  
I know there's life below me  
But all that you can show me  
Is the prairie and the sky. . .*

Slowly Emmylou's eyes widen when she realizes that Dolly is singing her song *Boulder to Birmingham*. She puts her hands to her cheeks, utters a weak "Oh," and flops back onto the couch, magically suspended between laughter and tears for the remainder of the song.

"That's your surprise," Dolly says, when the song is finished, and Emmylou can't say anything. She just reaches over and gives Dolly a big hug and everyone exchanges silly grins. It's the most spontaneous gesture I've ever seen Emmylou make, and I remember the first time I interviewed Emmy she was wearing a Dolly Parton T-shirt, and just getting to meet Dolly was one of her major ambitions. It was a nice moment for everyone but I can't imagine what Emmylou must have felt. She is a careful dreamer and she had just had a dream come true before she even dared to dream it. ■

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## BUDGET

(Continued from page 48)

Rich's early Epic LPs and four fine Johnny Horton albums, some at prices as low as \$2.99.

Back in July of 1969 Shelby Singleton purchased the controlling interest in Sun Records from founder-owner Sam Phillips, including, of course, the earliest hits of Johnny Cash, Charlie Rich, Jerry Lee Lewis and Carl Perkins. Singleton released a series of Original Golden Hits albums by Cash and Lewis, two by Perkins, a Charlie Rich and a few other Cash and Lewis albums, all of which are now cutouts. Shelby's own S.S.S. label was the first to record David Allan Coe, and both of the albums released are cutouts today, not to mention collector's items.

Mercury/Smash products seem to show up everywhere and even more surprising is the fact that some albums are of fairly recent vintage. Jerry Lee albums are plentiful and include some of his finest recent work. There's the two-volume *Country Music Hall of Fame Hits*, *Another Place*, *Another Time* and two live sets that show him at his rocking best: *The Greatest Live Show on Earth*, recorded at a 1964 show in Birmingham, Alabama and the more recent *Live at The International*, *Las Vegas*. Even *The Session*, cut with the cream of England's rock musicians and the 1974 release *Southern Roots* have been deleted, as have some Dave Dudley and Faron Young albums.

Tough to find but worth the effort are LPs on the defunct Starday and King labels. Both recorded and issued some of the hardest hard country on record before and after their merger. King, an older Cincinnati label, packaged thematically arranged albums of train and river songs as well as albums by their stars. Their artists' roster boasted such names as Moon Mullican, the Delmore Brothers, Cowboy Copas, Hawkshaw Hawkins, Grandpa Jones, Homer and Jethro, the Stanley Brothers and Hank Locklin. Starday, the Texas label that moved to Nashville and merged with King, reissued many of the King albums and issued others by George Jones (his earliest recordings), Dottie West, Red Sovine, Pete Drake, Stringbean, Floyd Tillman, The Willis Brothers, Johnny Bond, Leon McAuliffe and Merle Kilgore. They also compiled excellent

anthologies of bluegrass, dobro, fiddle and steel guitar instrumentals in addition to their well-known trucker's series.

RCA cutouts include such finds as vintage Waylon Jennings albums, and numerous disks by Chet Atkins, Porter Wagoner, Dolly Parton, Willie Nelson, Norma Jean and Bobby Bare. It's also occasionally possible to pick up some rarities like Willie's *Live Country Music Concert* (worth up to \$15) and Mickey Newbury's *Harlequin Melodies*. Releases on smaller labels that folded can yield a few treasures. Bob Wills's *Keepsake Album #1* and Phil Baugh's *Country Guitar* on Longhorn and the Johnny Paycheck and Lloyd Green sets on Little Darlin' are prime examples.

**Budget Liners.** Most budget lines are released with a minimum of fanfare and seem to come out of nowhere, since one of the factors in keeping the price down is no promotional costs for the record company. More importantly, budget line albums are, in most cases, strictly a one-shot proposition. A definite amount are pressed and only in the case of a major artist or unusually high sales will an album ever be pressed again. The result is that many go out of print within a short time and are sold at astronomical prices by rare record shops. But just the same there's plenty of country music in those bins, and many gems can be found.

Columbia's Harmony label is probably the most important budget line for vintage country since many of its albums were compiled from recordings made during the thirties and forties. The *Best Of* series included Johnny Bond, Gene Autry, Carl Smith, Jimmy Dickens, Bill Monroe, Rose Maddox, Bill Phillips, Floyd Tillman and Bob Atcher, all with a distinctive white cover featuring an attractive line drawing of the artist. Even *Lefty Frizzell Sings The Songs of Jimmie Rodgers*, believed to be the finest of all Rodgers tributes, was originally issued on Harmony. The label boasted three fine Bob Wills albums: *Great Original Recordings*, *Bob Wills Special*, which contains the original instrumental version of "San Antonio Rose" (and recently issued with an Asleep at the Wheel double-pak) and *The Great Bob Wills* with recordings by the post-war Texas Playboys. Harmony has other sets by Roy Acuff, Gene Autry, Ray Price, Flatt and Scruggs, Charlie Rich, Bill Monroe and Don Gibson.

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Coral) released budget liners by Webb Pierce, The Sons of The Pioneers, Kitty Wells, Loretta Lynn, Red Foley and Patsy Cline. Not surprisingly, their most interesting albums are the scarce ones, such as the Waylon Jennings LP which consists of his earliest solo recordings, made around 1958 for Brunswick. Bill Monroe's *Songs With The Bluegrass Boys* has Vassar Clements and Sonny Osborne as uncredited sidemen. Ernest Tubbs' *Great Country* is a shorter version of an earlier

Decca release and *Ernest Tubbs and The Texas Troubadours* has songs from the forties and fifties; "Two Glasses, Joe" and "Journey's End" alone are worth the price of this one. *Western Swing Along* by Bob Wills spotlights a few unsuccessful, and weird, stabs at the late fifties rock and roll market.

For sheer volume RCA-Camden is Harmony's closest rival, with numerous LPs by Elvis, Waylon, Bobby Bare, Willie, Porter Wagoner, Dolly

Parton, Jerry Reed, Chet Atkins, Johnny and Jack and Don Gibson. Hank Snow's *The Old and Great Songs* is made up of recordings from 1940 to 1945 and *The Wreck of The Old 97* is a two-disk collection of train songs. There's Elton Britt's *The Jimmie Rodgers Blues*, Pee Wee King's *Biggest Hits*, an ineptly titled *Bluegrass Mountain Music* by the old-timey Blue Sky Boys and Bill Monroe's *The Father of Bluegrass Music*, a 1962 release of his earliest recordings with the Bluegrass Boys from 1940 and 1941 and several albums by the Carter Family.

One budget line has even managed to become a collector's item in itself: Audio Lab, a label King records started in the fifties. They issued albums by lesser-known King artists like Charlie Gore, Hank Penny, The Bailes Brothers, Slim Willet, Clyde Moody, Bob Newman, Zeb Turner, The Light Crust Doughboys, an album of Moon Mullican piano instrumentals.

The leasing labels have impressive selections, too. The largest, Pickwick, has double albums of Tennessee Ernie Ford, Hank Thompson, and Wanda Jackson from Capitol, a double Patsy Cline from Decca and a double Flatt and Scruggs from Mercury, where they made their first recordings as a solo act. Single albums include Freddie Hart, Merle Haggard and Bonnie Owens, Roy Clark, Roy Acuff and Faron Young from Capitol, Webb Pierce and Ernest Tubbs from Decca, Jerry Lee from Sun and Mercury and George Jones from Mercury. Charlie Rich's *Lonely Weekends* is a repackaging of one of his excellent Smash albums. Hilltop, Pickwick's country subsidiary has a Johnny Horton set from Mercury, Al Dexter's *Original Pistol Packin' Mama* and countless others. The Sun recordings of Johnny Cash, Jerry Lee Lewis and Charlie Rich have been leased to Pickwick and other smaller labels and recently Sun has become a budget line label, releasing many of Charlie Rich's old recordings for Phillips International, a Sun spinoff label. Power Pak has released some of Johnny Bush's albums for Stop. New budget lines are coming all the time. Recently Columbia began to reissue older albums on their Limited Edition series, and Capitol's done the same with their Midline series, which boasts older albums by Wynn Stewart, Tennessee Ernie Ford, Merle Travis and Faron Young, and other top artists. ■

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(Continued from page 8)

Ain't it great? **Stonewall Jackson's** fifteen year old son will play drums for his dad this summer while school is out. Big **John Bechtel** who is Stonewall's steel player is my neighbor and told me this.

Wife **Sussana** travels with hubby **Guy Clark** on the road all the time, and it works. The pickers told me, "You can't think of Guy without thinking of Sussana." She's a real level pretty lady, who writes good songs. Course you know Guy and Sus-



**Buck Owens**

sana are great friends with the **Jerry Jeff Walkers**. It still cracks me up that the Clarks went to Venezuela with the Walkers on their honeymoon.

Heard from London Records that former Bluegrass Boy **Merle "Red" Taylor** has a debut LP titled *Taylor Made* on their prestigious label with old Red a fiddling up a storm. And they tell me too that them London hillbillies that call themselves **Z Z Top** is going to tour 100 American cities... with a 2,000 lb. black buffalo, two trained turkey vultures, three trained black vultures (attention readers, we call them things buzzards in Caswell County), four rattlesnakes (ain't snake handling against the law??), and a 150 pound timberwolf.

Appreciate my letters, and comments, and sure appreciate **Margie Robertson** back in Caswell County who subscribed to *Country Music* just to read my piece. 'Bout all for now 'cept I love everybody who loves country music, and especially Caswell County borned **Aunt Mary Rumbley**, who will be 96 years old by the time you read this. She is my late grandfather Boone's sister, and her and me will have ya'll know that **John Boone**, brother of **Daniel** was Aunt Mary's great, great, great grandfather, and try and count up what he was to me. ■

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# Letters

John Morthland's *Delmore Brothers Retrospective*, in the June issue of COUNTRY MUSIC was appreciated and the fact that they are still considered "copy" is in itself a compliment.

Alton was my father and Rabon my uncle.

For the most part the article is correct. However, it does have its inaccuracies. "Gonna Lay Down My Old Guitar" was not their theme song, we did not move to Huntsville, Texas after Rabon's death, and to some extent Dad's drinking was over emphasized.

Normally, I do not write letters to people who do articles on my father because for some reason they are usually very bad. My reason for writing is I detect a very solid insight into the Delmores' music few exhibit, whether they are trying to play it or write about it.

LIONEL A. DELMORE  
FAIRVIEW, TENN.

For the longest time Ralph Mooney's playing has been truly the sound in the back of my mind as Waylon and others have found. I've always said that if I'm ever reincarnated, I'd like to come back as the ole Moon and your recent story (July COUNTRY MUSIC) only reinstates that wish.

CARRIE MARBLEY  
ABERDEEN, MD.

In regards to the article "WWVA Will Censor Records" (April COUNTRY MUSIC), I for one am very disappointed in WWVA. My man is a long-distance truck driver and loves country music as I do. He is away from his family five days a week and sometimes more. His constant source of touching home and family is songs on the radio. These songs WWVA calls "suggestive" or "profane" have helped us to get through the bad and lonely nights without each other. One incident my man told me about will probably explain it better. He was tempted in a truck stop by a girl one lonely night. Then someone played

"Behind Closed Doors" by Charlie Rich. My man said the song overwhelmed him with love for me and his home. Needless to say, he left the girl and called me to say how much he missed me—at 1 a.m. yet! That was the best phone call I have ever received!

LOVIN SIOUX  
SIOUX FALLS, S.D.

Allow me to express my viewpoint on the review of Loretta Lynn's album, *When The Tingle Becomes A Chill*, in your June '76 issue.

I feel deeply that Martha Hume (the reviewer of the album) has offended many Loretta Lynn fans. The review states that the album follows a pattern in Loretta's recent releases, that they are a quick job just to cover the success of the title hit (*When The Tingle Becomes A Chill*). This is just not true! The review goes on, "*Rhinestone Cowboy*, an odd choice for a Loretta Lynn album if I ever heard one." Let me ask, what other female country vocalist has the versatility to sing that type of song? Not too many, I'm sure you will agree. The review further notes that the lyrics on most of the selections are inane. Martha must of had cotton in her ear from an old earache when she listened to the album.

BOB MCCREADY  
ELSMERE, DEL.

The article about Charlie Rich (June COUNTRY MUSIC) by Peter Guralnik is a gem. You have printed something with warmth and heart, and let everyone know that superstars are human, too.

NORMAN PIERCE  
LAS VEGAS, NEV.

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





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