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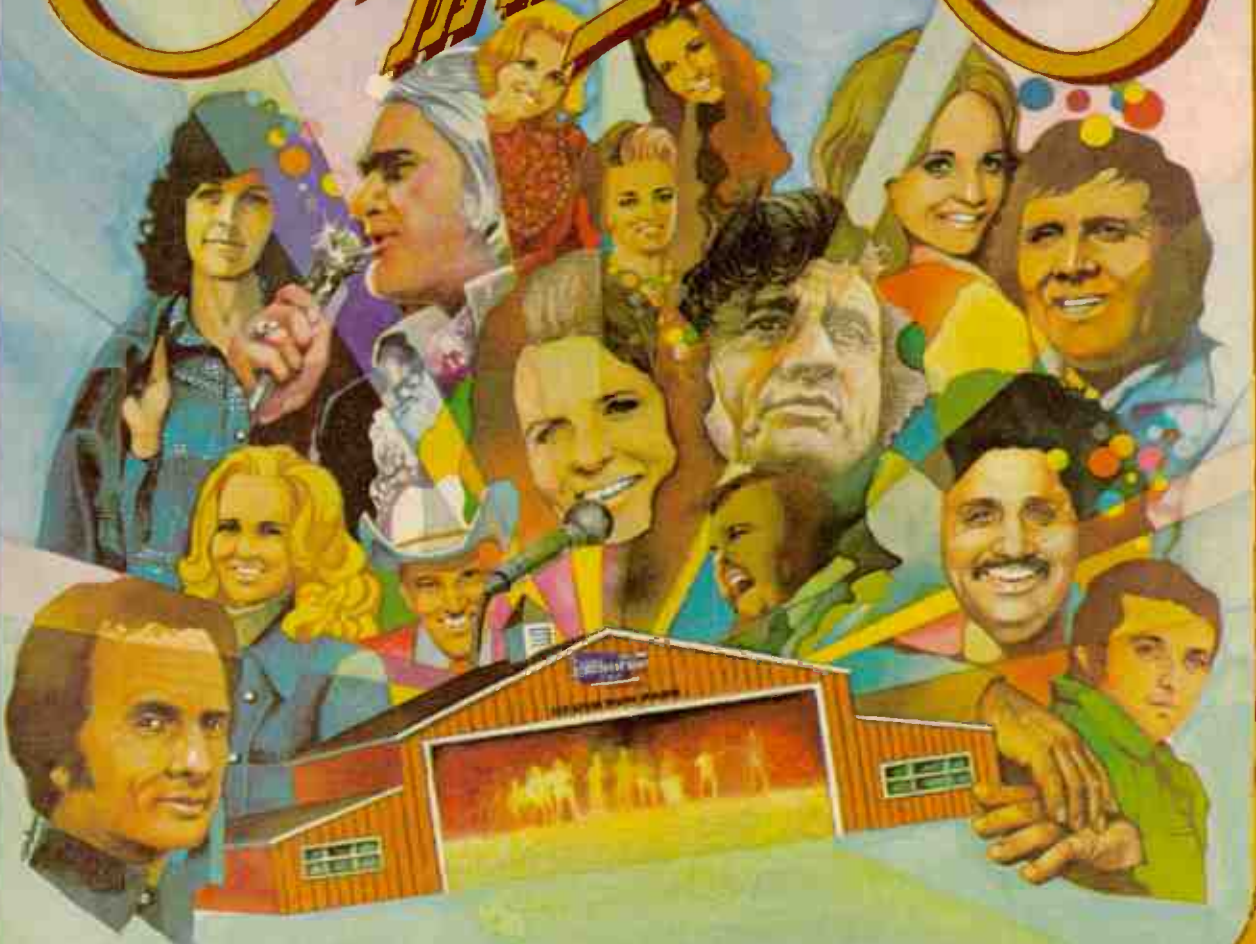
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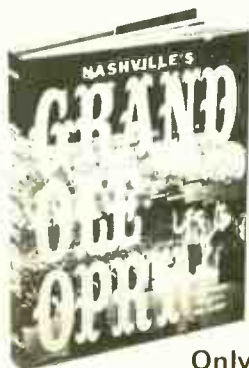
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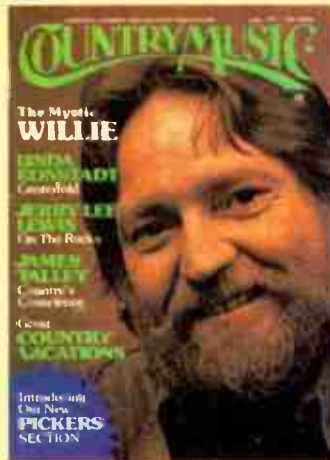
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June, 1977

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Record & Tape listing available in new subscriber copies (pg. 33A-33L).

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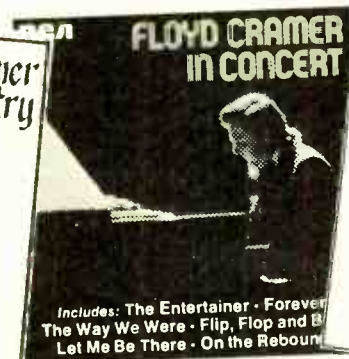


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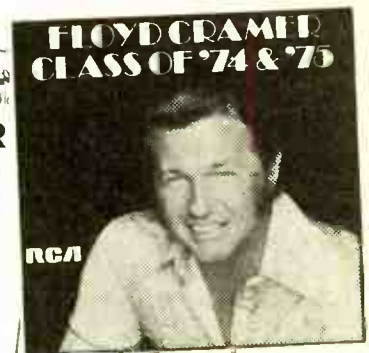
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Letters

They Like Conway And Our Article . . .

Conway Twitty (March 1977) was a delightful story. Conway is such a good down-to-earth guy willing to do good for the young and old. I wish there were more people like him.

MRS. CURTIS WILTAN
BROWNVILLE, N.Y.

We wish there were, too. Ed.

. . . greatest appreciation to you for publishing (March issue) John Pugh's article "Conway Twitty, Sexy Songs and Good Deeds Keep Him On Top."

I am an avid Conway Twitty fan and I read anything I can find about the great man. Mr. Pugh's article was one of the best! Also, Leonard Kamsler's picture coverage was just great. Thanks for the coverage of Conway's beautiful wife and his lovely children. Again, thank you for the in-depth look into the character and capabilities of this great entertainer and really fine gentleman.

BETH COLE
DENVER, N.C.

Thanks, Beth. Ed.

. . . But Some Say We Wronged Him

. . . My appreciation for the article on Conway Twitty in the March 1977 issue of your very fine magazine.

However, there were a couple of points with which I can't agree. I don't think Conway just decided to be the Frank Merriwell to his God-given talent, from the fact that he is always himself. He isn't trying to impress everyone and be a Superstar; he just enjoys what he is doing. His fans recognize this and love and respect him. Also, John Pugh gives the wrong impression of Conway's hit song, *You've Never Been This Far Before*. He says that Conway "sings of undressing innocent young things . . ." and "growls that his trembling fingers are reaching for a tender virgin's forbidden places." Anyone who *really* listens knows that is not what the song is about at all! Mr. Pugh should have gotten a woman's point of view, or asked Conway for the *real* interpretation of the lyrics.

A DEVOTED CONWAY FAN
FROM SOUTH CAROLINA

Thank you for the great article by John Pugh in the March 1977 issue about my favorite—Conway Twitty. I really enjoyed it. However, I didn't like the reference to the song *You've Never Been This Far Before*, that "Conway growls that his trembling fingers are reaching for a tender virgin's forbidden places." That is not the true meaning of the song.

An article by Patrick Carr and Marshall Fallwell in *Country Music* May 1974 gives Conway's own explanation:

"*You've Never Been This Far Before* simply means that this woman has always been true to her husband, and now, something's happened between this woman and her husband and they're no longer together. And because of this, you're together alone for the first time and you're both nervous about the situation. She is evidently a very nice person and she's never been this far before, to be here with you like this. Nobody other than her husband. And the line, 'as my trembling fingers touch forbidden places,' is one of the most *tender* lines I think I have ever written. It's certainly not a vulgar line. Simply putting your arm around this woman is forbidden. I mean it would be a forbidden thing. And that's exactly what that lines means. It certainly wasn't written the other way."

Conway didn't get the title "High Priest of Country Music" by writing dirty songs!

BARBARA L. HRUZA
AURORA, NEBR.

Says We Did Good On The Killer

The article about Jerry Lee Lewis was one of the best I have read (March 1977). Jerry Lee is one of the best all around entertainers in country music today. I would like to thank John Pugh for a very fine article. Like he said, "the Killer rocks on."

CHRIS KLUNK
HANOVER, PA.

If you liked that one, take a look at this month's piece on Jerry Lee, page 42. Ed.

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

COUNTRY MUSIC

Publisher:
John Killion

Editor:
Arthur J. Maher

Art Director &
Production Manager:
Cheh Nam Low

Contributing
Art Director
Eberhard Luetheke

Book Editor:
Patrick Carr

Managing Editor:
Michael Bane

Assistant Editor:
Rochelle Friedman

Art Assistant:
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Contributors:
Audrey Winters
J. R. Young

Circulation Director:
John D. Hall

Director, Circulation Promotion:
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Advertising Sales Director:
John Bowen

Director, Direct Marketing:
Anthony Bunting

Direct Marketing Assistant:
Eileen Bell

Director of Administration:
Olos C. Pitts

Accounting Manager:
Alma Braver

Executive, Editorial and
Advertising Offices,
475 Park Avenue South, 16th
Floor, New York, New York 10016
(212) 685-8200

John H. Killion, President
W. Beattie, Treasurer
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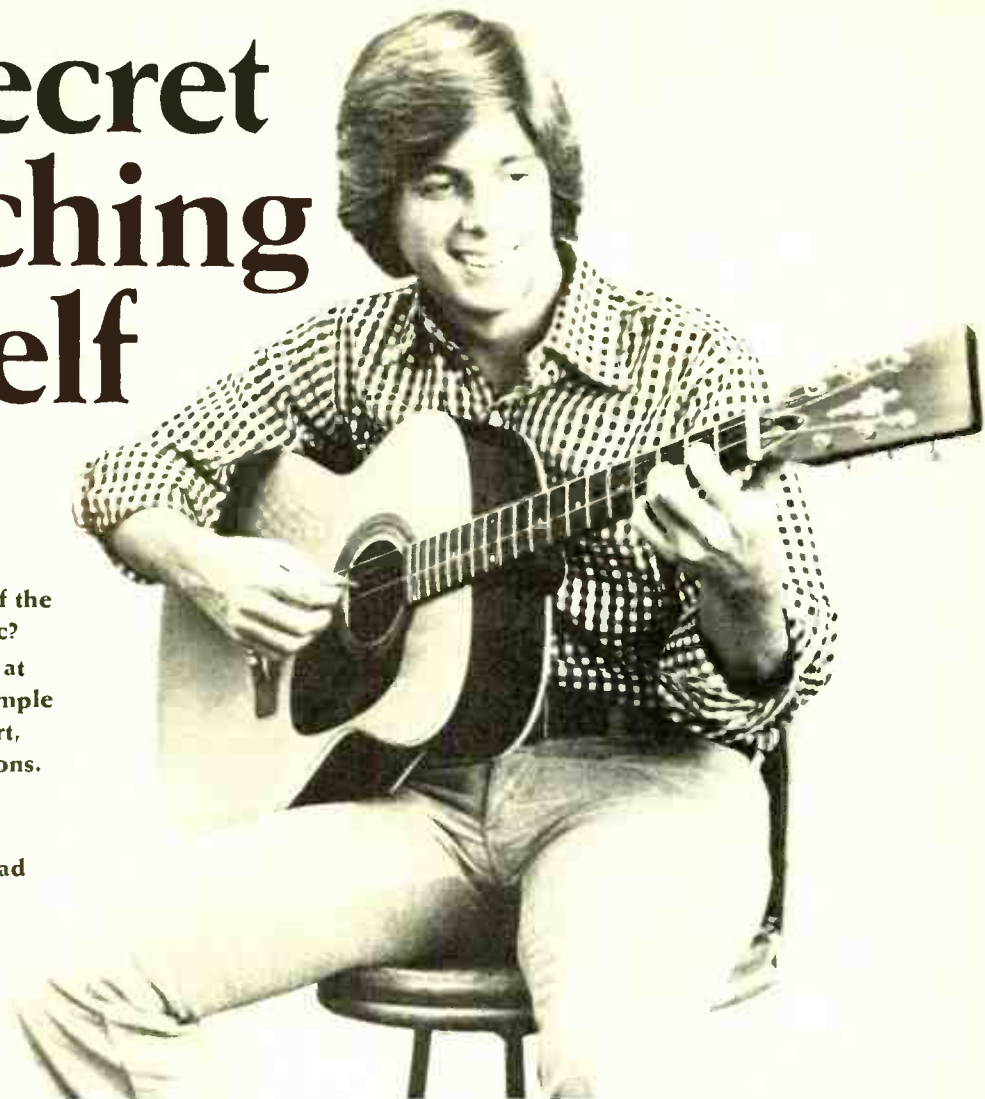
West Coast (Advertising)
The Leonard Company
6355 Topanga Canyon Blvd., # 307
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The Patts Group
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And, Cecelia Feeney of Vineland, N.J. reports: "It's like a dream come true. Knowing how to play and read music has given me new self-confidence."

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Country Scene

PEOPLE Hank, Jr. Shopping; Tillis Meets Carter Gang

by AUDREY WINTERS



Hank Williams, Jr.

Merle Haggard and Bonnie Owens are divorced, though they still work together. Bonnie, along with Fuzzy Owen and Louis Talley, Hag's managers, flew in to Nashville from Reno via jet to record several songs. They stayed five days and recorded about 25 songs for MCA/Talley Records.

Loretta Lynn and Conway Twitty only record one duet a year and they just keep on winning awards for their duets. It's that time again and they are in Bradley's Barn recording their next LP.

Hank Williams, Jr. is shopping for a house in Nashville after living in Cullman, Ala. for the past few years. Hank and Waylon Jennings are working a string of dates together in Florida this month.

The Franklin Road home of the late Hank and Audrey Williams is now in the hands of a real estate agency. Audrey has been dead 16 months and the estate is unsettled.

Hank Locklin goes around to all his friends saying *You love me, don't ya*. Jeannie C. Riley wrote him a song with that title which he recorded for his new single on Plantation Records.

Ray Price said in a recent interview of his tribute album to Hank Williams, *Hank 'n' Me*. "The only thing that really irritated me was that they didn't credit the dobro player on the album—Hank Williams, Jr. Otherwise, I'm very happy with the whole project and I think Hank would have liked it. He always liked pop versions of his songs."

Mel Tillis gave a command performance in Southern Georgia recently. He and First Brother, Billy Carter, along with Billy's wife, got together for a visit after a Mel Tillis Show in Americus. Billy called back shortly with an invitation to spend some time Saturday morning with the President at his home in Plains. Mel, his brother, Richard Tillis, and Mel's daughter, Pamela (now a part of her dad's show), were picked up by Billy and driven to the family home where they spent the morning with the President and First Lady. What did they talk about? Mel says it ranged from the national economy to just plain cutting-up!

Freddy Fender once made his living as a migrant farm worker. In that capacity he often came into contact with illegal immigrants. He recalls one time when he was working with a group of them. "I was hunched over like this picking cotton, and I looked up and here came all these Mexicans runnin' at me, you know. The immigration people were chasing them in a helicopter. They came runnin' at me and ran right by me. So I took out runnin' after them until my brother yelled at me: 'Hey, you idiot! You're not supposed to be runnin'; you were born here!'"

Capitol Records is preparing for the release of Jessi Colter's new LP titled *New Wine*. The LP is made up of sacred songs dedicated to her mother, the Rev. Helen Johnson, who was a minister for 31 years in Arizona until her death over a year ago.

Loretta Lynn and husband Mooney looked just like any other couple when they were seen driving down the street in a pick-up truck carrying a refrigerator and stove with a rope tied around them. It seems Loretta had bought new appliances and was giving the old ones to some of her office help. So she and Mooney delivered them from Hurricane Mills to Nashville by truck.

Mike Copas, younger son of the late Cowboy Copas, is playing drums in a band at the Dog House Lounge on Dickerson Road in Nashville. He teaches school when not playing drums.

Chet Atkins said he turned down three songs in one day about President Carter.

Mother Maybelle Carter is ill and being treated at Mayo Clinic.

MCA's Jesseca James (Cathy Twitty) and her new husband Bruce Harris, Jr. bought a new condominium in Hendersonville, Tenn. Jesseca said she was having problems with her cooking. "I cooked Hamburger Helper one night and got sick. Bruce ate the rest of it the next night and he got sick too!" said Jesseca.

Hank Williams, Jr. is an avid reader and expert on Civil War history. At present he is researching a Klu Klux Klan gun belt buckle given to him by Johnny Cash.

The *Singer's Singer*, George Jones, was just named Rolling Stone's Country Artist of the Year.

While Hank, Jr. was visiting Tanya Tucker at her home in Nashville last week to discuss a couple of songs, Tanya's big Saint Bernard bit Hank on the right side of the face, very close to where he had his last two eye surgeries. He decided not to go see a doctor but did call one who said he didn't think it would set up any infection.

Barbara Mandrell is having to get up awfully early these days in order to get her son, Matthew, to his 6:30 a.m. ice hockey practices. Barbara apparently doesn't mind because she is sponsoring a youth ice hockey team herself, Barbara Mandrell's Do-Rites. She also sponsors a woman's bowling team—Mandrell's Bowl Weevils—and boys' and girls' softball teams.

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Country Scene

HILLBILLY CENTRAL

by HAZEL SMITH

The world of country music has never been better. Just ask **Jimmy Bowen**, former producer of **Glen Campbell** and another singer named **Frank Sinatra**, and former president of **MGM Records**, in Nashville producing **Mel Tillis** and his daughter, lovely **Pam Tillis**. **Bowen** says the excitement of making phonograph records is at an all time high locally—about like the 1960s era in LA, and he feels that Nashville is gonna get a run for its money in this area. He didn't say that Nashville would exceed all other cities, and no one else has actually said these words to me, but I've been lead to believe by a bunch of heavies that this is what is in the making. I can feel the shifting sands, and it is exciting.

Being friends with **Bob McDill** for better'n five years, it was good to see him named songwriter of the year at the Nashville Songwriters Association International (NSAI) annual awards banquet. Other songwriters honored included **Bill Anderson**, **Bobby Braddock**, **Paul Craft**, **Lola Jean Dillion**, **Larry Gatlin**, **Merle Haggard**, **Waylon Holyfield**, **Waylon Jennings**, **Dickie Lee**, **Willie Nelson**, **Mickey Newbury**, **George Ritchey**, **Billy Sherrill**, **Shel Silverstein**, **John Schweers**, **Cindy Walker**, **Sterling Whipple**, **Don Williams**, the late **Hank Williams** and **Tammy Wynette**. It was also good to see and hear super songwriter **John D. Loudermilk** address the crowd of 800 with words of wisdom from the mind of one of the greatest songsmiths that ever lived.

Heard that **Tammy Wynette** gifted **Burt Reynolds** with a 1957 **Lincoln Continental**. Can't verify this as fact, but did hear it. I do know that **R.C. Bannon**, who you will hear a lot from not only as a singer, but as a writer, has just signed with **Columbia Records** with **Ben Tallent** producing. Talented Tallent also produces **Marshall Chapman**, who tore 'em up in New York City recently 'till she took pneumonia and had to be hospitalized.

Songwriter **Frank Dycus** said, "Prunes are like old women . . . wrinkled and sweet." Ain't no wonder **Frank** is the best co-writer in the world coming up with a line like that.

Producer **Larry Butler**, singer **Dottie West**, **Ruth Busby** and me along with a bunch more folks went to see **Kenny Rogers** at the **Exit/In**. **Kenny** did a hellacious



Alexander Harvey

show. The next week a bunch of friends and me went to see **Alex Harvey** at the newly opened **Armadillo East**. Heard **Alex**, who wrote the song, sing **Reuben James** after I requested it in my loudest **Caswell County** voice.

Bluegrass maestro **Bill Monroe** told me he and the **Bluegrass Boys** played to **SRO** crowds all over **Washington, Oregon** and **California**. Sad news in the bluegrass area: **Paul Warren**, longtime fiddler for **Lester Flatt**, is not well at this writing and neither is **Stoney Cooper**, of **Wilma Lee & Stoney** fame. They have been **Opry** members for 20 years.

Torn Between Two Lovers! Whadda song sung by **Mary MacGregor**. The lyric content of this particular song would have been sneezed off turntables in the not too far away yesterday, but today there's different songs to be sung, and this song went No. 1 pop, a long way country, and bless your soul it was sung by the lady one week on the **Tonight Show** and the next week at the **Grand Ole Opry**. Talk about progress We getting more like

Hollywood every day.

Grammy winner **Emmylou Harris**, along with the **Marshall Tucker Band**, tore up **Music City** with a super-spectacular show at the **Auditorium**. By the way, **Dolly Parton** picked up **Emmylou's** Grammy, while **Linda Ronstadt** picked up her very own Grammy and **Larry Gatlin** picked up his very own Grammy. Good for the Grammy winners, I say.

Monday night is **Songwriter's Night** at the **Exit/In** and there's so many people present that a body can barely walk around. And why not, with people like **Linda Hargrove**, **Tracy Nelson** and other stars performing.

A note of interest: **Brian Ahern** producing **Jesse Winchester**. There's been some talk of **Jesse** touring the States following **President Carter's** election, who had allowed that he would pardon **Jesse**, who was a conscientious objector, and has lived in **Canada** for over ten years. I know if **Jesse Winchester** returns to **Tennessee** that the mountains will put on the style to welcome the hometown boy back home.

Mary Reeves Davis and hubby **Terry** in **Africa** for two weeks. The wife of the late **Jim Reeves** is not only a first class business woman who has kept her late husband's music alive, she runs her own publishing firm, her own farm, and she is a first class lady as well. This goes to prove my theory—**Nashville** would sing a different tune if it weren't for the female smarts. Just ask any woman!

Have you ever spied a star entering a restroom, and said to yourself, "They have to go too?" I have.

There's talk that **Kris Kristofferson** is off the wagon following the release of the movie, **A Star Is Born**. Seems when **Kris** went to the premier showing he had the gut feeling that he was seeing the story of his life on the screen. And for those of us who have seen the great flick, we know that the male lead character did have a problem with alcohol, followed with a problem of passing away. Apparently the latter frightened **Kris**.

How time flies. **Planet Alexandria Swan** was three years old in May. The daughter of **Billy Swan** and his lovely wife **Marlu** is certainly a little lady by now. Looks like her mother and is pretty as a picture.

Pretty, red haired **Judy Walker**, daughter of **Grand Ole Opry** favorite **Billy Walker**, was telling me that she and her sisters are performing these days as the **Walker Sisters**, accompanying their famed dad on road shows, etc.

Beauteous **Jessi Colter** showed up at the grand opening of **St. Charles** restaurant on **Music Row** recently, where her sister, **Sharon Clement**, is hostess. ■

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NEWS Gilley wins; Green loses; & Weller's fans used to be bubble gummers . . .



Mickey Gilley



Crystal Gayle

Gilley, Gayle Grab Goodies at Academy of Country Music

Mickey Gilley made a clean sweep of the Academy of Country Music's 12th Annual Awards Show by winning in five separate categories, including Entertainer of the Year and Male Vocalist of the Year. Gilley, who was in Los Angeles to attend the Awards show in February, appeared most embarrassed as he kept returning to the stage to accept the awards for Album of the Year, *Gilley's Smokin'*, Single Record of the Year, *Bring It On Home* and Band of the Year. *Don't the Girls Get Prettier at Closing Time*, another Gilley hit, was named Song of the Year—technically a writer's award going to Baker Knight. Crystal Gayle was named Female Vocalist of the Year, with Billy Jo Spears taking the honors as Most Promising Female Vocalist. Moe Bandy was voted Most Promising Male Vocalist.

Lust & Losing: Our Man at the Grammys

There was this little bird flying randomly, desperately, around the cavernous interior of the Dallas-Fort Worth Airport. At first I thought the poor thing had gotten in somehow and was searching in vain for a way back out. Then I got the idea that maybe the management put it in there to give a little life to one of the most desolate, soulless, barren places on the face of this planet.

What I was doing there at 2 a.m. was taking the red-eye flight from Nashville to L.A. to attend the Grammy Awards, the music business' annual self-congratulatory television extravaganza in which they try to prove to the American public how glamorous, exciting and big time the music business is.

My own reason for going—I might as well bring it out in the open right now—was a nomination in probably the most obscure category of all: Best Liner Notes of the Year, which, I think, ranks just above Best Music Business Sanitary Engineer of the Year. Maybe.

I wouldn't say I was nervous about the impending event, but the next morning (actually the *same* AM) I was fully dressed in my tux—my first since high school—two and a half hours early, munching on fingernail hors'd'oeuvres. At last my ride came, and as we headed on over to the Hollywood Palladium the thought occurred to me that I had no ticket, no instructions, no nothing. Standing closely behind people with tickets, wearing a snappy grey-on-silver tux, trying to look inconspicuously important and being bigger than most of the security guards were, I believe, the only reasons I got in.

Once inside, the promised champagne reception turned out to be a great number of people in a very small space, standing around looking uncomfortable. Soon someone began braying from the podium that everyone should be seated for the giving away of the pre-telecast awards, for there are so many categories that despite a full two-hour television show, some thirty-seven awards are given out beforehand.

We were led to padded folding chairs which quickly became less than comfortable, and I was seated right next to Paul Craft, who was nominated twice in the Country Song of the Year category for having written *Drop Kick Me Jesus* and

(Continued on page 12)



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(Continued from page 10)

Hank Williams, *You Wrote My Life*. I couldn't exactly say that Paul was more nervous than I, but he did point out seventeen different women whom he described by saying "I'm in love with her. She's my favorite singer."

The televised portion of the show was hosted by Andy Williams. We got a local deejay who, after announcing the Best Country Female Vocal Performance (Ennmylou Harris' *Elite Hotel*) said "And as long as we're on this western stuff, the the Best Country Male Vocal Performance . . ." which was, by the way, Ronnie Milsap. Western stuff indeed. To spare you any further suspense, I did not win, nor did Paul Craft, who muttered a magnificently orchestrated string of semi-obscenities as Larry Gatlin accepted the award for *Broken Lady*. (Best Liner Notes went to Dan Morgenstein for *The Changing Faces of Harlem*.)

After what already seemed like hours on the folding chairs the telecast actually started, and once underway, although Ringo Starr looked foolish making leaden ad-libs, things rolled along smoothly. Although, by the way, they made a big thing of saying they wanted the applause to be spontaneous, somebody was really riding the big applause light.

A few random memories: Tennille's mouth looks as big, if not bigger, in person than it does on teevee. The Beach Boys looked as confused and in need of a lot of help as they did on screen that night (we sat in front of their wives who bitched incessantly and loudly to every passing usher about their seating position which they felt less than choice). Chester and Lester (Chet Atkins and Les Paul) went over very well, Les' incessant mugging delighting the crowd. A muffled gasp went through the audience as Barbra Streisand condescendingly told us that no matter what heights she'd risen to her "roots" were still in music. The Oak Ridge Boys stole the show with magnificent four part harmony; it was the first time white gospel music had been allowed to perform on the telecast. It's my guess that it won't be the last. Don't think for a second that music business women are Cher look alikes: I haven't seen so much cleavage since my high school reunion; in fact, I hadn't seen so much cleavage since we flew over the Grand Canyon. Linda Ronstadt looked small, frail and very shy. It seemed like at least half the winners were somewhere else. Over the monitors the visual effects looked great. And I was assaulted with a lot of loud disco music.

Paul Simon got to read the names of

(Continued on page 54)

Queen of the House Abdicates, Jody Miller Takes New Aim With a New Producer



After 14 years as a country singer Jody Miller is ready to launch her career.

She's got a new contract, a new producer, new material and a new attitude—and she's ready to make something of it.

Jody is best remembered for *Queen of the House*, the total woman response to Roger Miller's (no relation) *King of the Road* in 1965. The song crossed from the country charts to the pop charts before the term crossover had ever been coined, and won Jody a Grammy.

"I've always been recording pop country music," says Jody, chic in her black gauchos, matching vest and knee high boots. "I recorded it back in '65 and those country DJ's wouldn't play it at all, said it was just too pop. And now they're playing the same thing that I tried to get them to play then and they wouldn't play."

So now that her foresighted formula has proved successful with the advent of the Eagles and Olivia, Jody Miller is going to jump back where she started, right?

Wrong.

"This new session I did is a little more folk than country. The things I've recorded predominantly have said I am the housewife and my husband is going out partying while I'm sitting home. That's what it has said in the past and, of course, I think in

country music that is probably the main thing to sing about. But I like happy songs. I had a hit with *He's So Fine*, that kind of up feeling rather than that down feeling."

So when Jody renewed her contract with Epic Records in September, she asked for a little more say-so in her career. After three years of being produced by Billy Sherrill, she teamed up with Jerry Crutchfield, who brought her new material which resulted in Jody's new attitude.

"In the past," she admits, "I've gone out and recorded things and said, 'Okay, I've done my part, now let (CBS) do theirs,' but it doesn't work that way. You've got to go all the time, you've got to push. I'm a little smarter than I used to be."

Now, rather than make a quick dash from Blanchard, Okla., where she lives with her husband Monty Brooks and daughter Robin, to Nashville for a fast recording session, then back to Blanchard or her road shows, Jody is willing to help promote herself. She credits it to her change in producers.

"Billy never had any material ready for me, so we'd go back to the oldies like *He's So Fine*, *Be My Baby*, *House of the Rising Sun* . . . that's really getting kind of desperate when you have to reach way back there, and I was just getting sick of it."

With Crutchfield, however, "I have never seen so much new material in my life—and it all was great. He's got sort of a touch; to me it's a pop touch."

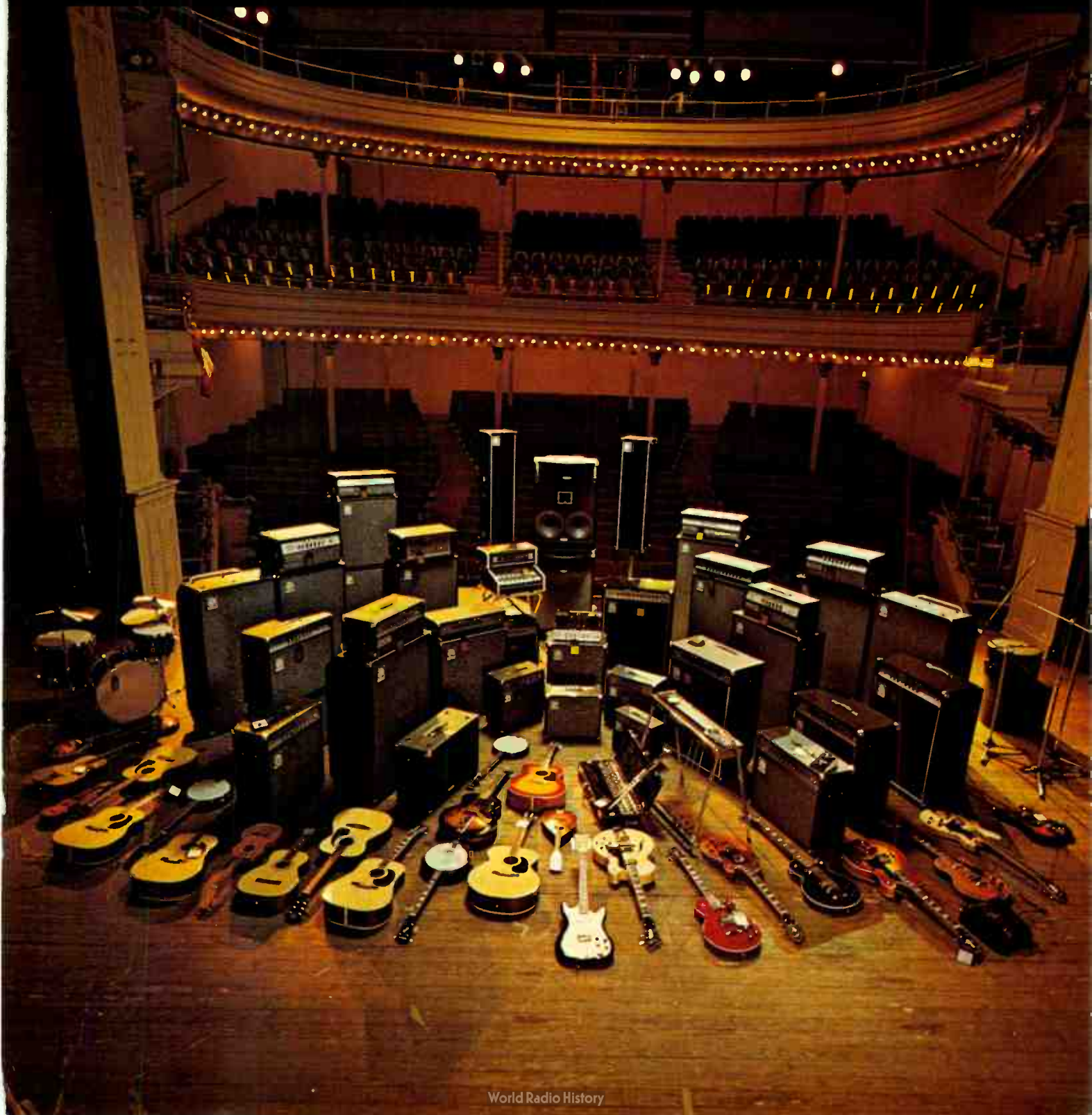
As she gears up to give her career that extra boost, Jody is honest enough to realize that despite the album-a-year she's cut for 14 years, what she's attempting is more of a come-back than a continuation of the success she had years ago.

"I have been away," she says, "—on the charts. The last thing I had was a chart record; every one of my things has been a chart record, but that doesn't mean anything to the public. That doesn't mean anything to the person going into the bar and having a drink and wanting to punch the jukebox. And that's who I have to try to reach. I haven't reached them since *Darling, You Can Always Come Back Home* and *He's So Fine*, about four years ago.

"I really need to come out with a real strong song."

MARY ELLEN MOORE

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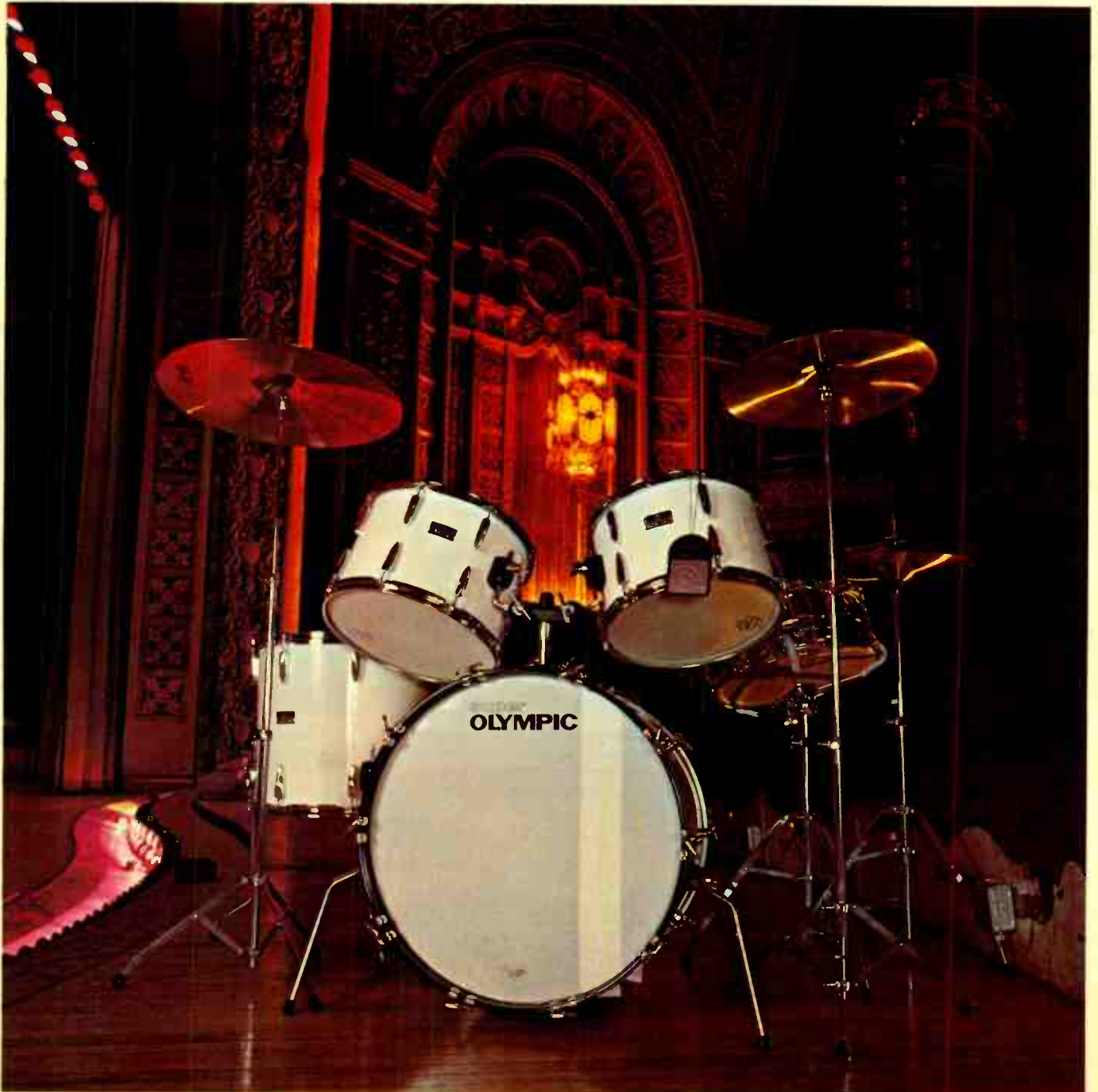
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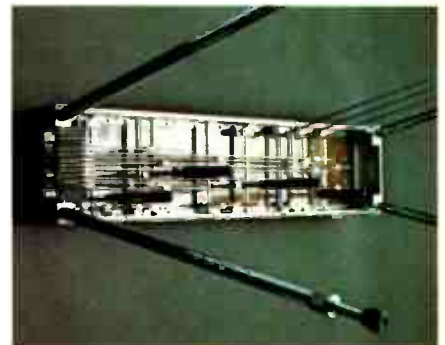
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WATCH THIS FACE: JOE ELY

Chances are that you haven't heard much about the Joe Ely Band, if you've heard anything at all. But I've got a gut feeling that you're going to hear a lot from him, and chances are that it may be sooner than even he may realize. I'd never heard of Joe Ely either, until good friend John Brown, head of MCA's country marketing department and ace promotion person, mentioned his name. He said they'd just signed a great band out of Texas, he'd seen them play and they'd blown him away. The Joe Ely group, he said, was going to be a very successful act. I was interested in learning about the music of Joe Ely and why he came to be raved about by an MCA biggie.

"If I had to give my music a title, I guess it's honky tonk ballad rock," said Ely after his opening show at Nashville's Pickin' Parlor. "I like to keep my music in the wind, because I like to play all kinds of music." Joe himself has moved around like the wind, following a wanderlust all over the country and to Europe. "Lot's of times I've been off hopping around the country with my guitar, playing or working to get enough money to get to the next town. I've gone off at different times, just for the sake of moving. I hung around New York for a while, playing the hard way, working as a janitor to get by. I played the streetcorners and the folk places in Greenwich Village. I was trying to hang out long enough to get the feel of it. I hung around in San Francisco and Los Angeles too, and kind of all those places in between." Joe travelled all those places in between as an animal handler with the circus, fulfilling the dream that most of us have harbored, to run away and join the circus.

"I worked the Arabian horses and sometimes the camels," he recalls. "We hit every stop in New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas." After the circus Joe headed back to Texas to put a band together. "I came through Lubbock on my way down to Austin. I was getting a band together down there. I just accidently ran across a bunch of musicians I'd known before and everything clicked. I had a lot of songs written, so we only worked on original material." The band—Jesse Taylor (guitar), Lloyd Maines (steel), Steve Keeton (drums), Gregg Wright (bass)—put their distinctive brand of honky tonk music on tape, which was heard by MCA through the help of the Lost Gonzo Band, who recommended Ely.

Ely's songs have an intelligence about them. Watching him on stage in Nashville, it was clear from the look in his eyes and his facial expressions that he felt he had something interesting to tell you. "I like to tell a story instead of just singing the same old 'I just wanna play one more



country song' stuff. Have you noticed how many songs are written about songs? There are so many stories to tell and feelings to get across. I draw from real life experiences for most of my songs—course I like to make up a good story, too."

Running through a quickly-paced set at the Pickin' Parlor, Ely performed tunes mostly from his album. He was in total control of both the band and the audience, no small feat for an outsider.

Was Ely satisfied with the album, too? "I felt it was a good place to start," he replied. "I wasn't trying for perfection, I just wanted a foundation on a place to start. This album has given me an insight on where I want to go from here. One of the problems on this record is that we had so many songs that I thought were ready to record. So we did a cross section to give ourselves some room."

So now Joe Ely is back on the road again, much of it he's already travelled, but under different circumstances this time. Ely is playing his own style of fresh, witty and sensitive honky tonk rock. It's good and it's real. And he still likes the road. "I still enjoy traveling. I don't especially care for all the attention and the limelight, though. But as long as I can get away from it now and then to write, it'll be okay." If Joe Ely travels through your area, go whoop it up with him.

BOB ANDERSON

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Country Scene

Freddy Weller: Jam Up & Jelly Tight with Country

Pointedly ignoring the man who had twisted in his seat to gaze at him, Freddy Weller ate his Jolly Ox lunch and talked about the fans from his earlier days who could sometimes make a drag out of everyday living just by recognizing him.

"Excuse me," the starrer from the next table interrupted, "I hate to interrupt, but you look awfully familiar . . ."

He finally established that, yes, it was Freddy Weller, the same Freddy Weller who, in the late 60s and early 70s, had achieved fame and fortune with a popular rock group, Paul Revere and the Raiders.

"You're mostly country now, aren't you?" the interrupter asked.

"Strictly country," Freddy replied, "that's all I really know how to do."

That's probably an exaggeration, since Freddy helped write such rock hits as *Dizzy* and *Jam Up and Jelly Tight*, and as one of the teen-loved Raiders played



Screamers' Pied Piper

for a type of audience that most country artists aren't even aware of.

"The audiences I saw were the real screamers," Freddy says, "the younger kids who didn't come so much to listen but as to watch and holler. It seemed like that was part of their enjoyment, to become really involved with the whole thing."

"And when I started recording country (in 1969), somehow or another they all knew about it—like they had a little network set up. So when I'd go to a town, it would be unbelievable to the promoter because all of a sudden all these young kids would show up when he was used to a laid-back, middle-aged kind of an audience."

"That was interesting to me—and to the Raider fans—because they didn't know what to make of it since the songs I sing are really country, very country—like

Merle Haggard stuff. But there were a certain amount of the screamers who would come to those things."

Many of those screamers had never even heard country music but, because Freddy was their man, they started listening to country stations hoping to hear one of his songs, hits like *Games People Play*. In doing so, some of them became country music fans, proving just as loyal as the rock fans. One girl, in fact, has kept a scrapbook of Freddy's activities since 1967 and every year sends him a ten-page photo album.

Other Raider fans did not accept Freddy's defection so readily.

"People would say 'Oh, what a drastic change, why did you decide to to that?' like it was a really foreign, stupid thing to do, country music." A stewardess who recognized him from his rock days even offered her condolences when hearing of his new line of work.

Ironically, though, Freddy didn't desert rock for country—just the opposite. He'd grown up in Atlanta on country music, and was working with Joe South and cutting some records of his own when the offer to join the Raiders came along.

"I felt like we were progressing nicely

(recording country), so when the offer came along from Revere I turned it down twice."

He finally accepted, spent five and a half years as the group's guitarist, becoming forever typecast as a rocker.

With the help of Paul Revere, Freddy started recording country in 1969, while still with the Raiders, and had his hit with *Games People Play*. He continued with the group until 1972 when "I knew I was no longer making a contribution to what they were doing."

With his return to country, he brought along a few more fans and a new element to country music audiences—screaming teenagers.

"Some of those people who were fans in those days are still fans today and I'm really proud of that. And usually they're pretty much 100 percent country music fans, too."

"Y'know," Freddy said, finishing up his lunch without anymore interruptions, "it used to be in an interview, or just in conversation, you'd finally get around to justify or defend country music—just why do you like that? It's not that way anymore."

MARY ELLEN MOORE

Pride Proves Pride of Showcase

Flew to Atlanta for an RCA-sponsored concert featuring Charley Pride, the Pridemen and Dave & Sugar. The setting was LeFevre Sound Studio, which was packed with folk from TV, radio, local press, the music trade press and a smattering of magazine people. All were guests of RCA.

Dave & Sugar opened, running through a lively set with their usual polish. Something of a surprise was a medley of Elvis Presley numbers which they and the Pridemen did quite well. Sue Powell, new member of Dave & Sugar, was of particular interest. She proved both good to look at and good to listen to. She replaces Jackie Frantz, who quit the group to go into religious work.

But Charley really knocked everyone out when he came on with his usual intensity and reeled off one great number after another. The crowd loved everything he did, but were especially moved by *Kaw-Liga* and *She's Just An Old Love Turned Memory*.

Later that evening, a bunch of us went with Charley, Dave & Sugar and the band to the Silver Saddle Inn, in nearby Decatur, Ga., where Lt. Governor Zell Miller was throwing himself a birthday party. The joint was packed, and Charley and his



Pride of RCA

troupe did essentially the same show we'd seen earlier, bringing the house down. Charley's performance hadn't been scheduled, which made the good-timing crowd all the more appreciative. They loved it.

Charley Pride works hard on stage. So do Dave & Sugar and the Pridemen. They're a hot act.

ART MAHER

EARPHONES

Your Ticket to Solitude

By HANS FANTEL

When you've got a date with Linda Ronstadt or Waylon Jennings, you don't want anyone butting in. Least of all your mate. Or the kids.

But where can you sneak off to be alone with your secret love? Time was when any well-appointed home included a music room or a library where you could take a vacation from the family behind sturdy oak doors. But in this split-level age of cardboard walls and doorless togetherness, it's getting harder all the time to find a quiet place for musical encounters.

The answer? Earphones. Slip a pair over your ears and you can have Linda, Waylon or anyone else at full volume, even when everyone else has gone to bed. And if you live in an apartment, you won't get complaints from the neighbors.

Aside from being instruments of domestic peace, earphones have still another advantage. Because the sound goes directly to your ears, it skips the acoustic quirks of your living room and you're bypassing the problems of speaker placement. The acoustics of your living room no longer enter into the picture. The net effect is an uncanny illusion: the space of the recording studio or concert auditorium is piped right into your head. You can *feel* that space stretch out between your ears! The



Sennheiser Wireless Headphone

inside of your head seems to grow as spacious as the concert stage, and you'll hardly believe your hat size stays the same.

How does this happen? Nobody knows for sure. Scientists have not yet pinned down the exact relationship between reality

and our senses. Of course, some philosophers have argued that all reality ultimately lies within our heads. Hearing "stereo space" via earphones is certainly a dramatic illustration of this.

All this may account for the recent popularity of earphones, which are currently among the hottest-selling items in audio. Yet when stereo earphones appeared on the market a few years back, they were greeted with loud snorts: "Earphones? I thought they went out with catwhisker radios!" In fact, today's earphones have little in common with their primitive ancestors in the early days of broadcasting. You might say that a modern pair of earphones compares to those older models as a racing yacht compares to a tree-trunk canoe. The difference lies in calculated refinement.

While early earphones were nothing but squawky telephone receivers, today's stereo models are crafted with the same precision that marks the best audio components. In principle, they resemble full-range loudspeakers reduced to a smaller scale. Many listeners are amazed at the rich and detailed sound obtained from these small devices. How, they wonder, can you get full bass from headsets meas-

(Continued on page 64)

OTHER PRODUCTS

Sony, a company best known for its TV sets and portable radios, is really pushing its way into the top-grade audio component field. And if the products in-

roduced so far are any indication, they consistently offer good performance and good value. Having hit the market with several outstanding stereo receivers and turntables, Sony is now branching out into loudspeakers, where the competition is fierce.

At present, over a hundred speaker manufacturers produce a total of more than a thousand different speaker models. Speakers come in all shapes and sizes—short, fat, lean, and tall—and all those woofers and tweeters seem to sound off in a single refrain: "Buy me, buy me . . . !"

It may seem strange that Sony decided to enter this crowded market. But when

I checked company officials about that, they seemed confident that they had something unique to offer. One distinctive feature of Sony's new speaker line is the material from which the speaker cones

(Continued on page 64)



Ess amt 1b Speaker system



Kenwood KR3600 Receiver



TEAC RE-711 Tape Deck

THE MYSTIC WILLIE NELSON

He's into Edgar Cayce, reincarnation and the martial arts, among other things. And his lifestyle is radically changed since success caught up with him.

But Willie is still an easy man to talk to, when you can pin him down. And . . . oh, yes . . . he says there'll be no more picnics, and no more awards.

By NELSON ALLEN

I arrive at Willie's gate, considerably altered since I'd seen it last—a huge stone fence topped with barbed wire graced the front with some kind of electronic gate and voice box out front. I press the button marked *press* and get some guy on the other end, and resisting an urge to order a Moby Jack, inquire after Willie. "Willie's sleeping," the voice says. "Well, he told me to come out today," I say. "Just a minute," the voice says. That, I thought, is probably the lowest job in the country music business—answering Willie's box. Then Connie, Willie's wife who looks like a country singing star herself, suggests over the box that I try and get back in touch with Willie later. "He's sleeping," she says. "He was out all night long last night and didn't get home 'till seven this morning."

I know that, since he was out with me, but it's a few days later before we get together again. This time Willie and family are ensconced in the Ramada Inn while remodeling is done at the ranch. (I'd run into a man who operates a landscaping business a few days before and he told me Willie had called him up and said he wanted some landscaping. "What exactly do you want planted?" he'd asked Willie. "I don't care," Willie replied, "just put some stuff out there.") It's two o'clock but getting somewhat familiar with Willie's schedule I first go to the bar and call the room. "Willie's taking a nap," Connie says, "Could you come back around four?"

At four I knock on the door and am met by Willie himself and led into a large living room suite. Willie has on a fresh pair of overalls, a t-shirt, tennis shoes, black shades, and his hair is tied back still wet from a shower. "Sorry you had to wait," Willie says shaking hands, and I notice as always the one incongruous element to his otherwise laid-back demeanor—the horseshoe diamond ring on his right hand pinkie. Horseshoe diamond rings are the sole sign of achievement for successful car salesmen and all male country and western stars.

Except for a coiled and stuffed rattlesnake sitting atop the refrigerator, there is nothing in the place that doesn't

belong to the Ramada Inn. Willie has a couple of phone calls to take care of before we talk. They have to do with his recent subpoena to appear before a Dallas court inquiring into illegal drugs (not a charge or accusation by any means), and Willie talks to lawyers and whoever else openly and totally unconcerned whether I overhear the conversations or not. Connie informs him that he's due to appear in San Antonio that night for an honorary award from a group of attorneys. "I don't want to go," he says but adds, "but tell 'em something good . . . like . . . like I don't want to." Willie turns to me waiting for the questions, waiting to give me some "different answers." I had told him once that "the questions are always the same." "The answers are always different," he'd said.

We had planned to visit a few places like the pool hall run by Willie's folks and the local golf course, but with the recent success it's been a while since Willie's had the time to really hang around Austin much—pitching washers behind Bully's, an east Austin bar, or playing golf with Darrell Royal, or just getting drunk with various Texas characters he's met through the years. Since the CMA Awards he's only been in town six days and more and more time is spent on the road. He purchased Porter Wagoner's bus, and it's been traveling from Atlanta to Jackson Hole to San Francisco and back again. Not long ago in Fort Worth he collapsed on stage. But no one has ever left a Willie Nelson performance disappointed, which is one of the reasons Willie scored so well when he first came to Austin. It was obvious from the beginning that Willie came to play. Lately he's been saying that he expects his career to peak soon as all careers do. He still gets nervous—the "only time" is right before he first climbs the stage. I asked him if it was true that he wasn't writing the sad country songs anymore because things were going good. "Yeah, to a certain point it is," Willie said, "I don't write the real sad tear-jerking songs that I used to write because I'm not real sad anymore."



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A LLEN: *What happened to the movie you were going to do?*

NELSON: Well, originally this was Ty Hardin's idea. He went through three or four scripts before he found one that he really wanted to do and that he thought was the one that we ought to do. I told him I'd do it with him; I didn't know anything about the movie but I was just going to get into it to try and learn, because I want to do the **Red-Headed Stranger** (as a movie). I wanted to do that, so I was going to learn about movies and this was going to be my education. But then Ty bailed out on it, he thought the script wasn't strong enough. And then the guy that wrote the script was down there trying to get the show on the road . . . talking about maybe hiring another actor to play opposite me. It just got to be too big a hassle, too many things going wrong so I bailed out myself.

ALLEN: *Have you thought about how you would go about making the **Red-Headed Stranger** into a movie?*

NELSON: How I would make the film? Well, Jay Milner and a couple more people are writing the script and I've been getting copies of it for a while and it looks pretty good.

ALLEN: *That album always seemed like a movie to me anyway.*

NELSON: Yeah, that's going to be the problem. I can imagine it being such a good movie, but whether or not we can get that on the screen is another question. It might not come out the way I think it'll come out.

ALLEN: *If you can get the right director. . . .*

NELSON: Yeah, we need to get somebody that really knows what they're doing. If we aren't careful it could be like a bad fiddle player—if it ain't good it's terrible.

ALLEN: *You're on the road more now. How is life on the road?*

NELSON: Well, I enjoy it. I was on the road a lot before I moved back to Texas and I slowed down a lot when I first moved back to Texas, but before that for about 12 or 15 years in a row I went pretty heavy. I started out with Ray Price and played bass with him, and he worked his ass off all the time. We went all the way up into Canada with him and then flew over to Alaska. We did a 90-day tour one time of one-nighters. I'm used to living on the road and Holiday Inns are just uh . . . I feel more at home in a Holiday Inn than I really do at home because the home that I have now I haven't been in as much as I've been in Holiday Inns. They all look the same and you walk in one room and you say, yeah here we are again.

ALLEN: *Everything's right where you left it.*

NELSON: Right.

ALLEN: *Have there been any disappointments along with all the success you had*

recently?

NELSON: No.

ALLEN: *I guess the disappointments were when you couldn't get them to promote your records?*

NELSON: Right.

ALLEN: *You were quoted recently as saying your career was about to peak. Did you say that?*

NELSON: Did I say that? It could be, it could be about to peak, but I don't feel like it is and I don't think that until I feel like it is that it is. But in some people's minds it may have already started a downward trend, it may be crashing.

ALLEN: *After you and Waylon won the CMA Awards. . . .*

NELSON: No, Waylon and I are not going to be involved in any of the awards this year. Most of the awards that one of us is in, the other is in, and I don't want that and he doesn't either, so we're just both taking our names out of the pot. Because we don't want to be in competition with each other—we never have been—especially on national television. Just to sit there and look dumb while Waylon wins or I win, either way it's not right.

ALLEN: *With all your success, has it made it easier on people coming up; has it brought about any changes in the industry?*

NELSON: They tell me that it has. I don't know. I really don't know because the people that I knew in Nashville, most of them are still there. Now whether anybody who moves into town now has a better chance than he would have a year ago or five years ago, I don't know. I think . . . that his appearance is not going to hurt him as much as it would have a year or five years ago. People who walked into Nashville with long hair a few years ago, uh, I started to say they couldn't get arrested but actually that's the first thing they could get was arrested.

ALLEN: *Why all the new trappings, the voice box etc., at the gate to your place? Why did that become necessary? Just too many unannounced visitors?*

NELSON: Yeah, really. And I only get two or three days off at a time, and when I do, I like to have complete isolation and privacy in order to rest—sleep for 72 hours or something.

ALLEN: *Is it becoming more difficult to just hang out around Austin like you did a couple of years ago?*

NELSON: Yeah, it is. It's hard to go anywhere and really just sit down and enjoy the evening.

ALLEN: *That's too bad in a way.*

NELSON: In a way it is but I know it's not going to last forever. Pretty soon I'll be able to go drink a beer.

ALLEN: *Have you given any thought to building your own club to hang out in?*

NELSON: No, I did that and wound up being . . . like I had an office to hang out in and everyone else hung out there, too. I opened up a pool hall so I'd have a place to go play pool and dominoes and I can't go over there.

ALLEN: *Why did you do that gospel album when you did?*

NELSON: I've been trying to get that album out for a long time. They kept putting me off from label to label. RCA wouldn't let me do one. They thought I needed to be a more established country artist before I could do a gospel album. I've done 32 albums and only one gospel album. I'd like to do several more and I probably will over the years. But this is just something I wanted to do and they wouldn't let me. They said you can't do that and I said yes I can. Another one of these things. But they didn't think gospel songs were commercial themselves and I knew they were because I knew that we were singing every night *Will The Circle Be Unbroken* and *Amazing Grace* and everybody would sing along. I knew that they would sell.

ALLEN: *There's a rumor that you disappeared for a period of time in the late 60's. Is that true?*

NELSON: I do that occasionally (laughing). I'm planning on disappearing in the next few minutes. How long a time did they say I disappeared for?

ALLEN: *About six months.*

NELSON: That's probably true. I haven't got to do that lately, but I'm glad you brought that up. It's a good idea. I can think about that again for awhile.

ALLEN: *You don't want to say where you disappeared to?*

NELSON: Oh, no. I don't remember where I was. I really don't know where I went.



“No, Waylon and I are not going to be involved in any of the awards this year.”



“I opened up a pool hall so I’d have a place to go play pool and dominoes and I can’t go over there.”

ALLEN: *Have you ever read or studied much of Edgar Cayce?*

NELSON: Yeah, I love Edgar Cayce. I really do. I think he was a smart man whenever he went to sleep.

ALLEN: *I read *Many Mansions* years ago. Did you ever apply any of that to your own life?*

NELSON: Yeah, a lot of that. In fact, I belong to that ARA, that association there in Virginia Beach and they sent me all the literature and the books and everything that Edgar Cayce had . . . Well, not everything, I guess there’s 15,000 readings that he had all together and they’re all in the library there in Virginia Beach, and anybody that wants to see them can go over there and read them. He had so much to say about so many things that you can pretty well make a whole life philosophy out of what the man said. He went into reincarnation, he went into earthquakes, he went into pyramids, he went into the whole thing.

ALLEN: *Has it led you to fashion your own beliefs in a certain way?*

NELSON: Probably in a lot of ways it has. Between Edgar Cayce and a lot of the mystery schools that I’ve gotten interested in over the years like the Rosicrucians. There’s a lot of interesting things there, food for thought. A lot of it makes sense. It’s all based on reincarnation and karma and that’s logical to me.

ALLEN: *Do you believe in reincarnation?*

NELSON: Yeah. It’s the only thing that makes sense.

ALLEN: *Have you ever given any thought to who or what you might have been in a previous life?*

NELSON: No, I’ve thought about it, but I’ve never really cared, never cared enough to go ask someone who’s supposed to be an expert on that kind of stuff. I never really cared to go back into past lives. I think people can . . . if a guy really wanted to be a singer and couldn’t, but if he just kept trying and trying I believe that if he didn’t make it this lifetime he might make it the next lifetime.

ALLEN: *It’s kind of encouraging.*

NELSON: It’s a positive way to look at life. Everything moves in one direction, you either go up or back, you’re either progressing or regressing, one of the two; you never stay in one place. I don’t believe that everything ends pow and it’s all over. That just doesn’t make sense. You can’t destroy matter, if you stop it here, it comes to life over here. You can’t destroy energy.

ALLEN: *Do you have an interest in yoga, kung fu, martial arts?*

NELSON: Yeah.

ALLEN: *Is that something you were interested in or something you’re still into?*

NELSON: I never have really quit. I still do yoga exercises practically every day. I don’t do kung fu much, but I still practice a lot of stuff that I used to do.

ALLEN: *Where did you train for it?*

NELSON: In Nashville. There’s a school there in Nashville. We used to go out to colleges and high schools there and put on exhibitions and try to raise interest . . . go out and break a few boards.

ALLEN: *Do they have belts like in karate and judo?*

NELSON: No in kung fu you’re either a master or a student. No in-betweens. I’m still a student.

ALLEN: *What is the difference between kung fu and karate?*

NELSON: I can’t speak about karate because I don’t really . . . but kung fu is probably 75 percent mental and 25 percent physical. It’s a lot of mind over matter more than brute strength. And karate I think is more physical, building up callouses on your hands, and we didn’t do that in kung fu. We didn’t go into that heavy a physical thing. It’s just concentration and believing that you can do it.

ALLEN: *Are the picnics over for good?*

NELSON: As far as I’m concerned right now they are. There are too many problems involved to try and put ‘em on.

ALLEN: *There seemed to be both good and bad things come out of them. What did you like about them?*

NELSON: Well, it was good for me first of all. A lot of people know the name Willie Nelson that didn’t know it then. That was one of the reasons that I put them on—to draw attention to myself. It was a big hype for Willie is what it was. But I think the shows were good. I know we had some

problems with crowds, not the audience. I think we had more problems with the backstage people than we did the audience. The people backstage were harder to please. If they’d paid and walked in the front they would have had a lot better time. Everybody wants backstage and that’s really not where it’s going on. It’s out front where the show is.

ALLEN: *It seems like you’ve been catching a lot of crap in your home state lately. Are you getting tired of all that?*

NELSON: Aw, yeah, I’m tired of it. A lot of that I don’t even read. I look at the title and if it doesn’t look too good I’ll just pass on over that and look for some good news.

ALLEN: *You did read the *Texas Monthly* story?*

NELSON: Yes, I read that. Jan Reid’s story about the death of redneck rock.

ALLEN: *All he did was talk about a term he’d invented anyway.*

NELSON: That’s right.

ALLEN: *I don’t know what he’ll have to write about next time.*

NELSON: The reincarnation of redneck rock.

ALLEN: *That story was offensive. It was so contrived.*

NELSON: It was, it really was. He pissed me off right at first when he started calling me Cocaine Willie. Now he could have called me anything else but, uh, I just don’t like cocaine and never have. In Fort Worth I was never known as Cocaine Willie.

ALLEN: *It kind of has a nice ring to it.*

NELSON: Oh, it sounded ok. It wasn’t anything I wanted to sue him for but then when all that bullshit came up in Dallas those words came back to haunt me. They brought it up, well they called you Cocaine Willie so you’re probably involved in some of that.

ALLEN: *I’ve heard that a lot of that came about because Gregg Allman released a lot of names when he was having trouble in Georgia.*

NELSON: I understand that happened but I don’t think that my name would have been involved in anything that he would have turned in. The situation that I was in . . . there was a friend of mine that they were trying to get and they knew that I knew him and that I’d known him a long time and they knew we were good friends. So they just figured that I had to be involved in business with him.

ALLEN: *A lot of people wrongly think that there were dope charges against you when you appeared before the grand jury even though that wasn’t the case.*

NELSON: Well, that was what I was talking about. It was just one of those guilt by association things. I’d known (this guy) for years and years and years when he was in the automobile business. He and

(Continued on page 54)

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I Dreamed Of A Hillbilly Heaven; Green Grow The Lillacs; Love Me Now; High Moon; The Deck Of Cards; Jealous Heart; Have I Stayed Away Too Long; Ol' Shorty; We Live In Two Different Worlds; There's A New Moon Over My Shoulder; Jingle Jangle Jingle; The Pledge Of Allegiance.

MARTY ROBBINS HITS - CS-8435 SPECIAL \$2.98
El Paso; Don't Worry; Ballad Of The Alamo; Like All The Other Times; Is There Any Chance; Ride, Cowboy, Ride; A Time And A Place For Everything; Streets Of Laredo; Saddle Tramp; I Told My Heart; Red River Valley; Big Iron.

MARTY ROBBINS HITS - CS-8639 - SPECIAL \$2.98
A White Sport Coat; The Story Of My Life; Ain't I The Lucky One; The Last Time I Saw My Heart; Long Tall Sally; The Blues Country Style; The Hanging Tree; Sittin' In A Tree House; She Was Only Seventeen; Singing The Blues; Knee Deep In The Blues; Aloha? Oe.

JIMMIE RODGERS - ANLI-1209 - SPECIAL \$2.98
Jimmie Rodgers' Last Blue Yodel; Mississippi Moon; My Rough And Rowdy Ways; Blue Yodel No. 9; My Blue Eyed Jane; The One Rose; Southern Cannonball; Long Tall Mama Blues; In The Jailhouse Now No. 2; Peach Pikin' Time Down In Georgia; Blue Yodel No. 1; Travelin' Blues; Mule Skinner Blues; My Carolina Sunshine Girl; The Brakeman's Blues; Away Out On The Mountain.

ROY ROGERS AND DALE EVANS - SM-1745 \$2.98
The Bible Tells Me So; Whispering Hope; Just A Closer Walk With Thee; In The Sweet By And By; There'll Be Peace In The Valley; Pass Me Not; It Is No Secret; Amazing Grace; Take My Hand Precious Lord; The Love Of God; I'd Rather Have Jesus; How Great Thou Art.

SONS OF THE PIONEERS - ANLI-1092 - \$2.98
Cool Water; Wind; Cowboy's Dream; The Last Round-Up; Ridin' Home; Twilight On The Trail; Red River Valley; Wagon Wheels; Riders In The Sky; Blue Prairie; Way Out There; Empty Saddles; Tearsdrops In My Heart; Blue Shadows On The Trail; Ridin' Down The Canyon; Timber Trail; Tumbling Tumbleweeds; Whoopie-Ti-Yi-Yo.

CONNIE SMITH - ANLI-1206 - SPECIAL \$2.98
Just One Time; The Hurtin' All Over; Just For What I Am; Once A Day; Cincinnati, Ohio; Ribbon Of Darkness; White Is My Castle; Baby's Back Again; Run Away Little Tears.

CARL SMITH - CS 8737 - SPECIAL \$2.98
Hey Joe; She Goes; Old Lonesome Times; Are You Teasing Me; I Feel Like Crying; Doorstep To Heaven; Let Old Mother Nature Have Her Way; The Little Girl In My Hometown; If You Saw Her Through My Eyes; You're Free To Go; Gettin' Even; I Overlooked An Orchid.

KAY STAR - SM 11323 - SPECIAL \$2.98
Bonaparte's Retreat; Crazy; Side By Side; Oh, Lonesome Me; The Man Upstairs; Wheel Of Fortune; Never Dreamed I Could Love Someone New; Make The World Go Away; Angry; Just For A Thrill.

HANK THOMPSON - SM 2661 - SPECIAL \$2.98
Oklahoma Hills; Wake Up, Irene; Shot-Gun Boogie; Humpty Dumpty; Deep In The Heart Of Texas; Wabash Cannon Ball; Sawaws Along The Yukon; Whooa Sailor; Total Strangers; Rub-A-Dub-Dub; Rockin' In The Congo; No Help Wanted.

MERLE TRAVIS - SM 2662 - SPECIAL \$2.98
Sweet Temptation; Sixteen Tons; Follow Thru; John Henry; Three Times Seven; Fat Girl; I'm A Natural Born Gambler; Man; Dark As A Dungeon; I'm Sick And Tired Of You Little Darlin'; Nine Pound Hammer; Steel Guitar Rag; I Am A Pilgrim.

MAC WISEMAN - ANLI-1208 - SPECIAL \$2.98
Eight More Miles To Louisville; Keep On The Sunny Side; It Rains Just The Same In Missouri; Mama; Put My Little Shoes Away; City Of New Orleans; Will The Circle Be Unbroken; Sunny Side Of The Mountain; A Tragic Romance; Catfish John; Let's Til Go Down To The River.

PORTER WAGONER - ANLI-1213 SPECIAL \$2.98
Y'all Come (You All Come); Sorry On The Rocks; Misory Love; Company; I've Enjoyed As Much Of This As I Can Stand; Green, Green Grass Of Home; Company's Comin'; A Satisfied Mind; Dooley; I Thought I Heard You Call My Name; Uncle Pen; Skid Row Joe; I'll Go Down Swinging.

Try A Country Music Vacation

Why not take this year's vacation in an area that's loaded with country music? You'll not only enjoy the sound, but possibly meet a star or two. And, depending on where you go, you can learn something of the history of country music and imbibe some of the honky-tonk atmosphere from which so much of the music has sprung.

No single article can present all country vacation possibilities, so we'll limit ourselves to some of the major cities and shows offering the best possibilities.

To begin with, of course, there's Nashville—Music City, U.S.A.—where the vast majority of country records are made and where many country stars live. A good place to start in this city would be the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum. Besides displays of the plaques and portraits of hall-of-famers such as Hank Williams, Kitty Wells and Jimmy Rod-

gers, you'll find exhibits of a recording session and a collection of historical memorabilia that includes guitars played by some of the greats. There's also continuous showing of a film on the history of the country music industry and a gallery displaying singers from yesterday and today as short selections by each performer are played.

Not far away is the Country Wax Museum, filled with life-like figures of stars such as Roy Acuff, Hank Williams and others—fifty in all.

Bus tours are a must for most tourists. There's a wide variety of them at many prices. Some include sights of interest around the city as well as stars' homes. There are also tours of the Grand Ole Opry, night clubs, historic Nashville, Opryland and some even include picnics with a country music jamboree. It's not hard to find a tour that suits your interests. But one word of caution: Don't believe everything the tour guides tell you about the sights you pass. They have been known to . . . er . . . dramatize a bit.

And don't forget Opryland—as if you could while in Nashville. This \$28-billion family entertainment complex covers 110 park-like acres. Five musical areas tell the history of American music with eleven live shows running continuously. There



At summer festivals there's big name talent and local groups like Johnny & Gerald's (top, rt.), Oscar Wright (guitar), Sherman Hammons (banjo). Photos taken at festivals in W.Va.



are many fine specialty restaurants, plus rides for children and adults. You'll also find craft shows and animal exhibits. But the big attraction is the music, which is performed by some of the most talented young people around. No matter what type of music your family favors, from country to Broadway productions, bluegrass to jazz, Opryland has it. There are also weekday performances by Opry stars in the new Opry House. Cost is included in your park admission. Opryland is an all-day adventure, so pace yourself and wear comfortable shoes.

Which brings us to the Grand Ole Opry, which, of course, is now housed in the new Opry House. During peak tourist months, regular Opry shows are given Friday, Saturday and Sunday afternoons,



with an evening show Friday night and two evening shows on Saturday. It's best to write in advance for reserved seats, but tickets are on sale at the door if you're prepared to stand in line. Your best bet is the late show on Saturday night, since there's less demand for those tickets. Write to Grand Ole Opry Ticket Office, 280 Opryland Drive, Nashville, Tenn. 37214.

A prime attraction is Nashville's annual Fan Fair, a week-long extravaganza at which you can meet top stars—provided you fight your way through the mobs surrounding them—get some autographs, and perhaps even a snapshot of yourself with a star. The place? Municipal Auditorium. The dates? This year, June 6 through 12. Your \$30 admission fee is good for the whole week of exhibits, fan club booths,

shows by top recording artists, the annual reunion show, a bluegrass concert, old-time fiddlin' contest, tickets to Opryland and the Country Music Hall of Fame and three lunches. An outstanding bargain. For registration forms and brochures, write Fan Fair, Box 2138, Nashville, Tenn. 37214.

A new series of live country performances is being held this year at the Nashville War Memorial Auditorium. The sponsoring group is ACE—the Association of Country Entertainers, which includes many top stars. The series is called the Nashville Jubilee, and it includes 42 shows beginning April 9. Starting June 26, performances will be taking place on selected weekdays as well as weekends. Reservations: Nashville Ticket Agency, 1300 Di-

vision St., Nashville, Tenn. 37203.

If you favor night life, there's the Exit/In, a hip listening club that presents name entertainment, both country and rock. It's a hang-out for music industry people, so you never know who you might run into. There's a charge for shows, but admission to the bar is free.

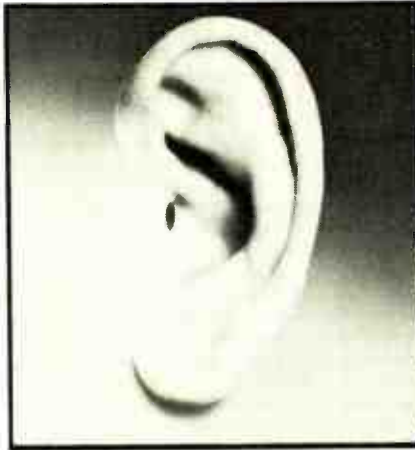
The center of Nashville's night life is Printer's Alley, where you'll find country music in such clubs as George Jones' Possum Hollow, Faron Young's Jailhouse and Skull's Rainbow (Skull's is not family entertainment).

And let's not forget the Ryman Auditorium, home of the Opry from 1941 to 1974. There are guided tours daily.

There's lots more to see in Nashville—
(Continued on page 30)

We want to hear your song.

Some people use their ears for listening. Our judges make a living with theirs.



Chances are you know how frustrating it is to get your songs heard by the "right" people — those music business heavies who can give you the big break. THAT'S WHY THERE IS AN AMERICAN SONG FESTIVAL SONGWRITING COMPETITION.

It's the surest and easiest way to expose your songs to the professionals. Our judges are A&R pros, recording artists, producers and music publishers. They work for major companies like Chappell, Motown, United Artists, ABC, MCA and Warner Bros. We guarantee that each of your songs will be heard by at least two of these heavies.

They've helped us award over \$340,000 in cash prizes so far, as well as signing numerous entrants to recording and publishing contracts. So if you want a good honest shot at starting a professional songwriting career, or if you write songs as a hobby and want recognition, you should let our judges hear your songs... THEY KNOW A GOOD SONG WHEN THEY HEAR IT!

WHO LISTENS TO THE SONGS?

Here are just some of the music giants who have acted as Final Judges, helping us to help you... the songwriter:

Top Recording Stars Like...

Tom T. Hall	Van McCoy	Smokey Robinson
Kenny Loggins	Jim Messina	Seals & Crofts
Loretta Lynn	Olivia Newton-John	Hank Williams, Jr.
Johnny Mathis	Charlie Rich	to name a few

Top Record Company Executives and Producers Like...

Jerry Bradley	Kenny Gamble	Richard Perry
Mike Curb	Rick Hall	Bob Reno
Clive Davis	Jimmy Ienner	Billy Sherrill
Fred Foster	Artie Mogull	among others

And Top Music Publishers Like...

Larry Fogel	Ivan Mogull	Lester Sill
Al Gallico	Bob Montgomery	Jack Stapp
Robert Gordy	Jay Morgenstern	Mike Stewart
Dick James	Aaron Schroeder	Cliffie Stone

THIS COULD HAPPEN TO YOUR SONGS!

Superstar recording artists appreciate good songs, just like our judges. That's why each of these top names (among others) have recorded at least one song written by an American Song Festival winner:

The Bay City Rollers	Bobby Goldsboro	Charlie Pride
Johnny Cash	Hall & Oates	Charlie Rich
Cher	Waylon Jennings	Diana Ross
Rev. James Cleveland	Kris Kristofferson	Frank Sinatra
Mac Davis	Barry Manilow	Joe Stampley
Marvin Gaye	Olivia Newton-John	The Temptations
	The Osmonds	Tanya Tucker
	Elvis Presley	Stevie Wonder

AND THIS COULD HAPPEN TO YOU...

Major Record Companies are always on the lookout for talented singer/songwriters. Here are just some of the labels that have signed at least one ASF winner to a recording contract:

A&M	Columbia	Nemperor
Asylum	Elektra	RCA
Atlantic	Epic	United Artists
Buddah	MGM	Warner Bros.

So if you've been dreaming about being in the music business, instead of reading about it, the ASF could be the break you've been looking for!

THE JUDGES WANT TO HEAR YOUR SONG!

The criteria for judging in the songwriting competition are composition and lyrical content, when applicable. Elaborate instrumentation and production will have no bearing. Make a simple recording and follow the easy Entry Procedures... that's all you have to do.

OVER 1,650 PRIZES.

- 2 Grand Prizes (1 amateur category winner, 1 professional category winner) for an additional \$5,000 each.
- 8 Category Winners (5 amateur, 3 professional) will receive \$1,000 each.
- 65 Semi-Finalists (50 amateur, 15 professional) will receive \$200 each.
- 600 Quarter-Finalists (500 amateur, 100 professional) will receive \$50 each.
- 1,000 Amateur Honorable Mention Winners will receive each a beautiful scroll in recognition of their creative achievement.
- The winner of the Vocal Performance Competition will receive a Grand Prize of \$1,000.

SPECIAL FEATURES:

- * You retain all rights to your songs.
- * Amateurs never compete against Professionals.
- * One song can win in more than one category.
- * The judges' decision option will allow a judge to pick an additional category for your song.
- * The vocal performance competition is new and exciting. It is open to amateur singers. (See rules & regulations #9.) The judges will be looking for the best lead voice. The same tape can be entered in the songwriting competition.

WHAT YOU GET FOR ENTERING:

- **YOUR ORIGINAL CASSETTE RETURNED** with feedback from a judge recorded on it. (Optional feature at no extra cost.)
- **THE 1977 MUSIC BUSINESS DIRECTORY** — record companies, music publishers, studios and producers (reg. \$4 value).

• **A HANDBOOK FOR SONGWRITERS** containing information every songwriter should know (reg. \$3 value).

• **LIST OF 1977 WINNERS**—a list of all judges, plus all winners from Quarter-Finalists on up.

(Note: Entrant will receive one each of the above, regardless of the number of songs entered. The optional Cassette/Feedback feature is available for each song submitted to the Songwriting Competition.)

ENTRY PROCEDURES:

1. Record your song clearly on your own cassette. Only one song per cassette. Start recording at the beginning and rewind before mailing. **No leads sheets are needed.** Print only the song title on the recorded side of the cassette. (If you have recorded on a disk or reel-to-reel tape, we will duplicate it for \$1.00 per song on one of our cassettes.)
2. Fill out the entry form (or a reasonable facsimile) checking Rules and Regulations #8 and #9 for divisional status. Choose only categories in your division.
3. You must enter at least one category to compete. The entry fee for one category is \$13.85. The fee for each additional category and/or Judges' Decision Option is \$8.25.
4. The **Vocal Performance Competition** is open to **amateur** singers only (see Rules & Regulations #9) and the Cassette/Feedback offer does **not** apply.
The entry fee is \$13.85, but if you choose it as an additional category, the entry fee is \$8.25.
5. If entering more than one song, a **separate** cassette and entry form (or reasonable facsimile) is needed for each.
6. Wrap the entry form and check or money order around your cassette. Entry packages **must** have your name and address **printed** clearly on the outside so that acknowledgement of receipt can be sent to you.

7. Entry packages must be postmarked **NO LATER THAN JUNE 3, 1977** and sent to:

The American Song Festival
P.O. Box 57
Hollywood, CA 90028
Telephone (213) 937-7370

1977 RULES & REGULATIONS

1. Competition is open to any person except employees of the American Song Festival (ASF, Inc.) or their relatives or agents appointed by ASF, Inc.
2. The entrant warrants to ASF, Inc. that the entry is not an infringement of the copyright or other rights of any third party and that the entrant has the right to submit the entry to ASF, Inc., in accordance with its Rules and Regulations.
3. No musical composition or lyric may be entered that has been recorded or printed and released or disseminated for commercial sale in any medium in the United States prior to September 1, 1977, or the public announcement of the "Category Winners", whichever occurs first. All winners will be notified and all prizes awarded no later than January 1, 1978. Prizes will be paid to the songwriter named in item #1 on the official entry form.
4. The entrant shall (or shall cause the copyright proprietor of the entry if different from the entrant to) permit ASF, Inc. to perform the entry in and as part of any ASF, Inc. award ceremony, to record the entry in synchronization with a visual account of such ceremonies and to use the resulting account for such purposes as ASF, Inc. shall deem fit.
5. ASF, Inc. assumes no responsibility for loss of or damage to any entry prior to its receipt by ASF, Inc. If the entrant designates the "Cassette/Feedback" feature offered on the entry form, ASF, Inc. assumes no responsibility for loss or damage of material.
6. All decisions of the judges shall be final and binding upon ASF, Inc. and all entrants.
7. All entry packages must be postmarked no later than June 3, 1977. ASF, Inc. reserves the right to extend this date in the event of interruption of postal services, national emergencies or Acts of God.
8. For the purpose of songwriting competition division selection, a professional is anyone who is or has been a member or associate member of a performing rights organization, such as ASCAP, BMI, SESAC or their foreign counterparts. All others are amateurs.
9. For the purpose of eligibility in the Vocal Performance Competition, a professional singer is anyone who has had his or her voice recorded and said recording has been released or disseminated commercially in any medium and distributed for sale. All others may enter and compete.
10. Each entrant acknowledges that in the event he or she is the winner of a prize, ASF, Inc. will have the right to publicize and print his or her name and likeness and the fact that he or she won a prize and all matters incidental thereto.
11. Entrants agree to be bound by ASF, Inc. Entry Procedures and Rules & Regulations established in this official entry form.

©1977 American Song Festival, Inc.

OFFICIAL ENTRY FORM

Entry packages must be postmarked no later than **JUNE 3rd**.

1. SONGWRITER: _____
(Print Name)

2. ADDRESS: _____
CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

COUNTRY: _____
PHONE: Home () _____ Office () _____
Area Code Area Code

3. TITLE OF SONG: _____

4. DIVISION SELECTION

See Rules & Regulations #8 (Songwriting Competition) and #9 (Vocal Performance Competition) to determine your divisional status. Be sure to read both.

CATEGORY SELECTION

You must select one category by checking an appropriate box (\$13.85 Entry Fee).

ADDITIONAL CATEGORIES AND J.D.O.

You may have your entry compete in additional categories by checking the appropriate boxes (\$8.25 Entry Fee for each). If you would like the judges to choose an additional category for you, check the Judges' Decision Option Box (\$8.25 Entry Fee).

AMATEUR DIVISION

- TOP 40 (Rock/Soul) FOLK
 COUNTRY GOSPEL/INSPIRATIONAL
 EASY LISTENING VOCAL PERFORMANCE
(see Rules & Regulations #9)

JUDGES' DECISION OPTION
(additional category only)

PROFESSIONAL DIVISION

- TOP 40 (Rock/Soul) EASY LISTENING
 COUNTRY JUDGES' DECISION OPTION
(additional category only)

5. ENTRY FEE:

FIRST CATEGORY \$13.85
ADDITIONAL CATEGORIES AND/OR JUDGES
DECISION OPTION \$8.25 × _____ = \$ _____
DUPING COST
(If entry not on cassette) \$1.00 × _____ = \$ _____
TOTAL FEE ENCLOSED \$ _____


6. COLLABORATORS' NAMES (if applicable): _____

7. CASSETTE/FEEDBACK FEATURE: Check the box to the left if you would like to have your original songwriting competition cassette returned to you with a judge's feedback recorded on the reverse side.

8. I hereby certify that I have read and agree to be bound by the Entry Procedures and Rules & Regulations of the American Song Festival which are incorporated herein by reference and that the information contained in the entry form is true and accurate.

SIGNED: _____ DATE: _____

SEPARATE ENTRY FORM NEEDED FOR EACH SONG.

Send entry to  THE AMERICAN SONG FESTIVAL CM
P.O. Box 57
Hollywood, CA 90028

A presentation of Sterling Recreation Organization

The 1977 American Song Festival®

An International Songwriting Competition

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Oscar and Mable Wright display a hand-made quilt like those you often find in the crafts-show sections of the old-timey summer festivals. Oscar and Mable live in Princeton, W.Va.

Music Row, for example, the area you'll be in if you visit the Country Music Hall of Fame. This compact neighborhood is the center of the country music industry. Behind the serene exteriors of its buildings, decisions are made which determine whom you'll be hearing on your local jukebox. Also worth seeing is Broadway, the run-down area that encompasses the old Ryman. It's gone to the dogs now, and full of X-rated theaters and massage parlors. But there's still Tootsie's Orchid Lounge, hangout of country singers, plus Ernest Tubb's famous record shop, Sho-Bud Guitars and custom clothing shops that design for the stars. And, for the sake of completeness, let's not leave out Hermitage Landing, with its family entertainment, picnicking, swimming, tennis, etc. Loretta

Lynn's dude ranch in nearby Hurricane Mills, and the Old Time Pickin' Parlor, where you can hear some fine country music.

The next big country music vacation area is Texas. The whole state is alive with music, so much so that many excellent Texas bands seldom if ever leave the state. You'll find literally thousands of dancehalls and honky-tonks all over the state, except in the dry (non-alcoholic) counties, in which the VFW halls and barn dances take over. Big name country singers can be seen and heard in most parts of the state.

The center of things is Austin. All kinds of music are produced in the state from Mexican to blues to rock and roll to country, but nowhere else is it all mingled to-

gether as well as in Austin.

Where to go in Austin? Well, there's the Armadillo World Headquarters. Built in an abandoned armory, it's the place that introduced Willie Nelson and Waylon Jennings to predominately long-hair audiences. At present, the 'Dillo is recovering from hard times, but it's still important to the Austin scene.

The Soap Creek Saloon, one of the first bars in town to feature live music, may be the best honky-tonk in Austin, and the one that represents the Austin character most. The only drawback is the dirt road leading to it from the highway which is infamous for its bumps and chug holes and which prompted Doug Sahm to buy a special junker car.

The Split Rail, raunchiest bar in town, has a long history. Robert E. Lee laid out the streets which surround it in 1842. After that it was a stop for a stageline. It's been a honky-tonk for some time now, providing a loose atmosphere and an inexpensive place to have a good time. There is never a cover charge and the club has been a good place for new acts to break in.

The Broken Spoke is an old, traditional country dancehall which has changed somewhat with the times. Ernest Tubb plays there, as well as local acts like Alvin Crow. They also have great food; the chicken fried steak is famous.

Willie's Pool Hall is basically just a pool hall with a giant TV screen Willie bought, which is always on but which no one watches unless there is a sports show. Mom and Pop Nelson run the place and have been known to befriend more than one down-on-his-luck, just-arrived picker. Occasionally there's some good jamming. But don't expect to catch a glimpse of Willie, who seldom drops by.

There are several other famous dancehalls located in Austin, although most have fallen on hard times. Dessau Hall may be the oldest honky-tonk in the country that is still open. It celebrated its hundredth birthday last year, has burned down three times over the years but has always been rebuilt as Dessau Hall. It's probably the only honky-tonk in the world with its own jail—an outside affair with open bars the bouncers used to put unruly cowpokes in to sober up. Almost as old and famous is the Skyline Club, which is the last place Hank Williams and Johnny Horton ever played. Horton was killed the very night he played there in an auto accident. But the Skyline is not what it used to be, and the bigger stars no longer climb its stage. Nowadays the Silver Dollar is the place and the only one of its kind in town that is successful. It often features Nashville entertainers, usually steering clear of progressive acts. You might catch George Jones here or numerous local country bands.

The Texas Chili Parlour, aside from serving chili, is one of the most popular

(Continued on page 37)

COUNTRYMUSIC

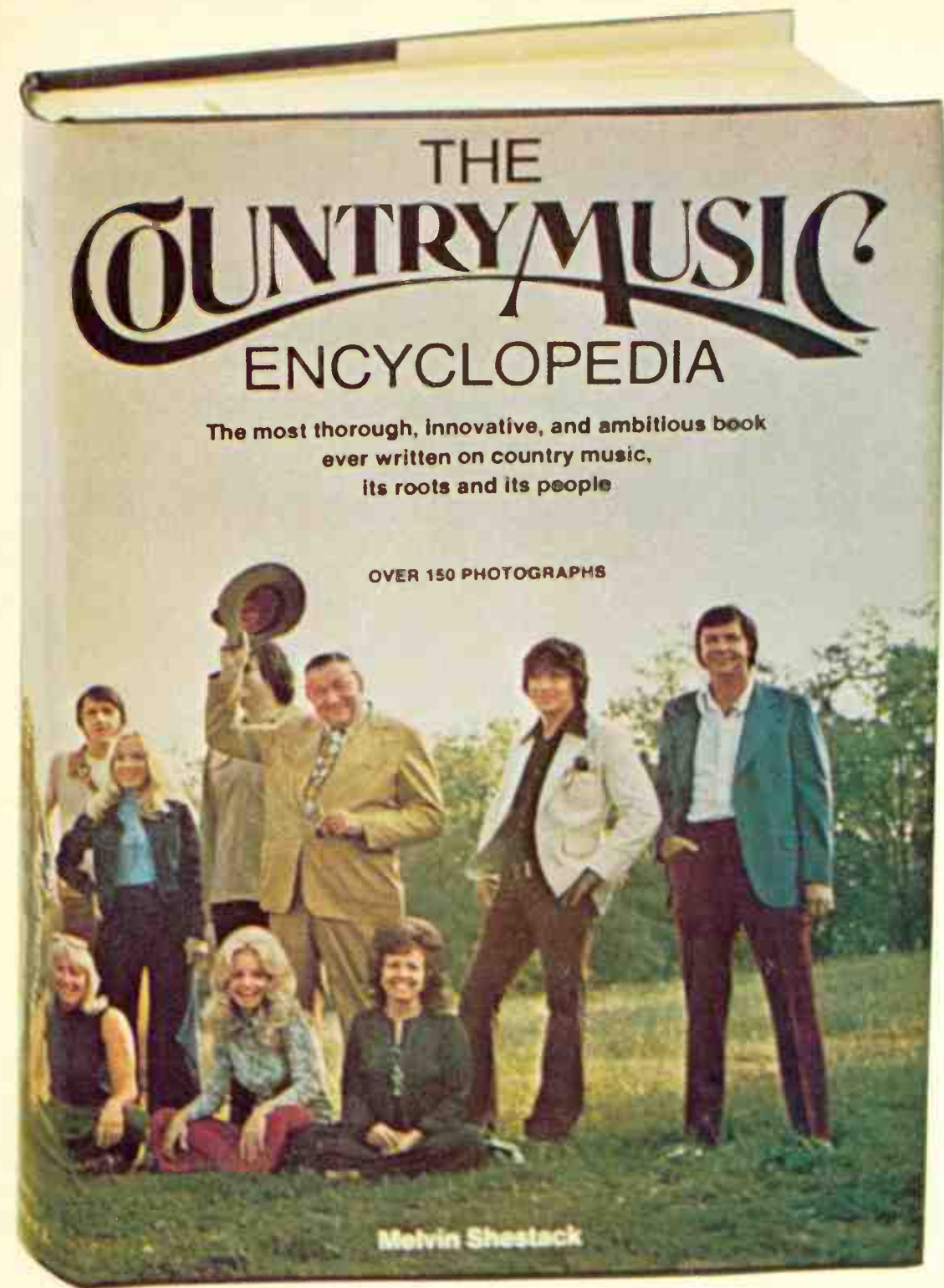
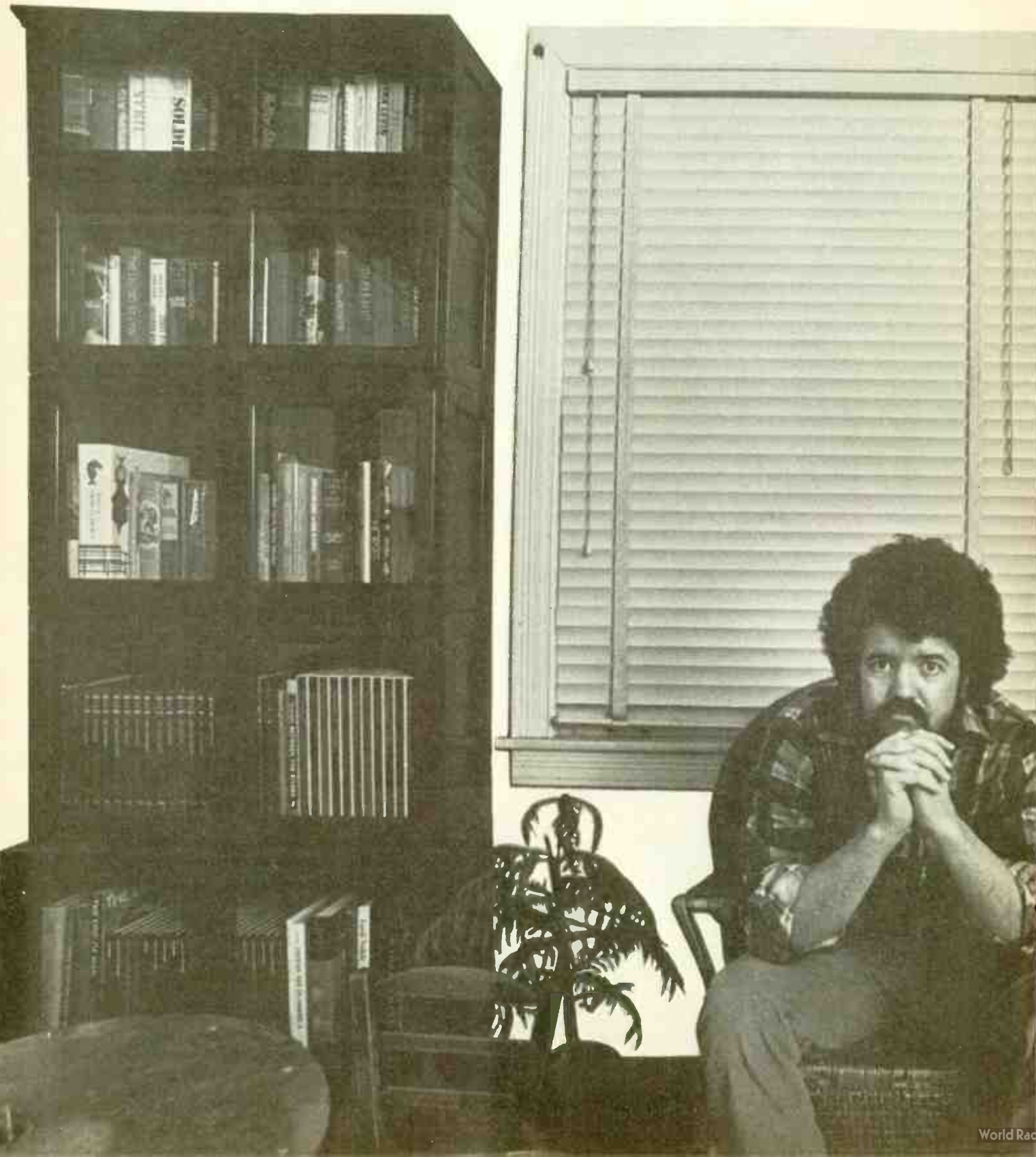
STAR OF THE MONTH



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JAMES TALL

BY DOUGLAS B. GREEN



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- Rush me my **FREE** copy of "Best Of Country Music, Vol. 3."

(Continued from page 30)

bars in town. No music, not even a jukebox, but it's the place where all the town's famous pickers hang out when they just want to drink and talk. There are, of course, countless other bars featuring live music—Gemini's and the Boondocks, Steamboat Springs, and so on. If you like bar hopping and good live music you'll enjoy Austin.

In San Antonio you'll find honky-tonks like the Golden Stallion, the Farmer's Daughter and Randy's Rodeo. These are places where cowboys still act like cowboys. Out the Bandera Road a ways there is the Lone Star Inn, an old place steeped in tradition. In the tiny nearby town of Helotes is Ford's Inn, a huge old German beerhall with an outdoor dancehall, longhorn cheese and great tamales. Willie Nelson often plays there. Although several progressive country places have come and gone, at the moment *the only place* is the Bijou, a small funky bar featuring local musicians.

Then there's Houston, where a great many places feature live country music. Most of them are of the more traditional type like the Winchester Club and the Esquire Club. But several places offer progressive, the Texas Opry House foremost among them. The best is Gilley's Club, located in the suburb of Pasadena, which presents the best of both worlds. Gilley's features national acts along with Mickey Gilley's great house band, Johnny Lee and the Bayou City Beats. A huge place, Gilley's just may be the best honky-tonk in the state and the biggest club in the world. Concert-like shows are regularly found at Liberty Hall, and at the Summit, a giant coliseum-like place.

In Dallas-Fort Worth the Big "D" Jamboree and The Cowtown Jamboree are long gone, and Fort Worth's famed Panther Hall, after several attempts at re-opening, is closed now except for occasional special events. But Dewey Groom's Longhorn Ballroom, the famous club Bob Wills opened after World War II, is still going strong. There's also the Grapevine Opry nearby, but most country shows are held in the various auditoriums and coliseums located in the two cities. Whiskey River (which Willie Nelson no longer has anything to do with) still packs them in, catering to Dallas' knit-suit set. The best place for progressive sounds is the Dallas club, Faces.

Rodeos, chili cook-offs and fiddler's contests abound in Texas as well as occasional festivals which feature country music. Willie Nelson's Picnic has been held on the 4th of July in various places around the state. After each one Willie swears he'll never have another and he seems serious about that this year but we'll just have to wait and see. The small west Texas town of Turkey, the hometown of Bob Wills, maintains a small museum dedicated to Wills and sponsors a celebration in late April of each year in honor of Wills and the Texas Playboys. Rod



Jamboree U.S.A., one of nation's most influential shows, is worth seeing.

Kennedy produces a three day country festival in Kerrville, near San Antonio, on the 3rd, 4th and 5th of July. They are well-ordered family affairs and camping is encouraged. They're also good shows giving a lot of people a chance to see entertainers they might not normally get a

chance to see. Kennedy also produces various bluegrass and folk festivals during the year at the same location. This year, Kennedy, along with radio station KOKE, produced the first annual Western Swing Festival held on Bob Wills' birthday,

(Continued on page 61)

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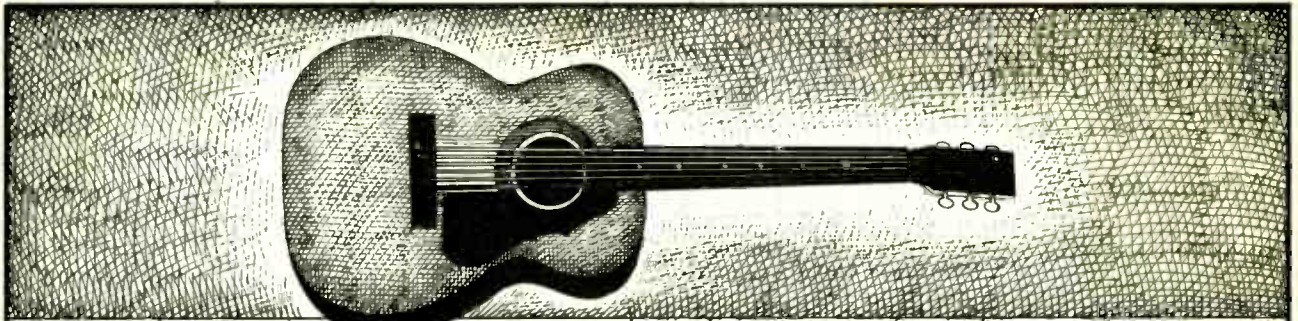
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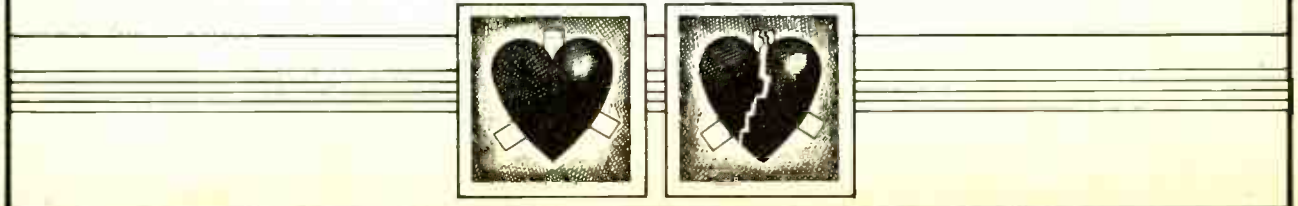
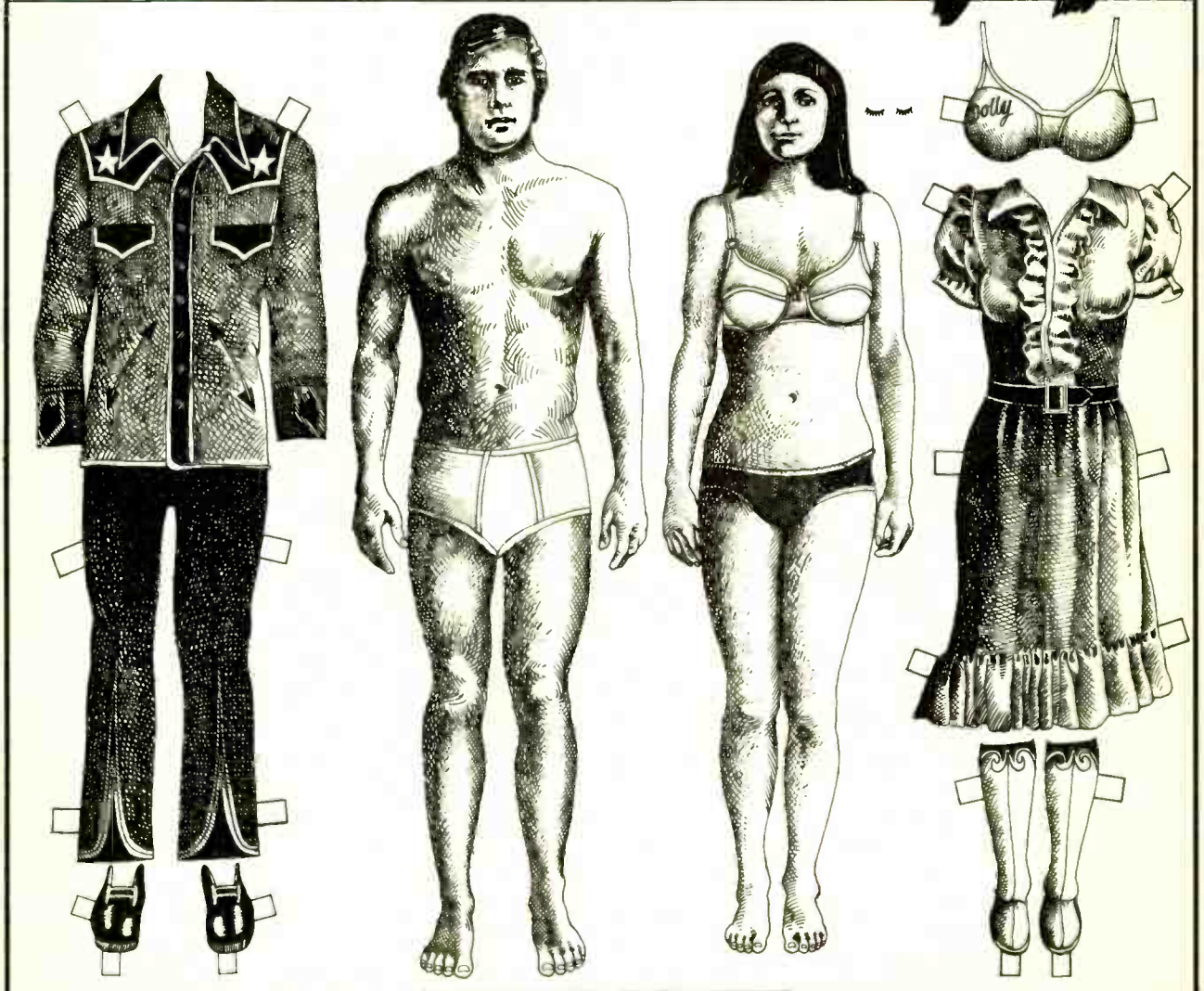
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V. S. Ferguson



HOW TO BE A TRUE COUNTRY FAN

With country music having broadened its horizons and gained so many new followers, it is well nigh possible that you are confused, not only as to who and what is or isn't country, but where you as a fan and spectator fit in. Herewith a primer to guide you in your choice of favorites and how best to view them at live performances.

By JOHN PUGH

Jerry Lee Lewis. For males, be the archetype good ole boy — Age of Aquarius style. Wear a leisure suit and patent leather loafers with little gold chains across the tops. Recall how you saw him back in 1961 playing at the opening of a Dairy Queen in Bossier City, and how he's not changed one bit, since then. Constantly affirm that, "He's the entertain'est SOB that ever lived," and look as if you want to fight anyone who dares disagree. You may want to emphasize your point by slamming your glass down onto the table and sloshing half your drink over the rim. Flit from table to table saying, "Brung ya'll a li'l sump-um to drank," or else, "Come awn ov' there an' have a li'l drank with us." Sit close to the ladies' room and give every gal the once-over as she enters, remarking to your friends, "Bet *she* could give you a ride." Come on strong with your waitress, usually by leading with some knock-out line, such as, "You from around here?" When paying the tab, always exaggeratedly peel off the required amount in \$1 bills from your

bankroll, and ceremoniously lay them on the waitress's tray. This is not meant to impress anyone, but is simply a tribal ritual among men for whom money is no object.

For females, jet black hair and a fire engine red or snow white dress, blouse or jump suit, with optional white vinyl go-go boots. After about five minutes of warm-up, start shrilly yelling, "We want The Killer." Go absolutely bananas whenever he refers to himself as a "motha-humpin' stud." Cry softly, but openly, if he sings *How Great Thou Art*. In utter amazement remark to your husband or date, "That's his *girlfriend* over there? That little 15-year-old teeny bopper over there?"

Say often: If he hadn't married his 13-year-old cousin, he'd a been the greatest thing ever.

But never say: Have you got your tickets to see Elvis next month?

Willie Nelson. Come to the show on a Harley-Davidson hawg, in a pick-up truck or a psychedelic van. Wear equal parts

leather and denim with at least one set-you-apart-from-the-crowd item, such as a railroader's bandana protruding from your hip pocket. Except in the summer when you will be refused admittance unless you are wearing a Willie or Waylon T-shirt. Once inside, blind everyone by reflecting your three-pound belt buckle off the revolving glitter ball on the ceiling. Regularly flash the "Hook 'Em Horns" sign, especially in football season, but in private confide that "The Longhorns ain't worth a damn no more. Cain't even beat Baylor."

Males, have a crush on Phyllis George; females have one on Don Meredith. Never be without your bottle of tequila, unless you are a beer drinker, in which case you should never be without a fresh can of Coors or Lone Star, even carrying it to the restroom. At the merest mention of Bob Wills and/or the Texas Playboys, go absolutely stark-raving, flat-stoned, mind-blowing crazy. Even if the closest you ever came to seeing Bob Wills was his picture in the paper.

Say often: "He sure showed the know-

it-alls in Nashville a thing or two."

But never say: "Didn't he write *Hello Walls?*"

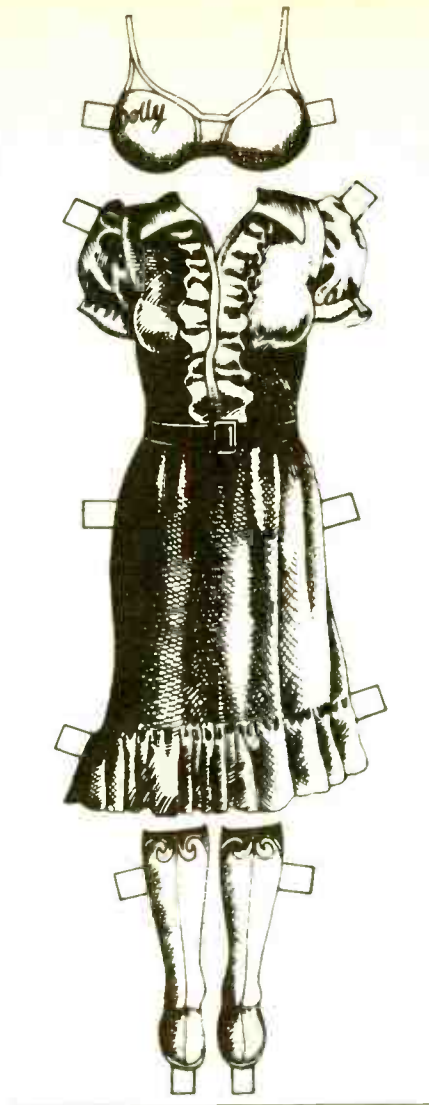
George Jones. In the last 30 days have lost a) your wife b) your girlfriend c) your dog d) your job e) your house f) your car g) your hair h) your way i) your mind j) all of the above. Come equipped with a dozen handkerchiefs, two vials of Murine and a facial expression reminiscent of Emmett Kelly. Be one fan who really *does* have every album he ever cut, and play all 50-60 of them each time after you and your mate has a fight. Get into debates about the quality of his work early in his career vs. present recordings, and say things like, "Billy Sherrill may be doing a better technical job with him, but no one could bring out the feeling like Pappy Daily." Or maybe, "As corny as it sounds, I think his best song ever was *You Comb Her Hair.*" Tell everyone how you remember him when he had a crew-cut and occasionally refer to him as "The Possum." Or else just sit off by yourself in a darkened corner, order another round and, breaking open a new box of Kleenex, think to yourself how much your waitress looks like the girl who almost married you eight years ago.

Say often: "Can't nobody else in the world sing one like ole George."

But never say: "Have you heard anything about Tammy Wynette and Burt Reynolds?"

Merle Haggard. Have one of all of the following: an American flag decal on your car's rear window; a Love America Or Leave It, Guns Don't Kill People or Cremate Earl Warren bumper sticker; an enamel belt buckle picturing the Stars and Bars. Listen to Paul Harvey twice a day, have a lifetime subscription to *American Opinion*, and loudly affirm that our real enemies are not in Moscow, Peking or Havana, but right up there in Washington, D.C., itself. Have a flagpole in your front yard, and fly the banner proclaiming, "Don't Tread On Me." Aver that anyone who doesn't believe in the conspiracy theory of history deserves to get exactly what's coming to him. Say of Richard Nixon, "Whatever else he may have done, at least he got Alger Hiss." (Dress in Johnny Miller Menswear from Sears. Have a facial expression comparable to George Washington on Mount Rushmore.)

Or else be a truck driver impersonating the Marlboro Man, who walks like a line-backer coming back to the huddle after having just thrown O. J. Simpson for a ten-yard loss. Be able to out-rebel yell anyone within a five-state radius, particularly when you hear the immortal first strains of *Okie From Muskogee*. Reach a crescendo when Hag sings, "We don't let our hair grow long and shaggy," mainly because your 14-year-old son has hair down to his shoulders and you can't



stand it—mainly because *you* are starting to thin out on top.

Say often: "The thing I admire most about him is that he served his time like a man."

But never say: "He should stick to singing and leave the fiddle-playing to one of the boys in the band."

Bill Anderson. Men: be a husband your wife dragged to the show, sit sullenly with your arms folded across your chest, and say, "The only song of his I ever liked was *Where Have All The Heroes Gone?*"

Women: Retort that, "You're just jealous because you can't sing like he can." Have six 8x10 glossy photos, four albums, two songbooks and a publicity kit for him to autograph. Know everything about him from his grade average at the University of Georgia to his batting average on his Po' Boys softball team. Bake him a cake for his birthday and bring it out to his bus during intermission. Inquire about all his ex-band members, particularly Snuffy Miller. Have upwards of 100 carefully cross-indexed tapes of his old syndicated TV show, and actually look forward to doing the housework each day so you can play them uninterrupted. Write him a mash note, but instead of sending

it, put it in your little secret box of intimate items, and vow to give it to him next time he comes to town and make him read it in your presence. In the meantime buy you and your husband two pairs of matching his and hers white boots.

Say often: "He'd be perfect for Holly-wood Squares."

But never say: "How long has he had that laryngitis?"

Waylon Jennings. See Willie Nelson—except say often: "He doesn't need the CMA to tell him how good he is." But never say: "Anybody can grow a beard and long hair and call himself an outlaw."

Dolly Parton. Women: be a wife your husband dragged to the show, sit with contemptuous, petulant look on your face and say, "Don't tell me she's not 80 percent silicone."

Men: (with either a smirking leer or self-conscious grin) retort that, "You're just jealous." Have a fetish about big breasts. Have a fetish about generous figures. Most of all, have a fetish about big eye-lashes. Several times during the night say in amazement, "She's even bigger in person than she is on TV!" Swear that you heard or read somewhere that she is going to be the Playboy centerfold.

Say often: "Underneath that gaudy exterior she really has a very beautiful, sensitive soul."

But never say: "I bet she hasn't won all those awards with just her singing."

Johnny Cash. Men, be hostile. Say that you only came to the show because your wife promised you a yellow shirt next Christmas. Wear red socks, "Back To Mono" and "Luther Perkins Where Are You Now That We Need You?" buttons and sensible pants. Mention often that Billy Graham dies his hair, and tell everyone you can that nobody *you* know would be seen dead in knee-high lace-up boots. Arrange to have the show picketed by real ex-cons. Wave pictures of Kris Kristofferson and Sarah Miles every time June does a number; get backstage at intermission and tape packages of pills to the inside of Johnny's guitar. Throw paper airplanes at the stage; write "same time, same place" on them and sign them "Waylon." Carry a toy train.

Ladies, be patient but firm. Cast your eyes upwards whenever your husband does any of the above. Tell him now and again that if it hadn't been for Johnny Cash there wouldn't be a Larry Gatlin, and watch him squirm. Spike his booze with Gerber's baby food. Tell him you won't come through on the yellow shirt, but wait until the show's over. Ask him if you can have the pictures of Kris and Sarah when he's finished with them.

Say often: "The Lord works in strange ways."

But never say: "Who's John Carter?" ■

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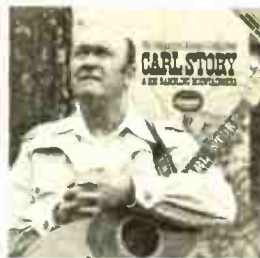
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THE KILLER ON THE ROCKS

“I’m gonna do just what I
want to do, no matter what anyone says . . .
People can stare, if they want to,
but I’m gonna do it.”

—Jerry Lee Lewis

BY WALTER DAWSON

Southerners, an observer once noted, are “a mythical people, created half out of dream and half out of slander, who live in a still legendary land.”

That is, in a way, a description of the life and hard times of Jerry Lee Lewis. Over his controversial—and that’s an understatement—career, Jerry Lee certainly has had his portions of slander and dreams from fans and detractors. His penchant for doing whatever he wants has probably antagonized as many people as it has fascinated.

He is, for example, a generous man, playing benefit after benefit in Memphis. He is also a selfish man, demanding that things be done his way; that the world conform to his own ideas. Perhaps the only part of the above quote that doesn’t apply is the “mythological,” because myth implies imaginary, and there’s nothing about Jerry Lee Lewis that could conceivably be called imaginary.

A few years back, when Elvis ended his long layoff from live performances, he invited Jerry Lee to come to his opening concert because he knew Jerry Lee would tell him the truth about it, good, bad or indifferent. The Killer don’t pull no punches. Jerry Lee lives in a reality that, although true, sometimes gets almost too bizarre to believe.

Recently the boy seems to have fallen on hard times. In late September he was charged with shooting inside the city limits after an incident in which his bass player, Butch Owens, was wounded. Jerry Lee said he didn’t know the gun was loaded, according to the police, but Owens and his wife said Lewis was trying to shoot a soft drink bottle when the bullet glanced off and hit Owens. The shooting took place at Jerry Lee’s Collierville, Tenn., home just outside of Memphis. A few weeks later, Lewis faced new charges in

Collierville, this time for disorderly conduct after police said he was shouting obscenities at neighbors. Five weeks after that, Jerry Lee again had a visit from Collierville’s finest. The charges (driving while intoxicated, reckless driving and failure to carry a driver’s license) were lodged after Jerry Lee crashed his \$46,000 1976 Rolls Royce into a ditch.

The next night, Memphis police found Jerry Lee sitting in his car with a loaded 38-caliber derringer on his knee in front of Elvis’ Graceland mansion. According to Elvis’ guard, Lewis drove up, asked to see Elvis and when told that Elvis didn’t see people at 3 a.m., “he started screaming and yelling and waving a derringer in the air.” The guard called the police, who charged Jerry Lee with being drunk and carrying a pistol. The next night, Jerry Lee was admitted to a Memphis hospital for what doctors called influenza and treatment of a peptic ulcer.

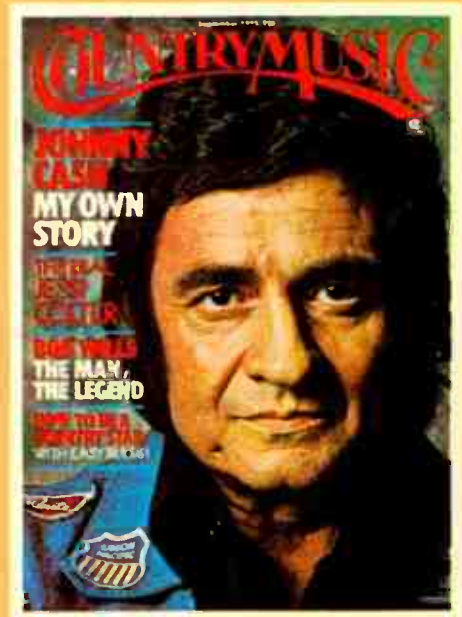
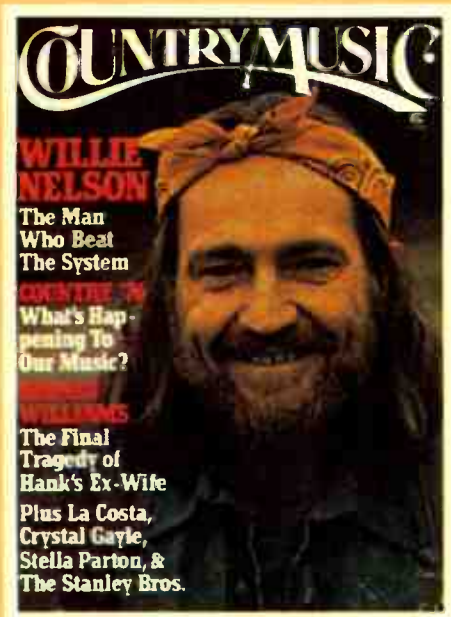
It was, for sure, a busy three-month period for Jerry Lee, and it brought out the same old questions that his conduct had raised almost 20 years before, the central one being: what’s wrong with Jerry Lee Lewis? What’s more, the questioning wasn’t restricted just to people who had never been too fond of Jerry Lee. This time, the questions also were coming from Lewis fans, and many of them, familiar with Lewis’ hell-bent, frenetic style of living, were wondering if perhaps this wasn’t the collapse that they had been expecting. After all, how long can a man keep living all out? Perhaps that depends on what the man is made of, and Jerry Lee is pure Southern stock.

Historians have isolated the two main traits that distinguish the South’s life-style from that of other regions as the strength of family ties and the importance of reli-

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gious beliefs. The family and church don't mean nearly as much today as they used to, but when Jerry Lee was growing up in Ferriday, La., they were prime considerations in the community and the major influences. Lewis came from a close-knit family, one steeped in togetherness, and in his adult life, he has shown a continuing belief in that tradition, even though his life as a musician has kept him away from his family for long stretches, and his family life has been anything but pain-free. He has gone through four unsuccessful marriages and has lost two sons in accidents. A few years ago, one of Lewis' friends, discussing the things that were pushing Jerry Lee, said the singer had taken the deaths of his boys very hard and after noting that and Jerry Lee's marital fires, he commented that if a man isn't happy at home, he isn't likely to be happy with anything else.

Jerry Lee was brought up in the Assembly of God church, a fundamentalist church, and his dedication to it is such that after high school, he attended Bible college in Texas. He wasn't particularly interested in becoming a preacher, he said, and his stay at the college lasted only a few months. But he was active in the church, preaching on several occasions and, of course, contributing his musical skills to the Lord's fight. Soon after he started having big success with secular music at Sun Records, Jerry Lee was having doubts about that music and how it was supposed to fit into the Lord's scheme. In an argument one day in the studio with Sam Phillips (part of which was recorded and is available on a European bootleg album), Jerry Lee was raving with the fervor of a tent evangelist about "you got to be so pure" and being in the world as opposed to being firmly and irrevocably in God's camp.

Several times since then, Jerry Lee has announced (sometimes privately, sometimes publicly) that he was considering leaving rock and roll and country music for the gospel road, something akin to the move made by Little Richard, another Southerner who had conflicts between his soul and his feeling for worldly music. Unlike Little Richard, Jerry Lee hasn't taken up evangelism, but he still seems to be taking glances at the Lord over his shoulder while continuing to make his secular music.

The South, for sociological reasons never fully explored, has always been a musical region—perhaps because of the music's capability to take the edge off the pain of what has largely been a hard-life poverty area, although that doesn't explain it all.

Like his contemporaries and most Southerners before them, Jerry Lee was raised in a house in which music was simply a part of living. He and his sisters regularly exercised their voices in the church, and by the age of eight, Jerry Lee was picking out chords on the guitar. A year later, his



Jerry Lee was
raving with the fervor
of a tent evangelist
about 'you got to
be so pure . . .'

father, who played a bit of piano in church, bought one for the family, and (so the story goes) Jerry Lee taught himself to play within six months, playing a mixture of country and white gospel and the black barrelhouse style he heard at Haney's Big House, a black club that Lewis and his friends used to sneak into to catch some of the biggest names in post-war blues.

In the '50s, segregation was engrained, and because of the 1954 school integration furor, feelings were inflamed. Rock and roll, to a lot of people, just wasn't the cool thing to do, especially in the South and especially in Memphis, a city with deep conservative roots and one almost as rural in its attitudes as the surrounding areas from which it has drawn its populace. To understand the Sun Record era and Jerry Lee, it is necessary to have a bit of background on Memphis:

The city grew up in the 1800s as a rough river town, and its reputation as a rolling-and-tumbling town increased until 1878, when a yellow fever epidemic wiped out a large portion of the city's people and caused thousands more to flee. The ones who could afford to leave were generally the ones with the strongest ties to Old World culture, and as Memphis rebuilt over the next 20 years, it was peopled mainly with rural folk from the farmlands around the city. As historian Gerald Capers noted, the city "formerly cosmopolitan . . . became hopelessly provincial. Gone were the minority groups so necessary to a healthy intellectual atmosphere; and in their place . . . came farmers from Mississippi and Tennessee, a simple and virtuous country folk, but stubborn and often unlettered."

These folk brought with them not only their country attitudes and ways but their own culture as well. It was during this time that Beale Street started taking on its cloak of notoriety, and the city as a whole reverted back to the lawlessness that it had known in its early days. Vice in all its forms was commonplace as the swelling numbers of ruralites made easy marks for the gamblers, prostitutes, saloon-keepers and petty criminals. Soon after the turn of the century, Memphis became the home of a young man from Mississippi who was, over the next half century, to turn the city into one of the cleanest cities in the country. Not politically clean, because Boss Crump ruled his machine in typical machine style, but at least clean in appearance. Under Crump's rule, the city went from outlaw to parson, and today Memphis often claims to have more churches than gas stations.

Then in 1954, the city found itself saddled with a group of barbarians. Some man named Sam Phillips was running a record company down on Union, and he had white boys singing like blacks. It was despicable, it was unheard of, and it was sure to be a blight on the city's good name. Why he and that weird-named fellow, Elvis somebody, were doing it was beyond anyone's comprehension. It was un-Christian, crazy, an affront to good people.

It took a lot of guts to make records like Phillips was making, and it wasn't until Elvis started making it as a national hero that the city fathers of Memphis even were willing to acknowledge Phillips' presence in the city. It would be a little longer before they saw Sun Records as an asset to the city.

In a sense, the city's good people were right about one thing: Sam Phillips and the Sun gang were insane. Insane in the sense that the word relates to a state outside of the normal human condition. Just about everyone connected with Sun at that time has admitted that the unordinary reigned supreme in that little studio. That, of course, is exactly why the small group of people was able to make such a great body of important music.

Perhaps the most different of all the Sun renegades was the blonde-headed kid that drove up to the studio one day from Louisiana, walked in and demanded an audition, telling them that he'd just sit on the doorstep and wait if they didn't let him play immediately. The meeting of Jerry Lee and the Sun gang was a natural. At Sun he found a group of people who had been raised on the same musical diet he had been, and they were as crazy as he seemed to be, although it took a couple of sessions for that to become clear. He saw himself at the time as a country singer, and his first Sun release was a remake of *Crazy Arms*, which did fairly well throughout the South. On the next session, Jerry Lee played a little song he'd been performing down in Louisiana—a piece called *Whole Lotta Shakin' Going On*. It re-



The Killer at last year's Playboy Records party.

vealed the "pumping piano" style of Jerry Lee in full regalia, and it established his future as a rock and roller. The record sold over six million copies, and success after success piled up behind it: *Great Balls of Fire*, *Breathless*, *High School Confidential*. Jerry Lee cut his own path in rock and roll. He was a demon. His records had a sexuality that Presley's only hinted at, and on stage (as well as off) he was the personification of the liberation that rock and roll was supposed to be for the teenage soul during the play-it-safe '50s. He embodied the very spirit of rock and roll.

Elvis was first and set the tone. He was hot item, but Jerry Lee was just as hot in a different way. Elvis tried to appeal to an audience, but Jerry Lee didn't care if you liked him or not. He was anarchistic and cocksure. Elvis went on the Steve Allen TV show and let them put him in a tux and make him sing *Hound Dog* to a big statue of a dog; Jerry Lee went on and in a frenzied moment kicked the piano stool across the stage. How Jerry Lee got on the Allen show in the first place is a story by itself. Judd Phillips, the promotion man for Sun and Sam Phillips brother, saw Jerry Lee for the first time when he was low man on a tour with Carl Perkins, Johnny Cash and Webb Pierce, and decided to put him on national TV. The thought that a big-time TV show wasn't likely to be interested in someone who only had released one record apparently didn't concern Judd. He took Jerry Lee to New York, where they walked in to see Jules Green, Allen's manager. What does he (Jerry Lee) do, Green asked. Plays piano and sings. Judd answered. Got any hit records. Green inquired. Well, *Crazy Arms* did pretty well. sold about 30,000 copies. Green was upset. Why'd these people come

in wasting his time? Judd was adamant. Just give my boy an audition. All right, Green figured to listen and get rid of them. A piano was located, Jerry Lee sat down, and for the next few minutes Green was mesmerized by the whirlwind before him. He gave Phillips some money and said to keep Jerry Lee under wraps until Allen could see him. When they got to Allen the next Monday, he listened to one song and booked Jerry Lee for three shows.

In 1958, in an old and familiar story, Jerry Lee's rock and roll world came down. He married his 13-year-old cousin and adult society crucified him. England kicked him out, and America unofficially but effectively blackballed him. A lesser man, one without Jerry Lee's strong sense of "I'm right, they must be wrong," would have packed it in, but he kept playing. The clubs were smaller, the record sales fewer, but he was still putting on what more than one critic has called the best live show in rock and roll. After about a decade, Jerry Lee found a new audience in country music, and he did so without losing his grip on rock and roll. Actually, his music had always been almost as much country as rock. Early in his career, he had emphasized the rock, and now he is stressing the country. His country hits still have underneath them that same old rock and roll sneer. Even when he's doing a sad country number about being left alone and heartbroken, he surrounds it with an unspoken air of "maybe the Killer's upset now, but you better believe, darling, he'll sure get over it fast enough."

Today Jerry Lee stands in a strange position in country music. The hottest things going are the outlaw-Texas axis and rockabilly-influenced artists, both of which owe much to Jerry Lee and the type

"He's been exhausted before, but it's been nothing bad like this," the road manager said.

of music he helped pioneer in the '50s. It's as though modern country has suddenly discovered a lost branch of the family. But the surprising thing is, the patriarch of that branch isn't coming to the reunion. In fact, he seems to be going the other way, if his recent single, *Let's Put It Back Together*, is any indication. That is an inexplicable country-schmaltz record, one of the worst Jerry Lee has ever cut. But it also was his biggest hit in some time, and it makes you wonder, if after all these years of being his own man, the Killer is going for the easy money. That record, coupled with Jerry Lee's recent escapades, brought forth a lot of talk around Memphis about whether 20 years of *Whole Lotta Shakin'* hadn't finally caught up with him, and the talk intensified after his road manager told a local paper that Lewis' health may have been a factor in his feats of derring-do. "He's been exhausted before, but it's been nothing bad like this," the road manager said. "Your body can only take so much, and he's getting old (41)."

Still, considering Jerry Lee's past, it is difficult not to view *Let's Put It Back Together* as just a slight aberration and his string of incidents as just the latest in a long line of "I'm gonna do just what I want to." That picture of Jerry Lee at Elvis' gates is one of the best rock and roll has ever produced. It says a lot about rock's past, and the different approaches Jerry Lee and Elvis have taken. Jerry Lee the barbarian at the door to the King's castle. The wild man who never compromised versus the man who compromised his way (look at all those movies and soundtracks) into a nice mansion on the hill. Elvis (and a lot of other rock and rollers) went for the money and acceptance; Jerry Lee never went for anything but his own way. And his own way is deeply stained with the influences and traditions of his upbringing. Even when his way takes on its occasional violent air, he is reacting in the grand tradition of the Southern male that requires a man to stand ready to defend anything that needs defending, from his sister's virtue to the make of car he drives.

Whatever the influences that have made Jerry Lee the way he is (and despite all that's been said here, it may be more honest to explain Jerry Lee as simply a foremost case of congenital rock and roll, in all that that implies), he has remained a traditional Southerner, and Southern traditions die hard. ■

Records

Moe Bandy

I'm Sorry For You My Friend
Columbia KC 3443 \$5.98
Columbia CA 3443 (tape) \$6.98
Star rating: ★★☆☆

Time certainly does fly. It's been nearly three years now since Moe Bandy's *I Just Started Hatin' Cheatin' Songs Today* suddenly made twin fiddles and old George Jones records fashionable again. Harder yet to believe is the fact that he's on his sixth album (his third for Columbia) and that throughout, his musical integrity has remained intact.

Nobody, thank heavens, has made any misguided attempts to get Moe a crossover hit by tampering with his style, which accounts for the solid, consistent quality in *I'm Sorry For You My Friend*.

The title, of course, comes from the Hank Williams number, and it seems to have become a Bandy tradition to include at least one on each album. His choice was a good one, since *I'm Sorry* hasn't been recorded by everyone from Tony Bennett to the Boston Pops.

As usual, there are plenty of laments about love in various stages of disrepair, including *Someone That I Can Forget*, one of Linda Hargrove's better tunes, *When All The Beer And All My Friends Are Gone*, *Does Fort Worth Ever Cross Your Mind* and the Haggardesque *A Four Letter Fool*.

Better yet are the offbeat tunes such as *The Lady From The County (Of 1100 Springs)*, a wry tale of a lass who can't get enough of "a well-known local beer" (to save your guessing, it's Pearl). *So Much For Me, So Much For You* bluntly analyzes an unglamorous divorce and *High Inflation Blues* says more about the subject than anybody's Council of Economic Advisers. A snappy snare-driven beat contrasts with the flatout melancholy of *She's Everybody's Woman*, the cry of a cheating husband



whose wife becomes his star pupil.

Like all of Bandy's previous work, *I'm Sorry For You My Friend* is a stunning success. It's not "progressive" in that sense, but simply another heartening step in his crusade to make the world safe for that once-endangered species known as honky-tonk.

RICH KIENZLE

Utah Phillips

El Capitan
PH 1016 \$6.98
No tape available
Star rating: ★★☆☆

Nobody writes songs about the West anymore. I don't mean the golden-glorified-California-Tex-Mex-West, I



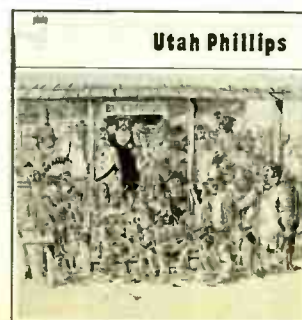
mean the West just over the Rockies. A region that became the last-pit-stop-to-Paradise. No one wants to write songs about a place you've got to pass thru to get somewhere else...no one 'cept U. Utah Phillips.

The first few tracks into his latest album are like kicking a can across Utah. But, by *Dog Canyon* we hit pay-dirt: the instrumentation is let loose and with the superb lyrics, it just "flows like sweet Spanish wine." By *The Star of Bannock*, Phillips has us in the palm of his sun-baked mitt. I can take or leave his harmonica work, but backed up with Doug McClaran at the piano, it's sheer wizardry.

The flip-side is a whole 'nother story: from bum-liberation to traditional—and everything you can think of in-between. It's a buckshot approach: a little humor, a pinch of raunch, more than a sprinkle of traditional and fist-full of fine instrumentation. *Larimer Street* from the curb of bum's-eye-view, is hilarious; *Enola Gay* is chilling and heavy—but it still works. The true jewels are *She'll Never Be Mine*, with which Utah may have written a Western-classic, and the traditional *The Sweet Briar*; here his narrow, taut vocal range is used to convey the severity of pioneer struggle.

This album's a must for the Western purist. And for all others, I'd say: more than half the tracks are really worth listening to, and you don't see many like that these days!

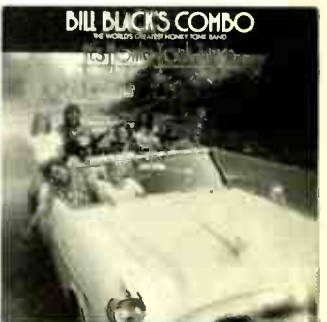
DON MATHE



Bill Black's Combo

It's Honky Tonk Time
Hi Records (London)
SHL 32104 \$6.98
SHL-8-32104 (tape) \$7.95
Star Rating: ★★☆☆
(Not available through C.M.)

The great problem with this record is that Bill Black is no longer with Bill Black's Combo. Back in the late '50's and the early '60's the Combo was perhaps the best of the great instrumental groups. Memphis-based, they put out pop-ish rhythm 'n blues instrumental numbers with a forceful and original approach. Now, however (although they're still from Memphis), they sound like a bunch of bored Nashville side-



men trying to stir up a little excitement without working too hard. They've added a couple of country standards (*Rollin' In My Sweet Baby's Arms*, *Cotton Eyed Joe*) and a fiddle. But if you get the feeling that you've heard it all before it's probably because you have. When they do approach the old sound they tend to fall back on the safe and reliable—the sax man gets to do *Yakety Sax*, for example. They also sing, which is a mistake.

The boys don't particularly miss a lick, but it just goes to show that it takes more than good musicians to make a band. Or a record.

The best things in this record are found on the cover. It features a vintage 1950 Packard convertible filled with pretty girls and at least one bottle of Black Jack Daniels.

NELSON ALLEN

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

Johnny Cash

The Last Gunfighter Ballad
 Columbia KC 34314 \$5.98
 CA 34314 (tape) \$6.98
 Star Rating: ★ ★ ★



Johnny Cash is already a legend and here he comes at us one more time pictured on the album cover pointing a six-gun at us, his eyes hidden in the brim shadow of a raunchy black (naturally) hat and wearing a scraggy beard. Cash has always loved to dress up for album covers. The six-gun, Johnny informs us in his self-penned liner notes, once belonged to Hank Williams and was given to him by Hank Williams, Jr.

So the mood is set for *The Last Gunfighter Ballad*, the title cut written by one of Nashville's best songwriters, Guy Clark. It's not as believable or as moving as *Desperados Waiting For The Train*, a similar Clark song; still it's a good song and Cash's coarse vocals lend credibility and style. The album also includes *I Will Dance With You*, written by son-in-law Jack Routh, the old

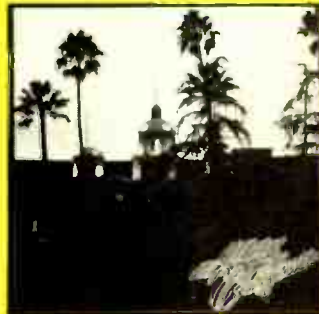


Eagles

Hotel California
 Asylum 7E-1084 \$6.98
 CT-5-1084 (tape) \$7.98
 Star rating: ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

The contributions of LA country rock—Olivia Newton-John, Linda Ronstadt, Poco, the Burritos, et al.—to the main body of country-western has been largely restricted to commercial aspects. Vocally, instrumentally and lyrically, the ideas usually are recycled ones, albeit cleaner. On the whole the writing is either a tame love song; a mod version of an old standard; a new popped-up version of an old standard; or some indulgent meandering about the ecology and Colorado. When backed by a slick, five-part harmony, it becomes merely formula.

Yet there comes a time to bite the bullet and in the case of the Eagles, this is it. More than any LA group, they have managed to break into AM



country radio without drastically altering their sound—they are still very much a rock group. But at the same time they are able to accomplish what the Nashville Sound once purported to do five years ago: serve up flawless production values (for once, synthesizers are used sparingly enough to achieve their intended apocalyptic effect), layered on top of a theme that can hold the attention of country and pop listener alike. In this case, *Hotel California* self-critically digs

into the inescapable paradise/bottomless pit mystique of Southern California and gets away with it without seeming overpretentious.

And that is more than sufficient, from *Hotel California's* seductive invitation into the trap to *The Last Resort's* epilogue for the Great American Westward dream. In between there are some persuasive love ballads (*Try and Love Again*) and tough tunes like *Life In the Fast Lane* and *Pretty Maids All in a Row*, the latter two displaying the new spark and primitivism of ex-James Gang guitar punk Joe Walsh. It is Walsh's added presence that ruffles the band's feathers and makes them more than pseudo-porch pickers. If an entity like country rock does earn a place in what was once known as C&W, odds are the Eagles will be flying up front, doing most of the creating.

JOE NICK PATOSKI

Gene Autry classic *That Silver Haired Daddy Of Mine*, and a well-done duet with wife June Carter on *Far Side Banks Of Jordan*. There's also Tom T. Hall's *Give It Away*, a song which I've always held a personal grudge against.

The album's weakness lies

in the area where Cash's music usually contains its greatest strength; of only four Cash originals presented here none can compare with his best compositions of the past, although I kinda like *Ridin' On The Cotton Belt*. When the big man cuts into a song like *Big River*

or *I Walk The Line* or *I Still Miss Someone* everybody else may as well step aside, but it's inevitable (although probably a little unfair) that a man of Cash's stature will always be compared against his best work. This ain't his best by any means, but it's not bad. NELSON ALLEN

Records

Mickey Newbury

Rusty Tracks
ABC/Hickory AH44002 \$6.98
8-44002 (tape) \$7.98
Star rating: ★ ★ ★

Mickey Newbury has presented his new record label, ABC/Hickory, with a classic Mickey Newbury album. His new LP, **Rusty Tracks**, contains all the elements to further confirm confirmed Newbury fans; they ought to impress the public at large far more than they do.

In typical Newbury style, it contains a song already a hit for another artist (*Makes Me Wonder If I Ever Said Goodbye* was a No. 1 for Johnny Rodriguez). Also, in typical

Newbury fashion, it does not contain a cut which will be a commercial hit for him. One of the strongest contenders, *Leavin' Kentucky*, is already doomed to the "B" side of his current single. It contains these lines which need no adjectives to glorify them ("God, I'm just one man, I wish I was three/ Take a 44 pistol to me/ Put one in my brain for her memory/ One more for my heart and then I'd be free").*

Despite Bobby Bare and Ronnie Gant production credits,

Rusty Tracks is produced with the lavish intensity that's marked Newbury's music for years. This is the same basic vision he has pursued since 1967, and one which is not exactly ahead of any particular time, but, just, well, ahead.

For example, the simple, plaintive mountain lament

In the Pines is amplified into a full-blown stage play for the ears with train effects and lonesome wails buried deep in the grooves. And yet, rather than overpowering the song, the effects powerfully redefine it.

His recreation of four traditional tunes continues an interest in traditional music that's



provided his strongest single to date, *American Trilogy*. And, wrapping up the whole album in unmistakable Newbury fashion, the last snatch of recording is the sound of downpouring rain and a melancholy harmonica.

Rusty Tracks is super-saturated Newbury, otherwise unclassifiable.

LOLA SCOBAY

**Leavin' Kentucky* Copyright Mickey Newbury, Acuff-Rose Publications, BMI.

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Loretta Lynn

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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." COAL 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.

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Records

Gene Watson

Paper Rosie
Capitol ST-11597 \$6.98
8XT-11597 (tape) \$7.98
Star rating: ★ ★ ★

Friends, let me tell you of Gene Watson has plain got it made. He sings about love and lust, about the everyday workings and failings of relationships, about the things we have to deal with in day-to-day life. Things you can relate to. He's had hit records like *Love In The Hot Afternoon*, *Where Love Begins*, *You Could Know As Much About A Stranger*, and *Her Body Couldn't Keep You Off My Mind*.

The reason he's doing so well is his choice of material (he picks it all himself, it says right here on his Capitol Records bio). He gathers songs that fit his style, nothing fancy, just



good solid country writing by Ray Griff, Porter Wagoner, Marty Robbins, Dolly Parton, among others. The subjects don't veer too far from the themes of most country lyrics, and it sounds like he's going for hit singles all the time.

There's plenty of pleasant listening on *Paper Rosie*. Watson remains smooth as always, without becoming boring. The Ray Griff-penned *If The Shoe Fits Wear It* as well as *Til You Can Make It On Your Own* have the stuff hit records are made of. Porter's *Tennessee Sunshine* provides light up-tempo balance for an otherwise ballad-filled record. *Desperation* and Dolly's *Most Of All Why* maintain the overall quality of the package. In pondering the whole thing, there really isn't a song that rouses suspicions of a throwaway or a publishing deal.

No doubt about it, Gene's come a long way in a couple of years. This album sounds like he's still hard at work at the craft of making entertaining country records, and you can't beat that. 'Long as the man keeps on working at it, Gene's sure 'nuff got it made.

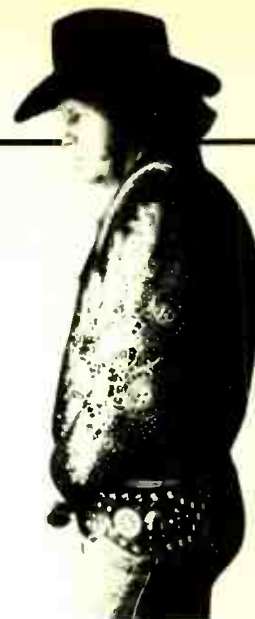
BOB ANDERSON

David Allan Coe

David Allan Coe Rides Again
Columbia/Lone Star
KC 34310 \$5.98
CA 34310 (tape) \$6.98
Star Rating: ★

David Allan Coe has had problems with his personal credibility gap of late and has, perhaps, been spending too much time in defense of his image and too little with his music. His latest LP (his fourth for Columbia and second on Lone Star) is a case in point. David is pictured on the front astride a chopper in proper outlaw motorcycle get-up, the album's called *David Allan Coe Rides Again*. All of this is outrageous enough (David Allan has never lacked nerve) but the proof is in the puddin' so to speak, and there's not a single strong cut on the record.

The album kicks off with the misconceived anthem, *Willie, Waylon and Me*, then there's *The House We've Been Calling Home*, which is some sort of a song about multiple wives and *Young Dallas Cowboy*, with an embarrassing use of football imagery. A couple more tunes and side one ends with *Willie*,



Waylon and Me (Reprise), which is mere name dropping. On the other side is *Lately I've Been Thinking Too Much Lately*, which is the single and not a bad song, but nothing compared to his strongest work; and *Laid Back and Wasted*, also not bad although it sounds a bit familiar. The album ends with *If That Ain't Country (I'll Kick Your Ass)* which is merely silly. For some unexplainable reason all of the songs are segued into one another.

David Allan Coe Rides Again

including:
Willie, Waylon And Me/Young Dallas Cowboy
The Punkin Center Barn Dance
Under Rachel's Wings
Greener Than The Grass We Laid On



The problem here, of course, is that David Allan is not without talent. The author of such tunes as *I Still Sing The Old Songs*, *Bossier City*, *Another Pretty Country Song* and many others including the classic, *Would You Lay With Me (In A Field Of Stone)*, David Allan can write songs with the best of them. He's put together a good band and is an exciting performer when he's in the mood. Apparently he wasn't in the mood to put together a record, however, because there's nothing here to interest anyone but the most hard-core of his fans. Nevertheless, David is too talented to be counted out because of this one album.

NELSON ALLEN

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Records

The Statler Brothers
 The Country America Loves
 SRM-1-1125 \$6.98
 MC-8-1-1125 (tape) \$7.98
 Star rating: ★

Dear Statler Boys:
 How are you? I am fine. Just heard your new album and wanted to write and let you know what I thought. I got the impression you guys were a little weary when you went into the studio this time. Is that true? You don't seem to have that old spark of excitement that I've heard on your other



albums. Hard to say just why, but maybe that feeling of listlessness comes from the choice of songs. They're not quite as lively as your usual material. Now don't misunderstand, you've always held a special place in my heart for those songs about the 50's, your remembrances of long ago loves (who always fare better with the passing of time, don't they),

and your true appreciation of the ones you love. No one is finer at what you do, but it doesn't sound like this is the best material or performance possible, compared to other efforts.

I don't want you to get too upset, guys. This doesn't quite hit the mark, but that isn't to say there aren't some good moments. *You Could Be Coming To Me* and *Thank God I've Got You* are pure Statler tunes, emotion-filled and very haunting. *I Was There* holds up to your usual standards of those "you were always the one I really loved" songs you do so well. *A Couple More Years* is a good interpretation of the Dr. Hook piece, and *Let It Show* is a delightful little number right out of the Les Paul-Mary Ford period.

Please understand that all the songs are pleasant (yours always are) but some are without much flair. And I thought a couple of choices were poor. *All I Can Do* could have been more than just covered. By the way, are you sure *Hats And Boots* was finished? I'll sign off now, with torn emotions over having to tell you this isn't as notable as past efforts. Looking to hear from you soon.

P.S. I still love you.
 Your friend,
 BOB ANDERSON

James Talley
 Blackjack Choir
 Capitol ST-11605 \$6.98
 8XT-11605 (tape) \$7.98
 Star rating: ★★★★★

You don't have to be Rosalynn ("He looks just like his album covers!") Carter to admire James Talley's talents as a songwriter, but the fact that he's picked up so many fans in so many walks of life says a lot about Talley's approach. He just lays the facts out, without a whole lot of poesy or obfuscation, presenting things just as he sees them. It's both his big strength and his big weakness: if he's trying to make a political point, as he was much of the time on his last album, *Tryin' Like The Devil*, the lyrics can turn preachy and textbook-y.

Fortunately, this doesn't happen much on **Blackjack Choir**. An extended exploration of the South, it



moves at the lazy pace which has come to typify (how fairly or not I won't venture) the land below the Mason-Dixon Line. *Alabama Summertime* is a good example of this, as is the gently swinging (as a porch swing) *Up From Georgia*, in which the name of the state occurs in almost every line like an internal chant. Or, for another view of the terrain, try the two side-openers, *Bluesman* and *Daddy Just Called It The Blues*, which are evocative without being imitative. Only *Migrant Jesse Sawyer* manages that excessive, heard-it-all-before (and better, from Woody Guthrie) feeling.

If anything, **Blackjack Choir** shows James Talley's talents pointing him in a new direction, and, with fans from the White House to my house, it looks like he'll be around to explore it for a while.

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WILLIE

(Continued from page 24)

I played poker together. He's still a good friend. I don't know what he did other than sell cars and don't want to know. It's none of my business. I bought cars and trucks from him and have records to prove it and that's the only business that I ever had with (him) . . . If they wanted to bust me on marijuana they could have done that years ago because everyone knows that I smoke a joint every now and then. Everybody also knows that I ain't got any for sale. I smoke it all. But that was a bad thing really because they were trying to get (this guy) and they just knew that I was involved with it. And there may have been some people who said I was, too, because a lot of people get arrested for one charge or another and they become a snitch in order to get better treatment. They'll say anything about anybody if it'll keep 'em from getting a long sentence.

ALLEN: *Do you think they called you up there because of who you are?*

NELSON: I think they probably did it to cause some publicity. Ray Price also, they mentioned his name and Ray Price is no more involved in dope dealing than I am or you are. He picks and sings. He makes a lot of money doing that. He makes \$10,000 a night, so he's not gonna go out and mess up the whole thing over something stupid like that. He's got everything in the world going for him and there would be no reason to do a thing like that. Anybody with any intelligence at all should be able to see that. If they'd had any nares or snitches around me, and I'm sure they have had, all they found out was just exactly the truth because I haven't got a thing to hide.

ALLEN: *Did you sever your connections with the nightclub Whiskey River over all that?*

NELSON: Well, that probably had something to do with it but I mainly just wanted to get out of the nightclub business. It's just a hassle. But that's a perfect name for a joint though. When I was thinking about really going into the nightclub business I was going to do a chain of clubs, the nightlife, and franchise them and all that.

ALLEN: *Tompall and Waylon are suing each other. Are you mad at anybody or is anyone mad at you?*

NELSON: No. I'm just laughing at both of 'em.

ALLEN: *Do you plan on building a recording studio now?*

NELSON: No, there's enough good studios around without me building one. If I put one up I'd have to use it all the time and I like to move around and use different studios.

GRAMMIES

(Continued from page 12)

the pretelecast winners (aaargh, the pain of salt in wounds, not to mention the folding chair), his countenance one of eloquent disgust. And the Divine Miss M, Bette Midler, tried her best—and almost made it—to pull it out with her gown and its thirty-five foot train, with her caustic Mae West-ian asides; but to no avail: everybody left feeling a little numb, a little embarrassed.

Afterwards all in attendance were invited to a "Disco-Buffer" at the Beverly Hilton. Here the food was absolutely magnificent, the dancers an erotic spectacle (especially a horror film starlet made up like King Tut's mummy in gold lame with a neckline down to *here*) and the din frightening.

Now I know this is the Recording Academy (NARAS stands for Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences; the Grammy Award itself is named for the Gramophone, which leads one to wonder if they had named it after the Victrola would it be a Vickie; if after Edison's cylinder machine an Eddie?) and, of course, the emphasis is going to be on recorded, as opposed to live, music. But more high-volume disco was going too far. It was at this point, after hearing lyrics of such poignant depth as "That's the way, uh-huh, uh-huh, I like it, uh-huh, uh-huh;" "shake, shake, shake your bootie;" and "more, more, more; how do you like it? How do you like it?" repeated endlessly that I decided the award for the slimmest book of the year should go to *The Poetry of Disco*.

Foot weary (tight boots), bone weary (remember the plane flight?), ear-weary, and brain-weary, we made our way back to the motel in bleary exhaustion.

The next Monday I rewarded myself for my loss at the Grammys, however: I bought a lace-up, fringed shirt at none other than Nudie's of Hollywood, from none other than Nudie himself, resplendent in green lame and sequins. I mean I don't have a plaque or a trophy or even a certificate for my nomination—a guy's got to have something more tangible as a reward than a bill for the plane flight and a wrinkled tuxedo, right?

DOUGLAS B. GREEN

GRAMMY WINNERS

Best Female Country Vocal: Emmylou Harris, "Elite Hotel."
Best Male Country Vocal: Ronnie Milsap, "(I'm a) Stand-By-My-Woman Man."
Best Group Country Vocal: Amazing Rhythm Aces, "The End is not in Sight."
Best Country Song: "Broken Lady." Larry Gatlin.
Best Inspirational: Gary S. Paxton, "The Astounding...World of Gary S. Paxton."
Best Ethnic Recording: John Hartford, "Mark Twang."
Best Gospel: Oak Ridge Boys, "Where the Soul Never Dies."
Best Female Pop Vocal: Linda Ronstadt, "Hasten Down the Wind."

Pickers

DON'T HOLD YOUR BREATH WAITING FOR FLOYD CRAMER TO PLAY HIS LAST DATE

There was a time when Nashville sidemen went virtually unrecognized by the fans. Today, however, many of the musicians who play in thousands of Nashville sessions have become stars in their own right—side-men like steel guitar wizard Pete Drake, harmonica player supreme Charlie McCoy, fiddle players Vassar Clements and Johnny Gimble, dobro player Uncle Josh Graves, guitarist Grady Martin and saxophone player Boots Randolph, to name only a few.

Long before these names started working into the American musical vocabulary, though, there was an instrumental sideman who turned record charts inside out, with a multi-million-selling piano melody that still haunts nearly every person who was a teenager in the early 1960s. The song was called *Last Date*, and it made Floyd Cramer one of Nashville's brightest and longest-burning stars.

His bent-note style of piano playing over the years has been partially responsible for the selling of millions of records for himself and other artists; for the making of several country music stars and for the creation of the type of music that has become known world-wide as the Nashville Sound.

Listen to Cramer on Elvis Presley's *Anything That's Part of You* or Cramer backing Perry Como's *And I Love Her So*. Listen to Cramer on the Jim Reeves hits *Am I Losing You*, *Guilty or Missing You*. Listen to Cramer on Brenda Lee's million seller, *I'm Sorry*. Undoubtedly, there are other musicians on the cuts, but the one sound that stands out above all the rest is that classic style of Floyd Cramer.

Cramer followed *Last Date* with well-known chart-climbers such as *On The Rebound*, *Corn Crib Symphony*, *Flip, Flop and Bop* and *Brian's Song*. Most recently, he achieved some publicity with a novelty tune called *Candy Pants*, but it failed to become a major seller. Although



By DON RHODES

“
Does your heart
throb every time you
hear *Last Date*?
The pianoman's magic
is still working.
”

he is not a great single-record seller, Cramer has sold an impressive number of albums for RCA. He has cut about 40 albums, in fact, while most entertainers are lucky to cut 10.

Part of Cramer's healthy album sales is due to his years of touring with the *Festival of Music* show, which starred for many years Chet Atkins, Boots Randolph, Cramer and guest artists. Atkins quit touring with the festival about three years ago, but Cramer and Randolph and the guest stars continue to play before packed concert halls.

The main reason for Cramer's album sales simply is people like to listen to Floyd put his fingers on the ivories. His sound is unmistakable—record producers in Los Angeles and New York routinely tell studio musicians, “I want some Floyd Cramer sound on this one,” and no other explanation is needed.

Cramer's style of playing was not original, but his success with it has made it his trademark. A Californian by the name of Don Robertson actually introduced the style to modern Nashville recording. Robertson with Hal Blair composed *Please Help Me I'm Falling*, and played piano and sang on the demo sent to Chet Atkins.

When Hank Locklin heard the song and recorded it, he asked Cramer to duplicate Robertson's piano style. The result proved so successful that Atkins suggested Cramer write a song around the new style. Cramer came back with *Last Date*. He has since told interviewers that, actually, the style dates back to Mother Maybelle Carter on the guitar and Bud Isaacs on the steel guitar. Describing the style, Cramer says, “You hit one note and slide almost simultaneously to another. It is a sort of near-miss on the keyboard. . . . It is an intentional error and actually involves two notes. . . . The result is a lonesome sound.”

In the long run, it doesn't matter who

originated the sound or how the sound is made. What really matters is the fact that when people hear the sound, they identify it more with Floyd Cramer than anyone else.

To comprehend Cramer's influence on the world of music, you have to realize he has played on thousands of Nashville recordings, backing performers such as Perry Como, Al Hirt, Burl Ives, Connie Francis, Jimmy Dean, Brenda Lee, Paul Anka, Jim Reeves, Elvis Presley and many others.

Cramer was born in Shreveport, La., also the home town of Hank Williams, Jr., David Houston, Claude King and Faron Young. Early on, his family moved to Huttig, Ark. (population 1,500). Cramer stayed there all of his young life and eventually graduated from high school there.

When he was five, his folks gave him a piano, the start of a beautiful friendship with music that was to become his life's work. He says he never treated the piano "as a toy," but neither did he give it much attention until he was 13. In the years after his high school graduation, Cramer's parents moved to West Monroe, La. Cramer himself headed for the Louisiana Hayride back in Shreveport.

There, Cramer began appearing with such Hayride artists as Webb Pierce, Jim Reeves, Jim Ed Brown, Faron Young, Ginny Wright and Hank Williams. At the time Cramer knew Williams, the Alabama singer-songwriter had gone from the Hayride to his great successes on the Grand Ole Opry, then back to the Hayride. "He was right in the middle of his worst time," Cramer recalls.

It was in Shreveport Cramer signed his first recording contract with a company called Abbott Records, also the label that launched the career of "Gentleman" Jim Reeves.

While on the Hayride, Cramer met a young Mississippi native who was on the verge of setting the world on fire. When Cramer met him, Elvis Presley was a nervous newcomer to country music and the two young men struck up a friendship that has lasted to this day. In the early 1950s, Elvis had secured his recording contract with Sun Records and was just starting to move in a big way, both from a physical and business stand-point.

Elvis enlisted Cramer to back him on a tour of high school auditoriums throughout Texas. "The kids were wild about him, even then," Cramer recalls. As Elvis moved up the popularity ladder, Cramer was there about every step of the way. "I played the piano on Elvis' first RCA recording, *Hearbreak Hotel*, and I have played on every Nashville session Elvis has made since then," Cramer recalls.

Beside playing on the gold selling singles and albums of the rock and roll king, Cramer also has played on all of Presley's movie soundtracks. "Elvis is quite a hard worker during his recording sessions," Cramer reports. "Generally, we would

start about 6 p.m. and work until the sun came up. About then, we would send out for Krystal's hamburgers or Kentucky Fried Chicken."

Cramer is reluctant to name which artists he has most enjoyed working with, but, nevertheless, Ray Price and Lefty Frizzell come to mind. "I've worked with just about everybody, and each has their own unique sound. I liked Lefty Frizzell quite a bit."

Talking about how the music road led to Nashville, Cramer says, "I was still working in Shreveport and not making as much money as I felt I should have . . . About that time, I was going to Nashville occasionally to play on sessions for the Hayride people recording in Nashville, like Webb Pierce, Faron Young and T. Tommy. I think my first Nashville session, as a matter of fact, was with T. Tommy. Anyway, while up there, I got to know Chet Atkins, who was then assistant to RCA producer Steve Sholes. Chet was also

“
Each instrument
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when one is liked
better than another.
But I still think
the piano is the most
basic instrument
of all . . . any instrument's
range is built
around the piano. . .
”

working sessions then. I asked him if he thought I could make a living working sessions in Nashville, and Chet said he thought I would work out good. He didn't make any promises; he just gave me his opinion. I had been married one year at that time, and I wanted to improve my family and myself, so I put the TV and the roll-away bed and everything else we had into a U-Haul and moved to Nashville. I was lucky enough to be in Nashville as the recording business started booming, and also lucky because I had the capability."

Of the many hundreds of songs Cramer has recorded over the years, one of his favorites is *Quiet Girl* from the Class of '72 album. Cramer notes, "That song is semi-classical, partly because it was composed by Johnny Cowell, who plays first violin with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra."

If that sounds high-brow for Cramer, that's not the way he considers himself. "I still consider myself a country artist.

I'm very familiar with country music, but I don't try to limit myself to country music. I try to do contemporary things, and I also like gospel music. I think a popular song can be done by a country artist, and it can appeal to a Top 40 audience, and also the reverse is true. I'm just real happy that country music is still popular and accepted today by young people and by the generally non-country music crowd."

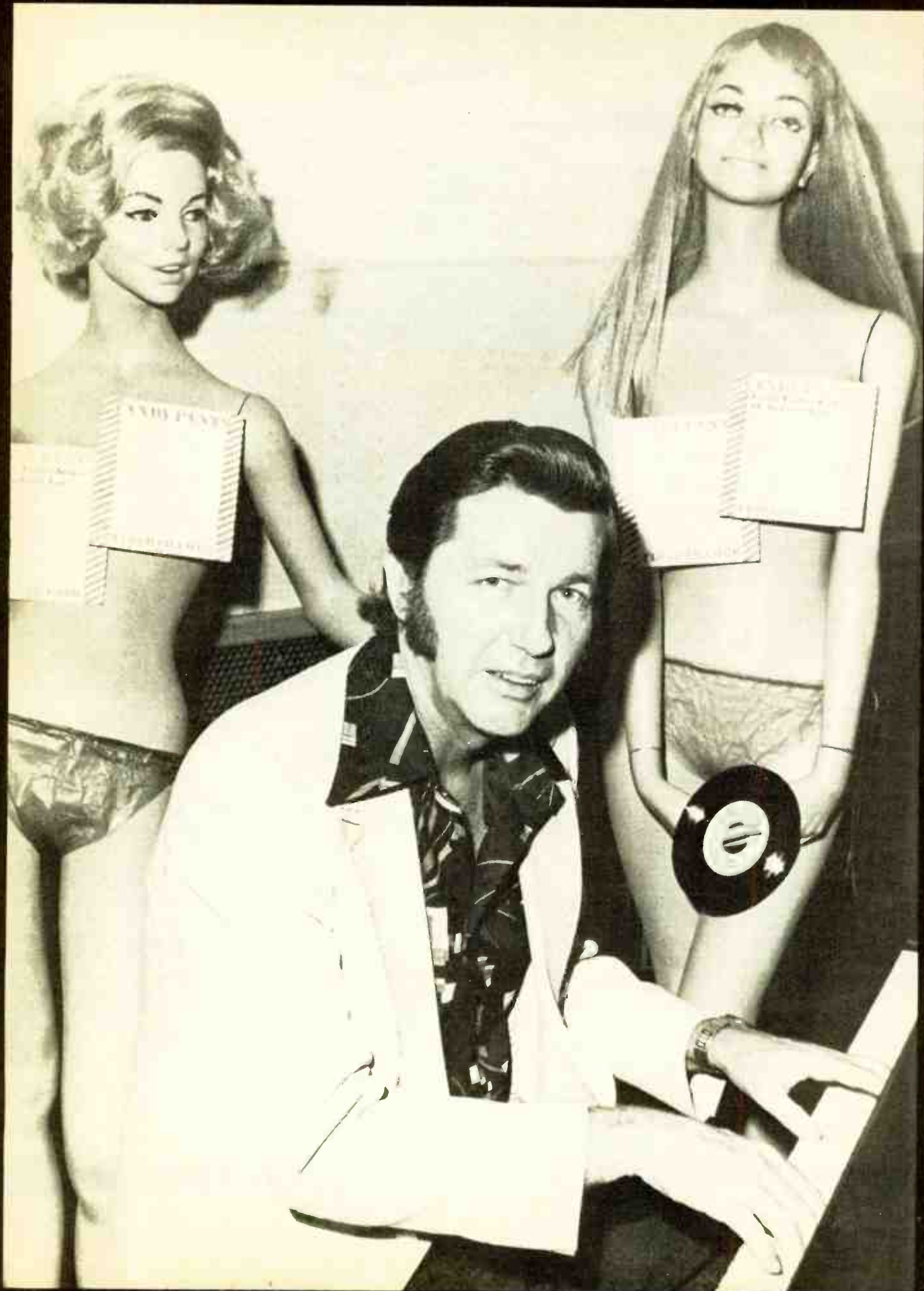
In talking about the popularity of the piano, Cramer observes, "I think more kids today are taking piano and learning than ever before. Each instrument has had its periods of popularity in time, when one is liked better than another. But I still think the piano is the most basic instrument of all. Most songwriters and musicians will tell you that any instruments' range is based around the piano keyboard. I feel the piano will traditionally be the basic instrument of music."

Chet Atkins himself has produced the majority of Cramer's albums, including the live *In Concert* album. "The recording studio for that album was the cafeteria of Neely's Bend Junior High School in Nashville, and the audience consisted of those who attended the annual Ninth Grade banquet," Cramer says. "One of my daughters was a ninth grade graduate that year and was on the entertainment committee. I also performed at the same banquet three years earlier for my oldest daughter, who was also on her entertainment committee. A lot of artists in Nashville perform at shows for their kids, but you just never hear of it in the public news. I decided I would like to try to record an album at the school, and I talked it over with Chet. He was reluctant to produce the album at first, but we checked the building out for sound, and he gave the okay. We had a choice between the cafeteria and the gym, but we used the cafeteria because it's air-conditioned. We really did it up right, using three engineers. We had a seven foot Steinway brought to the school from the studio, and for the recording we used a portable 16-track tape machine. We couldn't have had a more enthusiastic audience. Chet was very pleased when we finished, and said he was amazed at the good sound. After the album came out, I got a list of the names and addresses of the kids who were there that night, and I sent each a copy of the album."

If there is a secret to his success, Cramer doesn't know it.

"I'm still trying to figure it out," he comments modestly. "I just know that I am very lucky to have people follow me through the years. If there is a key, it may be that instrumental artists like Chet Atkins, Boots Randolph and others have to try as hard as we can to improve our work. Basically, I'm fortunate that people continue to buy my albums even though I haven't had a big hit in several years."

With a smile Cramer adds, "Evidently, I'm pleasing somebody!"



Floyd Cramer after his hit song "Candy Pants."

Pickers

If you've ever been dazzled by the hot, jazz-like guitar solos on Bob Wills records, you might actually have been dazzled by an electric mandolin. Wills featured them, and they can really knock you out. They sound like electric guitars being played in high register, but, being much smaller, they allow a good picker's fingers to dart over the fingerboard with incredible speed. It takes a nimble hand indeed to copy such licks on the guitar.

The man who played a good many of those licks for Wills is Tiny Moore, a Texas Playboy from 1946 to 1950. Some of the better known records on which you can hear him are *Fatboy Rag*, *Bootheel Drag*, *Cowboy Stomp*, *Braincloudy Blues*.

Nowadays, Tiny runs a music shop and gives lessons in mandolin and fiddle. He also markets a copy of the electric mandolin he toted on the road. It's called the Roberts Tiny Moore model, and it's a solid body instrument copied directly from the original that was made for Tiny by Paul Bigsby. The strings are single instead of the mandolin's usual doubles, and there are five of them instead of four. There are two pickups, each tapped at about half the windings for a variety of sounds. Also volume and tone controls, plus toggle switch. Tuning is EADGC. Tiny gets \$500 apiece, with hard case, sent UPS paid anywhere in the US. Each instrument is hand made by Jay Roberts and tried out by Tiny. Order from Tiny Moore's Music Center, 2331 El Camino Ave., Sacramento, Calif. 95821.

A more traditional four-string mandolin in a fairly modest price class is available from Hondo. The Model HM-5, styled after the classic Gibsons, has a scroll on the upper bout and peg head. The bridge is adjustable and made of rosewood. The solid rosewood fingerboard is pearl inlaid and celluloid bound. Finish is clear polyurethane with sunburst shading. Price is \$169.50.

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By ARTHUR J. MAHER

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new model to its highly respected line of hand-mades. Called the Timber Creek model, it has sides and three-piece back of East Indian rosewood. Whenever possible, all pieces used on sides and back are selected from the same tree, giving an unusually good match-grain appearance. Top is of quarter-sawn sitka spruce with wood marquetry and an abalone-inlaid soundhole. Ebony fingerboard is inlaid with squares and ellipses of abalone shell and the ebony bridge is fitted with an ivory nut. The rosewood peghead overlay is bound in white, as are the fingerboard and box. Truss rod adjusts from inside the body, which makes for a stronger neck. Priced at \$1095.

The CF Martin Organization is also introducing a new model—the HD-28 Herringbone model, with distinctive herringbone-pattern trim around the edges. This type of trim appeared on all Model 28 Martins manufactured from 1931 until 1946. Today's models, however, are made with stronger neck reinforcement and improved inlay materials such as Indian Rosewood, which has a fine, rich appearance. Tuning gears are permanently lubricated and enclosed. The bracing system is scalloped, like that first introduced by the manufacturer in 1850.

A company most people associate with fine electric guitars also makes acoustic instruments. I'm talking about Fender, who recently introduced the Leo Banjo, a professional five-stringer. It is said to give a loud, clear-ringing tone which is the hallmark of previous Fender banjos, gives extremely high volume, unusually crisp and clear upper register, and a quick, clean attack. Fender engineers achieved these qualities with a positive-fitting, specially designed tone ring and fine wood trim. The head is transparent high-tension mylar. A double-coordinating rod design permits adjustment of the neck angle. Peghead is inlaid, all metal parts of chrome plated and wood parts are natural finished walnut. ■



Timber Creek model from Mossman



Fender's latest banjo—the Leo model

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VACATION

(Continued from page 37)

March 6. The lineup included Leon McAuliffe and the Texas Playboys, the Light Crust Doughboys, Hank Thompson, Alvin Crow and Asleep At The Wheel.

If your vacation takes you to the Wheeling, W. Va. area, you've got to take in Jamboree U.S.A., held at Wheeling's Capitol Theatre and broadcast by radio station WWVA. This Saturday night show started out in 1933 and over the years has featured such performers as Hawkshaw Hawkins, Grandpa Jones, Bradley Kincaid, Wilma Lee and Stoney Cooper, Red Sovine, The Chuck Wagon Gang and, for a brief time, Hank Snow. Nowadays, the regular roster is headed by Don Williams and his wife, Chickie, veteran performers with a large following. Big names like Buck Owens and Johnny Cash are brought in regularly.

Other events in chronological order:

- June 5 Stowe, Vt. Northeast Fiddlers Meeting
- June 10-12 Duluth, Minn. Convention State Square Dance
- June 10-12 Erskine, Minn. Mid-Summers Dag Festival
- June 12 Flagstaff, Ariz. Sunmer Festival
- June 22-25 Pinnacle, N.C. Lester Platt's Fifth Annual Mount Pilot Bluegrass Festival
- June 25-26 Benson, N.C. State Singing Convention
- June 25-26 Palaskala, Ohio Mid-Ohio Bluegrass Festival
- June 25-26 Payson, Ariz. Old Time Country Music Festival
- June 26 Grandfather Mount., N.C. Singing on the Mountain 53rd Annual Festival
- June 26 Eau Claire, Wis. Annual Sawdust City Days Bluegrass Festival
- June 30- July 3 Langley, Okla. Powderhorn Park Bluegrass Festival
- July 1-4 Kerrville, Texas Country Western Song Contest
- July 3-5 Staunton, Va. Festival Happy Birthday U.S.A.
- July 3-5 Jackson, Miss. Mississippi Crafts Jamboree
- July 4 White River Jct., Vt. Fiddlers' Contest
- July 4 Crystal Springs, Ms. Celebration Fourth of July
- July 8 Germaotown, Ohio Bluegrass Festival
- July 10 Grenada, Miss. Contest Championship Fiddlers
- July 14-17 Disney, Okla. Round Spring Park Bluegrass Festival
- July 16 Woodstock, Vt. Contest Old Time Fiddler's
- July 23 North Conway, N.H. Festival Country Music
- July 24 Hastings, Mich. Thornapple Bluegrass Festival
- July 25-31 Brevard, N.C. Festival of the Arts
- July 29 Newbury, Vt. Cracker Barrel Bazaar
- July 29-31 Kerrville, Texas Kerrville Gospel Jubilee

- July 30 Holdenville, Okla. All Night Singing Under the Stars
- Aug. 2 Bolton Landing, N.Y. Bluegrass Concert
- Aug. 3-7 Hugo, Okla. Grant's Salt Creek Park Bluegrass Festival
- Aug. 5 Cornith, Miss. Annual Bluegrass Show
- Aug. 5-6 Asheville, N.C. Mountain Dance & Folk Festival
- Aug. 5-7 Flagstaff, Ariz. Square Dance Festival
- Aug. 5-7 Ottawa, Ohio Ohio National Bluegrass Festival
- Aug. 6 Bondville, Vt. Stratton Mountain Bluegrass Festival
- Aug. 6 W. Jefferson, N.C. Fiddler's Convention
- Aug. 7 Water Valley, Miss. Annual Country Music Festival
- Aug. 13 Calais, Vt. Annual Fiddler's Concert
- Aug. 13 Chelsea, Vt. Contest Old Time Fiddling
- Aug. 19-22 Porters Corner, N.Y. Bluegrass Concert
- Aug. 26-27 Seminole, Okla. All Night Gospel Singing
- Aug. 26-28 Richland, Wash. Campout Old Time Fiddler's
- Aug. 28 Cornith, Miss. Country Music Festival
- Aug. 31- Sept. 5 Huron, S.D. South Dakota State Fair
- Sept. 1-5 White Springs, Fla. Florida Folk Festival
- Sept. 2-4 Kerrville, Texas Bluegrass & Country Festival

COUNTRY MUSIC

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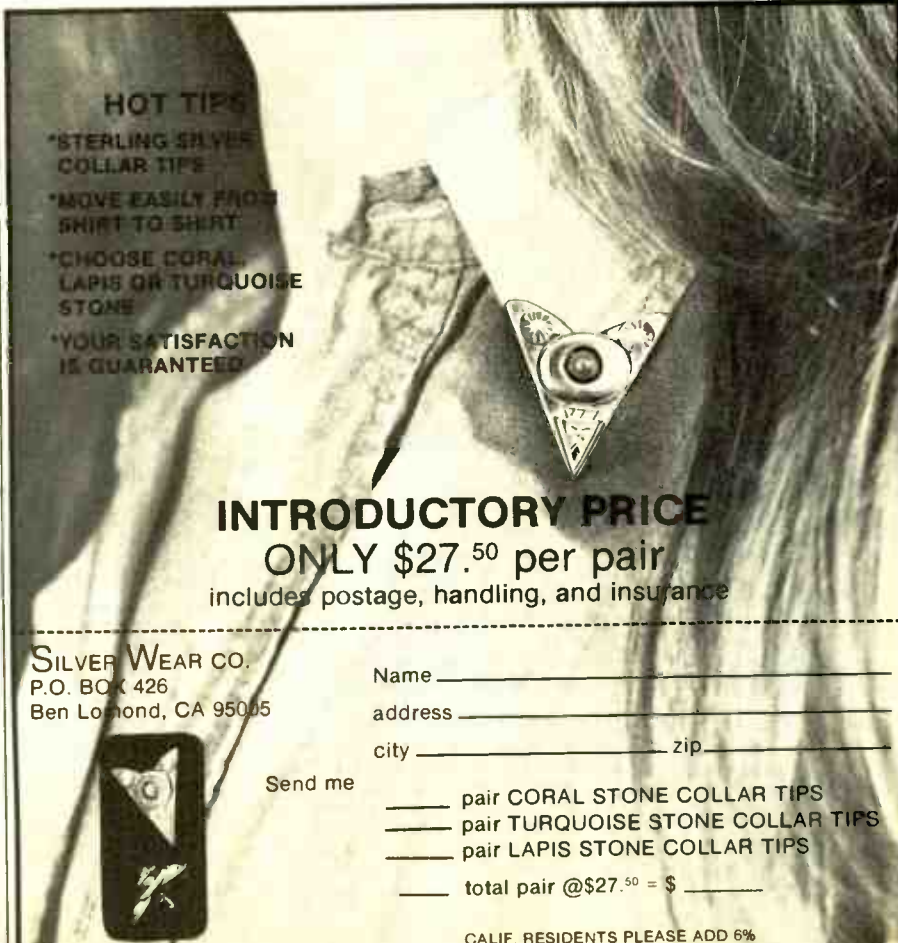
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LP: CM-1043; 8TK: 8TCM-1043



2-RECORD SET

3. CHET ATKINS (Country Pickin'): Foggy Mountain Top/Wabash Cannon Ball/Yankee Doodle Dixie/Hot Mocking Bird/Oklahoma Hills/April In Portugal/Early Times/Wildwood Flower/San Antonio Rose/Release Me (And Let Me Love Again)/Goin' Down The Road/Kicky/Bandera/Oh Baby Mine/Lonesome Road, more!
LP: CXS-9006; 8TK: D82-9006



2-RECORD SET

4. JOHNNY CASH (I Walk The Line/Rock Island Line): Born To Lose/Cry Cry, Cry/Straight A's In Love/The Wreck Of The Old 97/Remember Me/I Forgot To Remember To Forget/I Heard That Lonesome Whistle/Home Of The Blues/Wide Open Road/Hey Porter/Train Of Love/Get Rhythm/There You Go/Come In Stranger/I Walk The Line/Luther's Boogie, more!
LP: PTP-2045; NO TAPE



2-RECORD SET

5. PUT YOUR HAND IN THE HAND (The Blackwood Brothers Quartet): Whispering Hope/Ivory Palaces/Amazing Grace/Just A Closer Walk With Thee/In The Sweet By & By/My Name Is Jesus/Give Us This Day/God Is Just A Prayer Away/Led By The Master's Hand/The Keys To The Kingdom/Bridge Over Troubled Water/Oh Happy Day, more!
LP: CXS-9011; NO TAPE



2-RECORD SET

6. GRAND OLE OPRY STARS (Grandpa Jones/Minnie Pearl): You-All Come: Grandpa Jones/I Wish They Would: Minnie Pearl/Old Rattler: Grandpa Jones/Never Been Kissed: Minnie Pearl/Standing In The Depot: Grandpa Jones/Jealous Hearted Me: Minnie Pearl/Papa Loves Mambo: Jones & Pearl/Pap's Corn Licker Still: Grandpa Jones/Kissin' Games: Jones & Pearl/Sass-A-Frass: Grandpa Jones, more!
LP: DL2-0701 (e); NO TAPE



2-RECORD SET

7. COUNTRY & WESTERN JAMBOREE: The Last Round-Up. Spade Cooley & Band with Sons Of Pioneers/Beyond The Sunset: Rosalie Allen & Elton Britt with The 3 Suns/Lone Star Rag: Bill Boyd & Cowboy Ramblers/Happy Trails: Roy Rogers & Dale Evans/Home On The Range: Roy Rogers & Sons Of Pioneers/If I Could Only Learn To Yodel: Patsy Montana & Buckaroos/I Feel Like Cryin': Jenny Lou Carson, more!
LP: DL2-0579; NO TAPE

8. SONS OF THE PIONEERS (Riders In The Sky): Empty Saddles/Home On The Range/Red River Valley/The Timber Trail/Ole Faithful/There's A Gold Mine In The Sky/Wind/Cowboy Camp Meeting/The Ballad Of Davy Crockett/High Noon/Down The Trail To San Antonio/Blue Prairie/Cool Water/Wagons West/Outlaws, more!
LP: DL2-0336 (e); NO TAPE

9. CHAINED TO A MEMORY (Eddy Arnold): Just A Little Lovin'/That's How Much I Love You/Cuddle Buggin' Baby/Roll Along Kentucky Moon/When My Blue Moon Turns To Gold Again/I'd Trade All Of My Tomorrows (Just For One Yesterday)/Take Me In Your Arms And Hold Me/Wabash Cannon Ball, and more!
LP: CXS-9007; 8TK: D82-9007

10. THE BEST OF ROY CLARK: Never Picked Cotton/Come Live With Me/Thank God And Greyhound/On The Tips Of My Fingers/Yesterday When I Was Young/Somewhere Between Love And Tomorrow/Make The World Go Away/September Song/That Honey Moon Feelin'/Ghost Riders In The Sky/Rocky Top, more!
LP: CM-1040; 8TK: 8TCM-1040

11. MONTANA SLIM'S GREATEST HITS: Old Shep/Rattlin' Cannonball/You Are My Sunshine/Waiting For A Train/The Blue Canadian Rockies/I'm Thinking Tonight Of My Blue Eyes/Streamlined Yodel Song/When It's Springtime In The Rockies/Hang The Key On The Bunkhouse Door/It Makes No Difference Now/Red River Valley Blues, and many more!
LP: DL2-0694 (e); NO TAPE

12. 25 COUNTRY STARS & HITS: George Jones: (The) Windows Up Above/Patsy Cline: 3 Cigarettes In An Ashtray/Bobby Bare: Tender Years/T. Texas Tyler: Careless Love/Conway Twitty: Born To Sing The Blues/Sue Thompson: Last Night I Heard Somebody Cry/Maddox Bros. & Rose Sally, Let Your Bangs Hang Down/Hank Locklin: Born To Ramble, more!
LP: PTP-2085; 8TK: 8T2P-085

13. COUNTRY'S GOLDEN HITS: Loretta Lynn: Make A Man Feel Like A Man/Red Foley: Old Shep/Patsy Cline: She's Got You/Conway Twitty: Honky Tonk Angel/Bob Wills: Deep In The Heart Of Texas/Osbourne Brothers: Rocky Top/Jeanie Pruett: Satin Sheets/Webb Pierce: There Stands The Glass/Bill Monroe: Uncle Pen/Bill Anderson: Bright Lights And Country Music/Jimmie Davis: You Are My Sunshine, plus many more!
LP: CM-1038; 8TK: 8TCM-1038

14. THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF COUNTRY MUSIC: Look Into My Teardrops: Waylon Jennings/Mule Skinner Blues: Dolly Parton/Levee Walking: Chet Atkins/I'm A Lover Not A Fighter: Skeeter Davis/Anita, You're Dreaming: Waylon Jennings/Gypsy Feet: Jim Reeves/Just One Time: Don Gibson/Carroll County Accident: Porter Wagoner/Little Green Apples: Floyd Cramer/Rings Of Gold: Gibson & West, more!
LP: CXS-9032; NO TAPE

15. YAKETY SAX (Boots Randolph): Sleep/So Rare/The Happy Whistler/Temptation/Estrellita/Red Light/Big Daddy/Percolator/After You've Done Gone/Yakety Sax/Big Daddy/Little Big Horn/Teach Me Tonight/The Battle Of New Orleans/Greenback Dollar/La Golondrina/Sweet Talk/Sleep Walk/Blue Guitar.
LP: CXS-9003; 8TK: D82-9003

16. LYNN ANDERSON: Flower Of Love/A Million Shades Of Blue/Lie A Little/Games People Play/Okie From Muskogee/Once A Day/Stand By Your Man/No Another Time/Keeping Up Appearances/Wave Bye Bye/Too Much Of You/You've Gotta Be The Greatest/A Hundred Times Today/Paper Mansions, and more!
LP: PTP-2049; 8TK: 8T2P-049

17. FLOYD CRAMER PLAYS THE BIG HITS: A Man And A Woman/The Look Of Love/My Cup Runneth Over/A Lover's Concerto/Sunny/I Say A Little Prayer/Seattle/Little Green Apples/What The World Needs Now Is Love/I Got Rhythm/Love Is Blue/Portuguese Washwoman/Are You Sincere/Groovin', and more!
LP: DL2-0128; NO TAPE

18. THE HYMNS OF TENNESSEE ERNIE FORD: Amazing Grace/Did You Think To Pray/Sweet Hour Of Prayer/My Jesus, I Love Thee/Jesus Paid It All/Comin' Home/Break Thou The Bread Of Life/My Faith Looks Up To Thee/It Is Well With My Soul/Onward Christian Soldiers/Oh How I Love Jesus/The Church In The Wildwood/Jesus Loves Me, more!
LP: PTP-2050; 8TK: 8T2P-050

19. GOSPEL FAVORITES BY RED FOLEY: Amazing Grace/In The Shelter O His Arms/My Room Of Prayer/The Old Rugged Cross/Church In The Wildwood/Shall We Gather At The River/Rock Of Ages/Leaning On The Everlasting Arms/The Milky White Way/Nearer My God To Thee/Will The Circle Be Unbroken/Peace In The Valley/One Step More, and others!
LP: CM-1037; 8TK: 8TCM-1037

20. CARTER FAMILY (The Original & Great Carter Family/The Happiest Days Of All): Wildwood Flower/I'm Thinking Tonight Of My Blue Eyes/Diamonds In The Rough/The Grave On The Green Hillside/The Spirit Of Love Watches Over Me/Faded Flowers/When The Roses Bloom In Dixieland/Fifty Miles Of Elbow Room/Mountains Of Tennessee/The Happiest Days Of All/Away Out On The Old Saint Sabbath, many more!
LP: CFSLP-2R; 8TK: CFAST-28T

21. PRECIOUS MEMORIES: Precious Memories: Skeeter Davis/I Believe: Dolly Parton/Old Time Religion: George Beverly Shea & Cliff Barrows/Oh Happy Day: Blackwood Brothers Quartet/Keep On The Sunny Side: Carter Family/A Gathering In The Sky: Norma Jean/It Is No Secret: Stuart Hamblen/Amazing Grace: Blackwood Brothers Quartet/Will The Circle Be Unbroken: Statesmen Quartet & Hovie Lister, and more!
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LP: CXS-9009; 8TK: D82-9009

23. COOKIN' WITH COUNTRY: Tex Ritter: My Woman Ain't Pretty/Jean Shepard: Go On With Your Dancing/Buck Owens: If You Ain't Lovin' (You Ain't Livin')/Patsy Cline: Walkin' After Midnight/Johnny Horton: Done Rovin'/Webb Pierce: Georgia Rag/Floyd Cramer: Fancy Pants/Roy Clark: Silver Threads & Golden Needles/Jerry Smith: Misty Blue, more!
LP: PTP-2074; 8TK: 8T2P-074

24. GOOD OLD COUNTRY GOSPEL: Loretta Lynn: In The Sweet Bye & Bye; I'd Rather Have Jesus, Ernest Tubb: Great Speckled Bird/Webb Pierce: Far Away/Kitty Wells: I Heard My Savior Call; Dust On The Bible/Red Foley: One Step More; Amazing Grace; Just A Closer Walk With Thee/Bill Anderson: Reverend Mr. Black/Bill Monroe: I Am A Pilgrim, more!
LP: CM-1036; 8TK: 8TCM-1036

25. BLUE SKY BOYS (Bluegrass Mountain Music): Kentucky/Sunny Side Of Life/Beautiful, Beautiful Brown Eyes/Are You From Dixie (Cause I'm From Dixie Too)/Mary Of The Wild Moor/The Convict And The Rose/The Last Mile Of The Way/The Butcher's Boy/Brown Eyes/My Last Letter/Paper Boy/Little Bessie, more!
LP: DL2-0726(e); NO TAPE

26. HANK WILLIAMS ON STAGE: Rovin' Cowboy/Wedding Bells/Lovesick Blues/I'll Have A New Body/Lost Highway/Joe Clark/Where The Soul Of Man Never Dies/I'm A Long Gone Daddy/I'm Tellin' You/When God Comes & Gathers His Jewels/You're Gonna Change (Or I'm Gonna Leave)/Bill Cheatum/I Wanna Live & Love Always/Tramp On The Street, and more!
LP: CM-1042; 8TK: 8TCM-1042

27. WHEN MY BLUE MOON TURNS TO GOLD AGAIN (Hank Snow): Your Last Kiss Has Broken My Heart/The Answer To The Blue Velvet Band/On The Mississippi Shore/How She Could Yodel/I Wonder Where You Are Tonight/Little Buddy/Seal Our Parting With A Kiss/You've Broken My Heart/Linda Lou/Your Little Band Of Gold, many more!
LP: DL2-0337(e); NO TAPE

28. ELVIS PRESLEY (Double Dynamite): Burning Love/I'll Be There/It's A Matter Of Time/Fools Fall In Love/Follow That Dream/You'll Never Walk Alone/Flaming Star/Yellow Rose Of Texas/Old Shep/U.S. Male/Rubberneckin'/Frankie And Johnny/If You Think I Don't Need You/Easy Come, Easy Go, many more!
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31. 50 YEARS OF COUNTRY MUSIC: Wabash Cannon Ball/Down Yonder/The Great Speckled Bird/It Makes No Difference Now/Mexicali Rose/I Walk The Line/Statue To A Fool/Rose Garden/Slow Poke, more!
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EARPHONES

(Continued from page 19)

uring less than three inches in diameter? The answer is that regular loudspeakers must push large amounts of air to project bass energy into room-size space. But the "listening space" to be filled by earphones is only the tiny air volume between the headsets and your eardrums. Under such conditions, even small sound generators can create the full spectrum of sound.

Today's earphones come in two basic types. One type fits around the ear with foam-rubber padding that forms a complete air seal. These models are capable of shutting out nearly all outside noise; but since they don't allow ventilation around the ears, they're apt to feel rather hot if you wear them a long time. That's why many listeners prefer a more recent type known as "open-air" earphones. Rather than fitting around the ears, these headsets sit on top of them, allowing some air-flow around the edges. Most open-air models are also much lighter than seal-type headsets—often weighing only about 6-8 ounces—which makes them more comfortable to wear for long listening sessions. They still give you a considerable amount of sonic privacy, but you can hear the phone ring or someone calling.

I have checked out the current crop of open-air earphones for both sound and comfort. Among the budget models, I particularly liked Radio Shack's Nova-15 (\$22), Pickering's QA-2 (\$23), and Sennheiser's HD-400 (\$30), all of which sounded clear and lifelike. If you have a very good amplifier or receiver, you may want to invest in a set of earphones with extra-smooth response that really makes the most of the superior signal furnished by your rig. In this class, I was greatly impressed with the AKG Model 140 (\$39.50) and the Yamaha HP-2 (\$45). Both are first-rate musically and so light you hardly know you've got them on. A special pressure-relieving headband on both models fits them to the shape of your head. Among the somewhat heavier seal-type earphones, Koss offers a choice in every price range, with the PRO 4AA (\$65) providing excellent sound and a tight barrier to outside noise. One of Koss' many models, the "Technician/VFR" (\$75), has a unique feature that may prove valuable in critical monitor work: each earcup has a slide control for separately adjusting the frequency response.

Earphones of this quality are truly "sound bargains" because they sound far better than loudspeakers of equal cost. A \$50 headset can, in fact, outperform a \$500 speaker. This doesn't mean that earphones are a cheap substitute for loudspeakers. The listening experience you get from speakers is something quite different. But if your budget forces you to skimp on speakers, you can still get ultra-fidelity at an affordable price from a good pair of earphones. ■

OTHER PRODUCTS

(Continued from page 19)

are made. It contains a special graphite fiber called *carbacon*, which exhibits an uncommon combination of strength and lightness. The net result, it is claimed, is that the speaker cone movements follow more closely the shape of the original musical wave-form, giving truer sound.

At the low end of Sony's new speaker line is the SSU-1250, a compact bookshelf model measuring 26 x 13½ x 12 inches, featuring an 8-inch woofer augmented with an extra "passive cone" to double its sound-radiating area, plus a 2½-inch tweeter. The speaker delivers room-filling volume from as little as 10 watts (per channel) of amplifier power, but it can handle as much as 60. Price is \$100.

Another recent entry in the loudspeaker sweepstakes comes from ESS. Their model amt-lb (\$526) is an odd one, all right. It looks like a stumpy, sawed-off pyramid and is highly unconventional in other ways, too. For example, it uses the so-called Heil Air Motion Transformer for a tweeter. Named after its German inventor, this tweeter consists of a pleated metal foil that expands and contracts like an accordion when the sound signal is applied. The motion of the pleats squeezes out the air in the same way a cherry pit can be squeezed between the fingers to shoot forward at high speed. That's how the Heil pushes out the sound. I've heard it and it sounds remarkably crisp and clean, with every detail of the sound clearly etched.

And while we're talking about strictly deluxe equipment, TEAC's new A-2340SX multichannel open-reel tape deck is virtually a recording studio in a box, suitable for professional-grade recording. It lets you build up track upon track, one at a time, in perfect sync. That way you can sing duets with yourself or even make yourself into a full chorus, add a percussion track to a guitar track, and do a lot of musically creative work, either by yourself or with a group. Everything about the unit is super-smooth. Controls respond to the slightest touch—thanks to solenoid relays—and the three-motor drive makes the tape start and stop gently and precisely. There are front-panel inputs for four separate microphones. Though the TEAC A-2340SX is designed for simultaneous 4-track recording (with big, easy-reading meters for each track) it can also be used for standard stereo, two tracks at a time, or for dubbing one stereo track onto another. Specs are excellent, cost \$850.

Those of us who hanker for high quality at a reasonable price will like Kenwood's new KR-3600 receiver, which delivers 22 watts per channel with a frequency response of 20 to 20,000 Hz at no more than 0.5% total harmonic distortion. Its FM tuner section is quite sensitive (2.3 microvolts) and the unit has just about every control you'll need. Price: \$250. ■



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