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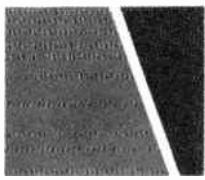
Volume Nine: Number One, September 1980



Cover photo: Elliott Erwit/Magnum on Polacolor-3 Type 808 film.

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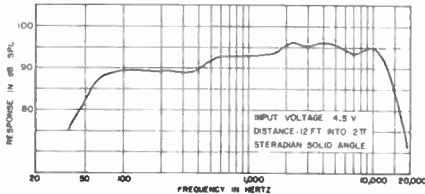
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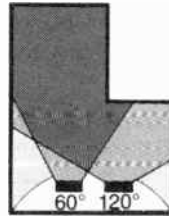


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# Letters

## Milsap Magic

Really enjoy *Country Music Magazine* so very much. Thanks so much for the great May issue with Ronnie Milsap gracing the cover, and the wonderful article about him.

Ronnie Milsap is my favorite entertainer of all time. Being a Milsap fan, I have seen his concerts and have thoroughly enjoyed his music so very much. He is one gifted entertainer.

Ronnie always has the time to say hello to his many friends and fans, and after you have witnessed that Milsap Magic, he just makes you feel so good inside your heart and soul.

Ronnie is 100% plus in my book and may I take one moment to say to Ronnie from his many friends and fans, thanks, and "We Love Ya Son!!!"

JUNE FREED  
SICKLERVILLE, NEW JERSEY

Bravo for *Country Music Magazine*! You couldn't have chosen a better person to put on the cover of your May issue than the great Ronnie Milsap. Ronnie has won the hearts of many with his talents. He truly cares about his fans. Ronnie recently did a tour of Texas. I attended five of the seven concerts within a week and a half. Talk about being on cloud nine. I was and still am. During the time I attended the concerts, I learned more about Ronnie Milsap the person. He's so sweet. He'll listen to what you have to say because he's interested. He's just as grand off the stage as he is on. Joyce, Ronnie's wife is the same way.

*Country Music Magazine* has definitely enriched its May issue by having Ronnie Milsap in it.

DEBBIE DUCKETT,  
TEXAS REP.  
RONNIE MILSAP FAN CLUB

I have just finished reading your May issue and I was delighted to see your article *Ronnie Milsap 98% Plus*. The article was truly sensational. Since I am an avid Milsap fan (one of the main reasons I subscribed to your magazine was so I might be able to keep up on any Milsap happenings), I have been disappointed with the magazine until now! As a matter of fact, I had just written a letter of complaint, which I have gladly torn up.

The photos were excellent and projected the Ronnie so many of his fans have come to know and love. My only complaint

might be that there were just not enough of them.

The article was well written and Patrick Carr should be congratulated. He managed to reach into the heart of the legend himself. I can't say enough thanks for all the enjoyment I've received from the article. I'm very happy to know that Ronnie will be putting more of Ronnie Milsap into the Milsap sound. I'm looking forward to his summer tour.

I hope it's now possible for his fans to truly communicate with him in a way that hasn't been easy the past few years. When a star really makes it big so many times they put themselves on such a high pedestal that no one can reach that high. I'm certainly glad Ronnie's coming back down to join us—his fans.

Thank you again for the article and keep us tuned into some future Milsap news from time to time.

BEVERLY BARRY  
DES MOINES, IOWA

## Bellamy Brothers

I have just finished reading your May 1980 issue and I am very impressed with the Bellamy Brothers interview. I am glad to hear young artists talk about good hard-core stone country ballads. I had almost given up on the young generation of singers. I hope that young people all over this country listen and support good, real country music. Artists like Merle Haggard are few and far between and should be given full country folk support. This country is enduring an awful time and country music can bring us together and help us understand ourselves.

JAMES WORTHINGTON  
BERTHOUD, COLORADO

## The Flying Burrito Bros.

On behalf of myself and countless Burrito fans throughout the world, thanks for the article, even if it was years overdue.

The Flying Burrito Brothers have done more for country music than most people realize. They were the first country band to play extensively to a rock audience, and as such paved the way for a lot of others. I can't help but feel that Waylon, Willie, Emmylou (obviously) and many others would have had it a lot harder had it not been for the Burritos.

They had endured numerous musical and personnel changes, and can boast the

most prestigious alumni of any band in popular music, country or rock. Not every cut on my various Burrito albums is a gem, and admittedly some line-ups were stronger than others. But the vast bulk of the Burrito catalog contains some of the most beautiful and vibrant country music ever recorded. I have seen the Burritos live sixteen times in the last twelve years, and being a musician myself, they have been a constant source of inspiration to me.

I was at the Lone Star the same night as the author of the article, and they were definitely "Hot Burritos." As a singer-songwriter, I place Gib Gilbeau in the same category as Merle Haggard, George Jones, and Gram Parsons. Being a steel player myself, I feel that Sneaky Pete is the most distinctive and innovative pedal steel player in music today.

In this day of a significant amount of watered-down slush that passes for country music, the Flying Burrito Bros. have remained true to their original inspiration and continue to play music that is honest, soulful, and most of all, "hot."

ARGYLE BELL  
NEW YORK CITY

## George & Tammy

I've just received and read the most fantastic issue of *Country Music Magazine*. You have made all of us Tammy Wynette and George Jones fans extremely happy with the fabulous cover picture of Tammy and George and the super spread of Tammy's interview of George.

This special and different kind of an interview was so unusual since it only involved Tammy and George. They are two very special people and I know a lot of questions were answered for their many fans. Leave it to *Country Music Magazine* to come up with such a great idea. I, myself, can't wait for the issue where George will interview Tammy. I've been hoping to see an article for quite some time about the two best people in country music and it sure was worth waiting for. And the best part is that we still have another story to look forward to. You are super, *Country Music Magazine*.

JOANNE WOHLTMANN  
RYE, NEW YORK

P.S. I know you've received many letters from me about Tammy Wynette and I've never been lucky enough to get one printed.





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## Everyday People

Thank you for the terrific article, Everyday People by Reverend Michael Shadick. I don't know where he collected all these sketches, but they spell out most accurately (on a feeling level) why country music is sweeping America. I got a real thrill from the sentence, "Country music today is the sound of America." Two years ago I released a song in which I tried to say that country music is American music.

MAURICE "BUD" MOORE, AGAC  
 SUNNY SIDE, GEORGIA

## In Rebuttal

I just received my June edition of your magazine, which I've taken for about three years, and I've never seen anything distasteful. I would like to see more about Hank Williams, Jr. and know where I can find his records and tapes.

The letter from Mrs. Kenneth E. Boyd took the cake. Did she ever stop to think some of us like *all* the country stars. I think they are all great. Sorry she's so uptight, but I'll bet there are more of us for than there are against. This is the first letter I've ever written to any magazine. I love you all, keep em coming.

THELMA MANNING  
 SEYMOUR, INDIANA

P.S. I'm not a teenage kid either, Mrs. Boyd, I'm 59.

## Record Reviews

I believe, for the most part, that your record reviews are written with the idea of letting the fans know where the latest albums stand, as far as being another great bunch of songs or just another album with the public sold short.

However, your record review of the Oak Ridge Boys' new album was a little annoying. I'm speaking of the "one lovely little number" co-authored by Helen Cornelius. I feel a little recognition is due to the other author. The song is just super and gets a lot of play in Kansas City. I'm speaking of Dewayne Orender. Dewayne is just not some "small-time matter-of-fact" songwriter. He has had several of his songs recorded by Faron Young, Connie Smith, Robyn Young, and Mac White, to name a few. He also does some fine singing, as well. He has made a few appearances here in Kansas City and the people won't forget the exciting effect this young writer had on our city. I hope that some of the less known writers are acknowledged along with the big ones when just acknowledgement is due. I have enjoyed reading the album reviews, and agree with the frank manner in which they are handled, just telling it like it is.

JUDY CASPER  
 INDEPENDENCE, MISSOURI

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## Old Favorites

I've been a subscriber since nearly the very beginning (I started with the third or fourth issue) and I've enjoyed every issue. However, this is the first time I've written to you. My favorite artists are the ones who leaned toward the more traditional country music, or what I call *real* country music. My favorite all time singers are Buck Owens and Connie Smith. Of course Connie is retired now and not making records anymore but I have a complete collection of her albums so I can still listen to that fantastic voice. Although Buck and Connie are my number one favorites, every other *real* country singer is tied for number two on my favorites list. All of that brings me to this. I really did enjoy the interview with Ernest Tubb in the May issue. I also enjoyed the short story on Norma Barthel and the Ernest Tubb Fan Club of which I am a member.

What I'd like to see in a future issue is an in depth story on Webb Pierce. Of course, Webb is one of the all time great *real* country singers and is destined for the Country Music Hall of Fame.

A story on Buck Owens would be nice, too.

JAMES R. WALLER  
HILLSBORO, TEXAS

*Mr. Waller, you're in luck. We have assignments out on both Buck Owens and Webb Pierce. Keep checking Country Music, they're on the way. Ed.*

## Lacy J. Dalton

I would like to share the good news of a new star on the country music horizon with the readers of *Country Music Magazine*. Her name is Lacy J. Dalton. I first heard her recording of *Crazy Blue Eyes* locally on WCMS radio here in Virginia. I thought possibly she was only a one-shot artist or a regional favorite. Then about the time I heard her next recording, *Tennessee Waltz*, I saw an advertisement for her record album in *Country Music Magazine*. Through your magazine, I found out she did exist and immediately purchased her album. Lacy has the same "catch" in her voice that Tammy Wynette and Tanya Tucker possess. With her great voice, I feel she will be a superstar of the future. Let's see an article on Lacy J. Dalton in a future edition of your magazine. She's great.

ROBERT J. MCKENZIE  
HAMPTON, VIRGINIA

*We also found that Lacy J. Dalton exists. Check out page 14 in this issue Ed.*

## Freddy Weller

I'm beginning to wonder just how your record critics listen to albums before they write a review. In most cases I'm sure an album needs to be really listened to more

than once to get and feel its full impact. In reading most of the reviews in *Country Music*, it's pretty obvious to me that the album was given one quick listen and by doing so, given a quick and unfair judgment.

I was most upset with John Pugh's review of Freddy Weller's *Go For The Night* album. The things Mr. Pugh said about Freddy's album were uncalled for, and almost mean. Mr. Pugh gave the album a very rotten deal by not listening to it objectively, and it's unfair if reviews like this one keep people from buying it. Freddy Weller has a lot to contribute musically and is doing just that right now. The *Go For The Night* album is a new direction for Freddy and to me, that album is the best Freddy has put out. It's more than a shame that due to a poor review this album will basically find homes in the hands of Freddy Weller fans who would have bought the album anyway. The album is a great workmanship with good selling potential, and it doesn't deserve being shot down so much by Mr. Pugh.

CARLA GOODWIN  
LAKEWOOD, CALIFORNIA

## Midnight Choir

In the May issue of your magazine I read a letter from Mrs. John Pinkston about Larry Gatlin, and I was highly perturbed.

In November of 1979, I went to see Larry in Greensboro, N.C. Larry sang *The Midnight Choir* but before he did he made it very clear that the song was not sung to represent him and his brothers, only sung by them. He also said that he felt that this was the only way the people at the mission knew how to pray or reach out to God. I was very touched by this explanation, and so were the people with me. I have always had much respect for Larry, but after that concert, I had much more.

As for the comment about having Larry on *after* the Statler Brothers being in poor taste, I say, "bah"! I think Larry was the icing on the cake. Keep singing, Larry.

TAMMY BEALS  
ELKIN, NORTH CAROLINA

For years I have been sitting back and reading the letters in *Country Music* but have never written one myself. This time it was too much. I just had to answer Mrs. John Pinkston of Chico, Ca. I'm sorry but if she looked around she would discover that these people of the mission are all over America and I congratulate Larry Gatlin and his brothers for calling people's attention to it. He, by no stretch of the imagination is poking fun at them as this lady puts it. In fact, I would bet that Larry Gatlin gives more help to these kind of people than Mrs. John Pinkston has ever done. Keep up the good work Larry Gatlin. I and millions of others are behind you 100%.

DOROTHY SAGER  
CHESILHURST, NEW JERSEY

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POCKET BOOKS

# Stereo for Car or Truck: Ask the Right Questions

By Neal Weinstock

Buying car stereos can be a lot more confusing than investing in a home stereo. Because almost all home equipment is so good these days you practically can't go wrong—even if you think you're going wrong. But your home doesn't generate engine noise, generate fifty-five mile an hour winds that blow through its windows, or move in and out of areas with different radio reception conditions. Unless you have a mobile home. Even a mobile home would not be so cruel as to subject its stereo to alternate freezing and baking and flooding and all the other ten plagues. That's part of what makes a house a home, and the lack of such homely virtue is what makes that pretty and purring little car about the worst place in the world for sophisticated electronics to live happily ever after.

So when you shop for a car stereo, your first concern is going to be with reputations of relative reliability. "I hate carrying stories about car stereo because every one I've ever had in my car has broken down," the editor of a well-known hi-fi magazine told me. I asked him what kinds he'd had: some very expensive models, it turned out. He asked me if I didn't have a lot of trouble myself. No, but then my whole system cost about a hundred dollars. But then, not being an editor, merely a writer, I didn't feel the responsibility to use the most esoteric of new-fangled equipment.

A name you're familiar with is a good place to start. The big brand names are all pretty reliable. *Consumer Reports* rates car stereos every so often, and is reliable. There's no logical connection, but a lot of folks at certain of the manufacturers like Sparkomatic, Alpine, or Altec-Lansing seem to have a liking for down-home music (and are also rated highly, among others, by *Consumer Reports* and other independent testers, or we wouldn't mention them). Somehow it may work its way out in the equipment. What has been completely unreliable, up until now, are the spec sheets from almost all manufacturers. Finally some standards are going into effect, so that at long last, this Christmas season, you can believe and compare the numbers thrown at you in car stereo ads.

Before we get into the numbers game, though, let's continue to make the decisions as they come. Next thing to do is examine all the options available to you and choose the type of system you need. Do you listen to the radio a lot but rarely

bother with tapes? Do you live in an area with reception so bad you must listen only to tapes? Finally, are you putting all this sound into a pickup or a van or a Caddy or in the smallest car that can fit in the smallest parking spot you ever find in your neighborhood?

For a van or even a big old guzzler you ought to get the largest speakers you can afford—brace yourself, they're called mini speakers—if you don't mind ripping up that back dash a bit. If you do mind, any car stereo dealer should be able to show you some speakers that will fit into the spots where the factory originals were. Six inch by nine inch coaxials (meaning the tweeter is aligned inside the woofer) usually offer the highest quality sound, next to minis (so named because for a home stereo, they're mini) but both will fit only into larger cars. For small cars, a host of new small and thin speakers have just come out.

Which reminds me: many people buying new cars are not buying the radio at all, and investing the same money in a higher quality car stereo. Better sound, and money saved.

So let's say you want radio, tape deck (probably cassette, not eight-track, which is going out of style, and you don't want to invest in something that may soon be discontinued), and speakers. Most likely you will be attracted to a so-called 'cassette/receiver.' This is a combination radio and cassette deck that fits in-dash. Under-dash cassette decks are a good idea when you're already happy with your radio, and allow you to lock away the goods in the trunk when not in use.

Which brings me to the reason why my own car stereo is so cheap. On my block, it wouldn't belong to me very long if it looked valuable to anybody else. There is no way to prevent a determined thief from stealing your car stereo. He doesn't even have to be particularly talented. No locks, no alarms, nothing. However, locks and alarms may work with the thief who isn't so determined. And an even better solution is to keep everything out of sight. I mention all this because it should be taken into account *before* you buy. You may buy speakers, then, that aren't noticeable from the outside, or a cassette/receiver that can be easily covered by a box of tissue paper.

Not that your only choice is between an add-on cassette and a cassette/receiver. There are as many choices in car stereo as in home stereo, but less room to put it all.

So if you've got an old guzzler with plenty of space, or have a lot of bucks to spend on a creative installer, you can go with tuner, preamp, amplifier, equalizer, cassette, and so forth. Whichever route you opt for, el cheapo or *el camino real*, some of the same questions must be faced, and they have to do with those ever-bragged-about numbers.

How much power? How much distortion? How much of all those other specifications? Just spending more money doesn't provide a higher quality answer to each problem: you can spend money on appearances or on features that go beyond the sound. For instance, a better cassette deck to some means auto-reverse, auto-stop, automatic head disengagement when the car motor turns off, preventing damage to the unit—all useful features—but a better cassette deck should first mean things that improve sound and durability. Like 'sen-alloy' heads, better rollers and bearings and other interior things whose workings you never notice, but will *keep working* longer.

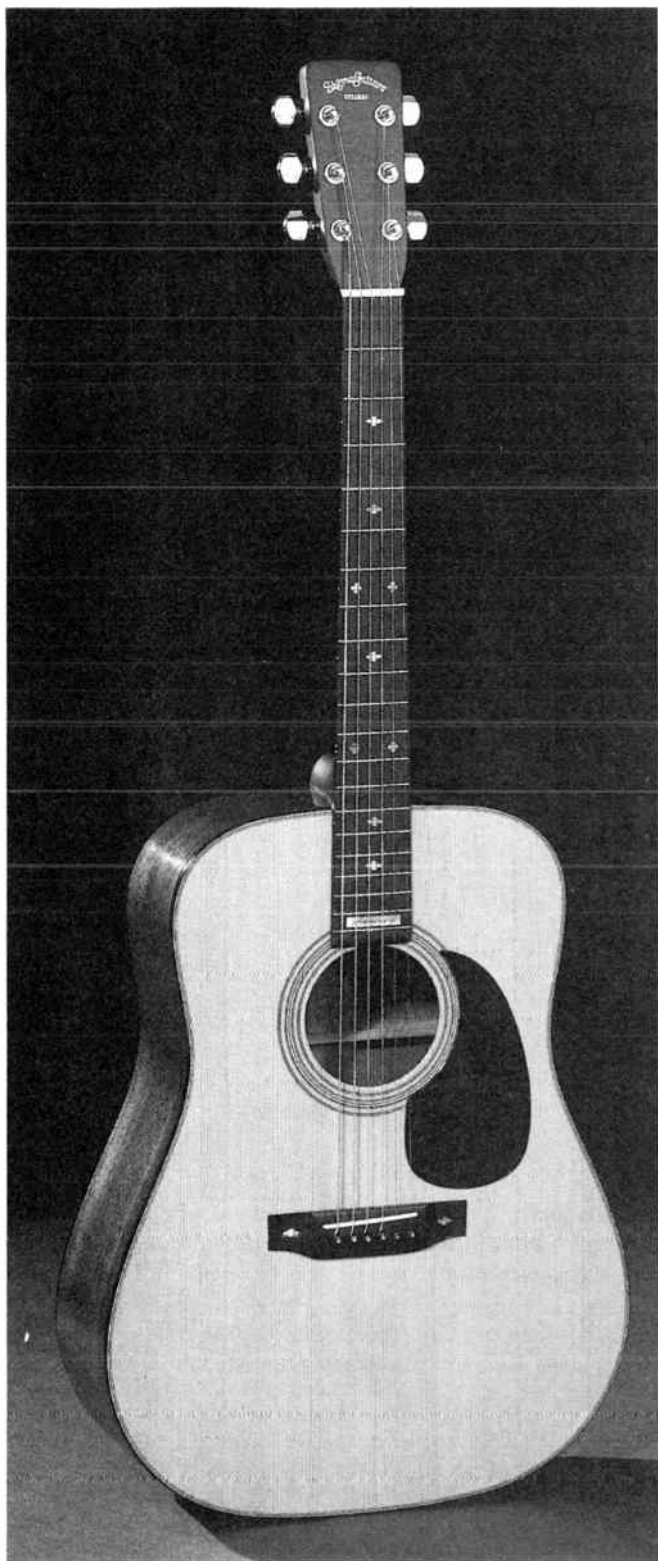
Similarly, you can spend too much on power. There are hundred watt amplifiers out there that will drain your battery in just a bit of cold weather or rain. The ideal solution is to deliver as much *clean*, or undistorted, power as your car battery can afford. This is most likely somewhere around ten or twenty, maybe forty watts. Between ten and forty watts is a long way, right? Wrong. Turn each up full blast and you may not even be able to tell which is louder, because twice the number of watts is supposed to add up to *just the smallest difference in what the human ear can hear*. Twice the smallest difference is still not much.

Clean power, now. That's the important part. Since it would take a story twice as long as this to begin to explain how to interpret the numbers, you'll have to make do with your ear instead of your calculator. Bring along a tape of your own when you visit the car-fi store, a favorite that you're well used to. Or listen only to one of their's that you're just as used to, if you don't have your own. That way you'll know what to listen for, and you'll know when you've got it. ■

*Neal Weinstock is a recording engineer and audio and video columnist for Oui, High Fidelity, db, AudioVideo, American Film, and many other publications.*



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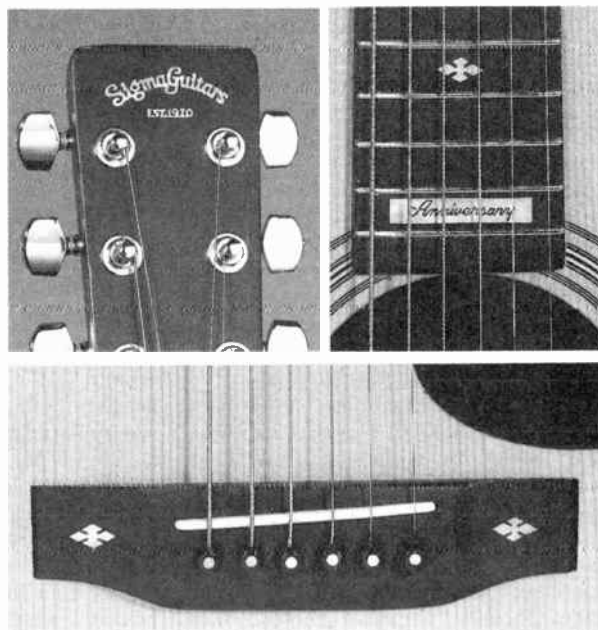
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# Country Music's Longest Running Star

By Rich Kienzle

*"I paid good money for this ol' box, and I ain't goin' to lay it down now."*

—Hank Williams

Hank rarely said "no" to Fred Rose, and with good reason. Rose, the former pop songwriter who polished and guided Hank's spectacular career, generally knew what he was talking about. But when Hank made the above comment, Rose had gone too far by suggesting he lay aside his Martin dreadnaught guitar during recording sessions to better concentrate on his singing. Hank, who used the Martin to set the tempo for his band, wasn't about to stand at the mike with his arms at his sides. And though Hank occasionally used Gibsons, it was the image of him and his Martin that has endured, an image so strong that in the early '70s rock singer/poet Patti Smith, a longtime Williams fan, was moved to buy a Martin on the strength of his association with the company's guitars.

For 147 years now, C.F. Martin has been America's longest-lived and most distinguished acoustic guitar manufacturer. The company was founded in 1833 by Christian Frederick Martin, who, fed up with the internal squabbles between himself and the local violinmakers' guild in his native Markneukirchen, Germany, came to New York City to build guitars. After six years in Manhattan, he moved to the rolling farm country near Nazareth, Pennsylvania, where the company has remained to this day.

Martin's close ties with country performers, and the company's growth have developed together. Guitarists revere Martins because they have always exemplified the finest American craftsmanship in guitars, a level that only a few other companies have approached. And the excellent sound of Martin guitars increased in importance as country music progressed from rural stringbands playing for amusement to serious professional musicians who had cast aside their inexpensive mail order guitars in favor of better-sounding instruments. One such musician was Riley Puckett, the blind guitarist who came to prominence as a member of Gid Tanner's Skillet Lickers. In early photos taken



*Hank Williams owned his share of Martins. Pictured here with a Martin (D—28 Herringbone). Rock singer Patti Smith was moved to buy a Martin just because she knew Hank Williams played them.*

around 1924, Puckett is seen with an inexpensive model of unknown origin, which was replaced in a picture taken ten years later by a Martin 00-18.

And on August 4, 1927, when a sickly ex-railroader named Jimmie Rodgers prepared to make his first record in a Bristol, Tennessee storeroom, he strummed a Martin 00-18, a model that he held in a widely circulated photo. Though

Rodgers later endorsed another brand (becoming the first country singer to ever endorse a guitar, and have it named for him), he always had a soft spot in his heart for Martin, so much so that in 1929, after he had reached the top, he ordered a custom-built Martin. It was delivered to him by none other than C.F. Martin III.

By the late '20s Martins were much in evidence, as early photos of the Grand Ole



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*"So, George, it's come to this."*

*"Yeah, Johnny, a whole 'Ugly' album."*

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*"Double Trouble"* is the album. It includes their current smash, "When You're Ugly Like Us (You Just Naturally Got To Be Cool)," their earlier hit, "Mabelline" and who knows what else?

*George Jones and Johnny Paycheck, Double Trouble...*  
not just a single ugly face.

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World Radio History

Opry illustrate. Although musicians' preference was divided among the different steel-string models, the popularity of Martin guitars was obvious, due to their bright, ringing tone which stood out on radio broadcasts and recordings. Sam McGee, the Grand Ole Opry's brilliant finger-picking guitarist, was rarely seen without his 00-28 in the early '30s. Yet the Martin about to hit the market was soon to become the model forever linked with country performers.

Since 1916 Martin had been building a large-bodied guitar, known as a "dreadnaught" (named for a British warship of the early 1900s) for another instrument company. Finally in 1931 they introduced it under the Martin name, and their timing couldn't have been better. Though country music at that time was still built around string bands, the success of Jimmie Rodgers suddenly made the solo singer just as important (and eventually more important). Since singers' needs were different than those of instrumentalists, they needed a deeper, fuller, more balanced sound as an accompaniment to their vocals. In the dreadnaughts they found just what they required.

Only a few were made at first and in 1932, the first country singer placed his order. Luther Ossenbrink, aka "Arkie the Arkansas Woodchopper" of the WLS Barn Dance, ordered a D-2 dreadnaught with his name inlaid on the fretboard in pearl, a tradition Jimmie Rodgers had begun. Though his guitar was still experimental, it was this model, with its attractive "herringbone" wood trim that would become the D-28, the one Martin model that has truly become a part of American musical folklore. Soon the company was marketing two models, the D-28 and the plainer D-18.

The WLS Barndance's acknowledged star in 1933 was Gene Autry. "America's Singing Cowboy," known for *That Silver Haired Daddy of Mine*, and well on his way to becoming a legend. Autry liked the dreadnaught, and custom-ordered one in Martin's elaborate style 45, which featured ornate abalone trim around the top, the fretboard and top. He too, had his name inlaid on it. Martin marketed it on a custom basis as they did the D-45, and although its flash appealed to other singers, its price was restrictive. In the next nine years, only 91 were built. But as Autry's career grew, the Martin's flashiness, combined with Autry's fancy western garb, created an unforgettable image. Though not everyone could afford a D-45, sales of Martin dreadnaughts increased dramatically in the latter half of the decade. In 1934 only 130 were built; in 1941, 800 were manufactured, the increase in popularity largely due to their use by country singers. 1,000 D-28s alone were built from 1933 to 1946.

But Martins had more unusual uses as well. An 00-18 (smaller than the dread-

naughts) had the bizarre distinction of becoming the first electric steel guitar ever used on a country record when Bob Dunn, an Oklahoma-born Hawaiian steel guitarist living in Texas, became interested in jazz and the fairly new electrically amplified guitars. He took the 00-18, raised the strings, placed a pickup under the strings, connected it to a tiny amplifier and set the guitar across his lap. He made history with this technique when he began playing western swing with Milton Brown and His Musical Brownies in 1934 and recorded with the band in 1935.

In the years just before World War II, singers began to recruit backup bands in order to provide a greater, more varied accompaniment. Most of these bands included fiddle, electric guitar and bass. But the Martins remained much in the forefront, setting the tempo for the other musicians in the days before anyone except Bob Wills dared to use drums. By 1939 other companies, including Gibson were building their own jumbo guitars to compete with the dreadnaughts.

During World War II Martin stopped guitar production to manufacture war-

ing, forever became associated with the bluegrass guitarist. During the war Bill Monroe, founder of the bluegrass movement, had become one of the major stars of the Grand Ole Opry. When he brought Lester Flatt and his Martin D-28 into his Bluegrass Boys in 1944, followed by Earl Scruggs's banjo a year later, it was this Monroe group which defined the classic bluegrass sound for all times. Not surprisingly, as new bluegrass acts sprung up in the wake of Monroe, their guitarists, as pickers are wont to do, copied Flatt's picking *and* his choice of instrument, so much so that it has almost become a stereotype. Hank Williams, too, owned his share of Martins, some of which are on display at the Hank Williams Museum in Nashville, including an elaborately inlaid model.

Through the early '50s, the Martin remained on top with singers. In fact, one new Martin owner may well have chosen his instrument because of the association with his country music idols. When Elvis Presley strummed the opening A chord of *That's Alright (Mama)* in the Sun studio in Memphis on that hot July evening in 1954, he did it on a D-18. He used a D-18 for



Gene Autry liked the Martin dreadnaught. He custom ordered a D-45 (above right) which featured ornate abalone trim and had his name inlaid on it. Above left is Autry's 00-44, also with his name inlaid.

related materials. When they resumed guitar building after the war in 1945, they began building their guitars with stronger bracing, which brought complaints that the tone was spoiled. However, the use of heavy strings created greater tension on the guitar tops, and created a need for a stronger instrument. In 1947, the attractive herringbone trim was eliminated from the D-28.

In the years just following the war, the dreadnaughts, altered tone notwithstanding,

nearly two years. By 1956 he had added a pickup to it, and later shrouded the body in an elaborate hand-tooled leather sheath. Many of the rockabilly singers who followed in his wake also used Martins. An early shot of Johnny Cash performing on the Opry shows him with one of Martin's rarer models, the F-7 archtop. It was one of the few F-hole models manufactured by the company from the mid '30s until World War II.

A sort of folklore began to grow around





In 1932, Arkie ordered a D-2 dreadnought, the forerunner to the D-28.

Martins through the '60s, as many country artists grew nostalgic for the older models like the D-45 and the herringbone D-28. Some performers even had their Martins specially altered by guitar repairmen to resemble the D-45 by inlaying pearl in a similar design. And the feeling that the lighter bracing of the prewar D-28 gave a brighter sound became so strong that many guitar repairmen were kept busy shaving the bracing under the tops of newer Martins to improve the sound (even though this voided the company's warranty).

The most treasured prewar Martins of all became those with distinguished



Jimmie Rodgers was the first to have his name inlaid on the fretboard.

pedigrees. Former Bluegrass Boys like Peter Rowan, who played guitar with the band in the mid '60s still talk about Bill Monroe's old D-28 and its incredible tone. It became a tradition for most Monroe guitarists, from the late '40s on, to play this guitar on recording sessions. But, in 1965 it was stolen from Monroe's son's car, and Monroe alumni now talk about it as if it were a deceased friend. And more recently Tony Rice, former bluegrass guitarist who now plays a bluegrass-influenced acoustic jazz, has been known for his legendary D-28, a model originally owned by Paul Westmoreland, who wrote the country classic *Detour*. It was later owned by the late Clarence White, who played guitar with the Kentucky Colonels bluegrass band (and later with the Byrds in their country-rock days).

By the late '60s the prewar Martin had become a sort of status symbol among guitarists and the prices of these prewar D-28s and D-45s skyrocketed, even while Martin's newer D-35, introduced in 1965 was becoming a big seller.

In 1968 Martin, recognizing the consumer demand, began building the D-45 again, and it sold well, even though the price was well over \$1000. They later introduced a similar, less expensive D-41. Still, the prewar D-45 remained a premium item, and some rock stars paid many times the price of a new one to obtain an original. And the cry for the Herringbone models continued until 1976, when Martin revived it as the HD-28, com-



The old Martin classical guitar Willie plays once belonged to Roger Miller.

plete with the lighter bracing. Since then, they've introduced several new models specifically designed for recording that provide a cleaner sound as part of their new M series, as well as a herringbone D-35. Just recently they've begun a new custom service which permits anyone to design their own individual Martin, combining the various styles and body sizes into a one-of-a-kind guitar, just as Autry did when he had style 45 put on a dreadnought 37 years ago.

Times have changed since Martin got started in 1833. For that matter, times have changed since the 1920s when Martin and country music first came together. There are more fine guitars around today than ever before, and the entire guitar making technology is more sophisticated these days. But as country fans and artists know, traditions are meant to be respected, and Martin is certainly one of them. Even their newer models remain close to the past, and those older models continue to be revered, some of the greatest being passed from artist to artist. Ask Willie Nelson. That old Martin classical he plays, covered with autographs and boasting a sizable hole from wear, once belonged to Roger Miller. ■



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# LACY J. DALTON

by Kip Kirby

*Record producers probably hear more aspiring singers in a week than most people hear in a lifetime. But we rarely hear a voice so unique it rises above the rest. Lacy J. Dalton possesses that exciting style and quality that make her special. That's what stars are made of."*

—Billy Sherrill, vice president, Columbia Records, Nashville

Lacy J. Dalton exploded onto the recording scene in the fall of 1979 with the meteoric velocity of a shooting star. From the minute her first Columbia single, *Crazy Blue Eyes*, was released, it barrelhoused out of the starting gate to make her more than a flash on the music scene.

It was an impressive debut for the diminutive singer with the strikingly unforgettable voice, putting her high into the country charts—but it left in its trail the inevitable refrain: *Who is Lacy J. Dalton?*

The new artist was labeled "an overnight success"—though Lacy herself laughs, "If I'm 'an overnight success,' at least make that read 'a longtime overnight success!'"

Because in reality, Lacy J. Dalton is *not* an overnight success, as her ten-year professional performing career will verify. But it took her signing with Columbia last summer to bring all the right components together on vinyl, and shift her talents into the national limelight.

Growing up in a small northeastern Pennsylvania farming community, Lacy's childhood was that typical of a blue collar family—long on love but short on money.

Her father, whose innate strength and character helped shape Lacy's own, was a guide on a hunting preserve; her mother owned a beauty parlor and later worked as a waitress in a truckstop. (Her sister married and became a truck driver to support her children.)

Lacy herself held a variety of jobs throughout her high school years, often singing for hours on end the country songs she heard constantly on the radio as a child.

Managing to scrape together the tuition, her parents sent her to Brigham Young University in Utah, where Lacy majored in art. She planned to be a professional artist until one day, in the midst of a sketching exercise, it suddenly occurred to her that one, she would never make a great painter; and two, she'd rather be a musician, anyway.

Shortly after this revelation, Dalton dropped out of college, and supported herself by waitressing, repairing shoes and



once even selling jewelry in a carnival. Eventually she wound up in California where she sang with rock bands, jazz trios, r&b acts, and onstage alone with only a guitar. No matter what the setting, however, Lacy noticed that her rapport with audiences was instinctive . . . and that crowds seemed to respond most

enthusiastically to her own country songs.

Those years spent performing in the frenetic, crazy-quilt musical kaleidoscope that was Los Angeles in the 1970s gave Lacy room to develop the free-wheeling powerhouse dynamics, unusual phrasing and controlled vocal intensity that trademark her singing style today. (Com-



menting on that period in her life, she says wryly, "It's not a coincidence that people have said I remind them of a country Janis Joplin. She was a big influence on my music.")

Along the way, Lacy married a man she describes as "the most loving person I've ever met." One evening at a friend's, in a tragic accident, he slipped and fell into a drained swimming pool, paralyzing his spinal column from the neck down. The next week, Lacy learned she was pregnant.

Nine months later, almost to the day, her husband was finally allowed to come home from the hospital, and Lacy gave birth to their son. For three years, she hung her own career in abeyance, concentrating on caring for her son and invalid husband.

It wasn't until her husband eventually died from further complications that Dalton considered returning to performing, only to find that the intervening years of musical inactivity had left her shattered and unsure of herself. She underwent a gradual rebuilding period as an artist, and by 1978 felt ready to give her career an all-out effort. With the help of musician friends, she recorded an album's worth of original material in a small garage studio high up in the coastal mountains of California, where she now lives with her son, Adam.

choice of direction.

Tapes went out to major record companies and producers, with Wood also relying on telephone contact for additional ideas. One of the people he called was Emily Mitchell, director of artist relations for CBS in Nashville, who screens all incoming material for Billy Sherrill. Although to this day, neither can remember exactly what was said, the lawyer managed to infuse her with excitement about his new discovery. When Dalton's tape arrived at CBS shortly afterwards, Mitchell took one long listen and put the box directly onto Sherrill's desk.

In what may qualify as one of the fastest signings ever, Lacy J. Dalton became a Columbia artist with Sherrill as her producer.

"It was kind of interesting," muses Lacy in retrospect. "We received offers from nearly everyone we sent that tape to. Willie Nelson wanted to put me on his label, and Mick Jagger also wanted to sign me to Rolling Stones Records. But there was never any question in my mind after I met Billy that he should be my producer. He has a feel for my music that's exactly how I've always felt it should be produced. He's exactly right for me."

The immediate success of her first two singles, *Crazy Blue Eyes* and *The*

*Tennessee Waltz* seem to bear out the accuracy of this statement. And onstage her energy is undeniable. Whether she's headlining a show with Bobby Bare and Johnny Paycheck, or entertaining a packed house of music industry people and disc jockeys at the annual Country Radio Seminar's *New Faces Show*, Lacy J. Dalton is a high-voltage addition to country music.

Few new artists seem to have been able to capture the support of critics across the country as quickly as Dalton. As a result, it came as no surprise when she won the Academy of Country Music's Most Promising New Female Vocalist of the Year award in Los Angeles in May.

Her grainy, whiskey-and-honey voice gives her a weathered wisdom beyond her years. She can take a phrase and wring it limp with feeling, bend a note until it breaks clean in half, then shiver down into heartbreak so achingly real you know she's been there before. When she tears into a song, she gives it everything she's got — and then some.

An enigmatic mixture of rough-hewn country, blues and rock, Lacy J. Dalton doesn't fit easily into any musical category. But that's okay. Once you've heard her unleash that vocal electricity in your direction, it's doubtful she'd slip anyone's mind. ■

**"We received offers from nearly everyone we sent that tape to. Willie Nelson wanted to put me on his label, and Mick Jagger also wanted to sign me to Rolling Stone Records. But there was never any question after I met Billy (Sherrill) that he should be my producer."**

She mailed out copies of the record to everyone she knew in the music business, with one going to David Wood, an attorney-friend whom she hadn't seen in a number of years.

What happened next, recalls Lacy with a grin, "... reads like something out of a movie script! David loved what he heard on my record, rough as it was—and though I didn't know it at the time, he'd been looking for an artist to manage for quite a while. When he finished listening to my record, he jumped on his private plane, flew up to the mountains where I was living, and took me back to Los Angeles to cut a professional studio demo." *Crazy Blue Eyes* was one of four songs cut on those sessions.

She adds that it was Wood's suggestion to follow her natural feel for country as a

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# Hank Williams, Jr. Habits Old and New

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But there are some other habits that Hank, Jr., isn't about to give up. Like climbing mountains, and playing the biggest concert halls and the smallest honky-tonks, too, and making the best damn records in the country.



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## Meredian, Miss. Remembers Jimmie Rodgers

*"The Singing Brakeman"—Jimmie Rodgers' name stands foremost in the country music field as "the man who started it all." His songs told the great stories of the singing rails, the powerful steam locomotives and the wonderful railroad people that he loved so well. Although small in stature, he was a giant among men, starting a trend in the musical tastes of millions."*

Inscription on plaque  
Country Music Hall of Fame  
Nashville, Tennessee

Meredian, Miss. is a quiet, delta railroad town of some 50,000 people, nestled among a broad expanse of tall, southern pine forests. Memphis, Tenn. lies 200 miles to the north, and New Orleans, La. sits 200 miles southwest of Meridian. Time seems to have washed away the deep racial tensions which once gripped this community in the early '60s, a period of social upheaval throughout the South.

Meredian is also the proud home of the legendary Jimmie Rodgers. Once a year, for a solid week, Meridian honors her native son with a Jimmie Rodgers Memorial Festival. This event includes concerts by major country stars, a barbecue, talent show, street dance and a wreath-laying ceremony at Rodgers' grave in Bonita Cemetery on the outskirts of Meridian. This year's festival was held in late May and featured Merle Haggard, T.G. Sheppard and Ernest Tubb as entertainment.

He was a singing star barely five years. James Charles "Jimmie" Rodgers died prematurely at 35 from advanced tuberculosis on May 26, 1933 during a recording session in New York City. Rodgers is considered the father of country music, and in 1961 was the first artist inducted in the Country Music Hall of Fame in Nashville. "The Singing Brakeman" was born Sept. 8, 1897 in the Mississippi town he always considered home.

At 14, Rodgers began work on the railroad as a water boy. Four years later, he was making regular train runs between Meridian and New Orleans as a brakeman. During spare time on those runs, Rodgers began writing songs and singing for his fellow workmen.

In 1976, through proceeds from Rodgers' memorial festival fund, the Jimmie Rodgers Museum was established.

Housed in a replica of an old train station, the museum contains a huge collection of Rodgers' old railroad effects, along with other personal items. Original song manuscripts, Rodgers' hand-tooled boots and spurs, a beautiful theatrical trunk and scores of old railroad artifacts line the walls and give visitors an authentic feel for Rodgers' musical and railroad career. During the festival, the museum serves as a focal point for the many activities scheduled throughout the week.

This year's festival kicked off on Saturday, May 24 with a bluegrass jamboree sponsored by Budweiser at the local fairgrounds. Area bluegrass groups provided entertainment and Budweiser's hot air balloons added color to the festivities. An early highlight of the festival came Tuesday, May 27, when Ernest Tubb brought his Texas Troubadors to town and played for an old-fashioned dance. Tubb, who modeled his early career after Rodgers, has been a regular performer at the festival.

Most of the entertainment centered around the evening concerts at the beautiful, historic Temple Theater in downtown Meridian. Once a movie theater, the interior design of the building stands as a nostalgic reminder of the days when movie houses were designed with care and elegance. The concerts were held each night during the week and featured many top country entertainers, including Stella Parton, Cristy Lane, Moe Bandy, Leona Williams, Kenny Dale, Charlie Louvin, Eddie Raven, David Rogers, the Geezinslaw Brothers, James Talley, Don King, John Conlee, Sheppard and



World Radio History

Haggard.

One concert highlight was the surprise appearance of Rodgers' grandson, Jimmie Dale Court. He came onstage Friday night (May 30) as a guest of Nashville's Annie McGowan. Performing in public for the first time in his life, Court walked backstage after singing two songs and remarked, "I felt the spirit of Jimmie Rodgers out there."

Blind singer Van Williams, also provided a real treat for the audience. Haggard, who appeared on the final night of the festival, brought Williams onstage as his guest toward the end of his second performance of the evening. Dressed in railroad clothes and singing and yodeling his way through a bunch of Rodgers' songs, Williams bore an eerie resemblance to the "Singing Brakeman" himself.

Festival officials reported the 1980 festival was successful, and plans for next year's event are already on the drawing board.

## Country Sales Reach New Peak

The record business endured a sluggish year in 1979, but recent sales figures indicate country music is healthy and growing like a young colt. According to the latest sales reports released by the National Association of Recording Merchandisers (NARM), country music is now the second largest-selling category of recorded music in the United States. Country music moved in front of pop music and continued to outsell disco and soul music.

Rock music was the top-selling form of music in America in 1979, capturing 37.4% of all sales, but country holds down second place with 11.9% of all records sold. For the first time in years, total record sales actually decreased in 1979, but country sales increased from \$426,543,600 in 1978 to \$437,455,900 this past year.

With artists like Kenny Rogers, Willie Nelson, Dolly Parton and Waylon Jennings appearing as top draws in movies, television and on the concert trail, country

music may be moving toward even greater heights in the 1980s. Jo Walker, executive director of the prestigious Country Music Association (CMA) in Nashville, feels confident the popularity of country music will continue to rise.

"We have been anticipating the increased sales figures for country music," Ms. Walker said. "A leading record merchandiser recently told me that country sales were up at his outlets by 30%. With the release of country-oriented movies such as *Coal Miner's Daughter*, *Urban Cowboy* and all the others, we look for country music to continue its growth surge for the next few years to come. Many people, including market analysts and syndicated columnists have predicted country will be the music of the '80s . . . and I think we are seeing that prediction come to pass."

In addition to the increase in country record sales, the CMA has completed a survey which shows that the number of full-time country radio stations increased 8% this year—from 1424 stations in 1979 to 1534 in 1980. The total number of stations programming a selection of country music also increased from 2278 in 1979 to 2403 this year.

## New Album Due Soon Glaser Brothers Reunite After Seven Years

The Glaser Brothers, whose soaring, three-part harmonies established them as the most awarded group in the history of country music, are back in the saddle again. Jim, Tompall and Chuck Glaser have patched up any musical or personal differences they might once have had and are singing and recording together again for the first time since their celebrated split in 1973. The group made its first reunion appearance at the Wembley Festival in England in April and performed soon after on *The Grand Ole Opry*. The Glasers are touring England this month, and a reunion album is due out this fall on Elektra/Asylum Records.

Each Glaser traveled a lot of roads in the past seven years. Tompall recorded on his own, and along with Waylon Jennings, acted as leader and spiritual advisor for the "outlaw" movement which swept Nashville in the middle '70s. Jim Glaser recorded as a solo act also. Chuck Glaser ran a booking agency, produced some new acts and suffered a debilitating stroke in

1975 which paralyzed his entire left side. Doctors feared he would never walk or speak again, but he completely conquered his illness.

Although the group had disbanded, the Glaser business interests prospered. Their production company and recording studio did well, and the brothers sold their valuable publishing company for a great deal of money. The catalogue contained such gems as John Hartford's *Gentle On My Mind*. But the three continued to go their separate ways. However, shortly over a year ago, their father in Nebraska became ill, and all the brothers returned home for Christmas. "It was the first time we three had been together for longer than 10 minutes in over six years," Chuck Glaser said.

Following the death of their father, the brothers spent more time together and discovered their musical interest had grown compatible with each other. The group experimented in the studio and recorded several songs that suited each other. E/A heard a few cuts, including their first single, *Weight Of My Chains*, and signed the group.

"The major reason we are back together is that we all three have arrived at the same point musically," Chuck Glaser said. "We always enjoyed working as a trio, but our conflicts were over musical tastes. We now seem to like the same things we did in the



early days."

Echoing Chuck's opinion, brother Tompall added, "Never before have we been able to merge our musical directions so well. This is the most honest music I have ever been involved with."

This is a strong statement for Tompall since he turned Glaser studios in Nashville into the most creative environment in town in the early and middle '70s. He co-produced Jennings' historic *Honky Tonk Heroes* LP and was a featured artist on the landmark album, *Wanted: The Outlaws*, which was the first country LP to ever achieve platinum status (one million album sales).

Even though he achieved individual success, Tompall candidly told one Nashville journalist, "I think the group has a unique gift. As a solo artist I didn't have the ability to reach. I came close, but I just couldn't get that message across like we can with the group."



**JANE FONDA JOINS DOLLY ON THE OPRY**—Everyone knew Dolly Parton was scheduled to appear on the Grand Ole Opry, but nobody mentioned that actress Jane Fonda would be tagging along as one of Dolly's back-up vocalists. In the fuss over Dolly, hardly anyone noticed, but Jane walked onstage and sang harmony with Dolly's band. Backstage, Jane said she loved the Opry. Fonda came to Tennessee to research a new film in which she plays an Appalachian wood carver. In the photo at left, Jane sings harmony with Anita Ball & Richard Dennison. At right, Fonda poses with Dolly outside her bus.



## Bill Anderson Named New Opry TV Show Host



Country music fans who tune in each week on clear-channel radio to listen to the Grand Ole Opry, wishing like crazy they were right there in person, are in for a treat this fall. A brand-new nationally syndicated television show, *Backstage At The Grand Ole Opry*, is set to air this fall season. Hosted by Bill Anderson, the 30-minute show will feature live performances by Opry members and non-Opry members and will also include interviews with stars and an intimate, behind-the-scenes look at the Opry. Sponsored by Opryland Productions and Show Biz, Inc., *Backstage At The Opry* is the first regularly scheduled TV show to carry the name and "seal of approval" of The Grand Ole Opry.

Anderson, a veteran member of The Grand Ole Opry and a member of the Country Music Songwriters Hall of Fame, has racked up a considerable amount of television experience in the past few years on talk shows, music shows and as the first country artist to host a daytime game show. He has also guested on the soap opera, *One Life To Live* which featured a recreated Grand Ole Opry scene. Accordingly, Show Biz officials picked Anderson because "he was the first country music personality to be featured as a network television host, and we feel he is an excellent choice for this special television first in country music."

Anderson taped 13 segments of the show this past summer, and he feels the series is unusual because it will give audiences a more personal, less stylized view of coun-

try performers, as there will be no definite format to the show.

"The format of the show is that it doesn't have a format," said Anderson, who performed in the pilot show and will appear as a performer occasionally during the series. "The basic concept of the show is what the name implies (*Backstage at the Grand Ole Opry*), but it is much more than this. It is the Grand Ole Opry out front as spectators see it, but it is also an *inside* look at the Opry backstage and the performers offstage. We are not doing everything right at the Opry house. We are doing some things at people's homes and on their buses. For instance, I interviewed Roy Clark the other day on the *Hee Haw* set. I am going to interview Porter Wagoner tomorrow on his show. And I am going to interview Barbara Mandrell out by her swimming pool at her house. But all performances will be onstage at the Opry.

"The tone of the show is different in that it is not a series of professional interviews like Ralph Emery would do," Anderson added. "It is like me and Barbara Mandrell—two Opry acts and two friends—having a conversation with people listening in."

Anderson also said the show will be

paced quickly, somewhat like *Hee Haw*, with an interesting interchange of interviews and performances. "A lot of the show's success will be due to the editing. For instance, if you sing and then talk, sing and then talk, that comes out very dry. But the way producer Bayron Binkley weaves the music into the interviews and the interviews into the music is really very unusual. You almost have to see it to know what I am talking about."

Another thing Anderson is happy about, is that *Backstage At The Opry* will feature country entertainers, rather than include a lot of Hollywood non-country acts.

"Even though Patti Page was on the first show, one thing I like is that it will basically be Opry people and country people," said Anderson. "They aren't going to bring in a lot of people like Henny Youngman and that sort of thing. People on the show will have to perform on the Opry. For instance, we have done a show with Charlie Walker and Jimmy C. Newman, and they haven't had a lot of national TV exposure. We are also getting people like Charlie Daniels on the show."

In addition to Page and Anderson, the pilot show will feature Roy Acuff, Eddie Rabbitt and "Bashful" Brother Oswald.

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Dolly Parton almost caused a riot at Fan Fair in Nashville this year. Nearly 1000 fans pushed and shoved and fought to catch a glimpse of Dolly or get her autograph as she appeared in the RCA autograph booth for the first time in four years. In spite of the huge crowd and the melting heat, Dolly signed autographs for an hour before being whisked away to her limousine by armed guards and record company personnel. "I think you owe it to the fans to be here," Dolly told the Nashville *Tennessean's* Laura Eipper. "It has been a little hard for me to get here the past few years because of all I have been doing, but this is just great. I am a little worried by the heat and hope all these people don't suffocate." Dolly also said she is spending a lot of time in Nashville now and planned to spend the entire summer here

writing and recording music. Her new album will be much simpler and more country than her previous records. Dolly also said she is content with her career and life. "It has worked out real well. I knew I would have to go through a lot of criticism, but I have to go by what I feel. Music is a very personal thing and nobody knows what I feel inside, where my talents are, or what I want to do but me."

The late Elvis Presley's physician, Dr. George Nichopoulos, has been indicted on 14 criminal counts for overprescribing drugs for Presley, Jerry Lee Lewis and others. "The controlled substances were dispensed to Elvis Presley by George C. Nichopoulos with knowledge that the said Elvis Presley was addicted to the habit of using the controlled substances. . .," the indictment in part read. Under court oath, Nichopoulos admitted Presley was hospitalized twice for detoxification and "probably" was addicted to the painkiller demerol. The doctor was accused of providing prescriptions for 12,000 stimulants, sedatives and painkillers to Presley in the last 20 months before his death on Aug. 16, 1977.

Roger Miller came back to Nashville

Continued

## PEOPLE

this spring for the first time in a while to tape the **Chet Atkins'** tribute. Miller now lives with his wife and 14-year-old son on a farm in Tesuque, New Mexico. Roger said he still writes songs, but approaches everything on a much more relaxed level these days. In the '60s, Miller was on top of the entertainment world with hit records and a national television show, but success caused him a few problems. "Success came so suddenly," the gregarious Miller said. "One day I was nothing, the next day I am a star. Let me tell you something about success. It can take you places you never dreamed you would be. Man, when success falls on you it's dangerous to run with it. You should walk."

The Worth County Fair in Northwood, Iowa wanted the **Statler Brothers** so bad this summer that the fair board moved the entire fair ahead simply to accommodate **The Statlers**. The Statlers have a policy of not appearing anywhere in July (except at their own festival), so the Iowa fair was moved to early August.

Remember **Merle Travis**, the great veteran songwriter and guitarist? Well, he is the only country entertainer to have been elected to the Nashville Songwriters Hall of Fame (1970), the Pioneers of Country Music Award (1974), the Country Music Hall of Fame (1977) and the Gibson Guitar Hall of Fame (1979). Among other classics, Travis wrote *Sixteen Tons* and *I Am A Pilgrim*. He was also the biggest single influence on the guitar work of Chet Atkins.

A new club featuring country music, called *Cactus Jack's*, has opened in Nashville and the club features the same mechanical bucking bull that has popularized *Gilley's Club* in Pasadena, Tex.

It looks like **Tanya Tucker** and **Glen Campbell** have a big thing going with each other. The two singers were running around together in Nashville back in May and left shortly after, for a vacation in Monte Carlo. At the time of the Nashville trip, there were no marriage plans, but Tanya told friends and reporters that she and Glen were "about as serious as two people can be."

The pairing of **Bill Anderson** and scruffy **David Allen Coe** on record may seem like

strange bedfellows, but Anderson said the two had been friends for years before Coe approached him about the project. "I was at the Opry a while back," Anderson said, "and David came up to me and asked me about an old song I wrote called *Get A Little Dirt On Your Hands*. He said he used to sing the song all the time in bars and clubs when he first started out in Nashville. He said he wanted to record it and would I get him a copy. I got him a copy and one day he called me and said 'why don't you come on down to the studio and sing with me on the record?' I told him I didn't know how that would work, but he said he had an idea. Well, he had **Dickey Betts** and people like that playing with him so I figured, 'why not, it will be interesting to get around that crowd and see how they do things.' "

People who know **Don King** say he is too good to be true. He doesn't drink, smoke cigarettes or any funny stuff and doesn't cuss. He just makes good music.

Singer/writer **Merle Kilgore** did a fine job emceeing the Wild Turkey Jamboree down at Columbia, Tennessee this summer. Kilgore looks great. He quit drinking three years ago and has lost about 40 pounds. Kilgore tours with **Hank Williams, Jr.** and reports they are playing to sell-out crowds everywhere they go.

"It's the greatest thing I have ever experienced," said **Barbara Mandrell**,



**NASHVILLE HONORS CHET ATKINS** — It's a good bet that no one in the country music industry commands more respect and admiration than Chet Atkins. And on May 14, on a nationally televised tribute held at The Grand Ole Opry House, taped before a live audience, an all star cast including **Roy Acuff, Bobby Bare, Charlie Daniels, Roger Miller, Tom T. Hall, Minnie Pearl, Charley Pride, Porter Wagoner, Dale Robertson** and **Archie Campbell** turned out and told their favorite Chet Atkins stories and picked and sang with the guitar virtuoso. In the top photo, guitarist **Earl Klugh**, who Atkins called "the greatest guitar player in the world today," play a guitar duet of *Good Time Charlie's Got The Blues*. In the middle photo, **Acuff** shares a story with Atkins. In the bottom photo, **Robertson** and **Campbell** rib Atkins while he picks a tune. The special was also a benefit for the **American Cancer Society**.



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**ROY ACUFF - SM-1870 ALBUM \$2.98**  
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8 TRACK TAPE - STM-1870 \$4.98

**GENE AUTRY - CS-1035 ALBUM \$2.98**  
Mexicali Rose; Boots And Saddle; Have I Told You Lately That I Love You; You Are My Sunshine; South Of The Border; Sloux City Sue; Mule Train; Someday You'll Want Me To Want You; Goodnight Irene; Home On The Range; I Love You Because; That Silver Haired Daddy Of Mine; Red River Valley; Buttons And Bows; Back In The Saddle Again.  
8 TRACK TAPE - 18C-01035 \$4.98

**PATSY CLINE - MCA-12 ALBUM \$2.98**  
Walking After Midnight; Sweet Dreams; Crazy; I Fall To Pieces; So Wrong; Strange; Back In Baby's Arms; She's Got You; Faded Love; Why Can't He Be You; You're Stronger Than Me; Leavin' On Your Mind.  
8 TRACK TAPE - MCA-12 \$4.98

**PATSY CLINE - MCA-87 ALBUM \$2.98**  
I Fall To Pieces; Foolsin' 'Round; The Wayward Wind; South Of The Border; I Love You So Much It Hurts; Seven Lonely Days; Crazy; San Antonio Rose; True Love; Walking After Midnight; A Poor Man's Roses; Have You Ever Been Lonely.  
8 TRACK TAPE - MCA-87 \$4.98

**PATSY CLINE - MCA-90 ALBUM \$2.98**  
She's Got You; Heartaches; That's My Desire; Your Cheatin' Heart; Anytime; You Made Me Love You; Strange; You Belong To Me; You Were Only Fooling; Half As Much; I Can't Help It; Lonely Street.  
8 TRACK TAPE - MCA-90 \$4.98

**PATSY CLINE - MCA-224 ALBUM \$2.98**  
Faded Love; I'll Sall My Ship Alone; When You Need A Laugh; Crazy Arms; Always; When I Get Thru With You; Blue Moon Of Kentucky; Someday You'll Want Me To Want You; Who Can I Count On; You Took Him Off My Hands; Your Kinda Love; Does Your Heart Beat For Me.  
8 TRACK TAPE - MCA-224 \$4.98

**RAYMOND FAIRCHILD - RRRF-254 ALBUM \$2.98**  
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Whoa Mule; Carolina Breakdown; Turkey In The Straw; Little Darling Pal; McKinley's White House Blues; Blue Grass Bugle; Lonesome Road Blues; False Hearted Love; Nine Pound Hammer; Old Joe Clark; McCormack's Picnic; Red Wing; Cripple Creek; Girl I Left Behind Me; Under The Double Eagle; Raymond's Talking Banjo; Cotton Eyed Joe; Cumberland Gap; Raymond's Banjo Boogie; Crooked Creek; Boll Them Cabbage Down; Pretty Polly; Learning On Jesus; Sugar Foot Rag; Train Forty-Five; Earl's Breakdown; Cindy; John Hardy; Banjo Fling; Orange Blossom Special.  
8 TRACK TAPE - TRR-254 \$4.98

**RED FOLEY - MCA-86 ALBUM \$2.98**  
I'll Fly Away; The Last Mile Of The Way; No Tears In Heaven; Were You There; This World Is Not My Home; My Soul Walked Through The Darkness; I Just Can't Keep From Cryin'; Lord I'm Coming Home; Only One Step More; Stand By Me; Farther Along; Life's Railway To Heaven.  
8 TRACK TAPE - MCA-86 \$4.98

**RED FOLEY & KITTY WELLS MCA-83 ALBUM \$2.98**  
One By One; Just Call Me Lonesome; As Long As I Live; A Wedding Ring Ago; Make Believe; Candy Kisses; You And Me; Memory Of A Love; I'm A Stranger In My Home; I'm Throwing Rice; No One Buy You; I'm Counting On You.  
8 TRACK TAPE - MCA-83 \$4.98

**RED FOLEY - MCA-147 ALBUM \$2.98**  
Beyond The Sunset; Should You Go First; Peace In The Valley; Steal Away; Just A Closer Walk With Thee; Out Lady Of Fatima; The Place Where I Worship; Someone To Care; The Rosary; Will The Circle Be Unbroken; Old Pappy's New Banjo; I Hear A Choir; When God Dips His Love In My Heart.  
8 TRACK TAPE - MCA-147 \$4.98

**LEFTY FRIZZELL - CA-9288 ALBUM \$2.98**  
Saginaw, Michigan; Mom And Dad's Waltz; Release Me; Always Late (With Your Kisses); I Love You A Thousand Ways; She's Gone Gone Gone; If You've Got The Money I've Got The Time; The Long Black Veil; I Want To Be With You Always; Shine, Shine, Shower (It's Saturday); A Little Unfair.  
NO TAPE AVAILABLE

**GUY LOMBARDO - MEDLEYS MCA-103 ALBUM \$2.98**  
Blues In The Night; The Birth Of The Blues; I Gotta Right To Sing The Blues; Memories; Let The Rest Of The World Go By; My Buddy; Secret Love; Love Nest; Love Is The Sweetest Thing; Something To Remember You By; The Very Thought Of You; You're My Everything; Kiss Me Again; A Kiss In The Dark; I'll See You Again; By The Light Of The Silvery Moon; Shine On Harvest Moon; Moonlight Bay; As Time Goes By; Bidin' My Time; Breezin' Along With The Breeze; I Want To Be Happy; I'm Looking Over A Four Leaf Clover; Happy Days Are Here Again; April Showers; September In The Rain; I Only Have Eyes For You; If I Could Be With You; It Had To Be You; In A Shanty In Old Shanty Town; Three Little Words; Baby Face; Somebody Loves Me; Don't Take Your Love From Me; What Is This Thing Called Love.  
8 TRACK TAPE - MCA-103 \$4.98

**LORETTA LYNN - MCA-5 ALBUM \$2.98**  
Everybody Wants To Go To Heaven; Where No One Stands Alone; When They Ring Those Golden Bells; Peace In The Valley; If I Could Hear My Mother Pray Again; The Third Man; How Great Thou Art; Old Camp Meetin' Time; When I Hear My Children Pray; In The Sweet Bye And Bye; Where I Learned To Pray; I'd Rather Have Jesus.  
8 TRACK TAPE - MCA-5 \$4.98

**LORETTA LYNN - MCA-6 ALBUM \$2.98**  
You Ain't Woman Enough; Put It Off Until Tomorrow; These Boots Are Made For Walkin'; God Gave Me A Heart To Forgive; Keep Your Change; Someone Before Me; The Darkest Day; Tippy Toeing; Talking To The Wall; A Man I Hardly Know; Is It Wrong; It's Another World.  
8 TRACK TAPE - MCA-6 \$4.98

**LORETTA LYNN - MCA-7 ALBUM \$2.98**  
Who Says God Is Dead; I Believe; Standing Room Only; The Old Rugged Cross; Harp With Golden Strings; If You Miss Heaven; I'm A'Gettin' Ready To Go; In The Garden; Ten Thousand Angels; He's Got The Whole World In His Hands; Mama, Why.  
8 TRACK TAPE - MCA-7 \$4.98

**LORETTA LYNN AND CONWAY TWITTY MCA-8 ALBUM \$2.98**  
It's Only Make Believe; We've Closed Our Eyes To Shame; I'm So Used To Loving You; Will You Visit Me On Sunday; After The Fire Is Gone; Don't Tell Me You're Sorry; Pickin' Wild Mountain Berries; Take Me; The One I Can't Live Without; Handin' On; Working Girl.  
8 TRACK TAPE - MCA-8 \$4.98

**LORETTA LYNN AND CONWAY TWITTY MCA-9 ALBUM \$2.98**  
Lead Me On; Shade Tree Music; When I Turn Off My Lights; Never Ending Song Of Love; Playing House Away From Home; You're The Reason; How Far Can We Go; You Blow My Mind; Easy Loving; Back Street Affair; I Wonder If You Told Her About Me; Get Some Lovin' Done.  
8 TRACK TAPE - MCA-9 \$4.98

**LORETTA LYNN - MCA-113 ALBUM \$2.98**  
Don't Come Home A Drinkin'; I Really Don't Want To Know; Tomorrow Never Comes; There Goes My Everything; The Shoe Goes On The Other Foot Tonight; Salnt To A Sinner; The Devil Gets His Dues; I Can't Keep Away From You; I'm Living In Two Worlds; Get What Cha' Got And Go; Making Plans; I Got Caught.  
8 TRACK TAPE - MCA-113 \$4.98

**LORETTA LYNN - MCA-444 ALBUM \$2.98**  
They Don't Make 'Em Like My Daddy; Behind Closed Doors; If You Love Me; I've Never Been This Far Before; We've Already Tasted Love; Out Of Consideration; Trouble In Paradise; I Love; Don't Leave Me Where You Found Me; Ain't Love A Good Thing; Nothin'.  
8 TRACK TAPE - MCA-444 \$4.98

**LORETTA LYNN - MCA-471 ALBUM \$2.98**  
The Pill; Will You Be There; It's Time To Pay The Fiddler; Paper Roses; You Love Everybody Buy You; Mad Mrs. Jesse Brown; Back To The Country; The Hands Of Yesterday; I Can Help; Another You; Linda On My Mind; Jimmy.  
8 TRACK TAPE - MCA-471 \$4.98

**LORETTA LYNN AND CONWAY TWITTY MCA-335 ALBUM \$2.98**  
Louisiana Woman, Mississippi Man; For Heaven Sake; Release Me; You Lay So Easy On My Mind; Our Conscience You And Me; As Good As A Lonely Girl Can Be; Bye Bye Love; Living Together Alone; What Are We Gonna Do About Us; If You Touch Me; Before Your Time.  
8 TRACK TAPE - MCA-335 \$4.98

**MILLS BROTHERS - MCA-188 ALBUM \$2.98**  
Paper Doll; I'll Be Around; You Tell Me Your Dream; I'll Tell You Mine; Till Then; You Always Hurt The One You Love; Don't Be A Baby, Baby; Across The Alley From The Alamo; Be My Live's Companion; The Glow Worm; Queen Of The Senior Prom; Smack Dab In The Middle; Opus One.  
8 TRACK TAPE - MCA-188 \$4.98

**PATTI PAGE - CS-9326 ALBUM \$2.98**  
Tennessee Waltz; Cross Over The Bridge; Old Cape Cod; Doggie In The Window; Mister Mississippi; I Went To Your Wedding; Mockin' Bird Hill; Allegheny Moon; With My Eyes Wide Open I'm Dreaming; Changing Partners; Detour.  
8 TRACK TAPE - 18C-09326 \$4.98

**RAY PRICE - CS-8866 ALBUM \$2.98**  
Crazy Arms; You Done Me Wrong; City Lights; Invitation To The Blues; I've Got A New Heartache; Who'll Be The First; Heartaches By The Number; The Same Old Me; Release Me; One More Time; My Shoes Keep Walking Back To You; I'll Be There.  
8 TRACK TAPE - 18C-00094 \$4.98

**CARL SMITH - CS-8737 ALBUM \$2.98**  
Hey Joe; There She Goes; Old Lonesome Times; Are You Teasing Me; I Feel Like Cryin'; Doorstop To Heaven; Let Old Mother Nature Have Her Way; The Little Girl In My Home Town; If You Saw Her Through My Eyes; You're Free To Go; Gettin' Even; I Overlooked An Orchid.  
8 TRACK TAPE - 18C-00110 \$4.98

**ERNEST TUBB - MCA-16 ALBUM \$2.98**  
Walking The Floor Over You; Rainbow At Midnight; Let's Say Goodbye Like We Sled Hello; Another Story; Thanks A Lot; Half A Mind; I'll Get Along Somehow; Waltz Across Texas; It's Been So Long Darling; Mr. Juke Box; I Wonder Why You Said Goodbye.  
8 TRACK TAPE - MCA-16 \$4.98

**ERNEST TUBB - MCA-84 ALBUM \$2.98**  
I'll Get Along Somehow; Slipping Around; Filipino Baby; When The World Has Turned You Down; Have You Ever Been Lonely; There's A Little Bit Of Everything In Texas; Walking The Floor Over You; Driftwood On The River; There's Nothing More To Say; Rainbow At Midnight; I'll Always Be Glad To Take You Back; Let's Say Goodbye Like We Sled Hello.  
8 TRACK TAPE - MCA-84 \$4.98

**ERNEST TUBB - MCA-341 ALBUM \$2.98**  
I've Got All The Heartaches I Can Handle; The Texas Troubadour; Missing In Action; Don't She Look Good; A Daisy A Day; Texas Dance Hall Girl; Miles In Memories; The Lord Knows I'm Drinking; Pass Me By; What My Woman Can't Do; The Last Letter.  
8 TRACK TAPE - MCA-341 \$4.98

**KITTY WELLS - MCA-121 ALBUM \$2.98**  
It Wasn't God Who Made Honky Tonk Angels; This White Circle; Mommy For A Day; Release Me; I Gave My Wedding Dress Away; Amigo's Guitar; Heartbreak U.S.A.; I'll Repossess My Heart; Password; Searching; Making Believe.  
8 TRACK TAPE - MCA-121 \$4.98

**KITTY WELLS - MCA-149 ALBUM \$2.98**  
Dust On The Bible; I Dreamed I Searched Heaven For You; Lonesome Valley; My Ones Are Waiting For Me; I Heard My Savior Call; The Great Speckled Bird; He Will Set Your Fields On Fire; We Buried Her Beneath The Willows; One Way Ticket To The Sky; I Need The Prayers; Matthew Twenty-Four; Lord, I'm Coming Home.  
8 TRACK TAPE - MCA-149 \$4.98

Continued

## PEOPLE

following an orientation flight in the Air Force Thunderbirds' supersonic T-38 aircraft. "It will take a month to get this smile off my face." Barbara had visited Randolph Air Force Base in Texas in May to record ten Air Force public service announcements and wound up hitching a ride in the celebrated airplane. While at the air base, she was named an honorary Air Force recruiter for her support of the Air Force.

Leona Williams, wife of Merle Haggard, and a fine singer in her own right, has been busy this summer with personal

appearances and recording work. In between Texas road dates, Leona has been working in the studio in Nashville with Porter Wagoner as producer.

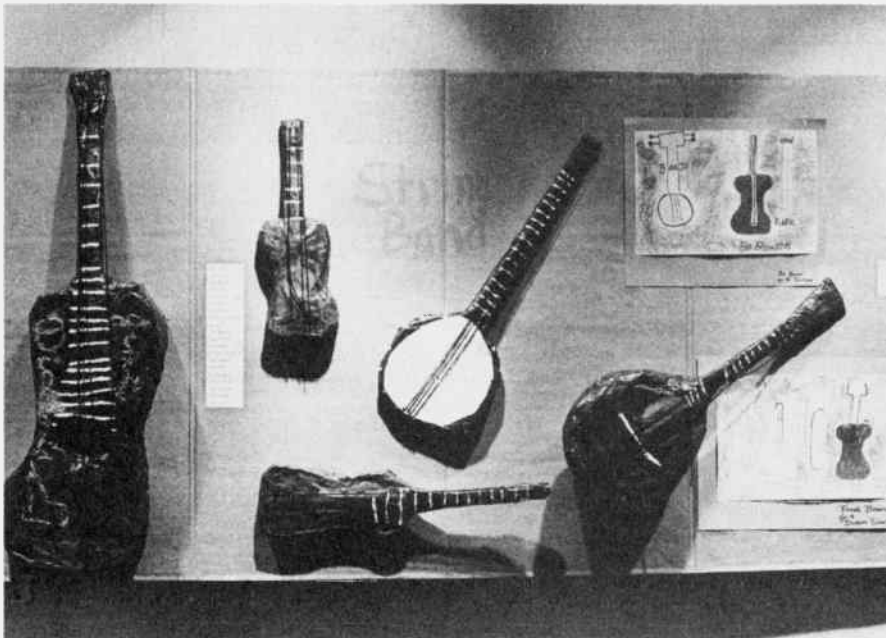
On the cover of Tom T. Hall's new album, *A Soldier of Fortune*, is a prize possession of the Hall family. The photo was taken in the Hall's living room and the couch is a genuine antique that reportedly once belonged to King Henry VIII of England. The couch is said to have cost somewhere in a healthy five-figure range.

Office personnel at the Country Music Hall of Fame Library and Museum get some strange calls. One club owner from New Jersey called and said a guy named T. Texas Tyler wanted to play the club. "I'm not sure Tyler is alive," asked the club owner. "It can't be, he is dead," answered the employee at the hall of fame. "Well, have you seen the body?," questioned the club owner.

The Oak Ridge Boys held a huge picnic for their fan club members during Fan Fair this year. Over a 1000 fans came out to their offices at Hendersonville near Nashville and ate lunch and talked with The Oaks. The Oak Ridge Boys said they loved it and the picnic was worth all the time and expense.



## Nashville Children's Exhibit Special View of Country Music



Children have their own special, uncluttered vision of the world—insights often magical in their simplicity and honesty. And when a bunch of kids are given free rein to express their feelings about country music through art and poetry . . . well, the results are as colorful and refreshing as a rainbow following a cool spring shower.

The education department of The Coun-

try Music Hall of Fame and Museum, in cooperation with the metropolitan school board, this year gave 2,000 Nashville children between the ages of seven and thirteen a chance to learn and write about country music. A representative sample of the children's work, called *A Child's View of Country Music*, was displayed in the Hall of Fame during May, June and July. The unusual exhibit was considered highly

successful by museum officials.

The brilliant multi-media exhibit included drawings, posters, water color portraits of country stars, poems written on loose-leaf notebook paper and a paper-mache assortment of various musical instruments. In addition, two of the poems, set to music by Nashville songwriters and recorded by students, were played constantly in the gallery room. A favorite subject was Dolly Parton's *Coat Of Many Colors*. Four different interpretations of Parton's song were on display. One poster, created by fourth grader Gary Jackson, showed a lady sitting by a fireplace weaving a coat of many colors. Another poster, drawn by fourth grader Kim Pope, depicted a man in a rainbow coat with *Joseph's Coat* written all over the poster. Written at the bottom were these lines from Parton's song:

*As she sewed she told a story from the Bible*

*She had read about a coat of many colors Joseph wore*

An interesting aspect of the exhibit was the originality of the many song-poems on display. Some of the titles included *My Best Friend*, *Nameless Song*, *I Love My Daddy*, *The Pillow Fight*, *Tennessee Frogs*, *Down That Ole Country Road* and *The Death Of The Fonz* (P.S.—*My Fonz Is A Frog*). The two songs chosen to be



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**ROY ACUFF - SM-1870 ALBUM \$2.98**  
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8 TRACK TAPE - 8TM-1870 \$4.98

**GENE AUTRY - CS-1035 ALBUM \$2.98**  
Mexicali Rose; (Take Me Back To My) Boots And Saddle; Have I Told You Lately That I Love You; You Are My Sunshine; South Of The Border; Sioux City Sue; Mule Train; Someday You'll Want Me To Want You; Goodnight Irene; Home On The Range; I Love You Because; That Silver Haired Daddy Of Mine; Red River Valley; Buttons And Bows; Back In The Saddle Again.  
8 TRACK TAPE - 18C-01035 \$4.98

**TONY BENNETT - C-30240 ALBUM \$2.98**  
Because of You; Cold, Cold Heart; Rags To Riches; One For My Baby; It Had To Be You; I Left My Heart In San Francisco; I Wanna Be Around; This Is All I Ask; The Good Life; The Shadow Of Your Smile; Who Can I Turn To; Yesterday I Heard The Rain; For Once In My Life.  
8 TRACK TAPE - 18C-30240 \$4.98

**THE CHUCK WAGON GANG - CS-9804 ALBUM \$2.98**  
Open Up Them Perly Gates; Thank God For Calvary; I'll Never More Stray; Where The Soul Never Dies; This World Is Not My Home; You Can Depend On Him; I Walk In The New Jerusalem Way; Sundown; Heaven's Really Gonna Shine; The World's Greatest Story; That We Might Know.  
8 TRACK TAPE - 18C-00642 \$4.98

**JESSIE COLTER - SM-11822 ALBUM \$2.98**  
Diamonds In The Rough; Get Back; Would You Leave Now; Hey Jude; Oh Will (Who Made It Rain Last Night); I Thought I Heard You Calling My Name; Ain't No Way; You Hung The Moon (Didn't You Waylon?); A Woman's Heart (Is A Handy Place To Be).  
8 TRACK TAPE - 8TM-11822 \$4.98

**BING CROSBY - SM-11737 ALBUM \$2.98**  
Oh Lonesome Me; Heartaches By The Number; Four Walls; Bouquet Of Roses; Wabash Cannon Ball; Wolverton Mountain; Hellow Walls; A Little Bitty Tear; Jealous Heart; Still.  
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**TOMMY DORSEY - ANL1-1087 ALBUM \$2.98**  
Marie; Star Dust; Little White Lies; I'll Never Smile Again; Yes Indeed; Boogie Woogie; Opus One; Song of India; Who?; Royal Garden Blues; Once In A While; I'm Gettin' Sentimental Over You.  
8 TRACK TAPE - ANS1-1087 \$4.98

**MERLE HAGGARD - SM-11823 ALBUM \$2.98**  
My Love Affair With Trains; Union Station; Here Comes The Freedom Train; So Long Train Whistle; No More Trains To Ride; The Coming And The Going Of The Trains; I Won't Give Up My Train; Where Have All The Hobos Gone; Railroad Lady; The Hobo.  
8 TRACK TAPE - 8TM-11823 \$4.98

**MERLE HAGGARD - SM-11825 ALBUM \$2.98**  
Soldier's Last Letter; Shelly's Winter Love; Jesus, Take A Hold; I Can't Be Myself; I'm A Good Loser; Sidewalks Of Chicago; No Reason To Quit; If You've Got Time; The Farmer's Daughter; I've Done It All.  
8 TRACK TAPE - 8TM-11825 \$4.98

**ENGBERT HUMPERDINCK - E-34719 ALBUM \$2.98**  
Raindrops Keep Falling On My Head; Help Me Make It Through The Night; My Love; I'm Stone In Love With You; The Most Beautiful Girl; And I Love You So; Love Me With All Your Heart; Talk It Over In The Morning; Leaving On A Jet Plane.  
8 TRACK TAPE - 18E-34719 \$4.98

**HARRY JAMES' GREATEST HITS CL-9430 ALBUM \$2.98**  
Vocals By: Frank Sinatra; Helen Forrest; Dick Haymes and Kitty Kallen.  
Cribbrin; You Made Me Love You; All Or Nothing At All; Sleepy Lagoon; I Had The Craziest Dream; Two O'Clock Jump; Cherry; I'll Get By; I've Heard That Song Before; It's Been A Long, Long Time; The Man With The Horn.  
NO TAPE AVAILABLE

**FREDDY MARTIN - SM-11886 ALBUM \$2.98**  
Tonight We Love; Santa Catalina; Warsaw Concerto; Why Don't We Do This More Often; Bumble Boogie; Grieg Piano Concerto In A Minor; I've Got A Lovely Bunch Of Coconuts; Cumana; Managua, Nicaragua; The Hut-Su Song.  
NO TAPE AVAILABLE

**CLYDE MCCOY - SM-311 ALBUM \$2.98**  
Basin Street Blues; Farewell Blues; Sugar Blues; Hell's Bells; Slues In The Night; Sugar Blues Boogie; St. Louis Blues; Limehouse Blues; Memphis Blues; Mama's Gone, Good-bye; Wabash Blues; Tear It Down.  
8 TRACK TAPE - 8TM-311 \$4.98

**GLENN MILLER - ANL1-0974 ALBUM \$2.98**  
Sunrise Serenade; A String Of Pearls; In The Mood; Pennsylvania Six-Five Thousand; Little Brown Jug; Chattanooga Choo Choo; Moonlight Serenade; Tuxedo Junction; (I've Got A Gal In) Kalamazoo; American Patrol.  
8 TRACK TAPE - ANS1-0974 \$4.98

**THE OAK RIDGE BOYS - C-33935 ALBUM \$2.98**  
Lord I've Been Ready For Years; No Earthly Good; Jesus Knows Who I Am; The Same Old Fashioned Way; I'm Winging My Way Back Home; Where The Soul Never Dies; Its Been Done; Doctor God; Jesus Was There; Last Train To Glory.  
8 TRACK TAPE - 18C-33935 \$4.98

**THE OAK RIDGE BOYS - C-32742 ALBUM \$2.98**  
Give Me A Star; Put Your Arms Around Me Blessed Jesus; Loves Me Like A Rock; You Happened To Me; What A Time We Will Have Over There; He's Gonna Smile On Me; The Baptism Of Jessie Taylor; Why Me; Freedom For The Stallion; He.  
8 TRACK TAPE - 18C-32742 \$4.98

**BUCK OWENS - SM-11827 ALBUM \$2.98**  
Love's Gonna Live Here; Gollin' Around; Excuse Me (I Think I've Got A Heartache); I Can't Stop (My Lovin' You); Kickin' Our Hearts Around; Act Naturally; Under Your Spell Again; Above And Beyond; Nobody's Fool But Yours; Under The Influence Of Love.  
8 TRACK TAPE - 8TM-11827 \$4.98

**PATTI PAGE - CS-9326 ALBUM \$2.98**  
Tennessee Waltz; Cross Over The Bridge; Old Cape Cod; (How Much Is That) Doggie In The Window; Mister Mississippi; I Went To Your Wedding; Mockin' Bird Hill; Allegheny Moon; With My Eyes Wide Open I'm Dreaming; Changing Partners; Detour.  
8 TRACK TAPE - 18C-09326 \$4.98

**RAY PRICE - CS-8866 ALBUM \$2.98**  
Crazy Arms; You Done Me Wrong; City Lights; Invitation To The Blues; I've Got A New Heartache; Who'll Be The First; Heartaches By The Number; The Same Old Me; Release Me; One More Time; My Shoes Keep Walking; Back To You; I'll Be There.  
8 TRACK TAPE - 18C-00094 \$4.98

**LOUIS PRIMA AND KEELY SMITH SM-1531 ALBUM \$2.98**  
That Old Black Magic; It's Magic; Just A Gigolo; I Ain't Got Nobody; I'm In The Mood For Love; I've Got You Under My Skin; Suona Sera; I Wish You Love; Oh Marie I Got It Bad And That Ain't Good; Embraceable You.  
8 TRACK TAPE - 8TM-1531 \$4.98

**JIM REEVES - ANL1-3014 ALBUM \$2.98**  
Four Walls; Goodnight Irene; Why Do I Love You (Melody of Love); Auf Wiederseh'n Sweetheart; The Hawaiian Wedding Song; Welcome To My World; From A Jack To A King; My Happiness; Mona Lisa; You'll Never Know.  
8 TRACK TAPE - ANS1-3014 \$4.98

**TEX RITTER - SM-1292 ALBUM \$2.98**  
Blood On The Saddle; Samuel Hall; Bury Me Not On The Lone Prairie; Little Joe The Wrangler; The Face On The Barroom Floor; Boll Weevil; Billy The Kid; Streets Of Laredo; Sam Bass; Rye Whiskey.  
8 TRACK TAPE - 8TM-1292 \$4.98

**JEAN SHEPARD - SM-11888 ALBUM \$2.98**  
A Satisfied Mind; I Learned It All From You; Under Suspicion; You're Calling Me Sweetheart Again; I Love You Because; The Other Woman; Beautiful Lies; Take Possession; You're Telling Me Sweet Lies Again; I'd Rather Die Young; Why Did You Wait?; Don't Fall In Love With A Married Man.  
8 TRACK TAPE - 8TM-11888 \$4.98

**FRANK SINATRA - M-11883 ALBUM \$2.98**  
I've Got The World On A String; Three Coins In The Fountain; Love And Marriage; From Here To Eternity; South Of The Border; The Gal That Got Away; Young At Heart; Learnin' The Blues; My One And Only Love; The Tender Trap.  
8 TRACK TAPE - 8TM-11883 \$4.98

**CARL SMITH - CS-8737 ALBUM \$2.98**  
Hey Joe; There She Goes; Old Lonesome Times; Are You Tasing Me; I Feel Like Cryin'; Doorstep To Heaven; Let Old Mother Nature Have Her Way; The Little Girl In My Home Town; If You Saw Her Through My Eyes; You're Free To Go; Gettin' Even; I Overlooked An Orchid.  
8 TRACK TAPE - 18C-00010 \$4.98

**SONS OF THE PIONEERS - SING HYMNS OF THE COWBOYS - ANL1-2808 ALBUM \$2.98**  
Suddenly There's A Valley; God Speaks; The Place Where I Worship (is the Wide Open Spaces); All Wild Things; He Walks With The Wild And The Lonely; Wonders Of God's Green Earth; The Woodsman's Prayer; Song Of The Bandit; The Mystery Of His Way; Star Of Hope; How Will I Know Him (When He Walks By); I Believe.  
8 TRACK TAPE - ANS1-2808 \$4.98

**BILLIE JO SPEARS - SM-11887 ALBUM \$2.98**  
Mr. Walker, It's All Over; Stand Bu Your Man; That Man; Home-Lovin' Man; Take Me To Your World; Harper Valley PTA; Mollie Brown; I Don't Wanna Play House; He's Got More Love (In His Little Finger); Ode To Billie Joe.  
8 TRACK TAPE - 8TM-11887 \$4.98

**JO STAFFORD - SM-11889 ALBUM \$2.98**  
You Belong To Me; Shrimp Boats; Make Love To Me; Georgia On My Mind; Jambalaya; Come Rain Or Come Shine; No Other Love; Day By Day; The Gentleman Is A Dope; The Trolley Song.  
NO TAPE AVAILABLE

**THE STATLER BROTHERS - CS-9878 ALBUM \$2.98**  
Daddy Sang Bass; King Of Love; And You Washed In The Blood; Pass Me Not; Less Of Me; Things God Gave Me; Led Out Of Bondage; Just In Time; The Fourth Man; Oh Happy Day.  
8 TRACK TAPE - 18C-09878 \$4.98

**HANK THOMPSON - M-11881 ALBUM \$2.98**  
A Six Pack To Go; Honky Tonk Town; Hangover Heart; Drundard's Blues; Bubbles In My Beer; Hangover Tavern; The Wild Side Of Life; Anybody's Girl; Warm Red Wine; A Broken Heart And A Glass Of Beer.  
8 TRACK TAPE - 8TM-11881 \$4.98

**TAMMY WYNETTE - BN-26486 ALBUM \$2.98**  
Stand By Your Man; Singing My Song; Take Me To Your World; Apartment No. 9; I Don't Wanna Play House; D-I-V-O-R-C-E; Your Good Girl's Gonna Go Bad; Run, Angel, Run; Too Far Gone; Almost Persuaded; My Elusive Dreams.  
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**FRANKIE YANKOVIC - CS-9287 ALBUM \$2.98**  
Blue Skirt Waltz; Who Stole The Keeshka?; Hoop-Dee-Do; Beer Barrel Polka; The Last Time I Saw Henry; Happy Time Polka; I've Got A Wife; Milwaukee Polka; Too Fat Polka; Just Because; Pennsylvania Polka.  
8 TRACK TAPE - 18C-00184 \$4.98

**RAYMOND FAIRCHILD - RRRF-254 ALBUM \$2.98**  
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8 TRACK TAPE - TRR-254 \$4.98

recorded and played in the display were *My Broken Heart* by Stephanie Hewlett and *Why Did It Happen To Me* by Lori Cutler. Both children are fourth graders.

The basic concept of the program simply involved educating children about the rudiments of songwriting. Diana Johnson, deputy director of the Hall of Fame and Museum, said country music was an effective musical teaching aid because of its simplicity and story lines.

"The idea was to teach kids about songwriting," Johnson said. "Of course, you have to do something simple with young kids, like teach them how to listen to songs and write a few simple lines. Country music is good because it is so lyrical. It is easier on the ear for the young child. Country music is very similar to folk music, and a song like *Coat of Many Colors* is a good story song. I actually think all the drawings turned out very good."

To kick off the exhibit back in late April, the museum tried a different concept—a reception geared to children. "We normally hold cocktail parties to open exhibits," Johnson said. "But we had a kiddie reception this time and served peanut butter sandwiches and cookies. We invited all the kids, and they in turn invited their parents. The kids loved it, and it was a lot of fun."



## Bob Nolan, 1906–1980

In the January-February issue *Country Music* ran a rare interview with Bob Nolan, who we called "country music's greatest songwriter." On Monday, June 16, he died of an apparent heart attack at the age of 72.

Born in New Brunswick and raised in Boston and Arizona, Nolan, Tim Spencer, and Roy Rogers formed the Sons of the Pioneers in the early 1930s, and his rumbling baritone gave the Pioneers much of their distinctive sound. With his song-

writing he virtually shaped America's conception of the West, having written well over 1,000 songs, many of them classics, including *Cool Water* and *Tumbling Tumbleweeds*.

Bob Nolan was a poet first and last, and painted a vivid, memorable, exquisitely beautiful West with his songs. He was an American original, one of the all time great American songwriters, and will be deeply missed.

DOUGLAS B. GREEN

## Honky Tonk Queen Selected At Gilley's Club

The scene could have come straight out of a Hollywood movie. Standing right on stage at the sprawling honky tonk to beat all honky tonks, Gilley's Club in Pasadena, Tex., directly in front of a houseful of wild, beer-guzzling Texans, were a group of smiling, decked-out cowgirls. And the one with the biggest grin was Cindy Boyd of Austin, Tex. She had just been named Honky Tonk Queen of America. She also had a winner's check for \$1000 in her hand and a brand new pair of Nocona Boots to show for her victory. Right offstage, dressed in hip cowboy gear, singer Michael Murphey was waiting to begin his final set of the evening.

For Murphey, who wrote and recorded the hit song, *Wildfire*, among other fine songs, this night would end his Great American Honky Tonk Tour. On selected stops along the way, like Cain's Ballroom in Tulsa, Okla., a honky tonk queen contest was held to coincide with Murphey's tour. The finals at Gilley's consisted of girls who had won their home town contest.

In addition to his tour, Murphey has been busy writing the screenplay and scoring the music for an upcoming movie, *Hard Country*. The movie is based on a previously unreleased Murphey song of the same name, and is being co-written by screenwriter Michael Kane, whose screenwriting credits include *Hot Stuff* and *Smokey the Bandit II*. The film stars Jan-Michael Vincent and includes actor Michael Parks and singers Tanya Tucker, Charly McClain and Katie Moffit. The story centers around a guy who works in a chain link fence factory in Midland, Tex. and haunts the honky tonks at night.

Although the story sounds like a remake of *Urban Cowboy*, Murphey said *Hard Country* will be more earthy and realistic. Murphey and Kane hung out in Texas honky tonks for days at a time, picking up ideas for scenes and dialogues.

"We wanted to make a picture that didn't stress dancing so much," explained Murphey, a native Texan who now lives in Taos, N.M. and is closely aligned with the spiritual philosophy of the American Indian. "Also, *Urban Cowboy* brings in a lot of big name stars like the Eagles and Linda Ronstadt. We don't do that. We use my band and we play a house band in a little honky tonk out in the middle of nowhere. Our picture focuses on the story more than music. It is a movie about growing up in West Texas and how hard life is for an average Joe.

"I am not talking competitively about *Urban Cowboy* because I want to see it succeed," Murphey added. "I just think ours is different. I really want to see movies about country music make it. We just feel we are in the new genre of urban-western films and there are going to be a lot of them. The story brings out things about growing up in Texas that I have seen and lived. Texas can be a confining place for someone like myself with Baptist parents who had aspirations to get out to other places. Texas is different than any other place in the country except the midwest in that you are confined by space. It is so big. What we try to convey in the picture is that feeling of being confined."

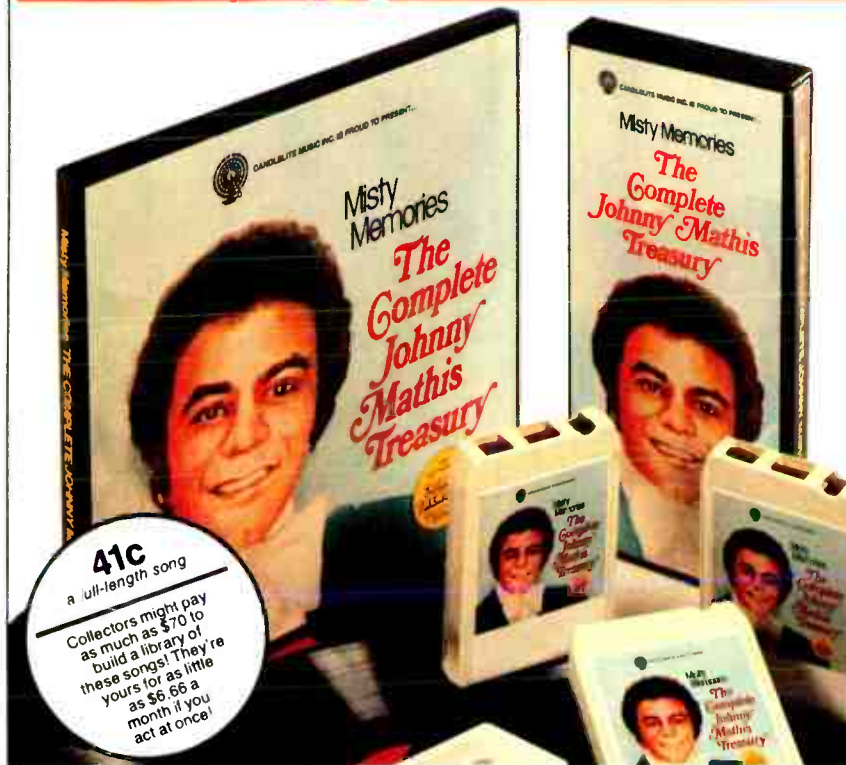
Murphey also said *Hard Country* would probably be released in early 1981. The film is directed by David Green and produced by Marble Arch Production Co.





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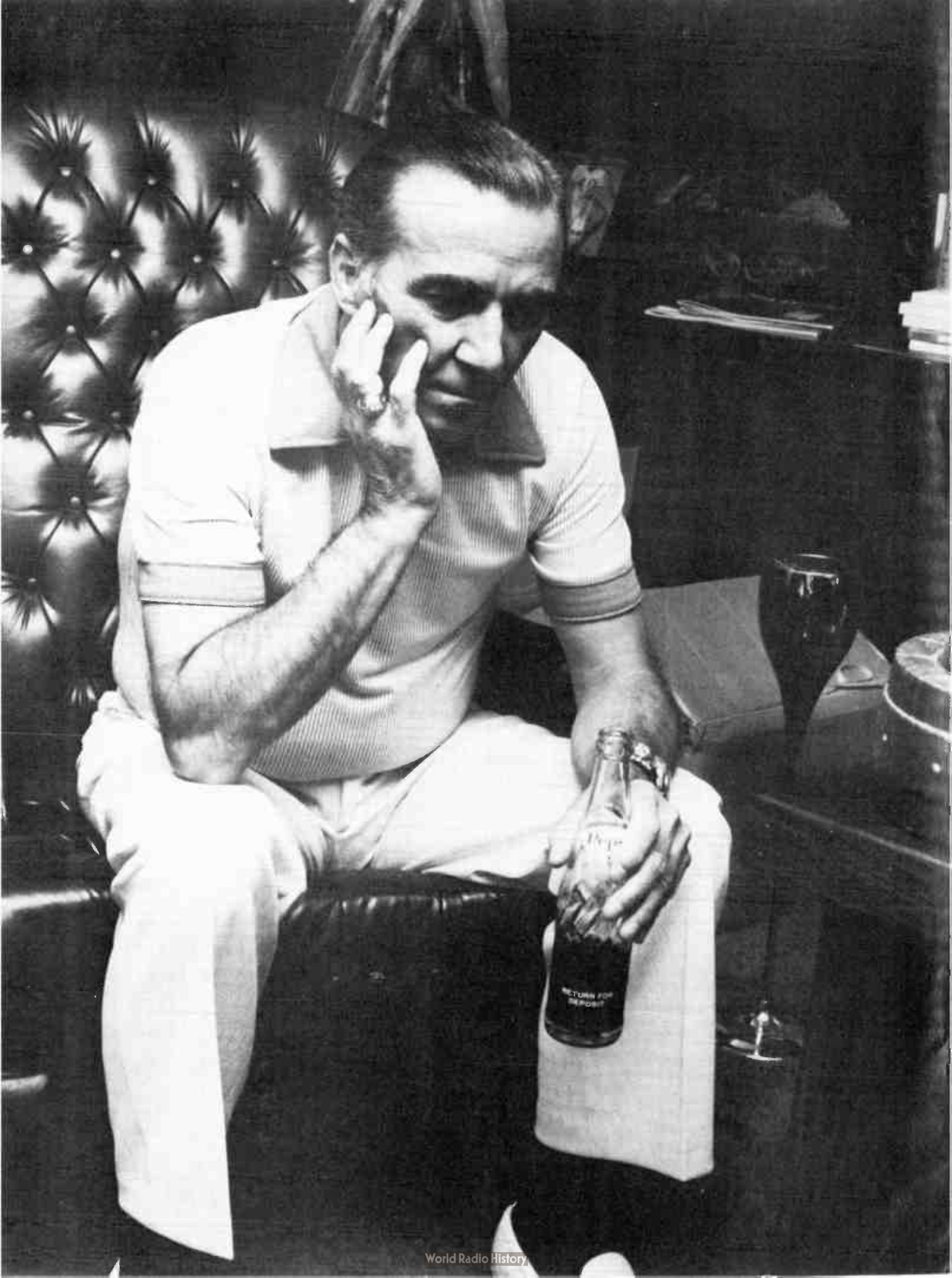
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# Faron Young: Live Fast, Love Hard and Keep on Cussin'

By Bob Allen

Everybody in Nashville, it seems, has a Faron Young story. Some of them are complimentary, some are outrageous. Some of them are printable, some are not. Some of them are true and some of them...

"Half of 'em are made-up or added-to stories," Faron insists, leaving no doubt that he's heard them all too. He is sitting behind the large desk in his immaculate, spacious office on the top floor of the office building he owns a few blocks from Music Row. This building, he will proudly tell you, cost him about \$500,000 to build some years back. He's since been offered well over \$1 million for it.

Faron is chain-smoking cigarettes and as he opens the top drawer of his desk looking for a match, everything in there—coins, paper clips, pens, pencils—seems to be arranged perfectly. Faron himself—despite 30 years of hard living in the music business, and despite all the stories of his legendary escapades and excesses that continually circulate—does not look worse for wear. Oh sure, at 48, his temples are graying and he's a little thicker around the middle than he was 20 years ago when he was riding the crest with songs like *Hello Walls* and *Congratulations*. But otherwise, he looks just fine: just as healthy and cocky as ever.

"You know," he says as he finally comes up with a match and lights his cigarette. "Everybody's always sayin' 'Faron Young did so and so,' and by the time it gets to the fifth person, it's a completely different story. Hell, I can carry a girl home and within a week, everybody's sayin' I took her out and screwed her. Or if somebody sees me alongside the road, talkin' to a policeman, within a week they got it where I been handcuffed and taken to jail.

"I have had a couple of run-ins," he ad-



mits lightly, "but I wouldn't say but ten percent of them stories were really true."

You see, part of Faron's problem is this: Back in 1955, he recorded a million-seller called *Live Fast, Love Hard, Die Young And Leave A Beautiful Memory*.

Fortunately or unfortunately, depending on how you look at it—Faron never got around to following his own advice. He took care of the living fast and loving hard part, but he never quite faded out into a memory. As one of the first generation of Nashville artists (he came to town in 1950), he was—and is—a contemporary of

greats like the late Hank Williams, Johnny Cash, Webb Pierce, and Ernest Tubb. While many of these men have either retired, become obscured by fame, or left us with nothing more than memories, Faron has somehow managed to stay right out there in the middle of it all these years—always just as feisty as ever. As he once told his old friend Johnny Cash when Cash came down to make a guest appearance at a Nashville club in which Faron has an interest, "Me and you started out about the same time, and look what happened, you got rich and famous and I had to open me a joint!"

Admittedly, there have been times in Faron's long career when his records went higher in the charts than they do now. And he is the first to admit that the sands of change in the music business have shifted under his feet a little. But still, if he's bitter about all this, he's not showing it. He still spends about 150 days a year on the road, playing fairs, Ramada Inns, and high school gymnasiums. And when he's home, he still spends hours going through songwriters' tapes, looking for another monster hit like *Hello Walls*.

"Hell, with 78 top ten records and 14 number ones, I can't make anything near what a new artist with two or three hit records can make," Faron explains, as if he's still somewhat puzzled by the incongruity of this. "Yet I can still outdraw 'em and outshow 'em. I see guys like Pride and Glen Campbell go out and make 20-25 thousand dollars a night, and I guarantee you, can't none of 'em do a better show than Faron Young! Yet I only make \$4,000 a night. But it's just the way the world turns and I'm not knocking it.

"You see," he adds, "I've won all those (CMA) awards: *Singer of the Year*, *Song of the Year*. But I got 'em back in the lobby of the Andrew Jackson Hotel. There

was nothin' put on network TV about it back then, so it didn't up our price at all. But like I say, it's just a change of the times."

Young has often been referred to as a "throwback" or a "survivor" of another musical era. In an age when musical tastes appear to be shifting drastically, and many artists are drastically trying to shift styles in order to keep up with them, Faron has clung steadfastly to the hairstyle, the stage clothes, the musical direction and even the songs that made him famous nearly two decades ago and have kept him periodically in the charts since. If you see a Faron Young concert, you're damned sure going to hear *Hello Walls*, *Four In The Morning*, *Live Fast*, etc., *Sweet Dreams*, *Goin' Steady*, and *Here I Am In Dallas (Woman, Where The Hell Are You?)*

"I've played Des Moines, Iowa every year for 25 years in a row," he explains as he lights another cigarette off the butt of the one he has just finished. "And every year a fan will come up all disappointed and say, 'Last year, you told a joke about your mother-in-law, but you didn't tell it this year!' And they wanta hear those songs even though I get sick of singin' 'em and I've actually had musicians quit my group on account that they were sick of playin' them. But the man who pulls money out of his wallet to come and see me wants to hear me sing what he's heard Faron Young sing all these years. If a guy buys a ticket, then hell, I feel like he's hired me!"

This sort of loyalty and hard-headedness on Faron's part often tends to cloud the numerous contributions and strides he's made in the country music business in the 30 years since he first came to Nashville. Though his detractors will fault his often blunt outspokenness and his occasionally crude public displays, there are dozens of musicians—some famous and some still starving—who remember Faron for the money he lent them, or the job he gave them, or the simple encouragement he offered at a point which they most needed it. Like Roger Miller, who got his start in Faron's road band, is fond of saying, "Faron Young has got a *heart* that's as big as his *mouth*."

And then there are a few others Faron has crossed paths with during his three decades in the business. Like:

*Elvis Presley.* "When we used to play the (Louisiana) Hayride together, I'd check into a motel and if it had an extra bed, I'd let him sneak in so he wouldn't have to pay. Later, when he got famous, he returned the favor by carryin' me on the road with him and payin' me double what I was otherwise gettin'. But I quit because I was wastin' my damned time. Everybody in the audience was screamin' so much, it sounded like an Army chow hall! I told him afterwards, 'I love you like a brother, but for God's sakes, don't put another singer out there. Get you a damned juggler

or a magician or somethin'!" "

*Hank Williams:* "I used to run with Hank. Really, he was my idol and I was kind of his go-fer. Hank was two different people, like a Jeckyll and Hyde. When he was sober, he was the sweetest guy in the world, but when he was on the juice, he'd get belligerent and tell people they didn't



have no talent and hurt their feelings. But he didn't cuss and I cuss like a drunken sailor, and he would stay on me about that. If he got mad at me, he'd call me Ray Price, and if he got mad at Ray, he'd call him Faron Young. That was his way of insulting us."

*Willie Nelson.* "After I had a million-seller with *Hello Walls* and *Congratulations* (in 1961), both of which he wrote, he come to me and said he needed money and wanted to sell *Hello Walls* to me for \$1500. I told him not to dare sell it, and if he promised he wouldn't, I'd loan him some money. He borrowed \$500. Well, Willie's next (songwriter royalty) check was for about \$16,000. The next time I was sittin' in Tootsie's," Faron laughs, "this big long arm come around my neck and he grabbed me and kissed me right on the mouth!"

*Kris Kristofferson.* "When he first came to town, I gave him work puttin' up panelling when I was building my building. About every 45 minutes, he'd come up to the office and wanta sing me another song he'd written. And he had the most God'awful songs back then! About the fourth time he came up, I told him the only singin' I wanted to hear was that hammer and that saw cuttin' wood. Later, I told him he was goin' to have to start goin' around to some of them bars and watchin' what those ole drunk housepainters would get up and play on the jukebox. Because back then, he was writin' in a completely different vein. I guess he finally took my advice, because he went on and wrote some fantastic songs. Back then, I could've signed him to my publishing company for \$50 a week and would have been a multi-millionaire today. But at that time, he could *not* write."

*Charley Pride.* "I carried Charley on the road when everybody else was still afraid to. I paid him \$100 a night. At first, I'd introduce him and the applause would taper off. Finally, I just told him to get to that microphone before they could applaud and tell them 'Don't be alarmed by my permanent suntan!' And then just start singin'. It



*Faron has been involved with many forms of entertainment. In 1965 he had the winning horse in the Ruidoso Downs (far left). Directly above he poses at the Winston Cup Grand National Race. Far above, in an early picture with Ben Keith and Gino King.*

worked and before long, he started stealin' the damned show! Pretty soon, he was a legend. Later, he did the same thing that Elvis did: he carried me on tour and paid me twice what I'd been makin'. We still keep in touch. He calls me 'The Banty Rooster' and I call him 'Super Jig'."

\* \* \*

Faron Young was born 48 years ago on a dairy farm near Shreveport, Louisiana. "That's where I learned to cuss." He laughs. "Ain't nothin' dumber than a cow, even a pig's smarter. That's a proven point!"

As a child, he idolized Frank Sinatra and Nat King Cole, and he began singing pop music in the first grade. "Later, I played in combos around Shreveport and somebody would give me a quarter to play five songs—like I was a human jukebox. Well then I started workin' those honky tonks, singin' country music, and somebody would come up and give me five





bucks to do *one* song. It didn't take me long to figure out what I better start singin'!"

Faron eventually landed a spot on the Louisiana Hayride, and then moved on to a slightly higher paying job with Webb Pierce who, at the time, was already something of a local star. "Webb was like a daddy to me, really," says Faron. "He gave me a job and he had Floyd Cramer as a piano player. We all lived in this little house down in Shreveport. I made \$35 a week."

Webb and Faron headed for Nashville in 1950 and joined the Grand Ole Opry. In 1951, Faron signed with Capitol and his first release was *Goin' Steady*. "My first record was my first *hit* really," he explains. "It stayed number one for 44 weeks. Eventually it sold over a million. In fact, it still sells, even though it's been out for 27-28 years. I still get payments on it."

For the next few years, the hits continued for Faron. In 1955, after a brief stint in the Army, he made a motion picture and played the part of a sheriff. Since then, he's had the nickname "The Singing Sheriff." "Back in the old days, you had to have a little monicker," he explains.

Things really turned the corner for Faron in 1961 when he became one of the first Nashville artists to score with an original Willie Nelson song; this one was *Hello Walls*. "Willie had come to Nashville and had a crew hair cut and was the All American Boy," Faron recalls. "I ran into him in Tootsie's and he sang me a couple of tunes and I fell in love with them immediately. I recorded 'em both: *Hello Walls* and *Congratulations*, and had a two-sided hit. *Hello Walls* was number one, *Congratulations* was number two, and *Hello Walls* crossed over and went number one pop."

In the mid 1960's, Faron got involved in a highly original and somewhat costly project when he started the *Music City News*, the first national magazine to be devoted exclusively to country music. "All

the rockers had their different magazines, but we didn't have a fan magazine," he explains. "But the thing almost broke me. I sold the last of my interest in it a while back and I sat down and figured it out. I never made a dime out of the *Music City News*. Not even enough for a postage stamp!"

But finally, after all the years of hits, and the time-consuming publishing venture; after 12 years with Capitol Records and then 15 more years with Mercury, the steam seemed to begin running out of Faron's career. "When I left Mercury, I just quit," he recalls. "I didn't record for over a year. I was dejected because the last couple years, I'd been bustin' my ass, cuttin' some good records and they weren't even puttin' 'em out! I just got to where I said the hell with it. Maybe I've been in the business too damned long!"

Then, enter producer Eddie Kilroy: "I knew him one time years ago, when I lent him a thousand dollars to get back home to Texas," Faron remembers. "He never forgot that. He called me one day and he had this *Billboard* book that listed all the hits I'd had over the years. He told me he'd always wanted to produce me and he said if I'd let him, he'd find me a record deal. And he did, with MCA."

Adding to Young's overall disheartenment around the time he left Mercury, was his separation from his wife of 22 years. ("I just been married once," he replies to the obvious question. "Ain't that enough!?!")

**"I ran into Willie Nelson in Tootsie's and he sang me a couple of tunes and I fell in love with them immediately. I recorded them both and had a two-sided hit. Hello Walls was number one, Congratulations, number two. Hello Walls crossed over and went number one pop."**

"Goddamn, if you're married that long and have some kids, and then have to get away from it, there's a helluva void," he sighs. "You talk about bein' lonely... That's when you start lookin' around for a pistol and wonderin' should you or shouldn't you?"

Which somehow leads back to all the crazy Faron Young stories that never seem to stop floating around town... What about them. Faron? Some of them are obviously true, like the incident out in Oklahoma a few years back which led to an arrest on a morals charge. In this case, in fact, if it hadn't been for the intervention of the governor of Tennessee himself, Faron would have been extradited back to

Oklahoma to face an embarrassing trial. Fortunately, the charge in the case was later dismissed by a judge who decided that an affidavit from an eyewitness, "raises a grave question as to the evidence supporting the original allegation." But by that time, of course, the newspapers had all had a field day with it—at Young's expense. Faron says it just about always seems to happen like that.

"I got arrested in Nashville one time when I bought a drink for these two undercover cops," he explains. "I was in this bar that didn't have a license to sell liquor by the drink. When they first told me who they were, I didn't believe 'em. They tried to put cuffs on me, and I got up and knocked one of 'em through the wall. The other one pulled a pistol on me and I backed him out of the damned building, and him with a pistol in his hands! Next thing you know, there's ten patrol cars out there. I finally got a resisting arrest charge, got fined \$87, and they wrote it up in the papers, naturally. And there it is in the house the next morning and my kids are reading it. I'd put up a bond and I figured that took care of the fine and I was done with it. Then two days later, I pick up the paper and there's a picture of me on the front page and it said under it, 'SINGER BEING SOUGHT!' Like I'm goddamned John Dillinger or somethin'. Later that day, I was goin' down to the bank and I saw a couple of cops and I said, 'Are you all lookin' for me?' And they said, 'Hell no!' And I said, 'Hell, my picture's on the front page of the paper where it says I'm bein' sought. And if you sonofabitches can't find me, then you couldn't pick your brother out of a nigger picnic!'"

But Faron insists that his wilder days are now over, and as far as the drinking that led to some of these incidents goes, "the last couple years, I've been 99.9 percent straight.

"I'm not proud of some of the things I've done," he admits. "Like to go on stage drunk when people have paid to see me. So I don't get drunk at concerts no more. I've really concentrated on behaving myself."

The obvious question is where does Faron go from here? At 48 is he looking toward retirement from the road; or is he really intent on reactivating his career again? Would he like to be as big as he once was?

"Hell yes! And bigger!" he replies. "I went through a hundred tapes the other day, lookin' for some good songs. I'm goin' back to the *old* Faron Young on my next album. I'm goin' back to the old 'four /four' hard country. I just want to put out country records and let 'em go, just like Willie did with *Blue Eyes Cryin' In the Rain*, and not give a damn. I think they'll go pop quicker if you don't give a damn!"

"*Hello Walls* sold way over two million, and it was my biggest seller ever. But really, I hope I haven't had my biggest one yet, because I'm sure as hell still lookin'!" ■

# Bronco Billy: Goes Westward with

The instructions I had as I landed in the New Orleans airport, were to look for a Bronco Billy shuttle bus that would take me to the Fairmont Hotel. Naturally, I assumed that since I was invited by Warner Brothers and Elektra/Asylum records, everyone on the bus would be there for the world premiere screening of *Bronco Billy*, the new Warner Brothers film starring and directed by Clint Eastwood.

I sat down next to a man sporting a cowboy hat who said he was from a radio station in Chicago and here to see *Bronco Billy*. We started talking about Clint Eastwood and how he would fare in a cowboy movie. I told him I was from *Country Music Magazine*, and I couldn't wait to see Clint sing in the film. The big news was that in one sequence Clint does a duet with Merle Haggard.

"Clint Eastwood is going to sing in a cowboy movie?" said a man sitting behind us, apparently listening to our conversation. "Yes," I said. "Aren't you here for *Bronco Billy*?"

"No," said the young gentleman. "I'm here for a paper goods convention from New Jersey. You mean to tell me that Clint Eastwood, alias, Dirty Harry, The Lonesome Stranger, The Man With No Name, is singing in a country music movie? I can't believe it."

It wasn't difficult to understand that the film would have some country music in it, after the current popularity of films like *Electric Horseman*, with Willie Nelson, *Coal Miner's Daughter* with Sissy Spacek playing Loretta Lynn, and the current release of *Urban Cowboy* starring John Travolta. In fact, according to *Record World*, there are approximately 19 films with a country music theme scheduled for release in 1980. And what holds all of this together, and makes it all the more interesting, is that one film, *Every Which Way But Loose*, starring non-other than Clint Eastwood, was the first film lately to feature country music heavily, and has paved the way for all the rest.

"Why not?" was my answer. "Didn't you see *Every Which Way But Loose*? That starred Clint Eastwood, with music by Mel Tillis, Charlie Rich, and Eddie Rabbitt. The soundtrack album went to number two on the country charts and had four number one singles. "Also," I said, "that film was the second largest grossing film in Warner Brothers' history."

"Well," said the young paper goods salesman, "it seems that everyone is trying to get into singing. And country music just seems to be the one avenue a lot of stars are trying to get into. Clint Eastwood is an actor, not a singer. And, how *country* could he be? He just couldn't be country enough."

"Well," I said with a little less conviction (as I had thought of those points on the plane trip down). "I wouldn't judge it before I saw the film, but maybe after, I'd have a better idea of how *country* Clint and *Bronco Billy* really were."

"I wouldn't see the film just for those reasons," said the obviously jaded New Yorker from New Jersey.

Realizing that I would get nowhere trying to justify Clint Eastwood's singing in a cowboy movie, I said no more, and anticipated tomorrow when we Bronco Billyites would in fact, see Mr. Eastwood in the film, and then have time to sit down and chat with him and get the real story of how he got into this seemingly foreign venture.

Armed with Bronco Billy workshirts, handbags and belt-buckles, the next day over 200 members of the press were shuttled to the Robert E. Lee Theatre to see the film. This time, the bus was filled with only the press and radio luminaries, but the conversation was somewhat similar to the day's before. "Clint's gonna sing, huh?" seemed to be the question on



everyone's mind.

And sing he did. Only about four lines, as he listened to the car radio and sang along with Merle Haggard to the tune of *Bar Room Buddies*. Haggard also appeared in the film. He performs in a bar and has to duck a bottle that hits his microphone during a fight scene.

But, *Bronco Billy* wasn't only about country music, or Clint Eastwood singing. The film is an action-comedy about a real-life cowboy hero, Bronco Billy McCoy, the owner of a traveling wild west show, who performs trick riding and shooting stunts for audiences across the country. His troupe includes Doc Lynch, master of ceremonies (Scatman Crothers), Two Gun Lefty LeBow, a one armed roustabout (Billy McKinley), Lasso Leonard James, a rope-artist (Sam Bottoms), Chief Big Eagles, a snake-dancing relative of Geronimo (Don Vadis), and the Chief's wife, Lorraine Running Water (Sierra Pecheur).

Bronco Billy is a man who represents traditional values and holds out against modern cynicism, which gets somewhat complicated when he meets the leading lady, Antoinette Lily (Sondra Locke) a New York heiress, who after being left by her husband, joins the Bronco Billy wild west show as Billy's assistant.



# Clint Eastwood Haggard and Milsap

By Rochelle Friedman



Lily is about as cynical and pessimistic as Billy is naive and optimistic, which leads to personal conflicts and some very funny sequences. Bill has a very clear-cut idea about right and wrong. When the entire ensemble tries, unsuccessfully, to hold up a train, even the hard-nosed Miss Lily, after some coaxing, gets into the act. Additional mishaps include a bank robbery, a tent fire (which subsequently leads them to have their tent remade by members of a mental institution), and finally, the union of Bronco Billy and Miss Lily. All of this leads to what we have waited for all along, a happy ending.

But we weren't satisfied. Not that we didn't like the movie. Most of us loved it. But we wanted some of our questions answered. What would I tell the young paper goods salesman if I ever met him again? So, at a luncheon at Arnaud's restaurant we honed right in at the heart of the matter.

**Who's idea was it for you to sing in the film? (This was the first and foremost question Clint would hear all day).**

It was written that way. Not

that particular tune. The girl's reaction is very important right there. She obviously would hate that kind of music, or that kind of life, or anything else that the

guy's involved with. Well, just figuring from her background, she probably wouldn't like any kind of country tune, and a thing like *Bar Room Buddies*, she'd hate even more so. So the guy's just singing along with the radio, along with Merle.

**At what point did Merle come into the film?**

Well, there was a thing where we went into the saloon, so we figured why don't we get Merle Haggard. We'll put him in, and have him playing at the place. The radio thing kind of came about later. It was just a lot of people sitting around and think-tanking it. And then, Ronnie Milsap, (who sings the title tune and *Cowboys & Clowns*) they wrote *Cowboys & Clowns*, and I liked the song, I thought it was kind of a nice story and it fit.

**Have you sung before?**

Well, I once did the title tune of the film *Beguiled*. The film was a terrible flop. It was sort of a poem song at the beginning that I did. But the film was a terribly good success critically. But financially...

**Would you ever think of recording an album?**

I'm not very smart on the music industry. I don't know what really goes over. I've discovered songs. I bought *The First Time Ever I Saw Your Face*, as a song and it became a number one record. I've done a few things like that. But I really don't think of myself as an expert... especially on country-western music.

**What do you think about country music? Do you like it?**

I think country-western music has taken the place of pop music. In the old days, when I was a kid, pop music was for balladeers. Frank Sinatra, Dick Hames, Billy Ekstine. They told very simple straight out stories and you understood them very well. And country music, you didn't understand too well. Nowadays, country are the balladeers and you understand the stories very well, and the pop music...

everybody is screaming, yelling and jumping through the window. And so, they've reversed themselves. So country, to me, has become much more appealing in recent years. But I think some of the country musicians are tremendous. I was a jazz freak when I was a kid, so I didn't understand either one of them. I still love jazz, very much, but I do like country-western music. In fact, in *Every Which Way But Loose* we used Charlie Rich who I like very much. I know Ronnie Milsap is of a newer generation of country singers, but he's a tremendous success. I guess country

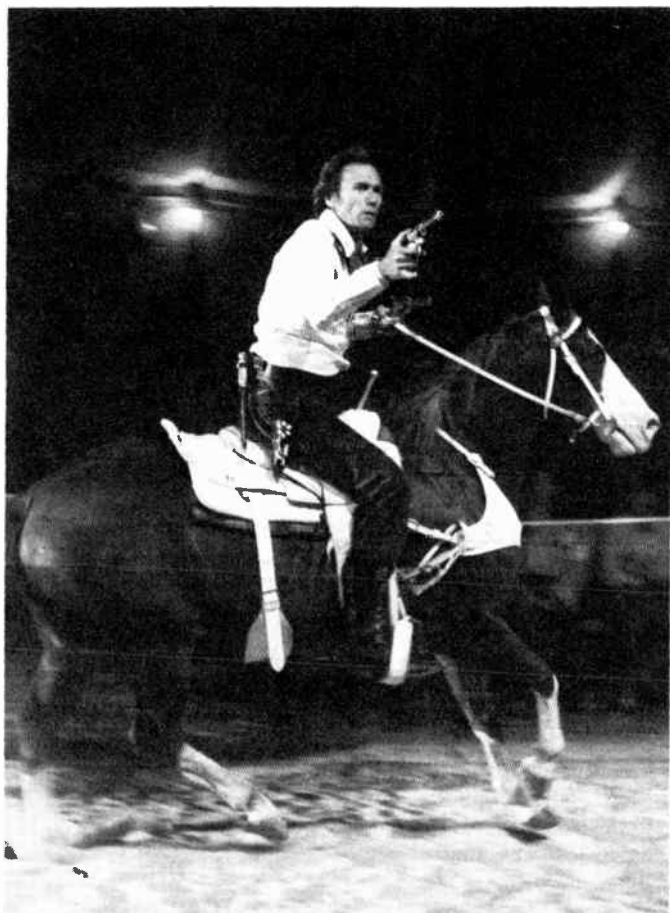
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**"Pop music used to be the story music. But I think now, country music has taken it over solely."**

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music has taken the place of pop music. I think it's terrific. But I have to admit there was a time in my life when I was growing up in the pop world. Hank Snow and those guys were the big deal. I didn't really understand that very much. But now as pop music has changed so much, I appreciate country. Of course, I think people like Kenny Rogers is as good a singer... certainly much more literate than most pop singers.

Pop music used to be the story music. But I think now, country music has taken it over solely. Pop music is stories built in the sound. Nowadays, pop music, it seems to be the sound is everything, and whether you understand anything doesn't mean to make too much difference. You have to listen to it about a hundred times before you really know what the story is involved with. But nowadays, as far as who, well I think Rogers is tremendous. Merle and Ronnie, I wouldn't have used them in the film if I didn't think they were good. Snuff (Garrett) recommended them



*Bronco Billy McCoy (Clint Eastwood) performs trick-riding stunts in his traveling wild-west show.*

and I researched and listened to them. But I knew them a lot better before we used them. I was boning up on them and started listening to them.

**Have you ever been to Nashville?**

I went down there once and recorded some records for an outfit called Citron. The guy talked me into coming down there and I got on the plane and I went down there and recorded four sides. I got off the plane in L.A. and the guy calls me and says Citron just went out of business. And I said, "Wait a second, they just went out of business? I just got off the plane." I guess they called the guy as I was leaving the airport and told them that they were folding up shop.

**What about Clint Eastwood the actor? The man famous for the Dirty Harry's and the Lonesome Stranger movies. Do you think that the audience will react favorably to this switch?** I think there comes a certain point in one's life when you figure there's a lot of things you want to try. I've been in a good

position to try. I've been lucky enough to get a certain amount of success where I can try other things. Not that I put down detectives, I'll do those. If I could find a great script I'd do it tomorrow. But it's very hard to find material. Good material or adventuresome material that takes you into other directions is very hard to come by. There are a lot of things that come your way that resemble things you've done before. But it's hard to find innovative stories. Most of the stories I get are just repeats of stuff I've already done.

**Which types of films do you like better?**

I like every film for what it is at the time. It's very hard to go back into past films and analyze them because I'm in another thought pattern right now. I'm an actor with a certain expression (or lack of it) and certain type of presence that's a little different. That's maybe a little hard to understand if you try analyzing it. But the public seems to understand it on an instinctive level, so they

buy it for that reason. But sometimes, when people can't break some things down to abc's and paragraphs and sub-paragraphs, etc., they get bugged by it. It annoys them. And I've just been kind of an oddity, I guess, for a lot of so-called film-buffs. But now I think it's changed a little bit in recent years. I don't know whether it's the films or the variety of films that's changing. That would be only for some outside person to be the judge. I always tried to go by the material. The material's the king on everything.



*Billy's assistant, Miss Lily, (Sondra Locke) takes a spin.*

\* \* \*

Those questions answered, we were treated that evening to a dinner/concert where we got a chance to see Clint and Merle Haggard sing a live version of *Bar Room Buddies* which went something like this:

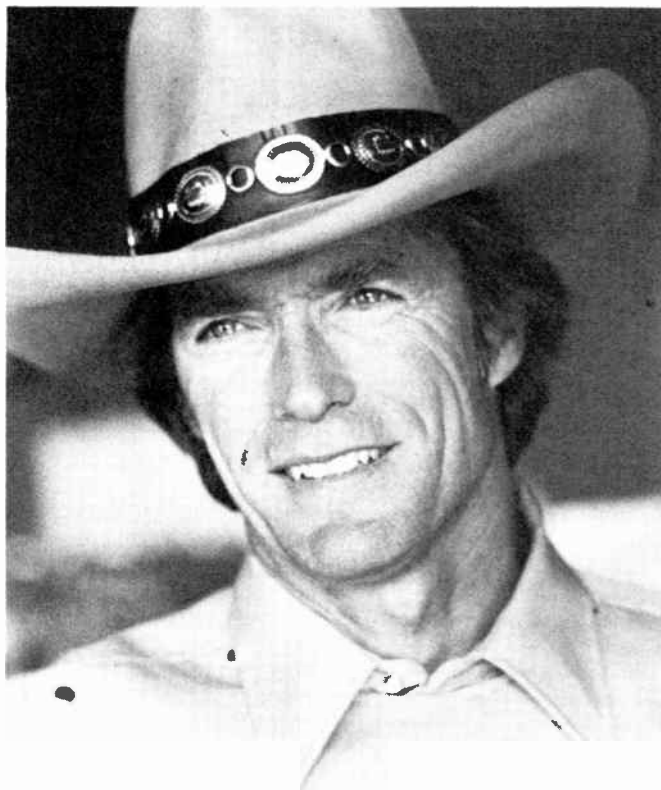
Merle: I wanna sing when the feeling gets right

Clint: Let's harmonize: we'll be dynamite

Merle: There's always some lady alone at the bar

Clint: And you always let her know just who you are.

*Bar Room Buddies*, which after just two weeks on the *Record World* charts went to number 38, is only one single from the soundtrack album which features Merle Haggard, Ronnie Milsap and Penny DeHaven. Others scheduled for release include *Cowboys and Clowns* by Milsap, *Bayou Lullabye* by Miss DeHaven and *Misery and Gin* by Merle Haggard. The album was produced by Snuff Garrett, who also produced the *Every Which Way But Loose* album. With a combination like that, maybe even a paper goods salesman from New Jersey would buy the album. ■





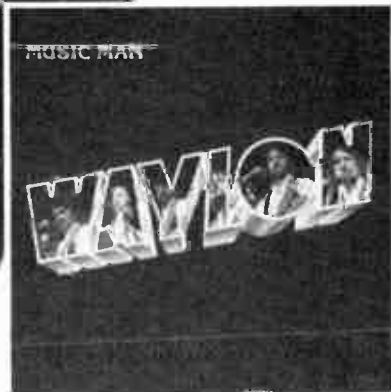
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*Emmylou Harris is 33 now. Salt and pepper streaks her long dark hair like a premature snowfall in October that barely dusts the ground. A few soft lines etch their way across the canvas of her face, earned perhaps by new maturity and a second baby. She was once an obscure folk singer struggling for recognition in a musical climate dominated by male artists. Now she has performed on stage with many of her heroes, herself a legend to countless others. She admires George Jones, Linda Ronstadt, Willie Nelson, Tammy Wynette, Johnny Cash, Dolly Parton, Merle Haggard, Loretta Lynn, the Kendalls. (She reveres the Everly Brothers.) She is pleased by her own success in country music, since she feels she has come into it as an outsider without legitimate roots. She shuns television appearances and slick packaging. She has arrived at the pinnacle by some private back road, refusing to compromise either herself or her music. She is enigmatic, idealistic, intelligent, romantic, strong, vulnerable and fiercely protective of her privacy. And, if things continue, Emmylou Harris may well turn out to be a genuine superstar despite herself: one of the few ever to scale the dizzying heights by doing exactly—and precisely—what she wants to do. When you listen to her new album, *Roses in the Snow*, you may feel like she just gave you a gift . . . roses for you from . . .*

# Emmylou

By Kip Kirby

The Eighth Annual 49'er Banjo, Fiddle & Guitar Festival has been in progress for several hours. Ominous skies have socked in the scenic Cal State campus at Long Beach, but the crowd of 8,000-plus is undaunted, among the typical outdoor concert ocean of blankets, beer coolers and frisbees. Straw cowboy panamas and faded denim cut-offs weave in and out through the ant's nest of tanned bodies. A large Confederate flag waves in the breeze.

The crowd, many with out-of-state license tags and long drives behind them, has sat patiently through performances since mid-morning. Buck White and the Down Home Folks have finished their lively bluegrass set to good response, and singer/songwriter Steve Goodman has just proven once again that the live electricity he generates on stage has never been captured properly on records. Still ahead is the afternoon's main event: the scheduled appearance of Emmylou Harris and her Hot Band.

Behind the outdoor stage, a semi-circle of rented motorhomes double as dressing rooms for the performers. Emmylou arrives in shorts, kneesocks and a football jersey, waving a framed picture of her with baby Meghann taken by a photographer friend who has driven down here today from Los Angeles to give it to her. Emmy chats with former band member Rodney Crowell and his wife, Rosanne Cash, bending over to coo at their baby, Caitlin, who is being introduced early to the California concert scene. Then she ducks into the trailer to change clothes for the show.

At 5:01, only a minute behind schedule, Emmylou and the Hot Band take the stage to resounding applause. Above the striped canopy over their heads, a small patch of blue sky breaks optimistically through the clouds.

The loudspeaker introduction for the band is blared out by grizzled, tattooed Phil Kaufman, Emmy's road manager, inherited from the old days with

Gram Parsons. "Make that *road mangler*," he insists cheerfully. Behind the musicians, roaming the perimeters of the stage like a watchful priest, is Eddie Tickner, Emmy's longtime personal manager, making sure nothing goes wrong.

Within the confines of her organization, Emmylou is well safeguarded. Things run smoothly, quietly, professionally, like some well-oiled piece of machinery.

The performance catches fire with the crowd from the first scorching guitar note. The Hot Band is aptly named: if they were any hotter, they'd be frying eggs up there instead of trading blistering licks. Old favorites tumble out one after another: *Two More Bottles Of Wine*, *Luxury Liner*, *If I Could Only Win Your Love*, *The Bottle Let Me Down*, *Return Of The Grievous Angel*, *Poncho And Lefty*.

The group is revved up to full throttle now: Frank Reckard on lead guitar, John Ware on drums, Mike Bowden on bass,

Hank DeVito on pedal steel, newcomer Don Johnson proving himself in the corner on keyboards, Ricky Skaggs up front with Emmy, adroitly switching from acoustic rhythm guitar, to fiddle, to mandolin. Musicians this good make it easy for Harris to relax, giving herself over to the music, eyes half closed, long hair blowing in the late afternoon breeze, her pure reed-thin notes stretched taut in the air, supported by the harmonies of Skaggs, Buck and his daughters, The White Girls.

Skaggs, who has seemingly become an integral part of Harris' music, has carried her deeply into the heart of traditional bluegrass on her last two albums, exploring with her mountain melodies and tunes as old as the foothills. If Rodney Crowell was Emmylou's twin musically, Skaggs is like a younger brother. Their voices blend into eddies swirling around each other's, comforting, tender, solid.

"It's what Gram told her when she was first starting out," Phil Kaufman tells me later.







"He told her always to pay for the best and she'd play *with* the best. She's never forgot it."

An hour and ten minutes into the set, the show ends with a fevered rendition of *C'Est La Vie* that brings what's left of the seated audience wriggling ecstatically to its feet. A girl sways dreamily to the beat of the music, a large and very live snake draped casually around her neck. A boy who has spent most of the concert lying on the ground with his eyes closed suddenly jumps up and yells, "Awwrrrrright, Emmy, you sure do kick ass!!" After the obligatory encore—*One Of These Days*—she is gone. The audience seems contented as it slowly begins to pick its way out of the field toward the parking lot.

When *Beneath Still Waters* hit the top of the charts recently, it marked Emmylou's first number one single in two years. That was more significant than the mere feat of toppling its competition for that week: it was the fruition of an Emmylou Harris dream that nearly caused a minor rift between artist and record company.

*Beneath Still Waters* was released from the **Blue Kentucky Girl** album, an unabashedly romantic bluegrass-flavored album that signaled a dramatic shift in direction for Emmylou. It was an album she believed in, felt compelled to make, but not one exactly up the alley that Warner Bros. had been expecting her to go. They felt that she was right on the verge of making *The Big Crossover* into pop, based on the sales of her high-energy country/rock singles.

A bluegrass album, said the label delicately, would be an uncommercial venture and therefore a step backwards for her.

Emmylou did not agree. "I felt very strongly about **Blue Kentucky Girl**," she says matter-of-factly. "I hoped it would turn out to be successful in the sense of making a statement. Like, see, you *can* put out straight, honest country music *and* be successful at the same time."

Harris does not understand the mad rush to cross over. She describes instead the difficulty she encounters when she's on the road, trying to tune in a

genuine country radio station, although she has no trouble whatsoever locating many stations that play what she refers to as "homogenized elevator country music."

"To me," she says simply, "there is more meaning in keeping things country." She does not want her own music to become homogenized or hybrid.

You get the feeling, talking with her, that control is a critical component in her career, something she has been fortunate to retain over the years ever since the release of her stunning debut album, **Pieces Of The Sky**, in 1975.

Nonetheless, one can appreciate the shock of Warner Bros. which had assumed that she would naturally continue in the direction of more country rock, and suddenly found itself faced with the prospect of peddling an album by one of its biggest stars who was deliberately bucking the rushing currents of contemporary mainstream music.

As it turned out, **Blue Kentucky Girl** was one of Harris' very best selling albums, paving the way for its successor, **Roses In The Snow**. And if Warner Bros. thought **Blue Kentucky Girl** was bluegrass. . .!

Graceful in victory, however, Emmylou is quick to intercept in her label's defense. "It's easy for an artist to look cynically at the record company, but I think artists have to appreciate where the record company is coming from and what they have to deal with. I mean, if I were a record company," she laughs, "we'd *never* put out any records because we'd never have any deadlines and we'd spend our entire lives in the studio perfecting records!"

"Warner Bros. has always let me do exactly what I want. They've never come down on me and demanded that I cut a certain kind of record. They respect success, and I guess they respect the fact that perhaps I have a success that doesn't follow any particular formula. They trust that I know

what I'm doing and that Brian (Ahern, Emmylou's husband) knows what he's doing in the studio."

*Pause. Blink.* "I sell a certain amount of records, anyway. I have a very loyal constituency who will buy my records no matter what I do."

In other words, she wants her albums to sell well, hopes that they will, but whether they sell 400,000 copies or a million copies isn't the issue to her . . . that her music's message reaches her audience *is*. She does not keep track of how many gold or near-gold or platinum records she has.

On a bookcase in her den sits Emmylou's first Grammy statuette. She won it last February for her vocal performance on **Blue Kentucky Girl**. Vindication of her dream. Realization of a rainbow.

Harris carried her vision a step further when she came out with the new bluegrass album **Roses In The Snow**, using no electric instruments. This time around, the record company was ready for what was coming, better prepared to deal with press clippings that marvelled in large black letters how Emmylou was crossing over, all right, only *backwards*.

Harris is unconcerned. She tries not to pay attention to critics who nail her in reviews, especially the ones who accuse her of staying in a rut.

"I think that's a negative way for them to look at it. Artists search all their lives trying to discover where they belong, and then the press comes along and picks on the very fact that you've found a style and are happy with it. What do they expect you to do—change your style completely and go into something altogether different? Something that you don't really want to do and wouldn't be happy doing?"

She shakes her head. "If I'm in a rut, let's just say that I'm very happy being *in* it, wearing my artistic blinders and working within the framework of my style."

She acknowledges that she may, in actual fact, be a bit of a pioneer these days, trailblazing a path back toward purer, more traditional forms of country music.

So, doesn't it seem ironic that here Emmylou Harris is—





a self-proclaimed "outsider" to the field — painstakingly recreating true grassroots country music, while the glittering awards seem to be going to artists trying like crazy to break out of that mold?

She considers the question thoughtfully. Then, "It's strange to me what's going on with country music today," she answers slowly, puzzling. "I don't really understand it. I think you have to let things happen naturally, not force them in a certain direction. The records I do, I do for myself and for the people who listen to my music.

"I try to make records for people who maybe wouldn't normally listen to country music. I mean, there's a whole young rock-oriented audience out there who listens to me sing *Coat Of Many Colors* and *To Daddy* . . . and they like it. Sure. *Blue Kentucky Girl* and *Roses In The Snow* are different directions for me. But there's a beauty and fragility in those albums that I think people will find irresistible if they sit down and really listen. . . ."

There's a touch of the crusader in Emmylou Harris. When many artists are leaping over the edge and abandoning the old country ways, she is leading a legion of new fans back on board. And she is being successful at it beyond belief: in its first two weeks of issue, *Roses In The Snow* racked up more than 215,000 sales. Not bad for a darkhorse acoustic bluegrass album.

When she is not on the road touring, Emmylou lives in a

sunny household of organized confusion, frantic comings and goings. Everyone in the family seems to have at least a hundred projects happening at once. Things have improved considerably since Emmy finally broke down and agreed to hire a housekeeper named Elena. Now, at least, there is a center in the chaos, an eye in the hurricane.

"I can't believe I waited so long to hire someone," she marvels. "I used to try to do *everything* myself, I was a real vegetable, trying to record, be creative, be a wife, be a mother, go on the road, take care of business . . ." A heartfelt sigh of relief. "I thought I was going to go right out the window until I found Elena."

What is a normal day around this comfortable, rambling California home nestled against the hills in residential Laurel Canyon?

*Normal?*

Emmylou leans back against the sofa, groans, laughs, sips coffee.

"This is."

At this point, there has been a steady procession through her front door within the course of a few hours. The phone seems to ring incessantly. Visitors drift in and out. Emmylou's daughter Hallie (pronounced "Holly") and Brian's daughter Shannon live with them, and now there's Meghann, the pride of the clan, old enough to crawl and investigate the world with fixated curiosity. Elena lives in; sometimes Vanessa Hendricks, Emmy's combination costumer/social secretary/make-up artist/close confidante, stays over to help keep things running smoothly. Emmy's husband, Brian, an overalled mountain of a man with layers of silent humor just beneath the surface of his imposing exterior, wanders in and out.

Then today has also included the *Invasion-of-the-Polaroid-People*. As a goodwill venture, with *Country Music Magazine*, the Polaroid Corporation has graciously offered to supply the cover picture and inside shots for this story in return for the rare chance to photograph Emmylou. The company has perfected a new professional film that will deliver premier-quality 8x10 color portraits on the spot, the debut of another



technological advancement in the photographic world.

Taking no chances, Polaroid has imported renowned photo-journalist Elliott Erwit for the occasion. Erwit and Henry Horenstein, Polaroid's energetic young publicity consultant for the project, have arrived promptly at Emmylou's house at 10:00 a.m. They are accompanied by an entourage of lights, cords, umbrella reflectors, film cases, about twelve miles of electrical cable and an enormous black camera. It begins to resemble a grand-scale photographic safari.

The shooting was scheduled outdoors, with Emmy situated strategically against the lush green foliage of her secluded backyard, but yesterday's ominous clouds have become today's rainy downpour. Everyone troops back inside, converting Emmy's spacious

living room into a convincing replica of a photographer's studio instead.

Emmylou is polite. She is cooperative. She obeys Erwit's verbal suggestions perfectly. She does not confide that she is camera-shy and dislikes having her picture taken. She poses docilely against the backdrop of a ruby-hued wall tapestry, draped in a black shawl, holding an artificial red rose. There is an ethereal, madonna-like quality to her at times, reminiscent of some earlier century. She seems smaller than her five-foot-seven inches. She is very, very patient.

Two hours later, the ordeal is over. The film has acquitted itself with flying colors, a true descendant of finest Polaroid ancestry. Magnificent color portraits of Emmylou, modern 60-second photographic oil paintings, lie strewn all over her





Emmylou with photographer, Elliot Erwitz.

dining room table. Everyone relaxes, pleased with the results.

Emmy dives into a bucket of Kentucky Fried Chicken that has been brought in, examining the pictures and commenting on her favorites. The best of the lot turn out to be the ones where Vanessa was holding Meghann up behind the camera, with Emmy beaming at her like a 1,000-watt spot light.

Hallie arrives home from school, barging into the kitchen to hug her mother, announcing loudly that she needs a new school bag. Shannon comes in a few minutes later and begins to amuse Meghann in her high chair. Brian appears, looks at the pictures of his wife wordlessly, smiling to himself. He says he is going over to the studio and leaves. Eddie Tickner shows up and there is a brief discussion about tomorrow's scheduled band rehearsal for the upcoming bluegrass tour. Emmy makes fresh coffee.

Later, in the relatively peaceful sanctuary of her den, she submits to the afternoon's interview. She appears to take her interviews seriously, working hard at them, answering each question in a clear, distinct voice, hands folded quietly in her lap. Sometimes she seems extremely open and candid, other times a guarded note creeps into her voice as if she is wary of an unexpected verbal fastball lobbed over the conversational net. Occasionally she reaches up to brush back a piece of hair that has fallen across her eyes.

I tell her about the first time I ever saw her perform. She had been dragged in to judge a promotional "Queen of the Silver Dollar" contest hatched

up by the local Nashville Warner Bros. branch before her showcase at the Exit/Inn. I remember that she looked uncomfortable and faintly embarrassed, as if she wished she could be anywhere else but there on stage, judging a bunch of crazies dolled up as pseudo Queens of the Silver Dollar.

Her eyes widen in surprise. She frowns slightly, trying to reconstruct the evening in question. It obviously comes back to her because she starts laughing.

"Well, but you know, the thing that really got me was I'd picked out a winner—it was a guy dressed up in drag!—and they overruled me. I thought if you were gonna do something like that anyway, it might as well be *funny*, and someone had told me Shel Silverstein originally wrote the song about a *guy*."

"But Brian was with me, and we ended up having a good time that night, as I remember. One time Lowell George and I were exchanging what we called our 'little horror stories' about that kind of thing. And he said that *he* had to go around to radio stations dressed up in a *chicken suit* to promote Little Feat's *Dixie Chicken*."

The idea of Lowell George in feathers is ludicrous, and I break up. "I don't know if it

was true or not," she adds, "but at least it made me feel a lot better myself!"

She tries to recall whether the Exit/Inn appearance marked her first time back in Nashville since she had lived there years before as a struggling singer, trying to support herself and Hallie by waitressing while her first marriage went down the tubes. She decides that it was.

"All in the same trip I met Dolly and sat in and played with George Jones at his club downtown—and then went back to my hotel that night and threw up from all the excitement!"

It was a long time ago, and I wonder if she ever thinks back to those days.

"No, not really. Maybe I could have made it in Nashville . . . but you know, I look on my life as the way things happen are the way they're supposed to happen. You can't let yourself look back and say, what if this or what if that. . . Sometimes I think that it would be nice if only I'd met Brian ten years earlier, but that's about as far as I go with fantasizing."

But then, I suggest, perhaps she wouldn't have met Gram.

The conversation misses an invisible beat. She picks up the unspoken thread with her words. There is a distant look in her eyes.

"Gram was—I know that a great deal of what I am as an artist is coming from him, from whatever it was that he exposed me to or brought out in me . . . I don't even think my singing then was—I think there's something in my voice *now* that just wasn't there until I sang with Gram."

Once in an interview, Harris referred to the quality that Gram gave her musically as "the high lonesomes." But she shakes her head. A curious

flatness comes into her voice. She looks across the room and speaks rapidly.

"It's still very emotional for me hearing his voice. When I hear the albums of us, it's like I hear myself singing with Gram, I don't hear my own voice."

"When Gram died, I felt like I'd been amputated, like my life had just been whacked off. In a sense, I was still trying to continue the momentum we had built together, as if nothing had happened. It was solid wall-to-wall emotion, and also day-to-day living. For me, it was just one of those critical points that everyone faces. I'd only been



...with baby Meghann.

with Gram a short time, but it was like everything had become clear to me in that short period, especially as an artist and a musician, which was very important to me. I didn't realize *how* important then because I'd never realized what kind of music was inside me before . . . until I met Gram. Then, when I knew, knew exactly what I wanted to do and where I was going—he was gone."

That was in 1973. For a long time afterwards, Emmylou refused to speak about that time in her life. The anguish, the confusion, the turbulence that she underwent all lay buried beneath her surface composure. And she survived, stronger and more secure. The years lent perspective, and she was able to use the legacy Parsons left her in her music.





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Eventually, while still in Washington, D.C., she was introduced to Brian Ahern through the efforts of Mary Martin at Warner Bros. (Martin is now Rodney Crowell's personal manager.) Warner Bros. consented to sign the fragile-looking folk singer if Ahern would agree to produce her. Their union led both to success in the studio and to marriage.

When she speaks of Brian, Emmylou takes on a sort of internal glow that radiates through her entire body, happy, complete, wifely, maternal.

"My relationship with Brian is different from the kind of relationship I've ever had with anyone else," she says. "There was no question in our minds almost from the very beginning whether we would marry because we were just so suited to each other. It was simply a question of our finding the time and the circumstances.

"Brian's very calm, very strong. People who don't know him well are a bit taken aback by him, I think; he can be very awesome and quiet." A glint of amusement lights her eye. "Cerebral is probably a good word to describe Brian. But you know, actually he has the most wonderful sense of humor of anyone I know."

Perhaps it is this inner tranquility and solidarity that she depends on most, since Emmy professes to fly off the handle and overreact to things at times on her own. She says Brian gave her a present once of a plaque that reads: *Licensed to Panic*. She thinks it is funny and accurate.

Those closest to the couple echo the opinion that their relationship is unusually deep and devoted. There is, they tell you earnestly, a spiritual bond and unspoken communication that flows like a river between Emmylou and Brian. They are the best of friends, soul mates, if you will.

Brian's uncanny production adaptability makes him an ideal artistic match for Emmy. He has an unerring ability to capture the heart and essence of each instrument, building clean, bright tracks to form a canvas for the incredible aching beauty of his wife's voice. It is his creativity as much as anything else that has led to



...with husband Brian.

Harris' phenomenal success.

As a result, Emmylou records spin on turntables from Boston to Belfast, from Denver to Dover, from . . . Boulder to Birmingham. She juggles the dual conflicts of career and family as skillfully as she can, wishing she had more time to spend at home but unable to give up touring. Unlike many artists, Emmy really enjoys the road and considers herself "the perfect road creature." When she isn't touring, she's in the studio with Brian.

"I can put up with all kinds of things when I'm traveling and performing that would destroy a normal person," she laughs. "On the road, nothing really rattles me."

Nothing? Not even the infamous Wembley spring tour overseas sponsored by international country promoter Mervyn Conn? A tour that was reportedly a disaster for its artists right from the start, plagued by inadequate transportation, interminable waits in pre-dawn hours at airports all across Europe, crowded planes and no road crews to help with heavy equipment?

Ah. There is something that is crucial to understanding Emmylou Harris: negative viewpoints do not appeal to her. In fact, she dislikes them intensely. Even when the negativity would seem justified—even, in fact, *overdue*—she is herself reluctant to join in the criticism. When backed into a corner by an impending negative fact, she will struggle visibly to pinpoint a positive way around it.

"Well," she begins carefully, "It wasn't the most enjoyable

tour I've ever been on, but no one forced me to do it. I knew ahead of time it was going to be hard and not like any other tour I'd done. True, I wasn't prepared for the four-hour waits at the airports and the luggage being carried inside the plane with us . . . and I had Meghann, my baby, with me, so I was freaked out by a few examples of corner-cutting that I thought bordered on dangerous."

A pause. She stops. She shifts her weight on the sofa, leaning back against the cushion. "But you know, hey, the audiences were there, what can you say? We don't have anything like it in the United States. There's no country music festival like that *here*. And Conn did book some really good hard-core country acts."

She's into it now, going great guns, warming up to the subject. "Sure the plane wasn't big enough, he could have had two planes for us. But I think that you should be able to get up as an artist under any circumstances, even when things aren't great, even when things are rough, and give people their money's worth. I mean, *they* don't know that you've been waiting for hours in a cold airport."

She offers the possibility that perhaps this next year she will go over by herself, just her and the band, and spend three or four nights in every town, maybe play some small clubs instead of big cavernous halls. She mentions that in July she will be touring Ireland and Belgium.

Hallie comes into the room to ask if she can build a fire in the fireplace for us. "You ought

to interview *me*," she announces, bringing in a load of wood. "I'm Emmylou Harris' daughter."

"Hallie!" says her mother.

For fun, I decide to pull a diversionary about-face and change the subject. If Emmylou could be any animal in the whole world, what would she be?

The question obviously comes to her from left field. She stares at me like she's suddenly had serious second thoughts about the advisability of talking to anyone who would concoct such a question.

"Uh," she hedges, "uh, gee, that's a hard one. . . ." A furrow crosses her brow as she searches for something for me. "Maybe a cat?"

"Come on, Mom, that's easy!" says Hallie enthusiastically, struggling to light the wood and having minimal luck. "You'd be a dog or a cat or a rabbit."

"Hallie," answers Emmy, "I'm the one being interviewed here." She considers for a moment. "I guess I'd be an owl because I'm a creature of the night."

I suggest that she reminds me of a deer: shy, slender, graceful, wide-eyed.

"Well, yeah . . . I was thinking about a deer myself," she says, brightening, getting into the spirit of the game. "I do like the woods and the idea of being swift, and I'd *like* to think of myself as graceful. But I keep having these klutzy things happen to me. . . ."

Her guitar straps fall off with implacable regularity. Strings



...with daughter Hallie.



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break with audible snaps. In Germany recently, during the middle of a television taping, a guitar stand fell over on her with a loud crash. And last year, she was dancing around on the stage in front of 7,000 people at a concert in Cincinnati when her boot heel got caught in a crack and she flew up into the air, landing with a huge thud right on her rump, still holding the guitar, legs flying.

The memory seems painfully fresh in her mind. She laughs ruefully. "What could I do? I told the audience which looked pretty shocked, 'Thanks, I'll do



anything for an encore!"

Maybe it's partly this fear of being . . . er . . . klutzy that's one of the reasons why she squirms at the mention of television, or more precisely, at her notable avoidance of it through her career.

She says she doesn't feel comfortable with the approach and caliber of most programs. They are not designed to showcase a musical artist. The sound and camera work is uniformly uncreative. ("They do an artsy sideways shot and you go, 'Ugh, puh-leeze!'") She says she would be a dismal failure in comedy skits. She lacks her friend Dolly's glib gift for gab so necessary for the quick-witted sparkling repartee of talk show formats. She gives the unspoken impression that underneath what frightens her most of all is the lack of artistic control she would have.

Although Harris is a facile and intelligent conversationalist, she claims to be stalked by a penchant for the volubly inane when cameras are rolling, a trait which would certainly be magnified for posterity by the merciless eye of the camera.

You get the distinct feeling that Emmylou Harris would *not* want to be sitting in her living room some evening confronted by her TV image, frozen forever on film, trading clever one liners with Johnny Carson.

Not even if it would help her sell more albums, make her name a household word, guarantee her financial security for the rest of her life?

"Of all the artists on our label," sighs a Warner Bros. promotion man with pointed emphasis, "Emmylou Harris is the one with the greatest chance for huge success—and the one

that probably wants it least."

"I have mixed feelings about it," she admits. "I worry that, at a certain point, success turns on you." She wonders instead if she's reached all the people she can reach with her music. She isn't at all sure that selling more albums to a wider audience wouldn't require watering down her music into a more acceptable commercialized form. She enjoys the luxury she has earned to keep exploring different musical pathways.

This interview is coming just prior to her summer bluegrass tour to promote *Roses In The Snow*. She has assembled an entire acoustic band to back her up on this particular tour, featuring several of the regulars from the Hot Band, Buck White, Ricky Skaggs, the White Girls (Sharon and Cheryl) and dobro impressario Jerry Douglas.

Sometimes she is frustrated by the fact that she sees bluegrass treated as a poor cousin of country music, a sort of "skeleton in the closet." Emmylou says she's heard musicians picking it late at night after a show, rolling down

the highways in their buses, in the dressing rooms, during informal jam sessions.

"But when it comes to going into the studio, they won't touch it on a record. Oh, maybe they'll do a token bluegrass number, but they won't make a real commitment, no matter how much they love the music. I guess that's what I was guilty of doing, too, for a long time, but finally I just said, hey, it's time so either do it or forget it."

The new bluegrass band still hasn't managed to get itself a name when it arrives in Nashville several weeks later to perform at the annual Acuff-Rose Golf Tournament. Wesley Rose, an arch-conservative in country music who wishes that all the contemporary upstarts could be traditional purists like Emmylou, has extended the invitation for her to appear before a packed industry audience.

It happens to be the first bluegrass date on a three-week promotional tour. The night after this show, Emmylou and the band leave for a sellout engagement at the posh Avery Fisher Hall in New York's Lincoln Center.

Tonight, before her performance, Emmy is seated at a long table between Wesley Rose and Roy Acuff. The banquet food is terrible: meat patties that taste like Ken-L-Ration, potatoes au gratin that glow pale orange with a greasy congealed patina. Nonetheless, she digs in with undeterred aplomb, smiling, chatting conversationally with Wesley and Acuff, putting down her fork to shake hands as people stop by to introduce themselves. She is very approachable.

She sits quietly attentive during the humorous long-winded trophy presentations, cupping her chin in her hand. Occasionally her eyes drift downwards and she seems lost in thought, retreating within herself to a private spot for a moment of introspection.

It occurs to me that Emmylou Harris is infinitely more complex than her surface candor would indicate. I wonder if there are many people who know the real Emmylou.

But if she is quietly reserved offstage, she springs alive with brilliant effervescence when she performs. She sweeps the

luncheon audience along some of the biggest names in the country music industry—in her lyrics, in the breathtaking quality of her shimmering voice.

With nine musicians crowded onto the cramped, makeshift stage, there's no spare elbow room at all, yet everyone plays like it's Carnegie Hall. The band unleashes a double-time instrumental that nearly shakes the lodge roof down. Emmylou capos up for a silvery version of Simon and Garfunkel's old hit, *The Boxer*. As the newest bluegrass tunes from *Roses* unfold one by one, her sheer joy in performing is apparent, her absorption in the music contagious.

She smiles. She claps. She ignores the distortion crackling in the borrowed sound system. There are smiles around the room so wide you could fall in and never be seen again. It's a great show, a true illustration of country music at its finest.

And the funny thing about it is, no matter how often you've seen her perform, there's that magic every time. She creates it, this special magic, her own mystique, despite the circumstances.

Then I remember what she said to me back in California as we sat sipping coffee by her fireplace.

"People don't want to hear about what's gone wrong. They only want to hear the music."

And, in the final analysis, music is what Emmylou Harris is all about. ■







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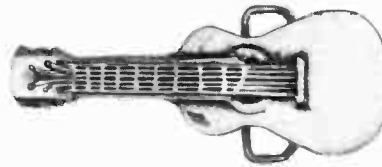
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# Everyday People

## Nothing is Forever

By John Pugh

Joyce Ann Fraley lights another cigarette, pours another cup of coffee, stares out the window and wonders how she can go on. Occasionally she looks up at one of the pictures on the wall of her adorable little daughter and is reminded of the only reason why she must get up to face one more day. If it weren't for little Tina, the sleeping pills in the kitchen might well have been swallowed by now. Joyce Ann Fraley is desperate, worried, constantly depressed. Joyce Ann Fraley is recently divorced.

"We were married for eleven years," she began. "He was working at Elgin Air Force Base in Fort Walton Beach, Florida, and I was working as a waitress in a restaurant and bakery in Niceville, Florida. I waited on him several times and we just became attracted to each other and pretty soon he asked me out. We went together four or five months and then he was transferred to Thailand. After he was over there a few months, he sent for me and we got married in Bangkok. We came back to the States a few months later. He worked as a telephone installer, putting in entire banks of telephones for military bases and construction sites, so we moved around a lot. He was a hard worker and a good provider, but he always drank a lot.

"Then about 1978 or '79 he began staying out. He'd say he was going to a bar to have a few drinks and would not come back all night. Next day he'd say he went to see his mother and she wasn't feeling well, so he spent the night with her. Or that he got so drunk he was too afraid to drive home, so he slept in his car. I kept asking him if there was somebody else and he kept telling me there wasn't. But all of a sudden I couldn't do anything to please him. The way I had cooked his meals for eleven years didn't suit him any more. The way I had ironed his clothes suddenly wasn't right. When he started like that, I knew something was wrong. I filed for a divorce, hoping to scare him back to his senses.

"Not long after that a man knocked on my door and asked for Jerry (her ex-husband). When I told him he wasn't here, he said, 'Then can I talk to you about your husband and my wife?' He sat down and told me everything. He had seen Jerry go in, spend the night with his wife and leave the next morning. I confronted Jerry with it, and he tried to laugh it off, saying it was

just a little fling. I told him to get out and not come back. Then she went back to her husband and Jerry came in crying, saying he had made a mistake and wanted to try again. Even after all that I took him back. The very next day he called after work and said he had changed his mind and was coming after his things. I said, 'Jerry, what have I done? Where have I gone wrong?' He said, 'It's not you. It's me. You're the finest woman I know. You've got a heart of gold.' That still didn't keep him from walking out on me. I knew then that I had no choice but to let the divorce go through."

*Our D-I-V-O-R-C-E becomes final today*

*Me and little J-O-E will be going our way*

*I love you both and this will be pure H-E-L-L for me*

*And I wish that we could stop this D-I-V-O-R-C-E*

She grinds out a cigarette and leans back on the sofa with a long, weary sigh. She has had a rough life and it shows, but still she is a reasonably attractive woman with the high cheekbones, brown eyes, black hair and sharp features that come from being one-quarter Indian. She has lost ten pounds since the divorce ("I can go for days without eating. Just no appetite."), which has made her trim figure begin to appear somewhat gaunt. She talks both pleasantly and candidly, but seldom looks you in the eye, a mark not of evasiveness, but rather of a mind lost in thought. She rarely smiles.

*Standing by the water*

*In the icy winter wind*

*I find no present comfort for my pain*

*With no gentle arms to hold me now*

*I know there's nothing worse*

*Than a day alone in Saunder's Ferry Lane*

"The first two months I felt like I wanted to die. I couldn't believe it had really happened. I'd find myself going to the door at five o'clock each night looking for him. All I could think was, 'Eleven years wasted.' If it wasn't for my daughter, I'd have just ended it all. He'd come back and get his things a little at a time, and leave me crying every time. Even after the

way he treated me, I'll always have some feeling for him. I've got over the hurt by now, but not the memory. That's something I'll never be free of. If I had to do it over, I don't know of anything else I could have done to keep us together. I swallowed my pride, forgave and forgot so many times. I kept thinking, 'He'll straighten up and settle down. All this will pass.' It passed sure enough, right out the front door.

"I blame it all on his drinking. I hate alcohol with a passion. I look at a drunk and I could just scream. That's the most sickening look I've ever seen. I kept trying to get him to go to Alcoholics Anonymous. He always said, 'I can quit anytime I want to,' I said, 'You're holding the bottle now. But one day the bottle will hold you.' I feel sorry for him now because that's exactly what has happened. Alcohol's wrecked a lot more homes than just mine. There's a thousand heartaches in one bottle."

*I wish I had the power to turn back the time*

*And live again the hours when he was all mine*

*For it hurts to see him running with that crowd downtown*

*But as long as there's a honky-tonk, he'll never settle down*

"My life ain't been no bed of roses. I've been there and I've seen it all. I'm just hoping for something better in the future. But I'm 47 years old and that's kind of late to be starting over. The worst part of it all is that it's all been for nothing. I got the house, but that's more of a burden than anything else. I can barely make the payments on what little he sends me. Everybody told me, 'Joyce, when you go to court, take him to the cleaners. Get everything he's got.' I said, 'No, I'm just not that type. Besides, he's got to live, same as I do.' Now I wonder if they weren't right. My nerves are bad and I can't eat. The doctor gave me some pills and they help, but I realize I can't be on them the rest of my life. Somehow I've got to tough it out by myself. I've learned one thing from this ordeal: nothing is forever. If you have anything, enjoy it today. If you want anything, reach out and grab it now. Because it probably won't be here tomorrow." ■





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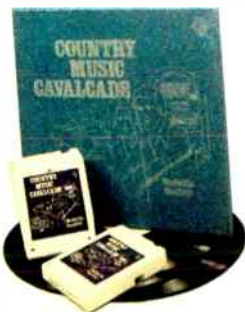
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# Record Reviews



**Emmylou Harris**  
**Roses In The Snow**  
Warner Bros. BSK 3422

With this album, Emmylou defies one tradition while preserving another. She has broken the unwritten industry code which says don't record bluegrass, folk, or gospel. It doesn't sell. A second notion

might be that if an artist pulls it off once, he or she would not be able to do it again with a follow-up album in the same vein.

Well, toss both of those notions out the window. This album was charted at number ten barely two weeks after its release. It's icing on the cake for everyone who flipped over *Blue Kentucky Girl* last year. This time Emmylou not only ventures into bluegrass, but she goes all the way with it, providing some of the purest "hillbilly" sounds to come from a major country star in many years.

The title song, *Roses In The Snow*, is a classic example, a tale of love and death told in simple terms, sparked from the

beginning by a high flying fiddle breakdown. But there's more to bluegrass than banjos, fiddles, dobros and mandolins. Because of the unique vocal phrasing and harmonies involved, it is one style of music that is almost impossible to imitate. Unless that primitive mountain feel comes naturally to the artists, then the result will be uneven.

No such problem exists here, however, as the group assembled could (if they haven't done so already) make Ralph Stanley and Bill Monroe sit up and listen. Tony Rice and Ricky Skaggs, both outstanding in their own right, supply some of the harmony vocals, along with Buck White's daughters, Cheryl and Sharon.

Johnny Cash is right at home with his part on *Jordan*. And finally, there are two more teasers featuring Linda Ronstadt and Dolly Parton. One listen to Emmylou and Linda on *Gold Watch and Chain* should leave you hungering for that long awaited trio album.

Emmylou's alluring pose on the cover certainly doesn't hurt anything. What a pleasant sight to contemplate happening upon while taking a stroll through the woods! The next best thing would be sitting around a mountain cabin listening to *I'll Go Stepping Too* and *You're Learning*. Since the latter is the more plausible of the two, I would highly recommend it.

BILL OAKLEY

## Various Artists

### Bronco Billy

Elektra SE-512

The soundtrack album for the film *Bronco Billy* is another chapter in the continuing saga of a very interesting subplot—"Hollywood Discovers Country Music." The realms of movies and music have joined together in Hollywood for mutual financial gain.

Burt Reynolds has done pretty well mixing film and country music, and there are presently two films doing quite well—*The Electric Horsemen* and *Coal Miner's Daughter*.

However, the predecessor for *Bronco Billy* is last year's box office and record store hit, *Every Which Way But Loose*. If this one does half as well as the aforementioned (which reached number two on the country charts and yielded four number



one singles) everyone involved stands to make a truckload of money. And that ain't hay, folks.

Both of these films starred Clint Eastwood and represent a character change from tough guy to nice guy. Both soundtracks were produced by Snuff Garrett and each album features some of country music's top talent.

Singing on this soundtrack are Ronnie Milsap, Merle

Haggard, Penny DeHaven, The Reinsmen, and Eastwood (on a duet with Hag). Haggard's solo performance of *Misery And Gin* is the centerpiece of the LP's first side. The album opens with Milsap singing a sappy tune, *Cowboys And Clowns* and closes with *Bronco Billy*, also sung by Milsap, which thematically sums up the movie within its lyrics.

Penny DeHaven provides some Cajun influences with *Bayou Lullaby* while The Reinsmen offer some nostalgia ala The Sons Of The Pioneers, with *Stardust Cowboy*.

The best shot at being a hit probably is the Haggard-Eastwood duet, *Barroom Buddies*. Not that Eastwood's that great a vocalist, but Haggard is. Eastwood's vocal is nearly a novelty which should garner mucho airplay.

Sandwiched around these

songs are several country-western instrumentals and a couple of John Phillip Sousa marches. Sounds exciting, doesn't it?

Well, nobody ever said Hollywood was anywhere near as exciting as real life. The backbone of country music has always been its accurate reflection of reality. Unfortunately, as country music goes Hollywood, some of that reality is distilled.

*Bronco Billy* may prove to be both a hit film and album. But compared to mainstream country music this album is a bit too watered down and comes nowhere close to approaching the music in another country music-based film—*Coal Miner's Daughter*.

The music may work well with the film, but the album by itself leaves much to be desired.

KELLY DELANEY

# Record Reviews

## Willie Nelson & Ray Price San Antonio Rose Columbia 36476

Ray Price did another album with this title in 1962, a Bob Wills tribute that came out long before it was fashionable. It sounded a lot like this one, with the famous Price shuffle beat right up front as he did justice to 12 Wills classics. Around that same time, give or take a year, Willie was playing bass with Ray's Cherokee Cowboys. In 1963, Ray had a huge hit with Willie's *Night Life*. He also owned part of the first publishing company for which Willie wrote songs. Of course, since then both have been through countless changes, Willie establishing himself with a conservative, neoclassical country sound while Price has gone to orchestrated ballads, standing firm in the face of criticism from both fans and critics. Both have prospered, but the bond between them



remains deep.

It pervades all eleven songs on this album, all of which are associated with Ray, Willie or the Texas honkytonk tradition that nurtured both. The idea, from track one on, was to recreate the Cherokee Cowboys sound with Willie's band, an idea that worked far better than anyone had a right to expect. Both singers stay out of each other's way, coming together when the spirit moves them, the only problem being Price's tendency to restrain himself when he should cut loose, as on *I'll Be There*. Otherwise, the

duets on *Release Me*, *Night Life* and *San Antonio Rose* are as successful as they could possibly be, coming from two men who've lived with these songs as long as they have. *Deep Water* and *Faded Love* are done in a restrained, almost reverent manner.

There is, however another pair of heroes at work here: Buddy Emmons, who played steel with Price from 1962 to 1967 is an asset to the entire record, lending authenticity and playing some spine-chilling music, such as his intro to *Night Life*. The second is Johnny Gimble, whose fiddling recalls the great Cherokee Cowboy fiddlers of the past like Wade Ray and the late Keith Coleman.

Unlike most reunion albums, this one isn't full of wisecracks and private jokes. It is instead a moving, inspiring tribute to the common roots and pasts of two artists who have gone on to their own particular forms of greatness.

RICH KIENZLE



## Shel Silverstein The Great Conch Train Robbery Flying Fish FF-211

Here's the man you probably know best as the writer of *A Boy Named Sue*. Or may know as the man who's been doing very funny cartoons for *Playboy* these past twenty years. He writes rock 'n' roll and country songs, and has recorded several albums of country music. He doesn't sound like your average country singer, though. His accent is northern, and some people think he has a "bad voice" or "can't sing." I think he sounds like a human being.

Shel has written a number of great songs, but no great songs can be found here this time. Some are good, most are funny, and there are a couple of throwaways like *Peace of Mind* (don't bring you piece of ass).

Shel is one of the people responsible for bringing raunch to country. If you are displeased by lines like, "(she) makes love to the leg of the dining room chair," (*Quaaludes Again*) this is not your record. I think *Quaaludes Again* is a funny song. So is *Going Down To Texas* (and be one more horse's ass).

There's much fine playing here, with an all-star cast of musicians like John Hartford, Josh Graves, and D. J. Fontana. Sam Bush plays a lot of perfecto chunkety-chunk mandolin. The tunes are folksy and simple or country and simple.

PETER STAMPFEL

## Levon Helm American Son MCA-5120

I always blew hot and cold on the music of the Band—while there were individual cuts I genuinely loved (such standards as *The Night They Drove Old Dixie Down* and *The Weight*, of course), I felt the bulk of their work treaded the very thin line between reverence of roots and imitation. In short, I tended to lump them along with such groups as the Grateful Dead and the New Riders of the Purple Sage—good, but not as good as the "real stuff."

This album, though, by Band-member Levon Helm (he played Loretta's daddy in the great *Coal Miner's Daughter*



movie) I really like. Perhaps the two most striking things about this album are its simplicity and its virtuosity. The arrangements are totally without pretension, avoiding the "instant mythology" feeling so commonly associated with the works of the Band. The

songs (written by the likes of Harlan Howard, Fred Carter, Jr., and Ronnie Rogers) are perfectly suited to Helm's low-key delivery. In fact, he does a superb job with Harlan Howard's *Watermelon Time In Georgia* and my own favorite, *Nashville Wimmen*, virtually a straight blues number that works perfectly. A couple of cuts don't fare so well, most noticeably *Stay With Me*, which comes out too cutesy. *Violet Eyes* and *Blue House Of Broken Hearts* are standard Band fare, and *Blue House*, despite that, is quite beautiful. There's also a pretty good pro-American song called *America's Farm*. Listen to it, and pay attention. Overall, a very good album.

MICHAEL BANE



# Record Reviews

**Byron Berline**  
**Outrageous**  
Flying Fish FF-227

You've probably heard Byron Berline without knowing it. Those of you who've come to country from rock most likely heard his fiddling on the Rolling Stones' *Country Honk*, or his playing behind Ronstadt, Dylan, the Byrds, the Eagles and others. Bluegrassers, of course, remember him from his late groups, Sundance and Gazette; straight country fans undoubtedly have heard him play on Emmylou Harris's records.

One can tell a lot about a musician from the way he plays behind others, but to realize a player's true depth, a solo album like this, where they can stretch out, is the key. Berline tackles bluegrass, rock, jazz and various combinations with a group built around ex-Emmylou Harris guitarist



Albert Lee, former Elvis lead man James Burton (the man who played lead with Ricky Nelson on all those dance scenes on the old *Ozzie & Harriet* TV show), pianist John

Hobbs, L.A. pedal steel master Jay Dee Manness, rock bassist Lee Sklar and banjoist John Hickman. They not only do a great job of backup, but their solos seem to inspire Berline to greater heights on each of his original tunes, most of which were cut live in the studio.

More often than not, the different styles slip in and around each other, such as the bluegrass theme of *Don't Put It Away*, during which an unadulterated jazz piano solo by Hobbs tumbles out of nowhere. *Stampede* fuses bluegrass, hard rock and jazz, the title track sounds like B.B. King jamming with Bob Wills, and *Oklahoma Stomp* is almost impossible to describe.

A little of an album like this goes a long way with many, yet between Berline's sizzling fiddle, the great band and the unpredictable arrangements there's plenty of exhilarating—if not outrageous—music here.

RICH KIENZLE

**Jerry Reed**  
**Jerry Reed Sings Jim Croce**

RCA AHL1-3604

It seems as though Jim Croce could have written for Jerry Reed, and if he were still around, he might have been approached to do it. Jerry's musical split personality works well, as he slides up and down the scale of Croce's painted character themes. The wild man in Reed comes out on *Bad, Bad Leroy Brown*, *You Don't Mess Around With Jim* and *Workin' at the Carwash Blues*. There's also plenty of room for the introspective poet.

Some of Croce's material is light enough to be picked up through casual listening, and some of it gets deeper. The believability of the characters differs somewhat from the typical pattern of many standard country songs. The heroes of country songs often combat

their frustrations by drinking, cheating, or running away. Croce's guy at the carwash wishes he were somewhere else, but somewhere else *working*, making better money. No mention of a woman to remember, forget, or feel guilty about. He just stays there and keeps wishing.

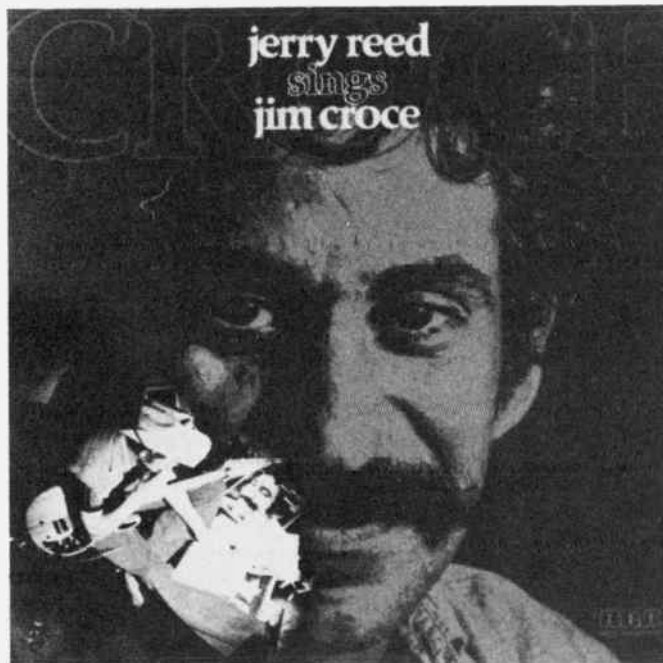
Both Jim and Leroy Brown are identified as mean fighters, but there is no dramatic show-down, no description of who they're out to beat, or why they are motivated to fight. Perhaps when Croce looked at a situation, he saw questions without answers, and people who paused to ask why and then kept on going. He was a writer of stories without endings.

What does all of this have to do with Jerry Reed? Well, Jerry puts in his guitar flashes whenever he can, and handles the ballads as well as if they were his own. Croce's characters are right where he

left them, pondering their existence, seeking only to have their stories retold. Jerry Reed

was an excellent choice for the task.

BILLOAKEY



# Record Reviews

## Waylon Jennings

### Music Man

RCA AHL1-3602

Writer Peter Guralnick in his book, *Lost Highway*, observes that "Waylon Jennings' image today is one of almost unrelieved gloom. Pain seems to gnaw at him like a vulture, and even his music seems bruised and weary."

Maybe Guralnick's words are lingering in my mind as I write this, because there is definitely something weary and uneasy about *Music Man*.

For one thing, *Music Man* is

a disarmingly subdued LP in which undercurrents of cynicism, restlessness, and even pain and boredom seem to swim beneath the surfaces of songs like *It's Alright* (the only Waylon Jennings original on here except for *The Theme From The Dukes Of Hazzard*) and *Nashville Wimmin*. Somehow it leaves one with the impression that Jennings, despite all the fame and worldly success he has achieved, does not have a very high opinion of himself.

The other songs on *Music Man* take on a wide range,

reminding us again of what an enormous variety of influences Jennings has incorporated into his own very unique style. There is everything from Jessi Colter's *Storms Never Last*, and Ernest Tubb's *Waltz Across Texas*, to Jimmy Buffett's *He Went To Paris*, Steely Dan's *Do It Again*, and Kenny Rogers' *Music Man*.

The problem is, however, that Jennings' interpretations on *Music Man* are all beauty but little conviction, as if he has tried to pour his fire into these songs while holding back his heart.

All in all, there's something rather listless about this entire LP. The choice of material is fine, as are the singing and the arrangements. Unfortunately, the energy level is dangerously low. It's as if there's a sheet of glass between Waylon Jennings and to whoever he's singing.

*Music Man* is a good album by anyone's standards but Waylon Jennings'. But when you compare it to great Jennings LP's of the past like *Dreamin' My Dreams*, and *Are You Ready For The Country*, it is but a faint whisper.

BOB ALLEN

## Dolly Parton

### Dolly Dolly Dolly

RCA AHL1-3546

The fact that Dolly Parton has made an effective change in her musical direction is now pretty well recognized by fans and critics alike. While she has undoubtedly lost some fans, she has obviously gained legions of new ones, as her success on the pop music charts would indicate.

However, the competition in pop music is much keener than it is in the more narrowly defined country arena. Parton is a country artist who has become a pop artist with country overtones. With the release of each album over the past three years, those overtones have become less influential. If Parton wishes to maintain her status as a viable pop artist she'll have to release stronger albums than *Dolly Dolly Dolly*.

The album is like a brand new car—polished to a fine glaze with chrome shining brilliantly. But, as we all know, they just don't make cars the way they used to. The same is true of Parton's new LP. The sound sparkles, but the question remains—just how durable is it?

Much of the album is trite,



mindless car radio music which fits nicely between disc jockey chatter, traffic reports, and the latest late afternoon racing results. With few exceptions, there are no memorable lyrics or melodies.

Gary Klein's production is solid, heavy on the rhythm section, with a booming bass sound. There is plenty of percussion and some tightly-constructed keyboard and guitar riffs. The album was

recorded at Hollywood's Sound Lab Studios, one of the best, with some of the top west coast musicians.

So the problem with this album is neither the production nor the musicianship. Parton's vocals are still lively, though perhaps not as scintillating as past performances. The real problem is a collection of some lackluster songs. As it has been said many times—if the songs are weak, there is not much of a

foundation.

Ironically, the strongest selections are the more country-flavored tunes, few as they may be. *Starting Over Again* is indeed a fine song, relating a sad but all too often true story. *Old Flames Can't Hold A Candle To You* closely follows the arrangement of Joe Sun's hit version. Yet this song works, due to Parton's wavering vocal and the fact that it is a well-written song.

The best of the remaining songs are: *Even A Fool Would Let Go*, adult contemporary in nature; *Sweet Agony*, with a reggae feel and exhilarating vocal; and *Packin' It Up*, a rocker which sounds like Dolly backed by Aerosmith.

Whenever the topic of brilliant, gifted songwriters is discussed, Parton's name is mentioned in the same breath with all the greats. Strangely, this album is void of any Parton-penned tunes. She seems to have fallen into the same trap as some other songwriter-singers who go for the brass ring. The career push overwhelms the desire to write.

Parton will have to follow this release with a stronger effort if she intends to stay beneath the big top. *Dolly Dolly Dolly* is only so much folly folly. KELLY DELANEY



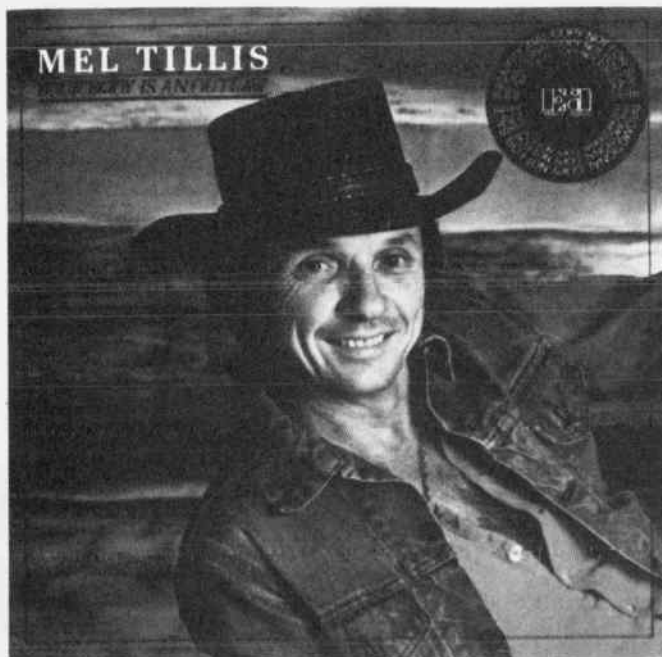
# Record Reviews

## Mel Tillis

Your Body Is An Outlaw  
Elektra 6E-271

It wasn't until recently that I had an opportunity to see Mel Tillis and the Statesiders in person. I could hardly believe it when not one, not two, but three fiddlers walked onstage and started gettin' after it. Mel and the boys are what shufflin', swingin', foot stompin' country are all about. Tillis is a bandleader in the sense that Bob Wills was, and he's also a perfectionist. The only thing time has done to him is keep him well seasoned.

Among his newer albums, this one ranks as one of the liveliest. The Statesiders were with him in the studio, exerting as much energetic spirit as they do onstage. The cocktail crooning that threatened to stifle Mel a while back (*I Believe In You*) has been swept under the rug, at least for now. Several of these cuts are arranged in traditional



western swing dance style, right down to the final drum beat.

Two of Bob Wills' snappiest numbers are included,

*Cherokee Maiden* and *Stay a Little Longer*. Here is a case where a little fancy production work turns up as a plus. The

credit goes to producer, Jimmy Bowen and horn arranger, Bill Pippin. Pippin plays flute and trumpet and there's also a sax and clarinet. When handled right, jazz and swing instruments can do a lot for country. Bob Wills and the legendary Jimmie Rodgers proved it long ago.

*She's Just Being a Woman*, which opens the second side, seems a little dull. But the four that follow make up one of the finest musical segments in Mel's catalog. *Rain on My Parade* is bouncy and clever, and it's a joy to hear Mel's recording of *Sweet Little Blue Eyes*. Then before the final fling with *Cherokee Maiden*, the mood softens briefly for a nice version of *A Thing Called Sadness*.

For anyone who hasn't kept up with Mel Tillis lately, and would like to get a sample of what he sounds like at his hottest, you can't go wrong with this one.

BILLOAKY

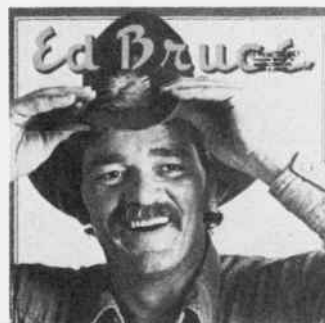
## Ed Bruce Ed Bruce MCA-3242

There are many country artists who seem to exist perennially on the second or third tier of music business success. They make a good living at their craft, yet they are something less than stars. Far from being household words, you probably can't even put their names together with their hit records unless you listened to the radio a lot or read magazines like this one.

And often, if you listen to such artists' albums, it becomes obvious why they are where they are. Often, there is something obviously lacking, whether it's inspiration, direction, originality, or good old down-to-earth creativity. Often, after one spin of such an

LP, it becomes obvious that the artist spends far more time perfecting his or her hairstyle than on his or her music.

That's why it's such a gratifying experience to play a new LP by a second-tier artist like Ed Bruce who's been around practically forever, and be so totally knocked out by it. You feel like you've made a discovery . . . like you've been let



in on a well kept secret.

Ed Bruce is an excellent album, and for me, hearing it for the first time, was like finding a \$20 bill on the sidewalk.

As a singer, Ed Bruce is—and always has been—smooth and subtle, yet as masculine and hard-hitting as Jack Daniels Black Label Whiskey. As a writer, he stands among the best as well. In the past, he's come up with classics like *Mamas Don't Let Your Babies Grow Up To Be Cowboys*; and on *Ed Bruce*, (with the help of cowriters like Ron Peterson and Patsy Bruce, his wife) he gives us some great new tunes *The Last Cowboy Song* (Willie Nelson sings a beautiful, utterly convincing duet on this one), *The Last Thing She Said*, and *Love Ain't Something I Can Do Alone*.

Bruce has recorded previously for CBS and a number of other labels; but somehow, on *Ed Bruce*, his debut LP for MCA, all of it—the excellent writing, the fine singing—seems to fall together better than it ever has before under the production of Tommy West. Even on nonoriginal material like the hit single, *Diane*, or Bruce's version of John Prine's *Blue Umbrella* (one of my all-time favorite songs), it all works—more yet, it works beautifully.

Judging from *Ed Bruce*, the reasons this guy is not up there with the likes of Merle Haggard and Waylon Jennings has nothing to do with a lack of talent. This LP is proof enough that he shouldn't be playing second fiddle to anyone.

BOB ALLEN

# Record Reviews

## Various Artists Song Of The American Trucker LSM-60

**T**itle sort of sounds like one of those Audubon Society specials—Song Of The American Hummingbird or something—doesn't it? The idea, I guess was a pretty good one: go out and round up all those guys who sing over the CB and put them on a record. If you've ever heard truckers singing over the CB, you've got a pretty good idea of what this album sounds like. I've listened to it three times, and I can barely tell where one song ends and the other begins. There are two major influences at work here: Dave Dudley and C.W. McCall, and damned if everybody doesn't sort of sound like one or the other (except for the women, who sound like Jeannie Pruett). My favorites include *Loose Wheel*, a parody of Kenny Rogers' *Lucille*, that is weird in a way only a trucker can be weird—maybe it's all them little white pills or truckstop ("choke and pukes," if you insist) coffee—by driver Russell Pate: *That Damn*

*Truck*, by Kay Shannon, whose got a voice that sounds like a cross between Cher and Donna Fargo and can really wail—also, judging by her picture on the album cover . . . well, forget it. Also, Max Barnes, who does *On The Road*, has a great voice and does a good job on his cut. Okay, though, here's the bottom line. It's a mistake to put so many trucking songs on one album, let alone a double album like this one. There's only so much truck driver angst—lonely bars, long hours alone, no women/men, foibles of the road, rain, snow, blizzards, what-have-you, highway is my home, pity the poor trucker, the mystique of the road—that a human being can take in one sitting. And I think I might be a little better inclined toward this record and the Last American Hero mythology of the American Trucker if I hadn't done so much driving myself and put up with so many arrogant, second-rate drivers who thought that just because they were behind the wheel of an 18-wheeler, that meant they could *drive*. Roll on, big mamas! MICHAEL BANE

## SONG OF THE AMERICAN TRUCKER



## VERNON OXFORD



## Vernon Oxford America's Unknown Super Star

Rich R' Tone LP-8109

**S**uddenly it's 1951. That's what it felt like to hear Vernon Oxford for the first time. Being scratched expertly on a place I somehow hadn't noticed had been itching for many years. It felt like that, too.

Vernon's voice is one of the most pleasant things that happened to country music in the last couple of decades. A little bit of Hank Williams, a little Ernest Tubb, a little Jimmie Dickens. . .

I've been wondering, how many country music fans don't really like this kind of thing at all? How many don't really dislike it, but will never go out of their way to hear a Hank Williams record? Well, you folks don't want this record. But, hey, you other ones, if you haven't heard Vernon yet, welcome to the '80s. Having been around since the mid '60s, he certainly deserves this decade.

This record is a fine place to meet him, although an odd one. The record was produced by

Everett Corbin, who is also president of the Vernon Oxford Appreciation Society. Everett has also written a book called, *Storm Over Nashville*, that contains "More about the Vernon Oxford story." Finally, Mr. Corbin wrote all the songs on the album except one, and he published that. Guess who wrote the liner notes? Sample: "I took this great singer of country music into a studio here in Nashville and let him sing to his heart's content." Hint: he should have said, "Let him sing my songs to his heart's content."

The words sometimes attain a staggering dumbness—"I think living is sweet/ Got a love that just can't be beat/ Life is simply a treat/ I think living is sweet." But usually the lyrics lie there on the music like plain folks relaxing in a hammock on a hot day. In fact, I hear some of the dumbest words on the record repeating in my head. I don't mind them there at all.

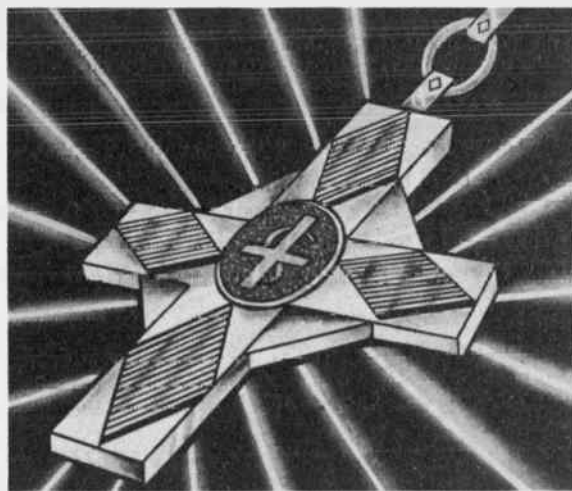
Just one thing. I wish Vernon would do harmonies with himself. That beautiful quaver in his voice would marry into itself so well.

PETER STAMPFEL



**WE HAVE BEEN VISITED BY BEINGS FROM OUTER SPACE. AND THEY HAVE BROUGHT US A WONDERFUL GIFT...**

# the cross of ANTRON



*"I am an ordained minister of The Knight Federation Church. The story of my amazing experience and how it led me to the Cross of Antron follows..."*



**MY NAME IS LYDIA STALNAKER**

...and because my story may sound too fantastic to be believed at first hearing, I want you to know the following facts.

My story has been thoroughly checked and verified by numerous scientific organizations and by several prominent scientists, including professors at the University of North Florida and the University of California at Berkeley. Dr. James Harder, Director of Research at the prestigious Aerial Phenomena Research Organization and a member of the National Enquirer's Blue Ribbon UFO Panel has said publicly that my story is true "beyond a reasonable doubt".

Articles about what has happened to me have appeared in national and international newspapers and magazines. I have been interviewed on international and national television shows. I have appeared on a David Suskind TV interview and numerous radio shows, including CBS Mystery Theater. I have lectured at such major universities as Boston University and the North Florida University.

The reason I am giving you this detailed background is that I want you to give serious consideration to my story. For, if you believe my message—and if you accept the remarkable gift I have for you—your life will never be the same again.

**I HAVE MET PEOPLE FROM ANOTHER GALAXY—**

—so I know, from first-hand experience that man is not alone in the universe. My meeting took place one evening in Jacksonville, Florida in August of 1974. I

was kidnapped and taken aboard an Alien Spacecraft from another galaxy, where the Aliens gave me "A MESSAGE FROM GOD" to deliver to the people of this world. They also told me I would receive "SEVEN POWERS FROM GOD". I am to use these powers to help mankind and to demonstrate His power so others may believe. I have been using these powers for GOD'S GLORY and His work.

Even now, there is a book being readied about my experience, filled with facts and proof, including a lie-detector test and many other tests given me by doctors and scientists. The book will be called: "The Antron Transplant" and it is to be published soon.

*"Experts say my story is true beyond a reasonable doubt."*

## THE MESSAGE OF ANTRON—

Aboard the spacecraft there was a woman named Antron, who told me they came from a green planet, located in another galaxy. And that she is thousands of years old. But the really important thing Antron told me is that all people in the universe, whatever their origins, know God and His Powers.

## I HAVE RECEIVED THE GIFT OF HEALING

I was given the gift of healing. And since this happened, many of my healings have been carefully documented. When I was aboard the craft with Antron, I saw a strange insignia that was their "Symbol". Later, Antron inspired me to design this Symbol on a cross, so that Earth people could receive its benefits. Also, I was told to wear this cross as a point of contact for God's Blessings and "Infinite Power" in my life.

On the cross, eight adjacent pyramids are connected by four single pyramids. And, at the center of the cross, appears the galactic symbol of the Universal Life Force. It is a bio-magnetic cross, and Antron says that the universal life force leaps from this cross in flashes of fantastic energy—just as the universal life force flashes out of my hand when I am engaged in the process of healing others. (see illustration at right for more details on this).

## ANTRON HAS GIVEN ME A MISSION—

Antron says that those on the Spacecraft had come because our world is going through a period of declining faith, and they were sent here to spread

the word about life in other galaxies—and about the universal power of faith and of God. They have given me an instrument to spread the word, and that instrument is—THE CROSS OF ANTRON!

*"The cross was designed by Antron—and the Universal Life Force surges out from it in powerful waves of energy!"*

## ANTRON'S GIFT TO THE PEOPLE OF EARTH

Antron's gift to prove their prophecies is this remarkable cross. And they stated that wonderful things will happen to those who wear it, for they will share in its tremendous life force energy.

I make the cross available to help spread Antron's message of hope to the people of earth. And whatever money I have left, after paying my expenses for this activity, will go for this purpose.

But the power of the Cross of Antron is really a wonderful gift, and if Antron were not willing to share it, no amount of money on earth could buy it. **WHAT DO YOU WANT?—**

Are you ill—or is a friend or member of your family sick? Wear the Cross of Antron. And please write and tell me if your prayers are answered for relief in illness and of any miracles of healing.

Do you need any money because you are desperate and in debt? Do you need money to buy your family the necessities of life and to provide them a car and a secure home? Wear the Cross of Antron and let its life-force reinforce yours. And please write and tell me if your prayers are answered and if the

## here is my proof...

"The powers of this amazing cross are a gift from God, who has made all things. Through Antron, a being from another Galaxy, it has now been brought to us, the people of Earth

Here is why I believe the Cross of Antron has such amazing powers. It is a bio-magnetic cross, which means it is surrounded by a surging force field. Antron calls this the Universal Life Force. At the right is a simulation of an actual Kirlian photograph (a special photography process discovered by para-psychologists in Russia) taken of my own hand during the process of healing. As you can see, the universal life force leaps out of my hand in flashes of energy, just as it leaps out of the Cross of Antron.



**The Hand of Lydia Stalnakher**

*Simulation: Actual photo is in my files and can be viewed as it appears in color.*

miracle of freedom from debt and the worries over money are lifted.

Do you want curses broken? Tensions healed; anger and bickering which affect your family gone? Then wear this Cross of Antron. And please tell me if your prayers for a peaceful family life are answered.

Wear this Cross of Antron and let its "POWERS" help you. Each cross I have prayed over and blessed in Jesus' Name.

**"Antron invites you to share in the power of this amazing cross."**

And please, please write and tell me of the miracles that the Cross of Antron brings to you.

The only repayment that Antron and I ask for sharing this Cross with you is for you to write and tell me how it has blessed and helped you.

You may receive the Cross of Antron by mailing in the form below. Wear the Cross of Antron for a full year—365 days—and if at any time you are disappointed with the Cross of Antron, your money will be refunded at once, without question. It would be a thoughtful gesture on your part to order extra crosses to share with those in need. A booklet about the miracle of the Cross of Antron will also be sent. Soon you will be sharing the wonderful powers of the Cross of Antron. God bless you. Lydia Stalnakher Antron

# THE CROSS OF ANTRON

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# Record Reviews

**Anne Murray**  
**I'll Always Love You**  
Capitol 500 12012

A few recording artists to successfully and consistently garner the best of the pop, adult contemporary, and country music markets. To say that Anne Murray is a mass appeal artist would be correct. To infer that she is like so much other commercial mediocrity would be a distortion of the truth.

*I'll Always Love You* is another Murray album which offers something for everyone, quite frequently within the framework of each individual song.

The secret to her success begins with the selection of material. Most of the songs on this album were written by pop tunesmiths or by Nashville-based writers who have had hits in the pop charts. Moreso than colonies of songwriters anywhere else, Nashville songwriters have a keen focus on Murray's pop-country sound.

Another contributing factor is Jim Ed Norman's production. He gets a pop sound and complements it with strings and horns and several basically country music instruments as well. The drum and percussion sound is crisp and snappy while his use of horns and strings is always sharp but laid-back.

Murray's own vocals are also quite distinctive. Her voice is thick and velvety with just enough edge on it to cut through the honey. No other vocalist quite sounds like her. Her style is easily recognizable.

The album is filled with fine songs including: Dave Loggins', *You've Got Me To Hold On To*, once a hit for Tanya Tucker; *I'll Always Love You*, by Eric Kaz and Tom Snow, a catchy love song; *Broken Hearted Me*, penned by Randy Goodrum who also wrote *You Needed Me*; and Richard

Supa's, *Lover's Knot*, a tightly-constructed pop song with an upbeat tempo.

Leaning more toward the country vein are *Stranger At My Door*, written by Kerry Chater, Rory Bourke, and Charlie Black, which epitomizes the pop-country sound; and *Good Old Song*, co-written by Ron Davies and Mentor Williams, featuring

Bob Lucier on dobro.

The two extremes on this album are John Stewart's *Daydream Believer* and Jesse Winchester's *Wintery Feeling*. *Daydream Believer* is still an innocuous pop song with the scent of The Monkees all over it. However, *Wintery Feeling* is a song of emotional depth made all the more evocative by Murray's vocal. This tune will

probably go unnoticed due to its subtlety, but it is the song with the most substance on the album.

Sometimes albums which attempt to cover too much musical territory get a little thin. *I'll Always Love You* is a solid album in all respects. Anne Murray's got all her bases covered.

KELLY DELANEY

## BURIED TREASURES

by Rich Kienzle

Well, Britain beat us to it again by reissuing some vintage material by established performers, material not available easily in this country, complete with fine notes and graphics. Britain's MCA *Country Hall of Fame Series* has just issued two more volumes: **Kitty Wells** (MCA CDL 8504) and **Bill Monroe** (MCA CDL 8505). The Wells set goes from *It Wasn't God Who Made Honky-Tonk Angels* in 1952 through *Making Believe* in 1955 and *Heartbreak U.S.A.* in 1960 to *Meanwhile Down At Joe's* in 1965. The sound is unadulterated and the selection of the 16 songs was faultless. Her 1953 duet with Red Foley, *One By One*, is also included. This would be a nice companion with her upcoming Ruboca album. The Monroe set is pleasant, though much of his Decca material is still easily available. It traces his career with Decca from 1950 to 1969 through *New Mule Skinner Blues*, *Uncle Pen*, *Gotta Travel On* and *Cotton Fields*, 17 tracks in all. Again, the notes and photos are faultless, with plenty of information on recording dates, etc. EMI/Capitol of Britain also has a new series *Capitol Country Classics*, with its first release a set by **Wanda Jackson** (CAPS 1033). Earlier Jackson reissues brought her rock sides into print, but this one compiles 16 of her country hits from 1961 to 1972, tunes like *Right*

*or Wrong*, *In The Middle of A Heartache* and *My Big Iron Skillet*. This set (compiled by the same team that did the MCA) also includes rare photos, including one with Elvis and fine liner notes.

From Japan, come two more interesting RCA Victor sets. **Hank Snow Sings Jimmie Rodgers Songs** (RCA RMP-5122), a long out of print American album featuring stunning versions of a dozen Rodgers classics by one of his greatest disciples, complete with the distinctive Hank Snow sound provided by the Rainbow Ranch Boys, all produced by Chet Atkins. These 12 songs are so outstanding it's impossible to single one out.

A second Japanese album, **Jerry Reed's Reedology** (RCA RMP-5040) was never issued here, but consists of a dozen guitar instrumentals, all of recent vintage, but to my knowledge never available together. The tunes range from the blaring rock of *Bake* to the semi-jazzy *Reedology* (with Charlie McCoy on harmonica) and *The Claw*, one of the best examples of Reed's guitar.

There's a movement afoot, a grassroots movement depending upon regional record labels to record the sort of simple, unfettered country that was popular 25 years ago. At least that's the impression I get from Jerry Hanlon's **Memories** (Universal-Athena 1001).

Hanlon, who comes with a ringing endorsement from Ernest Tubb, is a performer who's hardly fashionable. His dress and grooming are conservative, and his voice hearkens to the days of Hank Snow, Webb Pierce or even Slim Whitman. But his delivery is straightforward and believable, especially on Harlan Howard's *Boy With A Future*, Hanlon's own, moralistic *Scarlet Woman*, *One Step Outside of Misery*, and *California Blues*. Yet this is no garage band effort. "Pig" Robbins and the best Nashville musicians did the backup, and Hanlon deserves some real support. Ex-trucker Max D. Barnes, profiled by John Pugh in the June issue, has an impressive down-to-earth debut in his first album, **Round Around The Edges** (Ovation OV-1749).

In future columns, we'll be looking at the Sun reissue series, the new King Records reissues and the ultimate Hank Williams set, as well as at some bluegrass, western swing and straight country LPs.

The Wells and Monroe LPs are \$8.50 each, the Jackson \$7.95, the Reed and Snow LPs \$14.95 each from Down Home Music, 10341 San Pablo Avenue, El Cerrito, CA. 94530. Add \$2 for postage. The Hanlon LP is available from Universal-Athena, Box 3615, Peoria, IL 61614.





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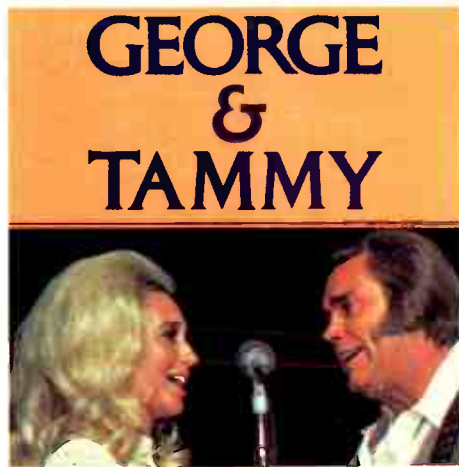
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# Jim Ed & Helen STICKING TOGETHER

by Suzan Crane & Rochelle Friedman

From the beginning, the pairing of Jim Ed Brown, a veteran of almost 30 years in country music and Helen Cornelius, a 34-year-old housewife from Hannibal, Mo., seemed destined for stardom. Their first single, *I Don't Want To Have To Marry You*, soared to the top of the country charts, followed by three successful albums.

Although her songs had been recorded by Lynn Anderson, Barbara Fairchild, Jeannie C. Riley, and many others, Helen Cornelius was still a greenhorn; a relative unknown. The demure, honey-voiced singer had found a comfortable niche under the wings of the seasoned performer, Jim Ed Brown. And at the same time, Helen was the saving grace to Brown, whose solo career had been floundering since his days as one-third of The Browns. That was in 1976.

\* \* \*

Four years later rumors circulated that perhaps Helen Cornelius was not happy with her role as the featured artist in the Jim Ed Brown Show. Perhaps what she really wanted was a solo career. But

Helen explains that she was not just thinking of herself, as both performers were seeking individuality.

"At the same time it was for me to pursue a solo career—it was for him to regain his identity as a solo performer, because we were suddenly one unit," she says. They did not mention him without me, and they certainly did not mention me without him. I had not had the solo career. He had had one and lost himself again within a group sound. He wanted to regain his own. I wanted to have mine. So it was both of us. It was not me wanting it more than him, or he wanting it more than me."

Then, late last summer it was announced that the duo would be parting company as of January 1, 1980. The breakup was well-publicized, but short-lived. The reconciliation went virtually unreported.

"We never were apart," Helen remarks. "Even after we announced it—we weren't really that excited about it, and the people didn't want it. And our record company felt like we could still have some individual identities, and individual records, and still stay together. So we actually determined between us, probably two or three weeks later, that we were not going to do it. But an announcement was not made because

they wanted to get everything settled with the contracts before anything was said publicly. But it never did happen."

"Actually," Jim Ed adds, "what happened was, the news that we're breaking up was announced *big*, and then the decision was made to stay together. There was no announcement made. We were waiting to get everything together, and then all of a sudden RCA, in their little *Nipper Notes*, came out and said, 'Well, they are staying together because Jim Ed's gonna do this, and Helen's gonna do this.' There was no official announcement made that we were staying together, which was wrong. There should have been."

But even if the breakup did occur, there were some things that wouldn't have changed. The union wouldn't have been totally split.

"We were still recording the duets," Helen maintains. "The album would have come out. We would still have done the television show together. In fact, we were even gonna be booked together, because the promoter still had the option of buying us together. Instead of coming in as one show, they would have purchased the Jim Ed Brown Show, and the Helen Cornelius Show."

"That is, unless one or the other refused to work with the other on the same stage—which could very easily be," Jim Ed injects wryly. "I could be very, very mad at her."

"Everybody we talked to felt it would be in our best interests. I think they would have backed us either way," notes Helen. "but they felt like it was a foolish move. They felt like you should not abandon the winning horse."

"I think the main pressure came from us individually," Jim Ed comments. "We realized as far as business was concerned that we would be much better off. We just worked it out. What we're doing now is the best for us."

They decided that they could achieve the best of both worlds by staying together: the success of the duo as well as independent solo careers. Either way Helen would continue writing songs, whether for the partnership of Jim Ed and Helen, as she did with *Foiled Again* on their current **One Man, One Woman** album, or for other major artists like the Oak Ridge Boys did with her *Ready To Take My Chances* (co-written by Dwayne Orender) on their **Reflections** album.

So Helen temporarily shelved thoughts of working alone. She admits, however, that both compromises and sacrifices had to be made.

"There are many, many things that I



would like to do. I generally, in the course of a one hour show, do three solo numbers. They're relatively short. When I worked as a single I had an opportunity to do some progressive country and work with the keyboards a lot. I would bring children up on stage and sing with them. At fairs I always did that. I would play with the guitar on some simple numbers. So it was a lot of variety. And I enjoy that. I do not get to do these things within the duo. So for me to know that I will never be able to do that—because time does not allow that many variations in the show—that's a great compromise for me. Now, do I want to get out there and struggle by myself before I can have all these things, or do I

want to stay in a comfortable position and give them up? I'm not sure that I have resolved that in my mind yet. I would not be interested in being the lesser half of a duo the rest of my career."

For Helen it is not lack of confidence in her abilities, but her admission that Jim Ed's nearly 30 years in the business versus her mere four, warrant him the respect, admiration and trust from fans and associates that she has yet to fully achieve. She must *earn* the fame. She must take the test of time. "It takes a long time to gain that respect of those people, your fans," deadpans Jim Ed. "At this point there's a lot of things about Helen that they don't know. So they've got to learn. In time she will get that respect. Because one day, if she should leave *this* show, there will come a time where she will be the headliner and somebody will be under her, and they will be pushing for that same thing. But it's a matter of patience, it's a matter of growing, and I think it's a matter of time . . . you cannot demand it."

Despite all this, their stage show remains pretty much the same. Sweetness permeates the air during their performance. Barely up to Jim Ed's shoulders, Helen's petite, satin and lace femininity matches the smooth, silky quality of her vocals. Jim Ed's 6 foot 2 inch stature and dark, imposing demeanor complements the soft innocence of his partner, as does the



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deep, strong resonance of his voice. The fluid blend of their vocals creates a blanket of swirling harmonies. In fact they love harmony so much, they jokingly admit to sometimes sounding like the Mormon Tabernacle Choir.

Jim Ed claims that each has equal time in the solo portions of their show. "She fought very hard for that. She told me in the very beginning, 'If I can't do as much as you, then I don't need to be there.' I told her that she didn't need to be there. But in time, I gave that to her. Sometimes she even does more than I do because she goes on first."

\* \* \*

Enveloped in the security of her own home and family since age 18, Helen gave little thought to the changing role of women. Until recently. After tasting life outside the comforts of home, she developed a new awareness that may have lead to, and resulted in, her recent divorce from husband, Lewis.

"You asked me if my divorce had anything to do with my career. It had to do with problems that started very early in the marriage. Things that you don't fight about. My husband and I never quarreled, ever. They are not things that you quarrel about. You perhaps just do not face them. You tuck them away. But pretty soon they will come over into other areas of your

marriage. They will enshroud other things which should be blossoming gloriously. So what I'm saying is that communication is the key to success in any marriage. A communication—a total sharing.

"So because, maybe, some of those problems begin to come between a person and their spouse, you begin to think your own thoughts. You may not share your feelings as much. You are not one, but you are two," continues Helen.

"So whenever you begin to travel, and you're gone from one another a lot . . . it was probably the straw that broke the camel's back. So yes, it would have to do some with the career. However, it would have been the same if I had been a secretary. I would have begun to have been a little more independent in my own thinking. By getting out in the world I would have learned that I could do things by myself. Just the way a man does with his work. Obviously, if I had a strong marriage . . . it was not in a very healthy state when we moved to Nashville."

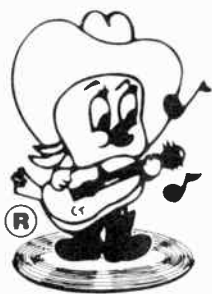
"I'm saying this to help women," Helen continues. "Because women are pursuing their own careers and that's beautiful. That's great. They should be successful, they should be proud. But at the same time, we all learn from each other's mistakes. If anyone can learn from mine I want them to know that they must continue sharing, share their feelings and not

feel that they are so strong that they could make it without that other partner.

"Many marriages are failing because women are going out and working. I'm not blaming the women for it. I'm saying that the men have led to the woman's need to do this," she concludes.

Although Helen is concentrating on her own career she remains close with her three children, and maintains a strong respect for the family unit. Even when she is in the studio recording all day, Helen still tries to set aside time to spend with daughter Christy, 17 and son Denny, 15½. Coming from Small Town, USA it is not difficult to understand that certain traditional and conservative attitudes prevail. But her open-mindedness is also evident in her relationship with her children. When her son 18 year old Joey entered college (obliging his mother's wishes) and found it was not for him, Helen accepted his decision to move south of Nashville to become a logger, in the same way her children have always supported her. "They want their Mama to be happy," says Helen. "When I'm happy I give more to them as far as love, trust, affection, security, everything. . . ."

And Helen Cornelius is very happy with her newfound career as a single, working mother. But the single life is not one without complications. Rumors of a romantic involvement with Jim Ed have



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been resurrected. In the past, they've dealt with such rumors by simply ignoring them. Sometimes they don't even hear them. In fact, Jim Ed complains, "I never hear gossip. People just don't do that to me. I wish they would sometimes." There's little chance, though, that Jim Ed and Helen could have been spared recent headlines in the *Nashville Banner* proclaiming their plans to tie the knot: a flash that this time may be more fact than rumor due to Jim Ed's recent announcement that after 17 years of marriage, he and wife Becky are divorcing. (Currently, Brown's divorce case is in the courts and neither Jim Ed nor Helen were available for comment.)

Prior to the actual divorce proceedings Mrs. Brown's attorneys filed with the court requesting financial statements, income tax returns, and a complete breakdown of Jim Ed's earnings in the entertainment business. Jim Ed was also asked about the duo's decision to continue

president of Top Billing, Inc. and the singers' spokesman, as saying, "A rumored marriage between Jim Ed and Helen is just that—a rumor. I know all this came about because Helen divorced earlier this year and Jim Ed recently became estranged from his wife." Moreover, Helen confided to a friend that having just gotten out of one twenty year marriage, she's not about to get into another one any time soon.

\* \* \*

So all those amorous sentiments expressed in their music is just part of the act, right? Consider some of the song titles on their latest album, **One Man, One Woman**, currently number 35 on the *Billboard* chart: *Born To Be With You*, *Morning Comes Too Early*, *The Best Kept Secret*, *The Bedroom*, *What A Friend I Have In You*.

with the total sound and the blend of their unique harmonies. "There are so many things that are going through your mind at one time," says Helen. "I've thought of this when I see romantic love scenes on television or in the movies, and I've read before that contrary to what they look like, they are so conscious of looking right before the camera that it wasn't as romantic as it looked." But singing in the studio, and performing live before an audience are two different things, as Jim Ed points out. "When you're in the studio the lights are dimmed way down. You're setting a feeling. You have to project. See, those people can't see you on that record. So you have to be able to think and project a feeling in that song. When you walk on stage and start performing, that's a whole different ball game. Because in my mind, I'm thinking why the light man is putting a purple light on me when it should be amber. . . ."

Jim Ed and Helen both praise their current producer, Tom Collins, (who also produces Barbara Mandrell and Ronnie Milsap, among others) for his ability to create the proper mood in the studio. "If we either get too down, or we get too happy he will some way bring us out of it. He will bring us up, he will bring us down. He'll make us serious, he'll make us happy," boasts Jim Ed.

Collins not only allows, but encourages the creative input of the artists. And they, in turn, depend on his opinion in the selection of their material. Most of the time it's a meeting of three minds. There was one song on their latest album, however, which Jim Ed had great doubts about recording.

"We just recently recorded a song that was too much a part of me. And it got too close to me. I did not want to do the song. Tom and Helen thought it was a hit. So that's two against one. I went ahead and did the song. But most of the time we all agree. We all love it, and want to do it."

At the present time Jim Ed and Helen are each looking for solo projects. "And I know she likes the contemporary, so chances are she will come up with something like that," he observes. "I'm country. I love my country. I love my people. I always have. And chances are, the things I do will be along the country line. Although, I will go one step beyond and say that music is universal and it doesn't have to be strictly country. So, as far as my looking for a pop song, I'm not. Or a middle of the road song, I'm not looking for that. I'm looking for a good song," he adds.

And what better place to find one than Music City?

"Nashville has the reputation of being pure, hard country. That is not true. Because if you look you will find some tremendous songs that have come out of Nashville. Some people are even coming to Nashville now, doing all of their recording, going to the west coast and mixing them,

## Singing Duo's Friends Say:

# Jim Ed And Helen May Tie The Knot

By BILL HANCE

Country music favorites Jim Ed Brown and Helen Cornelius have been singing lovebird songs for three years and now it looks like they may be planning to make a nest together — not as singers, but as husband and wife.

On May 19, 1977, the two recorded a sweet-heart song called *I Don't Want To Have To*

✓ Melvin Sloan continues square dance tradition at Fan Fair. Story, picture, Page 17.  
✓ Warner Brothers' heavy hitters and RCA Records' finesse decide outcome of Fan Fair softball tourney. Story, Page 64.

Marry You and wedded bliss that day on Music Row was far from their minds.

But today, that's apparently not the case. Their friends and persons within the Nashville music industry indicate the lanky Brown and the cute, blue-eyed Mrs. Cornelius may be discussing marriage.

"This is a highly personal matter and the last thing I'll do is discuss the personal matters of my artists with the news media," declared the singers' spokesman, Tandy Rice, president of Top Billing, Inc.

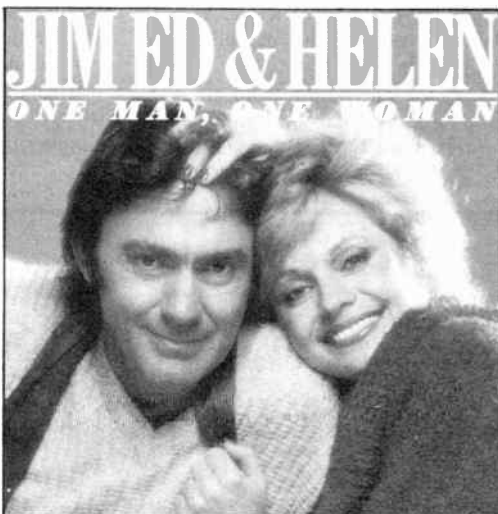
"I have just talked with Jim Ed and Helen about this," he said, "and they also have no comment."

Brown, 45, is currently embroiled in a divorce suit filed last August by his wife of 17 years, Rebecca Sue "Becky" Brown.

A court date for the Browns' divorce has not been set.

Mrs. Cornelius was granted a divorce Jan. 15 from her husband, Lewis Ross Cornelius, a former truck driver she married nearly 20 years ago in her hometown of Hannibal, Mo. Williamson County Judge Henry Denmark Bell granted the divorce and awarded her

See DIVORCE, Page 4



This is the cover of the popular twosome's new RCA album.

*Nashville Banner's* June 11th front page flash raises the question: Will they or won't they? With Jim Ed's divorce case currently in process, only they know for sure.

their professional association. "Helen Cornelius has obviously been a source of upset and irritation to Rebecca Sue Brown," Jim Ed's attorney Aubrey Harwell, Jr. said. "Brown has discussed the situation on several occasions with his manager and other advisers. However, realizing that one of his prime roles in the marital relationship is that of a provider, and further believing that it is in his economic and professional interest to continue performing with Helen Cornelius, Brown has decided not to sever the professional relationship."

According to reports in the *Nashville Banner*, friends of the twosome confirm the possibility of a blossoming romance. Conflicting reports in the *Nashville Tennessean*, however, quote Tandy Rice,

"We look for the best songs we can find," says Jim Ed. "We look for the positive 'I Love You' type songs. That's what we're after. We're not after all the other types of songs. Although every once in a while one does come in. Even though it may be negative or something, if we think it's a hit, then we will still record it. But love is what makes the world go round, and we like to play on that. We like to sing about it." What do they think about, though, while they are singing such romantic ballads? "She has her microphone, and I have mine," he quips, while Helen says with characteristic candor, "I'm very conscious of not falling down on my six-inch spikes or stepping on a cord."

But basically they are most concerned



so that they could say they came from the west coast and get away with it. As far as I'm concerned, there is enough in Nashville for everybody. I don't have to go to the west coast. I don't have to go anywhere but Nashville, Tennessee."

Of course Nashville is the home of countless other established and aspiring country artists, and that in itself means competition. But according to Jim Ed and Helen that competition is only felt during award time. "And that's a good healthy competition," Jim Ed contends. "And if you're fortunate enough to get into the top five, you're automatically a winner. Most of the time it's extremely close. And you want it so much because of the pride and because of the ego. But if the other person wins you're so happy for them, but it hurts when you don't."

"I wasn't happy for them," Helen good-naturedly admits. "I wanted to win."

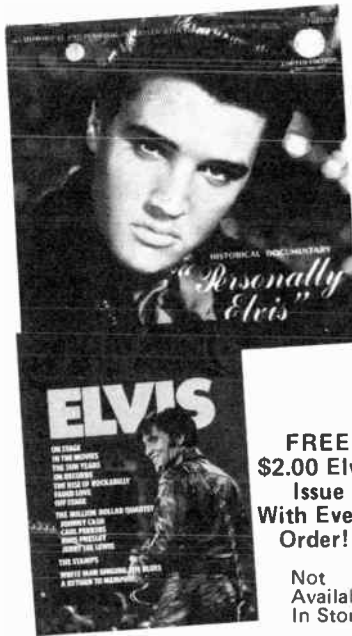
\* \* \*

The partnership of Jim Ed Brown and Helen Cornelius has once again been firmly cemented. They were a contrived duo, arranged by their producers. They have since developed a close relationship, one that comes with sharing victories and defeats. Wherever they go, be it socially or professionally, they are expected to be together. Their fans almost demand it. Helen elaborates. "A teenage boy recently came up to us and said, 'My friend and I have a five dollar bet. He says you are not married, and I'm saying, please, please be married—because I got five dollars on it.' I said, 'I'm sorry, but you lost five dollars. And he said, 'Would you all get married so I won't lose five dollars.' And I said, 'I'll tell you what, it would be cheaper for me to pay you five dollar bet!'"

For Jim Ed and Helen, the bet is still on. ■

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## WATCH THIS FACE

# RAFE VAN HOY

By Bob Allen



Rafe Van Hoy has a full head of thick, tousled hair and a slightly scattered and mischievous presence about him. In fact, at age 24, he sort of looks like the kid you might see unravelling toilet paper out of a third-floor college dormitory window, or making a last minute decision to drive all night to Florida.

But for all his callow, youthful demeanor, Rafe Van Hoy is actually something else again. Simply put, he is one of Nashville's most successful and versatile songwriters. And his songs usually reflect a degree of maturity and insight that goes well beyond his years. This year he was one of five finalists nominated for the Nashville Songwriters' Association's top award, Songwriter of the Year.

And judging from the reaction to *Prisoner Of The Sky*, Van Hoy's debut album on MCA Records, he may also be on his way toward an equally successful career as a recording artist.

In fact, as the LP's title cut begins to receive airplay on both country and pop top 40 stations Van Hoy is pulling a band together to take his music out on the road where it counts.

"One time, a long time ago, my dream was to be an artist who had it kind of set up where he didn't have to work the road a lot," Rafe explains as he sits casually in an office at Tree International, the publishing

company for which he writes, and under whose aegis his records are produced. He sips a glass of wine and blinks into the late afternoon sun that is streaming through the window. "I wanted it where I could just sit at home and write songs and make records. But I see now it ain't gonna be all that easy. So I've decided that I'm *really* going to try to make it as an artist. I don't want to live on the road, but I've come to realize that to start out when nobody really knows who you are, you have to work the road a lot and get around.

"Record labels like it when you do that too," he adds. "When they realize you're serious about it, they're more apt to get behind you."

Rafe Van Hoy is a perfect example of the hybrid-type artist toward which Nashville's music industry is turning more and more of its attention. That is, the kind of artist whose creativity and appeal is capable of comfortably overlapping into pop and rock without losing touch with country audiences. (Kenny Rogers is perhaps the archetype of this crossover breed; writer/artist Randy Goodrum is another good example.)

In the past few years, Van Hoy has written some of the most often-heard songs to hit the country charts, including: *Golden Ring* (co-written with Bobby Braddock and recorded by George Jones and Tammy Wynette); *Crying Again* (also co-written with Braddock and recorded by the Oak Ridge Boys); *Tonight* (co-written with Don Cook and recorded by Barbara Mandrell); *Don't Go City Girl On Me* (co-written with Mike Kosser and a hit for the Kendalls); *Lady Lay Down* (co-written with Sonny Throckmorton and a hit for John Conlee); and *Let's Keep It That Way* (co-written with Curly Putnam) was the title song to Anne Murray's 1978 come-back LP. Due to an intricate set of circumstances, this last song was never released as a single, but it did earn Rafe a platinum album.

Other songs written or co-written by Van Hoy have been recorded by Susie Allanson, Tom Bresh, Billy "Crash" Craddock, Gene Cotton, Rex Allen Jr., Mary Kay Miller and England Dan and John Ford Coley (whose version of *What's Forever For* was a hit for them).

That same tune is featured on Van Hoy's *Prisoner Of The Sky*, an album which decidedly falls in the pop/soft rock category, much in the vein of artists like Gene Cotton, Dave Loggins, Kenny Loggins or Jackson Browne. The material (all original) and arrangements on the LP demonstrate Rafe's versatility as a recording artist and his tendency to deviate from the pure country sound of his more popular compositions.

As a writer, Van Hoy has no difficulty explaining his extraordinary ability to bridge these different musical genres. "Most of my experience has been in learning to write country songs," he admits.

"But I think in learning to write country, I learned the basis of writing all kinds of songs. Actually, I'd really like to get more songs cut by pop artists as well as country artists.

"I always take the time to write," he adds. "But there are some songs that I write for me and there are others that I write just to get cut."

*Prisoner Of The Sky* is actually not Rafe's first foray into the record charts. Several years ago, he was part of a mildly successful soft rock group called Fallen Rock. The group briefly recorded for the now defunct Capricorn label which at the time also featured the Allman Brothers and the Marshall Tucker Band. Before the group took its final plunge, two of its singles, *Mary Ann* and *She's A Mystery*, made their way onto the bottom of the pop charts.

Rafe is a native of the hill country east of Bristol, Tennessee. ("As east as you can go in Tennessee without bein' in Virginia or North Carolina," he explains.) His father, who is now retired from the U.S. Postal Service, was himself a musician. "He was a drummer in 'boogie bands,'" Rafe explains. "He'd work during the day, play music at night, come home, get a few hours sleep, and then get up and go to work again. But because of trying to raise a family, it didn't last very long."

Even though Rafe's father eventually got out of the music business, he never stopped encouraging his son to pursue his musical ambitions. "He wanted me to play guitar when I was a kid," Rafe recalls, "but I was real hard-headed when I was young and I never wanted to do anything that wasn't my own idea. So he bought a guitar and left it laying around the house like he was going to play it. So I ended up picking it up and playing it.

"Then at another point he decided I should be writing songs," Rafe adds. "So he would write poems and lyrics and bring them home and give them to me and tell

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**"I wanted it where I could just sit at home and write songs and make records. But I see now it ain't gonna be all that easy."**

---

me to write music to them. In other words, he had to con me into doing it the whole way. He really had a lot of foresight about things."

When he was 17, Rafe left east Tennessee and moved to Nashville. He enrolled in Peabody Teachers' College for a semester or so and studied music theory; but he really had his sights set on nearby Music Row and the songwriting business. At the time, Rafe had an older brother who was attending Vanderbilt University in Nashville, so eventually the rest of his family moved up as well. Unlike most





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parents, Rafe's mother and father continued to support him in his ambitions to write and play music for a living.

Rafe made the rounds with his songs until a friend brought him to the attention of Curly Putman who eventually signed him to his own Green Grass Publishing Company. Putman, a songwriter of considerable repute (*Green Green Grass Of Home* and *My Elusive Dreams*), worked patiently with Rafe and gradually helped mold him into the top-notch, versatile writer that he is today. Today, the two of them still co-write extensively.

When Putman sold his Green Grass Publishing Company to the much larger Tree International Company, and went back on staff there, Rafe was given the option of going on staff at Tree as well. After considerable thought, he took the option. "I knew there was a possibility that since Tree had so many writers on staff that I might get lost in the shuffle," he recalls. "But I was still learning and still trying, and I really didn't have any other kind of deal going."

Rafe's worries turned out to be unfounded, to say the least. Instead of being lost in the shuffle, he emerged from the pack to become one of Tree's most prolific and most-often-recorded writers—and also one of the company's youngest staffers. Tree International president Buddy Killen recently called him "one of the most promising writers around today," adding that "at any minute, he could explode into the pop field."

When Rafe began singing on his own demo records as well as those for other songwriters, the people at Tree became equally impressed with his vocal talents. So it was only natural that when Tree expanded its facilities to include a 24-track master studio and broadened its corporate umbrella by reactivating its production company, Rafe was one of the first staff writers that they looked at with an eye toward developing as a recording artist. Off and on, over a period of a year, Rafe and his coproducers, Don Gant of Tree and Ron Chancey of MCA Records put his *Prisoner Of The Sky* LP together in Tree's own studio.

As intent as Rafe Van Hoy is on becoming a successful artist, he maintains that he still intends to keep his songwriting in the forefront; and he looks toward his eventual success as an artist as merely another channel for getting his original songs across to the public. "I'm working toward getting in a position where I can create a market for my voice or for me as an artist so that I can have that additional outlet for my songs," he explains.

"Also," he adds, "record companies tend to like it better when they know they have an artist who can write hits for himself so they don't have to spend a lot of time finding songs for him to record. The artist who is just an artist, I feel, is being phased out."



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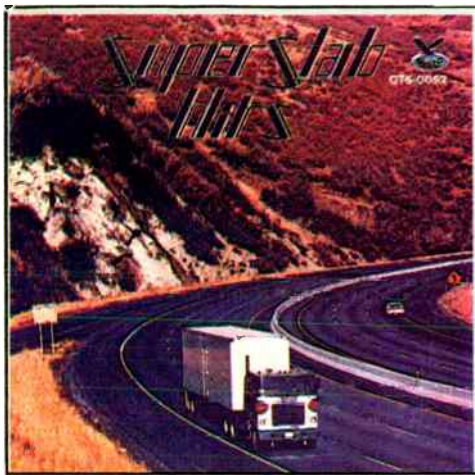
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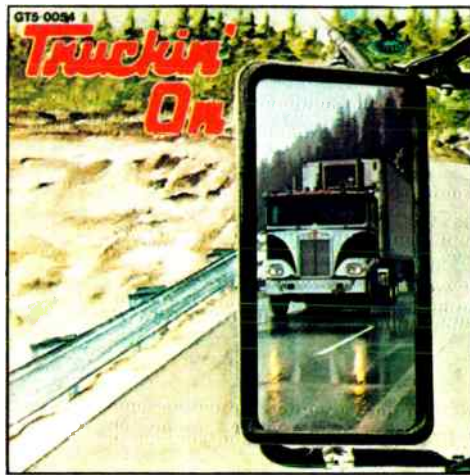
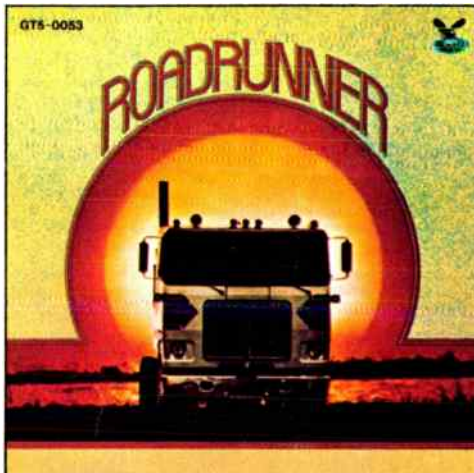
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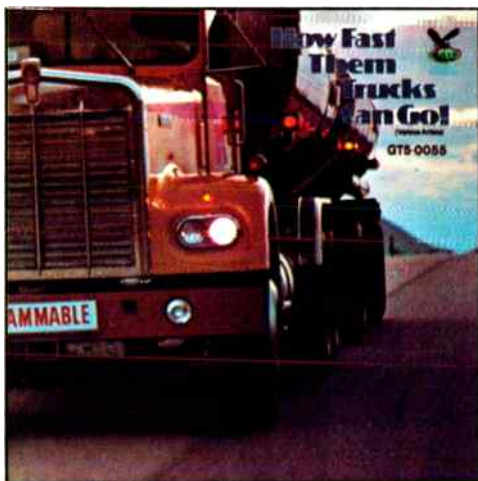


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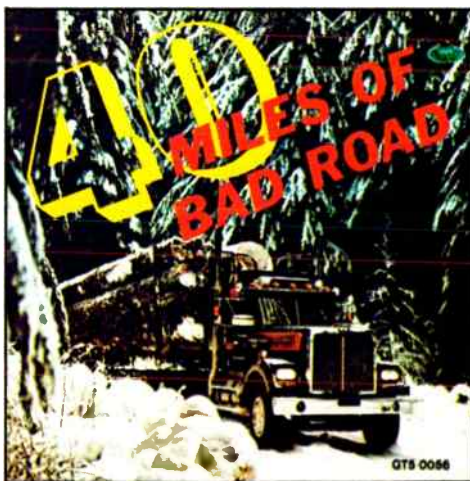
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# ROY CLARK

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Roy Clark has performed in many different places throughout the world. Skeptics might say that the United Kingdom, Canada, and especially the Soviet Union would be a strange place to bring country music. But, alas, Mr. Clark has proven them wrong.

So, it wasn't really surprising when Roy hosted a 90-minute TV special shot entirely on location in Nassau and Freeport in the Bahamas. Special guests included, The Oak Ridge Boys, Mel Tillis, Charly McClain, Barbi Benton and Australia's Julie Anthony.

The bountiful tropical setting of the Bahamas piqued the imaginations of the show's creators. Where else could the Oak Ridge Boys adorn wet suits for an underwater production number shot by Louis Prezlin, who was special effects photographer for Jacques Cousteau for 12 years? (Don't tell anyone where you heard it, but professional divers took over for the Oaks when it came to the actual underwater swimming.) The cast also got a chance to perform for orphaned Bahamian children at Flamingo Park in Nassau, sing on the beach in front of the Xanadu Hotel in Freeport, and even get down and pick with a native Junkanoo Band.

The special, produced by Tony Edens and Dick Howard, with Jim Halsey as executive producer, which is scheduled to air in October, was only the second American TV Special to be filmed in the Bahamas. Check your local listings, and you'll find it's true when they say . . . "It's Better In The Bahamas." ■



*The cast, including Mel Tillis, Roy Clark, The*  
*their opening number outside of the Xanadu*



*Benton belts out a number with back-up man*





*Oak Ridge Boys, Julie Anthony, Barbi Benton and Charly McClain kick Hotel in Freeport.*



*The Oak Ridge Boys get ready to take the plunge.*



*Clark. Children of all ages, (and Roy) enjoy Flamingo Park.*



*Roy jams with a native Junkanoo Band in Freeport.*



*Charly McClain shows her expertise doing the Limbo.*

# Billy Joe Shaver: Cowboy in his Soul

By Kelly Delaney



Billy Joe Shaver hits the stage in boots, faded jeans and denim shirt, with a wide-brimmed brown western hat pulled down over his ears. As his band kicks into the set's first number, *I've Been To Georgia On A Fast Train*, Shaver's wide grin and narrow, devilish eyes lure the audience into the music faster than a neon sign advertising free beer draws longshoremen on leave into a waterfront taproom.

To be sure, Shaver's music is intense, delivered with the poetic fire and flair of a folkish Dylan Thomas. He's a lyrical straight-shooter, laying out his emotions clearly and decisively with each song.

Shaver first stormed into Nashville 15 years ago, riding on the back of a cantaloupe truck. (Legend has it that he was on his way to California, but was unable to hitch a ride in that direction, so he headed east instead—to Music City.) His arrival on the Nashville scene coincided with the birth of the outlaw image; and as artists like Waylon Jennings, Bobby Bare, Willie Nelson and Jerry Jeff Walker were becoming the voices of a new country sound, Shaver's songs soon emerged as significant forces behind the movement. Jennings' *Honky Tonk Heroes* album featured nine tunes written by Shaver, and his *Good Christian Soldier* was the first song written by someone else that Kris Kristofferson ever recorded.

Although Shaver is best known as a songwriter, having penned such classics as *I Couldn't Be Me Without You*, *Old Five And Dimers*, and *Willie The Wandering*

*Gypsy*, among others, he does have three albums to his credit. None of these, however, launched him into the spotlight as a recording artist.

While Shaver's lack of success as a performer may be attributed in part to the non-committal attitudes of his record companies, the artist himself was, in fact, his own worst enemy. If his songs came from the backstreets and smokey barrooms of life, then Shaver played the part of his own creations. He quickly developed a reputation as a hard drinking, hot tempered ex-bullrider. (Lord knows, a man's got to be a little crazed to climb on the back of one of those critters.)

While today there is still plenty of the raw-boned cowboy spirit in his soul, at 40, Shaver's life is on a more even keel. Since September, he has been making the long hard ride toward recognition as a recording artist, beginning with his signing to the House of Cash Publishing Company. By gaining the endorsement of the "Man in Black" himself, this move has helped to assure his bread and butter.

Shaver's next step was to assemble a band of little-known, but immensely talented musicians to tour with him. The band includes his 17-year-old son, Eddie, who learned to play electric guitar from Dickey Betts; Rouggie Ray, a harmonica player with more wind than a Texas tornado; Eric Butler, a tasty acoustic guitar player; Freddie Joe Fletcher, a solid one-two punch drummer; and bassist David Pomeroy.

As a personal commitment, Shaver has cut way back on his drinking and even quit sniffing the cork while working. He recognized a problem and dealt with it quickly and cleanly.

During the last eight months, Shaver and his group have practically lived on the road, sometimes traveling as much as 1000 miles between one-nighters. When they have a few days off, they usually play one of Nashville's clubs, virtually guaranteeing a standing-room-only crowd of fans, musicians and artists alike. (A recent show was attended by such notable performers as Dickey Betts, Johnny Cash, David Allen Coe, Joe Sun, Ronnie Sessions, David Perkins, and Guy Clark, all of whom jammed with Shaver and his band on stage.)

All this hard work is finally beginning to pay off. Aside from building a well-earned reputation as one of the hottest touring bands in the country, Shaver is considering several recording possibilities. (He wants to record a live album with his band.) A movie script is underway, based on his songs in the *Honky Tonk Heroes* album, and most recently Shaver and band appeared on the educational television network's *Austin City Limits*.

Most significant to Shaver's recent push forward, would seem to be his changed attitude, as set in its direction as the flow of the Rio Grande itself. You might even say ol' Billy Joe has a pretty good roll going for himself right now. After a recent gig in Bowling Green, Kentucky, Shaver arrived home in Nashville only to discover his guitar missing. With the signatures of Kris, Waylon, and Willie, to name but a few, carved into its face, it is also the same instrument with which he has written most of his songs, and he considers it to be priceless.

He called the club owner, but the guitar was nowhere to be seen. Refusing to accept its loss, Shaver decided to have one last look around. On the way to an engagement in New York City, he made a slight detour to the club. There, leaning against a fencepost behind the club, was the guitar.

In the final analysis, a man makes his own good fortune. Nobody knows that better than Billy Joe Shaver. He's logged a lot of miles up and down the road. Less gritty individuals would have hung it up by now. Yet as Shaver stands on stage delivering song after song with such vibrancy and emotion, one gets the feeling that as far as he's concerned, the journey's just begun. ■



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