

MAY/JUNE 1988

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# COUNTRY MUSIC™



## DWIGHT YOAKAM

Remembers Those  
Hillbilly Cats

THE STATLER BROS.  
Hometown Heroes

DUANE EDDY  
Rebel Rouser

DAVID LYNN JONES  
Prodigal Son

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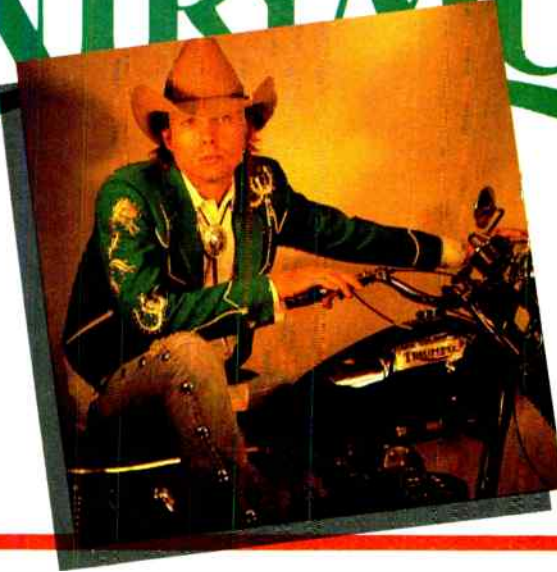
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## TOYOTA QUALITY

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# COUNTRY MUSIC™



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### 70 20 Questions with Louise Mandrell

Once again Michael Bane plays his favorite quiz game with a country star.

*by Michael Bane*

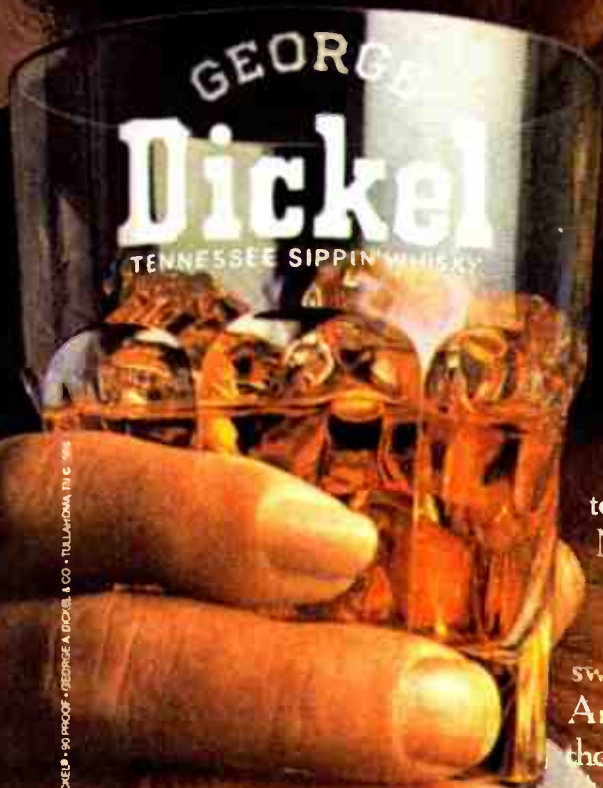
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Rose Maddox of the 1940's, Kitty Wells of the 1950's and The Louvin Brothers of the 1960's are all available today. Also Roy Acuff, Wanda Jackson, Eddie Adcock and the last of Hank Williams' early recordings.

*by Rich Kienzle*

Cover photo: *Alan Messer*

# "Ain't Nothin' Better."



“When it comes to whisky, I’ve been known to leave one and take up with another. Not anymore. Not since I found this smooth sippin’ whisky from Tullahoma, Tennessee. George Dickel.

Whatever it is they do down there turns out the sweetest sour mash this country boy’s ever tasted. And in my humble opinion, there ain’t nothin’ better.”

*George Haggard*

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# Letters



## Star and Carr

Dear Patrick:

Thanks so much for the article you wrote in the January/February issue of *Country Music Magazine*. I don't normally read reviews or articles about myself, but this was put in front of me as an article I must read. In the 25 years I've been in this business, I don't think any article, including the *Playboy* interview, which incidentally took three days longer, was ever more objective and yet at the same time flattering.

Thanks again for all the kind words.  
Your friend,

Kenny Rogers

## Idol of Youth

Very much enjoyed your Kenny Rogers article in the January/February issue. In my opinion, he is the epitome of country music. He is also my 15-year-old son's idol. In this day of fast drugs, fast sex and fast music, for a 15-year-old boy to idolize Kenny Rogers is something very special. I encourage him all the way!

My son and I both wanted to go to Kenny's concert at the Fox Theater in Atlanta in December, but we could not make it because of finances. Could you please send an address when my son can write to him?

Mary A. Niemann  
Alpharetta, Georgia

Write to Kenny at Kenny Rogers' Special Friends, 8265 Beverly Boulevard, Los Angeles, California 90048.—Ed.

## Impressed by Kenny's Concert

I enjoyed your feature article on Kenny Rogers in the January/February issue.

Then I saw him perform to a sell-out crowd with The Forester Sisters and Exile. All three were great, but Kenny Rogers was fantastic. He had such an ability with the audience. His light show was great and his singing, of course, was out of this world. I was very impressed.

Jeanette Smiley  
Amarillo, Texas

## More Kenny Hits

The article was great, but I'd like to correct you on one thing. You stated that Kenny had not had a Number One hit since 1983 with "Islands in the Stream," a duet with Dolly Parton. In fact, in 1985 Kenny recorded an album, *The Heart of the Matter*, which produced two Number One country hits. They were "Morning Desire" and "Tomb of the Unknown Love."

But I think Kenny has enough devoted fans (like me) who will always attend his concerts, buy his merchandise and albums. He won't have to worry about being Number One.

Thank you very much for doing the feature on Kenny. I had been waiting for it.

Wilma Williams  
Belpre, Ohio

Thanks for the correction.—Ed.

## Friends and Relations

The *Country Music Magazines* are better with each issue. When I get the magazine, I first read the Letters. I look carefully to see if any remarks are made by R.D.B. Then I go to the *Newsletter*.

Why do I look for these first? Because Russell D. Barnard is one of my favorite nephews, and there is no one who can compare or come up to his lovely wife, Helen, my niece. I am always so pleased to see Russell's picture with a country music star.

I was especially thrilled to read a letter written by Pam Smith of Saint George, Kansas, in the January/February issue. I plan on writing to her.

A proud uncle,

Cecil Gyer  
Saint George, Kansas

We have learned a lot from you, Cecil, and we try to put it into practice in the magazine.—H.P.B. and R.D.B.

## 30th Anniversary Bust

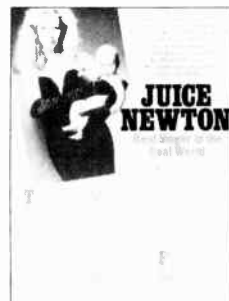
Saturday night, January 23rd, we turned on the Country Music Association's *30th Anniversary Celebration* taped January 7th at the Grand Ole Opry in Nashville with great anticipation. It soon became apparent that we were to be disappointed. Except for the last 15-20 minutes of the show with the appearance of Eddy Arnold and "friends," we all agreed it was one of the worst country music showings in our memory.

Why? Rock music was prevalent, the camera work terrible, the show was peppered with too many unrecognizable names, and we think the performers were vying to out-do each other with weird hairdos and outlandish attire.

This 30-year anniversary gala set back the prestige of country music for as many years and was a waste of airing time.

Marilyn R. Cryan  
Mercersburg, Pennsylvania

Next time we're going to ask the CMA to let us produce it.—Ed.



## Good on Juice But Two Corrections

On behalf of all the Juice Newton Fan Club members, thanks a million for your article on Juice Newton in the January/February issue.

Finding a picture or article in a magazine on Juice is rare, and I commend you. However, I have two comments: First of all, Juice is going to be 36 in February, not 38. Second, Juice's husband's name is Goodspeed, not Goodstead.

You've made many Juice Newton fans very happy.  
K.L.I.  
Oops! Sorry! Thanks for the corrections.—Ed.

## Foresters Fan Consoles Bane

Hello, out there, ya'll!

First, let me say "thanks" to Michael Bane for the excellent review of The Forester Sisters latest album, *You Again*, in the November/December 1987

issue. A lot of music critics will listen to the first song on an album and base their entire review on just that certain song, but that was not the case with Michael Bane. You could tell he's really been studying his "Forester Facts." A friend just sent me the May/June 1986 issue of *Country Music Magazine* in which Michael wrote an entire article on the girls, and it was super! When do we get the honor of seeing another article (and *maybe* cover) featuring this fabulous four?

This is my second year as a subscriber, and from what I've read so far, there's *no way* I'm going to let my subscription run out! You've printed articles and pictures of all my favorites except one, Exile. These guys are as talented, not to mention down to earth, as they come, yet they always seem to go unnoticed.

Thanks, ya'll! Here's hoping us younger fans will have another 15 years or more of your magazine to look forward to.

Ray Lynn Hammer

LaHarpe, Kansas

P.S. Don't worry, Michael, my daddy's a June Forester fan, too, and he's *still* hoping for an encouraging look!

For more on *The Foresters* and tour-mate Kenny Rogers, see *People in this issue*.—Ed.



### Kris Kristofferson, Politics, Religion and Good Old Country Music

Enjoyed your interview with Hank Snow in the January/February issue. He's always been one of my favorites. I also like *Buried Treasures* and a few other features.

However, the general tone of country music seems to be deteriorating. Kristofferson is absolutely disgusting. His abysmal ignorance of politics revealed in your article on him in the January/February issue is bad enough (where was he when Col. North testified?), and when he went to Nicaragua, I'm sure Kris saw and heard only what the Sandinistas wanted him to.

Also I don't believe Kristofferson has ever read the Bible (the Christian's manual) to see what is expected of a Christian. A good place to start would be Deuteronomy 5:11, "Thou shalt not

take the name of the Lord thy God in vain."

Juice Newton's baby is cute, in the article on her in the same issue, but who is she showing off in the picture, herself or the baby?

R. Severns

Kalispell, Montana

P.S. In the name of honesty and fair play, I challenge you to print this letter. I don't ordinarily criticise a person's religion or politics. However, when that person is a public figure, and uses the media and their own popularity to try and "sell" their own personal views, then it becomes open season on those views and comments.

*You don't like his politics. O.K. You don't believe he's read the Bible. You're wrong. What do you think of the many Christian songs he has written? I think "Why Me, Lord" is simply the most powerful of modern gospel songs, and it makes my spirit soar to hear it.*—R.D.B.

### Wrong Forum for Kristofferson?

I fail to understand why you would give a political forum to Mr. Kristofferson. This is a man of obvious genius who has admittedly spent most of his life under the influence of alcohol and illegal drugs. He chooses to honor governments who do not believe in personal liberty. He has also stated that America is responsible for international tensions. Country music fans are basically freedom loving. I just don't think this story fits in your magazine.

Ron Shaw

Decatur, Georgia

*Kristofferson fits in our magazine just like anyone else who happens to be a country music songwriting legend. We publish his opinions, Hank Snow's, Ray Price's and yours...whether we agree or not.*—R.D.B.

### What's Popular or What's Correct: Bravo Kristofferson

As a longtime subscriber to many country-related magazines, I must say yours is far superior in all departments that count. Especially in beauty, good taste and reporting.

This January/February issue was especially appreciated because of the article on the greatest Songwriter of the 20th Century, Kris Kristofferson. It's rare nowadays for someone to disregard what's popular for what's correct. I know. I've been there, having been for many years an Elected Public Servant. I was in Nashville when Kris first arrived. We did not become friends because we traveled in different circles. And yet from the first I knew he was special—that rare talent that most of us somehow can never quite develop, yet we keep trying.

Bob Payne

Georgetown, Illinois

### Kris Kristofferson's Views

This letter is to thank you for Patrick Carr's great article on Kris Kristofferson in the January/February issue. I was so glad to see someone take the time to really talk to Kris and have the courage to print Kris' views for country music fans to see.

Having had the privilege of attending 19 of Kris' concerts in the last year, I know how sincere he is in his beliefs. As he states at each show, "I know not everyone agrees with everything I sing off this stage, but I appreciate your having the courtesy to let us communicate it. It's real important to us. Don't make the mistake of thinking I'm not a patriotic American. I believe in every single principle this country was founded on, especially liberty and justice for *all!*"

Carol Ristan

Miramar, Florida



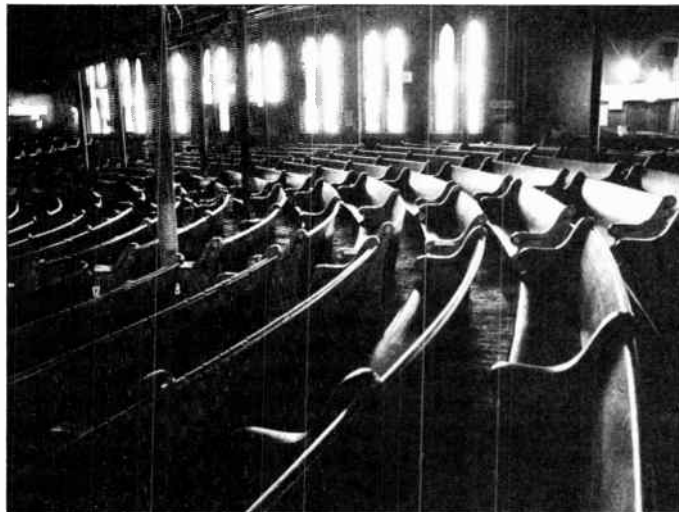
### Snow's Right About Opry Audience

This past fall, in September and again in October, my family and I attended the Grand Ole Opry. It had been 18 years since we had been to Nashville and the Opry. The last time was in 1969 when the Opry was at the Ryman.

The Opry is just as good now, if not better, than it has ever been in its 62-year history. But Hank Snow is correct when he talks about the audience in 20 Questions in your January/February issue. I've never seen so many "sour pussers" in one place in my life. While I clapped, yelled and enjoyed myself, people sitting around me sat as if they were waiting to see the doctor or something. I caught a couple of people looking at me in disgust, as if I were disturbing them with my enjoyment. I drove over 300 miles to get to the Opry. I spent hard-earned money for a motel, tickets, etc. I enjoyed myself. If these other people didn't want to have fun, why did they even bother to come?

Could the answer be as Hank says? Are these people only curiosity seekers? Maybe they expected Kenny, or Dolly. Maybe they are tired from the trip. Are they upset because it is costing them money? Is it because a large part of the audience is made up of "senior citizens"? Whatever the reason, I wish they would just stay home, and

Deserted seats at the Old Ryman. In 1974, the Opry left downtown Nashville for the Opryland complex out on Briley Parkway.



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Marvin Christmas  
Martinsville, Indiana

P.S. I'm going back to the Opry this spring. If you listen to the Opry on the radio, you will probably hear me. I'll be the one clapping my hands, yelling for more, and enjoying myself. By the way, how about a story in your magazine about one of the greatest of them all? Cowboy Copas!  
We'll try.—Ed.

### Opry Talk

I agree with Hank Snow that the Grand Ole Opry lost something when it became Opryland, U.S.A.

I've listened to country music from the time it started on radio with the Solemn Ole Judge through my courting years holding hands and listening to the little "box" on Saturday nights. Now after fifty-one years together, we're still holding hands and listening to country music, but after three trips to Nashville, we're disenchanted with the change.

The first time we went, we stayed at an old hotel called The Sam Davis, in walking distance of the Old Ryman Auditorium and Music Row where we could stroll around, meet and shake hands with the artists and feel they were our friends. In 1984 we went to Opryland, U.S.A., stayed at the Opryland Hotel, and didn't see one star, nor shake hands with one person we knew. To us it is just another theme park.

Yes, things have changed, what with the suggestive songs, that are really not "country," and the atmosphere of friendliness and good foot-stomping music that disappeared when the real Grand Ole Opry became "Opryland, U.S.A." Incidentally, Hank Snow was one of many country music artists we met on our first trip to Nashville.

Louise Ingram  
Kershaw, South Carolina

### Hank Snow, Author?

In October of 1986 we were at the Opry. What a thrill! That night Hank Snow said his book would be out in the summer of 1987. Can you please tell me if it has been released and the name of it? We are real fans of his.

Barb Lynn

Wyoming, Minnesota

*Hank is writing his life story. It will probably be another year or so before it's ready for the publishers.—Ed.*

### Furious Father: Does Reba Care?

I have been trying to get a picture of Reba McEntire for my 15-year-old daughter. My daughter is broken-hearted. We have over \$100 in tapes of hers, and I am sure she could spare one picture. I am an 8th grade teacher. It took The Judds one week to return a picture. Those three are the only ones my daughter likes. Are they so blind to their success they don't realize who is buying their tapes? I thought country people were different. I wonder. They don't realize who they could be hurting. Miss McEntire better wake up before her balloon bursts.

Matthew Van Wagener

San Jose, California

*Reba has a new fan club address: it is P.O. Box 121996, Nashville, Tennessee 37212. Try that. Maybe your previous letter got lost in the move.—Ed.*

### SKB Song Hits Home

I just wanted to compliment Schuyler, Knoblock and Bickhardt on their latest song, "This Old House." It's such a sad song. We are now in the process of selling my grandpa's house that my grandma's parents built in 1927. Since then, four generations of people have lived in it, including me. If you could find some kind of mailing address of theirs, I would love to write a letter to them.

Jeremiah Galley

Caledonia, Wisconsin

*Write SKB at The Tangerine Music*

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## Kansas Calling Waylon Jennings

Could you please see if you have an address on file for Waylon Jennings' fan club? He has been on the top of my list now for a long, long time. Also I'd like to know if he will be anywhere near Kansas or the surrounding states anytime soon.

I'm really pleased with the way your magazine tells the stories of all our nation's outstanding country music performers. "Cowboy, Don't Sing the Blues" in the November/December 1987 issue was my favorite.

Jan Burenheide  
Neosho Rapids, Kansas  
*Waylon has no fan club—sorry to disappoint you. He does have an itinerary hot line, 615-327-0823.—Ed.*

## Alabama's Just Us Review

I am an Alabama fan, but first and foremost I am a country music fan, and I can't stand to see it misused. I don't know how your last Alabama review went, but as far as this one in the January/February issue is concerned, maybe you'd get a more realistic review if you didn't give the job to such a professed fan.

You see, the last two projects by these guys left me sorely disappointed. When I heard "Tar Top" on the radio, I thought, "Great—these guys are back on the track." I loved the tune so much, I bought the whole album, but, alas, all I heard was more of the same Alabama as before.

It seems that recently a lot of the band's music has been put out simply to make the young ladies "ooh" and "aah." It's not that I have anything against "oohing" and "aahing," it's just that there is so much more to life and certainly to music than that. Their love songs have lost that simple beauty and emotive spirit that they once had.

Alabama is made up of four very talented musicians, vocalists and songwriters who seem not to be trying anymore. They're not pushing those limits and that, to me, is really sad.

By the way, did Paddi Carr appear in that movie they made a few years ago about Valley Girls? She sure sounds like it, like, totally.

Donna Henry  
Warren, Pennsylvania  
*Did you mean "professed" or "possessed"?—Ed.*

## Looking for Paddi Carr

Since "Paddi" Carr isn't listed under the credits for *Country Music Magazine*, he/she must be an imposter hiding behind the name of someone who is—Patrick?! At any rate, the review of

Alabama's *Just Us* in the January/February issue was as repulsive as most of their music—so disgusting it was almost funny! There is nothing that makes me turn the radio off quicker than an Alabama song, though Lee Greenwood's and Exile's latest efforts are competing for the honor!

Marge Belth  
Bloomington, Indiana

## Ode to Paddi Carr

It was soooo wonderful to read a "review" by a true believer. You capture the essence of Alabama-ness like nobody I've ever read before, or hope to read again. It's really neat that you managed to explain what makes Alabama so...well...great, so that even the musically retarded can grasp the magic of...well...just them.

Your review was a real eye-opener for me, it truly was. I hadn't realized reviews could be written with such wit and charm. It will doubtless inspire me, and all other loyal Alabama fans with aerial photos of Ft. Payne in their wallets, to renew subscriptions and be loyal *Country Music Magazine* readers, too. Yes, sir, any magazine that would print your "review" is high on my list, let me tell you.

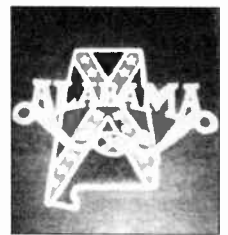
I'll remember your name every night as I kneel (facing Ft. Payne) and pray for the Fab Four to be protected from floods, tornadoes, moronic reviewers, and things.

Maybe we'll even meet in Ft. Payne some day. Ye gods, I'm so excited.

Cheryl Powers  
Hayesville, North Carolina  
*Do you need a job, Cheryl?—Ed.*

## Inspired by Alabama

Recently in my Art II class at my high school, we had the choice of doing a painting of whatever we wanted. Naturally I picked Alabama, and did an acrylic portrait of their logo. They are quite an inspiring group!



Tammy Moore  
Otway, Ohio

*For more on Alabama, see People in this issue.—Ed.*

## The Age of Randy-Mania

I have just one big question—how in the world can the American people be so blind as to think Randy Travis is a better entertainer than George Strait, by any means? Randy Travis has had a few good songs, but, come on! He has gotten almost every award, on every award show, for the last two years. *That's ridiculous!* He isn't that good yet!



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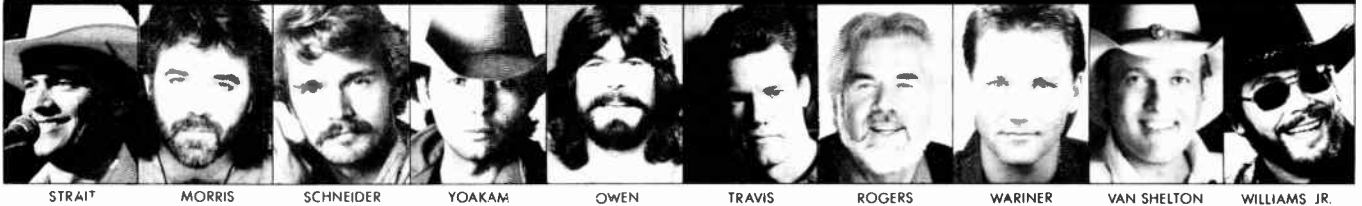
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## Playgirl Poll: Country Music's 10 Sexiest Men



## KZLA Poll: Los Angeles Listeners' 10 Sexiest



There are countless numbers of entertainers in country music that he can't even compare to!

Randy has had one fantastic album, *Storms of Life*, which is deserving of awards. His second album, *Always & Forever*, was and is greatly overrated. I have seen his live shows—they are at best "amateur," especially his band. Also, his stage personality could use a lot of work.

I am so sick of "Randy Mania"! Will it ever end!

By the way, I enjoy *Country Music Magazine* so much! Especially the album reviews—bad or good!

Renee Wallace  
Altha, Florida

*We are taking bets on which is going to be more controversial, your opinion of Travis or your response to our record reviews.—Ed.*

### Fabulous Fiddler with Travis

I went to the Memorial Coliseum in Portland, Oregon, this past October to see Randy Travis, Loretta Lynn and Conway Twitty, and during Randy's performance there was a violin player in his back-up group who beat anything. He was just great. Now, what I want to know is, is he a regular studio back-up player or is he strictly a Randy Travis man?

I hear what sounds like him playing with so many different performers while I'm listening to my favorite station, KUPL, Portland, Oregon (just had to throw that in).

Dorothy Harlan  
Oregon City, Oregon

*David Johnson was trained as a classical violinist at the University of Iowa. He is strictly a Travis man and has never been a studio player.—Ed.*

### Waiting for Lightning to Strike

I've been a musician since I was seven years old. I started playing and singing in church and gatherings. After many years of listening and playing country

and bluegrass music, I feel like it's time for me to be climbing the ladder a little. Seems everywhere I go to perform for people, they always say I should be discovered by someone. *Please* tell me where to start.

Billy Wiley  
Goldsboro, North Carolina

*Almost every story we publish tells how someone was discovered. Mostly it's in Nashville.—Ed.*

### Country Music's Sexiest Men

The January 1988 issue of *Playgirl Magazine* featured an article on Country Music's 10 sexiest men. *Playgirl's* listing, in no particular order, is as follows: Willie Nelson, Vince Gill, Foster & Lloyd, The O'Kanes, Steve Earle, Randy Travis, Dwight Yoakam and Michael Martin Murphey.

Women in Los Angeles had a very different opinion. Barbara Barry, of KZLA Radio/93.9 FM, ran a week-long telephone poll asking for our favorites. The 10 sexiest men in country music according to her poll, in order, are: George Strait, Gary Morris, John Schneider, Dwight Yoakam, Randy Owen, Randy Travis, Kenny Rogers, Steve Wariner, Ricky Van Shelton and Hank Williams Jr.

Would you please print these results with pictures?

Jody E. Seal  
Northridge, California

*What, no centerfolds?—Ed.*

### Welcome News on Webb Pierce

I've been wanting to write you, Hazel, and just say "thanks"—thanks for writing such a great section in *Country Music Magazine*.

Thanks also for the mention of Webb

### Correction

The photo of Emmylou Harris in Letters last issue was taken by Piet Milane, not Mike Farrell.

Pierce's recovery in the People section of the January/February issue. He was and still is my favorite in country music. Many years ago I had the pleasure of knowing him and, believe me, they just don't come any nicer. Sure miss seeing him perform.

When I was younger, my dream was to be a part of the Country Music World and its greats, but somewhere along the way I goofed, so I stay in touch by reading your magazine.

Pat Kennedy  
Dumfries, Virginia



Charlie Louvin and fan Nicole Reynolds at The Louvins Park.

### Louvins Revisited

In your Buried Treasures section, you have written some beautiful reviews on The Louvin Brothers. We would love to see an article about them in your magazine.

Charlie is still very active. He plays the Grand Ole Opry on weekends, and lives on the grounds of the Louvin Brothers Music Park in Henagar, Alabama. Every Mother's Day weekend in May, he has the Annual May on the Mountain Bluegrass Festival at the park. I have attended every one and enjoy them tremendously. The Louvin Brothers Museum is also there and is very interesting to see.

My five-year-old granddaughter, Nicole Reynolds, has been there several

# ROSANNE CASH

## KING'S

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times with me. She is very much a Charlie Louvin fan.

Shirley Harrison  
Memphis, Tennessee

For more on the Festival, call 205-657-5700. Watch *Legends of Country Music* in the CMSA Newsletter for an article on *The Louvins*.—Ed.

### Tracking Dwight Yoakam

Re: Dwight Yoakam... He is on the right track, but he needs to either fire or have a serious talk with that drummer. Drums in country music are bad enough under any circumstances, but a loud drum line is unbearable.

Also ole Dwight is almost as pretty as Emmylou Harris—he ought to make up his mind which gender he aspires to. He's been looking at too many heavy metal magazines.

Tony Redden  
Kodiak, Alaska

P.S. Love old country. Hate new country. Love Old Grand Ole uproar. Hate new "Opryland b.s."

Must be cold up there in Kodiak.—Ed.

### Date of Death, Please

I enjoy country music, and I collect all country music stars and dates of their birthdays and deaths. So could you please help me on these—Wynn Stewart and The Duke of Paducah. I read in your magazine that they had died, but you didn't give the dates.

Ann Lempke  
Troppe, Maryland  
Wynn Stewart died at his home in Hendersonville, Tennessee, on July 17, 1985. The Duke of Paducah died in Nashville on June 20, 1986. For country music stalwarts who died in the last months of 1987, see *People in this issue*.—Ed.

### The Singing Sanders

In the January/February issue of *Country Music*, a lady from Virginia wanted to know about Steve Sanders, now a member of the Oak Ridge Boys.

I have a record of Little Stevie Sanders put out by Songs of Faith, a single, Number 8006. Titles are "I've Been Changed" and "Because of Him," gospel songs, by Little Stevie Sanders and The Segro Brothers. I saw him in person with Naomi and The Segro Brothers at Tate's Creek Baptist Church, about 10 miles east of Toccoa, Georgia. He was probably eight or nine years old.

I am sending a picture of him. The resemblance is there. It is the Steve Sanders.

Love your magazine. Keep up the good work.

Christine Hughes  
Demorest, Georgia  
More good sleuthing. The single is one



Little Stevie Sanders before he became Big Steve and joined The Oaks.

of the first, if not the first that Steve recorded. He recorded *This Is My Valley*, mentioned in *Letters in the January/February issue*, when he was 15 or 16.—Ed.

### Calling All Amateurs

I have played pedal steel a good many years and have played in a number of country bands. I find it difficult to locate other musicians and groups to get together with. Maybe some kind of listing of groups looking for lead, steel, bass and rhythm players and vocalists would be a success in your magazine.

I am sure there are many talented people around who could benefit from such a list. It's great to read about the stars, but all of us struggling musicians could sure use a hand too!

Pete Shaw  
Stuart, Florida

This might work for the Newsletter. Stay tuned.—Ed.

### Found: Charlie Hodge

I saw the letter titled "Whatever Happened to..." in your May/June 1987 issue, asking for info on Charlie Hodge. Charlie is a friend of mine, so I thought I'd let you know he is doing well and living in Decatur, Alabama. Thanks for asking!

D. Denney  
Huntsville, Alabama  
Stay tuned, friends. We'll find 'em for you! Thanks, D. Denney, for writing in.—Ed.

### Whatever Happened to Clark Kessenger?

A couple of years ago I was in a hospital recovering from my second bypass operation. Someone left a *Country Music Magazine* on my bed. I am not much of a reader, but I am a lover of country music. I read it and liked it and ordered it the same day. Have it a couple of years advanced so I won't miss a copy.

I like it all from cover to cover, so keep it coming. Now, I am hoping you can help me. I am trying to find out what happened to an oldtime country fiddler, Clark Kessenger. I know he made some recordings as far back as the 1940's on a Kanawha label. Would like to know where I could find his albums or a copy of same. Some of your readers will know him—you reach a lot of people. He made his music in the Carolinas, Virginia, West Virginia. Anywhere musicians got together, Clark was there.

Virgil Turley  
Fernley, Nevada  
Clark Kessenger friends and fans, come in, please.—Ed.

### And, What Happened to David Wells?

I am a country music fan and have been all of my 28 years.

I would like to know what has happened to David Wells? The last time I remember hearing of him was November 1974 when he had a Top 10 hit out called "Song on the Juke Box."

Where is he, what has he been doing and where can I pick up an album of his from the early 1970's?

Garry L. Coldiron  
North Judson, Indiana  
Mailbox open on David Wells too.—Ed.

### Thanks for Hank Thompson and How About Martha Carson?

I have just received my second issue of *Country Music Magazine*, the January/February issue. What a great magazine. In the first issue I received, I was pleased to open it and find a letter on a friend of mine, Hank Thompson. My wife Vi and I had the pleasure of spending some time with Hank and his wife Ann when Hank appeared at Travis Air Force Base in September 1986. The day after the show we took them to the Oakland Airport to catch a plane to L.A. I've met several country artists, but Hank and Ann are down-to-earth, warm, friendly people. And Hank's voice is like a bottle of fine wine, "It keeps getting better with time." The man will always be the king of country swing.

The other reason I wrote was, and this is for your "Whatever Happened to..." column, how about a lady who sang gospel music for many years, Martha Carson? I have one of her albums on Capitol records.

Jerry R. Moose  
Suisun, California  
Martha Carson, where are you?—Ed.

### Here's What Happened to Jerry Wallace

Jerry Wallace is back! For every Jerry Wallace fan who takes out his albums or 45 rpm records from the 1950's, 1960's

# THE SKOAL MAN<sup>\*</sup>

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World Radio History

and 1970's and then thinks to themselves, "Why isn't he making more records?"—the answer is, he's back, with a new release, a love song, "I Bought the House," which he co-wrote with Kevin Young.

Jerry had been doing some songwriting during the last ten years, but he said he missed recording and his fans. That's all it took for engineer and producer Rick Thomas to decide to release that pause button, roll tape and let Jerry's smooth voice start the magic again. Jerry has told us, "You have to express feeling in a song, for it to be a good song, and when you have experienced love and heartache, you can express that feeling."

Jerry's single is out on Southwind Recordings.

Donna Thomas  
Sylmar, California

Thanks, Donna, for this update, and good luck, Jerry.—Ed.

### Swing Your Partner, Czechoslovakian-Style

We are a group of young people, dancers, who are keen on your Country and Square Dances. We have some information on square dances and about 30 country dances with description and music on tapes from one of our experts on country dances, Prog. Frantisek Bonus.

We perform these dances at so-called "country balls" for the public with live music of country music bands or with playback from the tape. However, we



Friendly greetings from the Square Dance Club Caramella, located in the center of Europe, in the capital of Czechoslovakia, Prague.

have never seen your dances—we only imagine them. We would naturally like to see how they are danced in their home country. We would even be grateful for addresses of clubs performing Square and Country Dances.

We believe the long distance dividing us should be overcome by friendship.

Our group is called Country Dances Club Caramella. We are sponsored by the Factory Committee of the Trade Unions of Tesla Strasnice comp.

Dr. Jiri Vasak  
Prague, Czechoslovakia

Our address is Dr. Jiri Vasak, tanecni skupina Caramella, ZV ROH Tesla Strasnice, Slezska 103, 130 00 Praha 3, CSSR, Europe.

Readers, any suggestions?—Ed.



Exile stopped and snapped with the Yeagers and radio station people Lori Gray and Sam Van Zant in San Mateo.

### Exile Excitement

Had the opportunity to win tickets to see Exile in concert at Circle Star Playa, San Mateo. They sure put on a fantastic show. They opened for Kenny Rogers, and he was great. Our granddaughter, age 17, got to come along too. She was just so excited and loves country music.

Our radio station, KNEW in Oakland, plays nothing but country music 24 hours a day non-stop. The promotion director, Lori Gray, and disk jockey Sam Van Zant were also around that night.

Keep the good stories and pictures coming this way.

Barbara Yeager  
Dillon Beach, California

Sounds like the same show Jeanette Smiley saw in Texas. See her letter above.—Ed.

### Rewarding the Reviewers For Their Oaks' Reviews

I have been a subscriber to *Country Music Magazine* for nearly 10 years—I'm also a charter member of CMSA—and have seen your magazine get better and better every year.

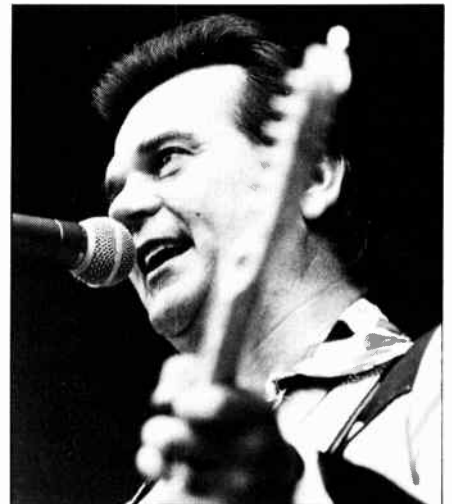
I always read the record reviews to see what is new in records. Over the years I have observed that your record reviewers seem to have a great pre-  
dice against some of my favorite acts, The Oak Ridge Boys in particular. I haven't read a single positive review of an Oaks record in over five years. The review of their *Heartbeat* album in the January/February issue is no exception. What is the reviewers' problem? I have that record and I think it is absolutely super! It is the *best* one they have made in years. I'm no music expert, but I know what I like, and I love that one. Come on, guys, give The Oaks a break. They have some great talent there, and they sure know how to entertain an audience. Okay, all you Oak Ridge Boys fans, let's get together and give the *Country Music Magazine* record reviewers a great big raspberry!

Linda Nellen  
Rock Springs, Wyoming  
And no whipped cream, either.—Ed.

### The Mighty Mellencamp—or, Bane, Take a Bow

I would just like to say thank you to Michael Bane for a brief but well-written update on John Cougar Mellencamp's latest album, *The Lonesome Jubilee* in Record Reviews in the January/February issue. Like Bane, I agree that what makes this album is a "gut-level understanding and appreciation of what makes up American Music." Let's face it, recognition for John Cougar Mellencamp as a singer and as one of our greatest songwriters is long overdue. And what better way to do it than for *Country Music Magazine* to give him a good review.

DeDe Lyle  
Moreno Valley, California



Conway Twitty was Jenkins.

### Harold Jenkins/Conway Twitty

In the early 1950's, I went to Fort Smith Junior High in Fort Smith, Arkansas.

A friend of mine, James (Jimmy) Jenkins, went to school there too. At Jimmy's home were several pictures of a

man named Harold Jenkins whom Jimmy said was his older brother. The pictures looked a lot like Conway Twitty. Could they be the same person?

Every time I look at a picture of Conway, I can see Jimmy Jenkins.

By the way, I love your magazine! It's great! Where can I write to Conway Twitty?

Bob Roberts

Colorado Springs, Colorado  
*Conway Twitty's real name is Harold Jenkins. You can write to him at Twitty City, 1 Music Village Boulevard, Hendersonville, Tennessee 37075.—Ed.*

### Direct Me to Demo

I'd like to get started in the music business. I heard once on TV that you could go to a place at Opryland and record your own demo. If you have any information to help me find out more about this, I would appreciate it.

L.L.

Camden, Tennessee

*The Opryland studio is just for fun. If you're serious about making your own demo, there are professional outlets in Nashville.—Ed.*

### My Hero, Ed Bruce

I guess it's true what they say...everybody has a hero. Mine is Ed Bruce. I had the honor of meeting him at the San Antonio Stock Show & Rodeo in February. He is such a great singer, and he has given so much to country music with little publicity or recognition in return.

I am 26 years old and have admired his music for years.

Vicky Mosher  
McQueeney, Texas



Vicky Mosher caught up with hero Ed Bruce at the Rodeo in San Antone.

### Who's Writing Those Record Reviews, Anyway?

I just received my *Country Music Magazine*. I'm a fairly new subscriber. I really like your magazine a lot except for one thing. I'd like to know where your magazine got the jerks who do the



### Bags of Mail

Since the first of the year, we have received the most wonderful mail—not only lots and lots from our U.S. readers—the mailbags are groaning and the postmen are charging overtime—but also more letters than usual from interested fans across the sea. We have had inquiries of various kinds, including American cash sent

through the mail for a back issue, from The Netherlands, Czechoslovakia, Italy, England, Nigeria, Spain, Sweden and Norway. And we've got the stamps to prove it. Thanks to all our European and African friends for their interest. We're getting to all their requests little by little.

record reviews? I mean, ever since the first copy I've received, I have never seen them say anything good about my favorite performers.

Like Hank Jr., Willie, Waylon and George Jones—just to name a few, although their opinion doesn't mean anything. Performers like Hank Jr. and Willie have more talent in their little finger than most of the others have in their *whole body!* I'd rather quit listening to country music than ever listen to the ones those jerks give good reviews to, people like Alabama and George Strait.

Craig Turner

S. Cle Elum, Washington

*In trouble again.—Ed.*

### Review's Right About Rosanne Cash

I had to write because I couldn't agree more with Rich Kienzle's review of Rosanne Cash's *King's Record Shop* in the January/February issue. The album is the best I've heard in years, but that doesn't really surprise me. Rosanne has always done everything top notch. She is definitely the best singer around. But I feel she has been somewhat underrated. I think Rich Kienzle was right when he said she is ahead of her time.

I also just read two reviews of her in concert in *Rolling Stone Magazine* and *Cashbox Magazine*. Both were great.

Maybe everyone is catching on to something we already know.

Keep up the great work, Rosanne. Everyone's talkin' about you.

Chuck Walter

Staten Island, New York

*Back in the ballgame.—Ed.*

### Boogie Down, Hank Jr.

I just want to say that John Morthland really tore up Hank Williams Jr.'s *Born to Boogie* album in your November/December issue. Are you sure this guy knows anything about good music? My husband and I are big fans of Hank's. We bought *Born to Boogie* and love it. We put it in the car stereo and keep listening to it over and over again. It happens to be one of our favorite tapes.

Christine Graham

Gelnhausen, West Germany

*We can't win. But thanks for writing all the way from West Germany. Hank, your fans love you.—Ed.*

*Send Letters to the Editor to Country Music Magazine, 342 Madison Avenue, Suite 2118, New York, New York 10173. Mark your envelope, Attention: Letters. Sorry we can't answer each individual inquiry. We do read every letter and answer those which are representative here.*

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Fatsy Cline "Live at the Opry"

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Steve Wariner "I Should Be With You"

Reba McEntire "Reba"

Conway Twitty "Still Your Dreams"

This is a record year for MCA Nashville. We're celebrating our 30th Anniversary.

And we're happy to say that the hits just keep on coming.

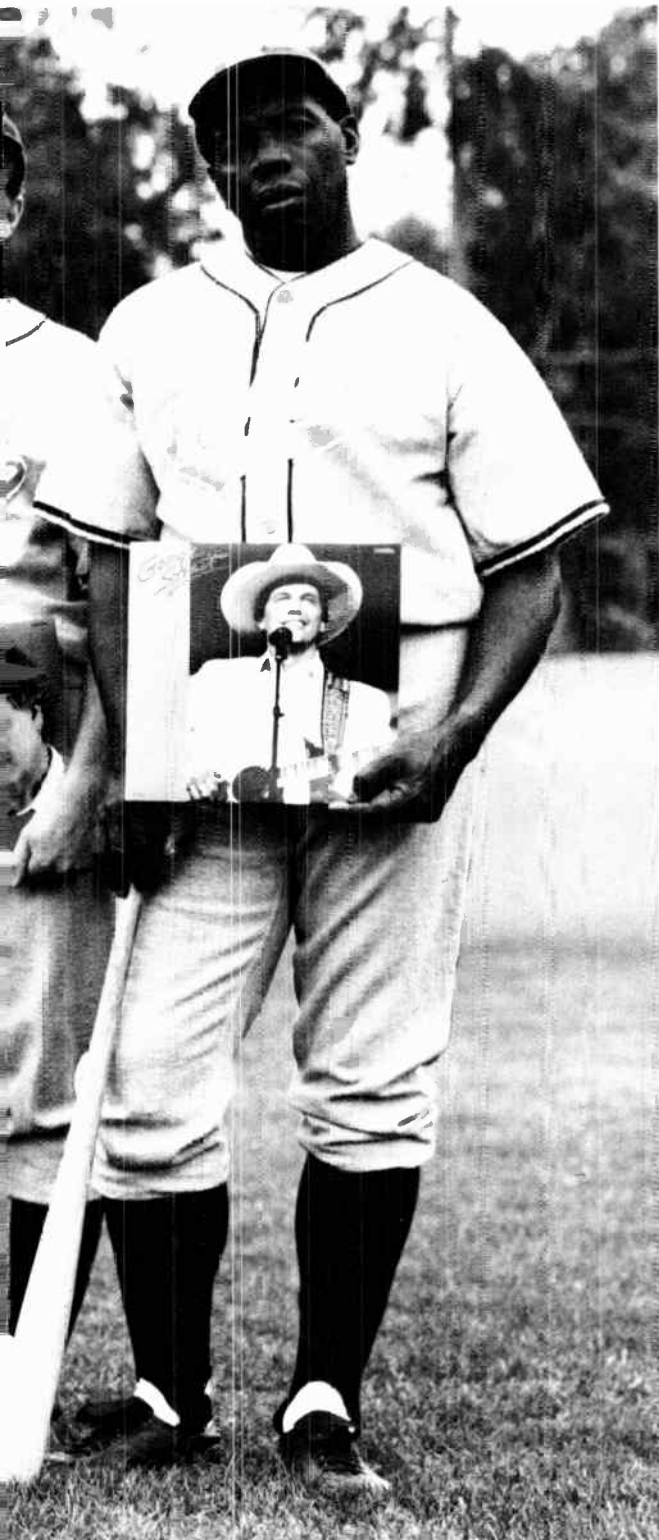
Take a look at this year's line-up. Hot new releases from today's country stars. And everyone's favorite classics now in CD **World Radio History**



So,  
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# FROM MCA NASHVILLE



This hit doesn't feature any country singers. There are no drums or guitars. And it's not available on LP's, CD's or cassettes.

But it could end up making you a million bucks!

## THE SWING FOR A MILLION SWEEPSTAKES.

It's your big chance to strike it rich.



### GRAND PRIZE

If your name is picked as a Grand Prize Winner, we'll whisk you off on American Airlines to Nashville for three days and two nights.

You get three fabulous days of entertainment at Opryland USA, "America's Musical Showplace"<sup>SM</sup>, and a baseball game at the Nashville Sounds stadium.

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That's when things get really exciting.

Picture yourself up at bat. The crowd's cheering. You get three pitches.

Drive the ball out of the park and you'll drive away with a brand new Dodge Dakota Sport truck.



Hit a second home run and you'll bat in a million dollars!

And to show you that we're real sports, we'll give away a Dodge Dakota Sport Truck, even if there are no heavy hitters. And you also have a chance to win one of these other fabulous prizes:

### FIRST PRIZE

6 trips to Universal Studios Tour in Hollywood.



Lights! Camera! Action! You'll take a VIP tour and take in a concert at the Universal Amphitheatre. Your chance to "go Hollywood" for three days and two nights.

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10 Pioneer PDM 50 Multiplay CD Players. This should be music to your ears. They're loaded with remote control, 32 step programming and 6 disc selection.

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### THIRD PRIZE

200 home videos. And not just any home videos. We're talking about George Strait—Live, featuring George Strait in concert, brought to you by MCA Home Video. It's like having George right in your living room.



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500 subscriptions to Country Music Magazine. The best way to get a beat on what's happening in Country music.



To enter, just tear off the attached entry form.

And get ready to strike it rich.

Prizes may vary at participating retail outlets. For complete details see official rules on reverse side of entry form—available at your MCA retailer.

In George Strait "If You Ain't Lovin' You Ain't Livin'"

wing by your favorite record store during the month of and you just might hit it big!

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# People

## A GIFT FOR MAMA

Young and gifted, **Randy Travis**, the Golden Boy of the Country Music Charts, has a heart as big as his talent. All of Marshville, North Carolina, probably knows that Travis presented his mama with a new car for Christmas. This made me prouder of Randy than any and all of his Number One records. I like mamas a whole lot. And I've had a lot of practice being a mama.

## THANKS TO COUNTRY RADIO FROM HERE TO HOME

I gotta start in Music City and go to Knoxville, Asheville, Hickory, Statesville and Winston Salem, North Carolina, to say thanks for all the great country music between here and home in Caswell County, North Carolina. Hope I didn't miss nobody. One thing for sure, the babies will sleep as long as the music is playing. Even when our babies are awake, if music is going they don't cry. Of course, all kids aren't *that* perfect!

## ROY CLARK STILL AFTER THE BIG ONE

Don't you know that **Roy Clark** is well off! It don't matter if he is, he hasn't stopped reaching and stretching. Last August he was made a member of the Grand Ole Opry, and I reported it in this column in this magazine. That is not the last thing on Clark's mind. He's just signed a recording contract with Capitol Records. Aren't you proud that some of the labels still have sense enough not to let these big fish go before their time? And aren't we all happy to have some more Roy Clark music fixing to come on the air.

## WHEN THE LIVING DIES, YET STILL LIVES

It was a sad day for us in country/bluegrass music when the **Johnson Mountain Boys** hung up the fiddle, bow and five-gallon hats in exchange for computers and real estate. Yes, you read me right. Can you believe it? There's got to



## SISTERS

Yes, that's Dolly Parton sharing a laugh with her sister Stella during a rehearsal for a segment of the *Dolly* show. Stella, who helped Dolly coordinate that episode, will have a regular feature on *Dolly* next season. That's what's known as keeping it in the family.

be a zillion folks in the U.S.A. who can work computers and sell real estate, but there was just one Johnson Mountain Boys Band. And they disbanded. No offense to realtors and computer operators, but when folks entertain that good, it just seems a sin to me for them to turn in their guitar, banjo, bass, fiddle and mandolin and stop playing. It was good while it lasted. About the only thing left is the records and the memories of one of the greatest bluegrass bands to come down the pike in many a moon. Friends, I beg, beseech and dare you to support your favorites. Do not allow them to have to stop picking in order to make a living.

## CLOWNS HANGING OUT WITH THE JUDDS? WHO'D-A-THOUGHT IT?

The Greatest Show on Earth meets the Greatest Show on Earth when **The Judds** act as ringmasters for a forthcom-

ing Ringling Brothers Barnum & Bailey Circus. I knew that mother and daughter duo could strut their stuff, but I never once thought about them clowning around with horses or horsing around with clowns. That's show biz, I reckon.

## A GAL NAMED K.T.

Early on in her career, I was a **K.T. Oslin** fan. I attended her first party, and I attended a *New Country* taping at The Cannery which was her first live performance of *80's Ladies* album songs. The *80's Ladies* video killed me and I thought, this is like the wind. It will pass and like the rest of 'em, she will slough off...the next one will be lesser. Not true. "I'll Always Come Back" is another classic video, and the song is right up there with "80's Ladies" and "Do Ya." I have no idea how far K.T. will go with her music. But I got a feeling she will go as far as she wants to.

Reporter: Hazel Smith

Editor: Rochelle Friedman

"k.d. lang is a rare talent with a great voice and an imagination to go along with it. Producing this album was not work but a constant amazement. As a singer, k.d. is anything she wants to be!"

*Owen Bradley*



# k.d. lang Shadowland



The amazing album from the Academy Of Country Music nominee for Top New Female Vocalist. Featuring some of Nashville's best session musicians, with guest vocalists Loretta Lynn, Kitty Wells and Brenda Lee.

*Includes The Song*  
"I'M DOWN TO MY LAST CIGARETTE"

*Produced By Owen Bradley*



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World Radio History

# People

## TOO MANY COOKS



Sylvia, host of the new TV show *Holiday Gourmet* on The Nashville Network, talks with the audience as The Whites prepare for their Memorial Day outing. Sharon and Cheryl on either side of their dad, Buck White, are obviously amused at the getup on every side of Buck. The Whites prepared barbecued chicken on the grill and a seven-layer salad, and Buck never even had to use the fire extinguisher!

## LEONARD, THE PICTURE MAKER

My good friend, Leonard Kamsler, perhaps the world's greatest picture taker, was in Music City for a session with the beautiful Miss Barbara Mandrell. Of all the folks in Nashville that he knows, he only asked one person to lunch. Me! My sons were really impressed that Leonard is also the official photographer for the Harlem Globe Trotters and will go with the group to both Russia and China in 1988. Leonard Kamsler has taken many a great cover for *Country Music Magazine* and that's why he is one of our Contributing Editors.

## WE BENEFIT FROM BENEFITS

One of the more worthwhile benefits in this City of Music is the Fraternal Order of Police benefit for under-privileged children. They have a wonderful camp in Mt. Juliet where my buddy Det. Mark Garafola and a bunch more of the good guys in blue spend time without pay during the summer to see that children get to go to camp that otherwise couldn't. Folks on the row that have helped with this very worthwhile char-

ity are CBS-ers Joe Casey and Kay Smith, BMI-er Harry Wariner, hillbillies Ricky Skaggs and Jerry Reed, Merit Music's Norro Wilson and Mercury/Polygram's Debbie Banks. Let's give a hand to these good folks and everyone who helps a child smile, swim, laugh and enjoy these benefits.

## GRIFFITH TO IRELAND

MCA's Nanci (with an i) Griffith crosses the big pond for Ireland. Her second trip in a year. I gotta learn to swim or sing so I can go someplace.

## WHITLEY ALA FRIZZELL

Hopefully the Keith Whitley/Garth Fundis pairing in the recording studio will be the answer to the question I've been asking: "When is somebody gonna produce Keith the way I want to hear him?" From what I hear, the song they're banking on is the old Lefty Frizzell classic, "I Never Go Around Mirrors." Know what? They used Allen Frizzell, Lefty's baby brother, to sing the harmony. This one should buy the farm for Keith.

## AN ANGEL IN THE FAMILY

Vanessa Mandrell Boyer made her debut in the world recently. Daughter of Irlene Mandrell and Ric Boyer, Vanessa joins brother Deric, who was two on Christmas Day. All the fans will know that young Deric was born on the birthdate of his famous aunt, Barbara Mandrell. Irlene is the dingy Mandrell on *Hee Haw* each week. Grandparents Irby and Mary Mandrell are awfully proud, so I hear.

## EYE SAW

Yep, I saw that cute Mark Miller of Sawyer Brown at O'Charley's having lunch. Girls, that guy *must* have to go to the bathroom just like the rest of us. He did, in fact, walk by my table (I might' nigh touched him) and into the door marked *Men*. The first time I ever saw a door that said *Men*, why I went in to get me one, and got thrown out!

And I saw Ronnie McDowell having dinner at one of my favorite restaurants, El Chico, where they serve wonderful Mexican food. Plus I saw that pretty Ricky Van Shelton coming out of the Welk Building and into my dreams.

I saw K.T. Oslin going into the Music Mill, where she records with my good friends Harold Shedd, Jim Cotton and Joe Scaife.

And I saw Don Williams. The Gentle Giant was on Music Row. We talked about the old days when he was as poor as I am now. Now, friends, that was long ago and far away.

I saw Eddie Rabbitt with flying colors! White, Gray and Greene! Eddie was hosting *Nashville Now* for vacationing Ralph Emery, and his musical guests were The Whites, Dobie Gray and Jack Greene. Wouldn't you call that a colorful show? I did and I saw the show.

I saw Marty Stuart at CBS. He should be there. That's where he makes records.

I saw Mr. Roy Acuff and a carload of folks driving across the back of the Harvey's parking lot in Madison and later I saw them dining at Morrison's. The drive across the parking lot was to avoid traffic on busy Gallatin Road. The rations were at Morrison's because they are good.

I saw Cheryl White of The Whites backcombing her hair backstage at the Opry.

I saw Wilma Lee Cooper getting out of her Cadillac in the Opry parking lot.

I saw Johnny Russell driving down 17th Avenue in an alley! Why did I see

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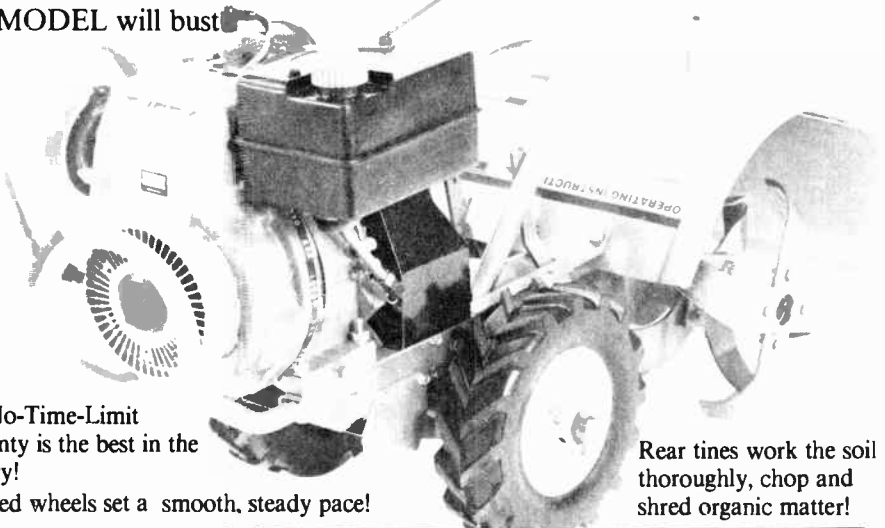
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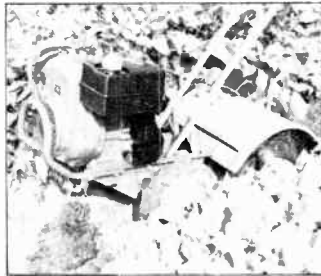
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# People

him in an alley? I was in the alley too! Avoiding traffic.

I saw **Little David Wilkins** at Bellshire Grocery. He has lost a 'person' in weight! I think he said about a hundred and a quarter pounds.

## UNTAPPED MOTHERLODE

Producer **Richie Alhright** assures me that Polygram up-and-comer **David Lynn Jones**, who topped the Top Ten with his "Bonnie Jean (Little Sister)" single, has got a suitcase filled with uncut jewels—meaning more songs like that one—in Arkansas where he hangs his hat. We will see, Richie, when we hear them. So far he has recorded all good 'uns.

## THE VERY IMPORTANT MEDIA-RADIO

When the mighty powers of the airwaves convened in Music City in 1988 as part of The Country Radio Seminar, they were introduced to a well-known face—**Hank Williams Jr.**, who entertained. Earlier in the proceedings, executive director **Frank Mull** and his radio execs had attended the New Faces Show, which is a way of introducing new talent to the DJ's of the airwaves. In the past, the New Faces show has been credited with the boosting of now-major stars like Ala-

bama and **Ricky Skaggs**. Those who performed on this year's New Faces show were **Foster & Lloyd**, **Nanci Griffith**, **David Lynn Jones**, **Patty Loveless**, **Tim Malchak**, **New Grass Revival**, **K.T. Oslin**, **Ride the River**, **SKB** and **Ricky Van Shelton**.

May we never forget our friends in radio. So let us appreciate **Frank Mull** and staff for the great job they do annually for the DJ's. Radio and fans are the two main ingredients that put the food on our tables. We appreciate both. And also all the new faces who keep our music fresh and exciting.

## TWINNING

40-year-old **Rex Allen Jr.** and his wife **Judy**, who is pushing the same age, are anticipating twins most any day now. Also, **Craig Bickhardt** and wife **Eileen** are the proud parents of **Jacob Wilson Bickhardt** and **Aislinn Julia Bickhardt**. Craig is the "B" of the MTM Records group **SKB**. The "S" of the group, **Thom Schuyler**, and his wife **Sarah** are also expecting but not twins. The "K" is **Fred Knobloch**.

## AIRBORNE RECORDS LAUNCHED

**Airborne Records**, Nashville's newest independent label, means to be in competition with the biggies. President

## FINAL BOW

We lost a number of legends and gifted performers in the last months of 1987, all of whom will be missed—and remembered—for their contributions.

Two major performers, both known for their work on *Hee Haw*, died in August of 1987. **Kenny Price**, also known for his 1960's hits for RCA, "Walkin' on New Grass" and "Sheriff of Boone County," and his TNN Travel series *Wish You Were Here*, died suddenly of a heart attack August 4th. He was 56.

Also claimed by heart trouble later that month was veteran *Hee Haw* performer and mainstay **Archie Campbell**. One of the world's best known country comedians, Archie died August 29th at age 72, following a lengthy hospitalization. After years of working on WNOX radio in Knoxville, Tennessee, he joined the Opry in 1958 and was with *Hee Haw* when it started in 1969. Archie was long considered one of the pillars of the show, as both performer and writer.

**Charline Arthur**, 58, star of the *Big D Jamboree* and RCA Victor recording artist, died in November. Her tough onstage image (in the era of **Kitty Wells**, she wore western pants outfits, unheard of at the time) and snarling, bluesy records predated **Wanda Jackson** and **Patsy Cline**.

**Molly O'Day**, 65, whose soulful traditional voice earned her a reputation as the "female **Hank Williams**," died December 5 in Huntington, West Virginia, of cancer. She and husband **Lynn Davis** had led the Cumberland Valley Folks and recorded for Columbia in the late 1940's. Among her best-known numbers were the classic "Tramp on the Street" and "Poor Ellen Smith." O'Day and Davis eventually became exclusively gospel artists and by 1952 left music to become fulltime evangelists.

**H.W. "Pappy" Daily**, co-founder of Starday Records and **George Jones'** longtime musical mentor, also died December 5.

**Tiny Moore**, 66, gifted electric mandolinist and arranger with **Bob Wills** and his **Texas Playboys**, **Billy Jack Wills** and, in the 1970's, **Merle Haggard's Strangers**, died December 15 of a heart attack while performing in Jackpot, Nevada. Moore was slated to be a part of "Playboys II," the new Texas Playboy alumni band led by steel player **Herb Remington**, before his untimely death.

—Rich Kienzle



## SEEING DOUBLE

Remember country music's love affair with duets some years back? Time was that you couldn't turn on your radio without hearing at least one pair of country artists every hour. Well, two of the most successful duets are reuniting and taking their shows on the road again. **Jim Ed Brown** and **Helen Cornelius** (above) have announced plans for a national tour, marking the first time they will appear together since 1980. They had many hits, including "I Don't Want to Have to Marry You," and won the CMA's Duo of the Year Award in 1977.

The CMA's Duo of the Year in both 1981 and 1982 was **David Frizzell** and **Shelly West**. With hits such as "You're the Reason God Made Oklahoma" and "Texas State of Mind," they were another couple who made headlines and topped charts for a while. They have also announced plans to reunite for a select number of dates this year.

Who knows, with all the cycles in country music, these two acts might be starting another trend. Anyone hear from **Willie Nelson** lately?

**John Jossey** has announced the signing of superstar **Mickey Gilley**, who will be produced by Grammy-winning producer **Larry Butler**. The company has also purchased the tracks of a **Mickey Newbury** album titled *A Legend in a New Age*. **Frank Jones**, former head of both Capitol and Polygram Records, is associated with the new conglomerate, as is my personal friend **John Lomax**, who is just as famous as me!

# People

## T GRAHAM TAKES THE CAKE



You never know what to expect when you are on the road and it happens to be your birthday. For T. Graham Brown, his band members decided to celebrate in style. Their idea, present the cake a la Brown, instead of a la mode. Pictured together are Joe McGlohon, saxophone player; guitar player Michael Thomas, T. Graham Brown and keyboardist Garland Craft. Not pictured is keyboard player Greg Wetzel who threw the cake. Incidentally, T. Graham turned 33.

## AN ALABAMA RECORD

That Southern Foursome Alabama have scooped the bankroll for 1987, thank you. Boasting ticket sales of over 17 million dollars, they were Number One in the country field and Number Ten in the overall concert field. Congratulations to Randy Owen, Teddy Gentry, Jeff Cook and Mark Herndon.

## HANGING OUT AT THE OPRY

Boxing great, Randall "Tex" Cobb, showed up backstage at the Grand Ole Opry. A country music fan, Cobb was definitely in Hillbilly Heaven as he walked among the stars. Course, nobody didn't try to start no junk with the king-sized Tex.

## 110,000!

I wish The Statler Brothers would give me their mailing list and I could sell each address for a dollar. I'd stop work for a couple of years and go to Florida and un-lax. Can you believe that the talented four sent out 110,000 holiday greetings? That's what I call fans.

## 20% AND SMILING?

Talking with super-songsmith Paul Overstreet about some gospel songs for The Whites, he allowed as how he was glad I called. Said he had some new gospel material that he hadn't put on tape and would since I called. Being the

aggressive lady I am, I immediately asked for the 20% norm that managers usually ask of their artists. After laughing, Paul said this classic line, "Hazel, ain't it something. When folks used to tell us what to do, we would tell them where to go. Now when they tell us what to do, we pay them 20%!"

## LYNN ANDERSON HORSING AROUND

The talented singer took two first places in national celebrity horse competitions. Ms. Anderson would have to promise me a rose garden and an unhurt backside for me to even consider riding a horse.

## 2nd GENERATION HAGGARD MIGHT CONNECT WITH THIS TUNE

The song "I Wonder Why Trains Make Me Lonesome" could be the signature song for Marty Haggard, son of Merle Haggard—the singinest hillbilly that ever wrote "Mamma Tried." Written by Paul Overstreet and Thom Schuyler, the song must appeal to the young Hag. He sings it like it was his.

## HALF A CENTURY AND STILL SINGING

On February 19, 1988, the King of Country Music, Mr. Roy Acuff, celebrated 50 years as a member of the world-famed Grand Ole Opry. Roy was the first singer on the Opry. Before him, there was string music only—fiddles, banjos,

guitars and jugs for blowing and drinking from (but not necessarily in that order). Acuff's first song on the Opry was "The Great Speckled Bird." He encored four or five times, according to the 84-year-old legend from East Tennessee. When asked how he felt about being a member of the Opry for half a century, Mr. Acuff replied, "Fifty years is a pretty long time."

## GOING ON 90

Herman Crook, the only original member of the Grand Ole Opry, will be on the top side of 90 next birthday. Retiring? Nope. He's still on the Opry each and every Saturday night.

## CLOWER WRITES BOOKS AND LEAVES 'EM LAUGHING

Jerry Clower, funnyman, author and deacon in the Baptist Church, has a new book out titled *Life Ever After*. You can buy the book in your local bookstore, according to Clower, who is, by-the-by, also an Opry member.

## RESTLESS IS ONLY A NAME FOR A GROUP WITH HEART

Restless Heart has a right to brag these days. Their album *Wheels* has been certified Gold...meaning the record has sales totaling over 500,000. Congratulations and keep 'em coming.

## CHET HAGAN WEARING A DIFFERENT HAT

Famed for his work in producing country music television, Chet Hagan has embarked upon another "horse farm." If this statement makes no sense, it will when you read Hagan's forthcoming novel titled *Bon Marche*. It's an American dream with a cute twist. The book deals with life or existence during the 1700's and 1800's. It must have been a blast during those times to have lived in the big house with servants to fill your wash basin and empty your potty. As I daydreamed on this way of life, reality hit me like a ton of bricks. Had I lived during that time, with my luck I probably would have been a field hand. A hoe handle always did fit my hands!

## AN ITEM

According to my sources, record producer Emory Gordy and starlet Patty Loveless are an "item." If those two can make love like they make music, I am here to tell you they will have heaven on

## CMM UPDATE: JAN HOWARD



earth. Ain't no use of them going to heaven when they die. I almost spilled the dishwasher the night I heard Patty belting "If My Heart Had Windows" on the *Nashville Now* show on TNN.

### 'CORDING TO BILLBOARD

Yep, 'cording to *Billboard Magazine*, MCA Records is the Number One label of the year...ain't nothing new. They've been Number One for three years running. Ever since Jimmy Bowen moved in, they've been Number One.

### CONDOLENCES

Condolences to two friends—John Lomax on the loss of his brother and Frank Mull on the death of his mother.

### BEST LITTLE WHOREHOUSE IN TEXAS COMES TO NASHVILLE

Our own Jeannie Seeley is starring in the role of Miss Mona, made famous by our own Dolly Parton. Of course Dolly played Mona in the movie version, and Jeannie is at the Tennessee Performing Arts Center. Jeannie's first acting job delighted everybody. She is a natural, and when it comes to singing, there is just none better.

### ANTICIPATION

Dolly Parton's little sis Rachel Dennison, star of TV's *9 to 5*, and hubby Richard Dennison, who sings with the *a capella* singing group on Dolly's TV show, are expecting their first child. Word I get is sister Dolly just can't wait. Rachel is the youngest Parton and has spent a lot of time with her famed sis and sis' husband, the elusive Carl Dean. Matter of fact, Rachel met Richard when both were singing backup with Dolly a few years back.

### ON THE DOLLY SUBJECT

Look closely at the screen when Dolly and her show are on...see the piano player? He sits to the left of Dolly. Handsome as a movie star. That's Gary Smith, husband of Christy Forester of The Forester Sisters. Christy is also a good-looking doll.

### HONKY TONK ANGEL FOR REAL

One of the televangelists exclaimed, after much deliberation, that angels are without sex, to which I replied, "I been an angel for years." Now somebody write a song about that!

**T**here was a piece in the paper this morning—it said 'Jan Howard, author-singer,'" says Jan Howard. And, since she's taken acting lessons, she may someday add a third title. In any case, 'singer' is currently taking a back seat to 'author,' the result of *Sunshine and Shadows*, her autobiographical book dealing with the loss of two sons. "It isn't a showbiz book," she cautions. "That's not the focal point. It could be any woman's story. I'm writing a fiction novel now," she adds. "I love to write.

"For a while I just wanted to curl up and die," she says, speaking of the period following the 1968 death of her son Jimmy in Vietnam. "But...I knew...I couldn't do that to my other sons. Then David died (a suicide in 1972) and I couldn't do that to (surviving son) Corky. And I couldn't do that to myself." Writing the book, she says, was a catharsis. "You can't begin to heal until you face something. I've found it's a lot easier to talk about it. The grief is still there, but it's inside me and it's personal.

"I'm not recording at the moment," she explains. "My life has just been so taken up with this book. I'm kind of thinkin' about (recording) now, but it would have to be a very special project and a real hit song. I don't work the road that much. I do some. I never liked the travelin', gettin' there, this and that. But I do love to sing. Of course I'm at the Opry every week I'm in Nashville."

But Jan Howard is a strong woman, and her gentle, thoughtful demeanor aside, her views on today's Nashville are surprisingly blunt. "I really don't know how young artists and beginning songwriters get heard now," she declares. "Everybody has a closed-door policy and it's lousy." She cites ex-husband and songwriting legend Harlan Howard, who "got heard because he sent a song to a publishing company. Now they don't accept outside songs. They have in-house writers. It shuts all the others out.

"The record companies are not

interested in anyone that's known or has a track record. That's why I really haven't even approached anybody about recording. They want people that no one has ever heard of, and they've got to have the bucks, the band and everything before they ever record. It's totally backward. They want an artist that they can build. Connie Smith has one of the greatest voices I've ever heard, and she's not recording."

Anger flares as she complains, "Today's record executives and promotional people don't know *anything* about country music. I heard one call Ray Price, Ray Pierce. That shows ignorance. They shouldn't even be in the business. People are not people (to them). They're just dollar signs."

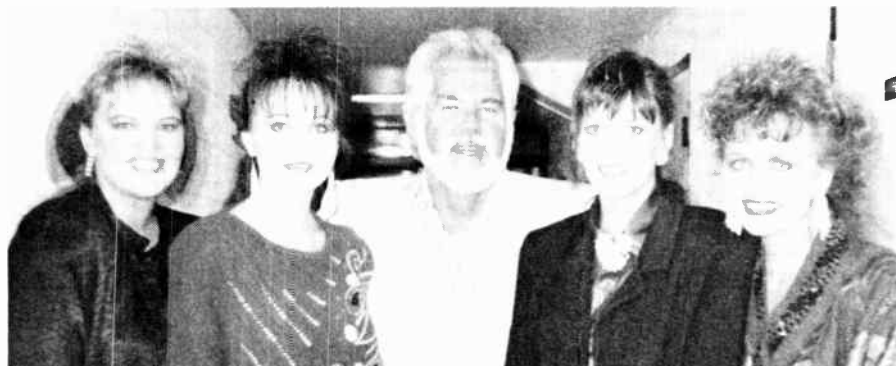
As far as country radio is concerned, she recalls touring with Bill Anderson, doing live interviews at stations along the way. "Now," she complains, "you can't do a live interview. They cannot play your records even if they're huge fans. They have to play what some consultant said they could play. That's why the Grand Ole Opry is filled every show, every time, because the people cannot hear basic, good country music in their hometown and on the radio stations.

"I'm not talking from sour grapes because I've had a lot of wonderful years in the business, but I hate to see it turn its back on the people who are the mainstays of country music, and I'm not just talkin' about myself. I'm talkin' about the Stonewall Jacks, Jimmy Dickens and Jack Greenes." She is, however, enthusiastic about many younger traditionalists, particularly Holly Dunn, Highway 101 and Ricky Skaggs.

"I feel like good wine, I've gotten better with time. I've grown as a performer. I've grown to where I love the audience instead of bein' scared to death of them. There comes," concludes Jan, "a time when you need to look forward to something else. I hope I'll be singin' the rest of my life, but you never know." —RICH KIENZLE



# People



New Warner Bros. star Kenny Rogers and The Forester Sisters gather backstage to kick off their 1988 tour. From left to right are Kim, Christy, Kenny, June and Kathy.

## ROGERS LABEL HOPPING

Superstar **Kenny Rogers** has hopped over to Warner Brothers Records where his friend for nearly 20 years, **Jim Ed Norman**, is at the helm. No word at this writing who will produce the Rogers recordings, but if time allows I'd bet the house and the farm that young **Kyle Lehning** might lay his heavy hand on this little project. I've told you before, Kyle produces **Dan Seals** and **Randy Travis**.

## RCA/BARRY BECKETT/LORRIE MORGAN TEAM

Let's hear it for the big man from Muscle Shoals as he goes into the studio with the beautiful **Miss Lorrie Morgan**. Recently signed with RCA, **Mr. Barry Beckett** will fill the producer's chair when the lovely **Lorrie** goes into the recording studio. **Lorrie** sings her buns off. If you don't believe me, ask **Keith Whitley** if she can sing. He knows. He's her husband.

## THE BIZ OF PROMOTING SHOWS

**Pro Tours**, a new promotion company, has some very talented owners. I mean, **Naomi** and **Wynonna Judd**. The mother/daughter duo needed someplace to put their money that counted, and management apparently thought promoting shows would count. Their first multi-city tour stars the red haired **Judds**, the blonde **Tammy Wynette** and the most wanted man in show biz, **Randy Travis**.

## I DIDN'T LIE—SOMEBODY LIED

The first Number One single for **Ricky Van Shelton** is "Somebody Lied" from his *Wild Eyed Dream* album. Now, girls,

leave that one alone. He is mine. Anything that pretty belongs at my house. Don't you know his hometown of **Grit, Virginia**, is just bursting at the seams what with the success of their son? **Grit** is so small, it's not even on the map, but I hear it's near **Roanoke**. I just wish **Ricky Van** was near me!

## THEY'RE GONNA PUT ME IN THE MOVIES

Multi-talented **Randy Travis** is going to appear on the big screen come August. **Randy** will portray a bartender in the film *Young Guns* which stars **Charlie**



Number One artist **Ricky Van Shelton**

**Sheen**, **Emilio Estevez** and a host of others.

## SORRY I MISSED THAT JAM SESSION

Vacationing Nashvillians **Johnny Cash** and **Tom T. Hall** were in Jamaica, each at his own place, as was **Paul McCartney**. Somehow the three got together for a little informal passing of the guitar and sing-along. The trio ended up at the Cash island home, **Cinnamon Hill**, and co-wrote a song. What a way to have a vacation. Why, I've dreamed of winning a vacation to Hawaii and running into **Willie Nelson** on the beach. He has a home there. And I am sorry I missed the above mentioned jam session. I'm always at the wrong place.

## FAN FAIR BEGINS JUNE 6

Now, everybody who has written to me, the magazine or the stars, you have the answer in living black and white!! **Fan Fair** starts June 6, 1988. If you plan to come, be sure you have reservations for a room. There will be no empty rooms that week. Be sure you wear loose, comfortable clothing and shoes. Ladies, leave your high heels at home. Sneakers or any comfortable flats are suitable. There is no use heading for Nashville without advance ticketing for Fan Fair. You must have tickets in hand or you will be left in the sunshine or rain, no matter who you know.

The price of the ticket includes a couple of meals daily. The food is adequate and sometimes delicious. There's cold drinks, sandwiches and knick-knacks on the grounds. Please, do not depend on anyone for anything during this week. All of us in the music business are tied up in some fashion with work. Our families don't see us or hear from us unless it is the crack of dawn or midnight. All the shows are held outside, so bring an umbrella in case the old master decides the angels need to cry on country music fans.

This week will be one that you will want to encore and encore, if you are a country music fan. You will never be closer to your favorites. Also, you will be well entertained all week long. Get all the information before leaving home. Read it. Know before leaving home which show you want to attend. Read the map and figure the closest route to your destination. It sounds harder than it is. If I can do it, anybody can. You all come.

For ticket and all other info, write to **Fan Fair**, 2804 Opryland Drive, Nashville, Tennessee 37214.



# DWIGHT Y

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*It may look like Dwight Yoakam is capitalizing on his looks and his salty conversation, but in fact, the boy is sincere. He loves the music he makes, and it comes in a pure, genuine stream out of his past.*

---

**I**'m sitting in what I imagine to be just Dwight Yoakam's kind of place, the lobby of an artfully renovated old Hollywood Boulevard hotel positively reeking of the kind of ruling-class *chic* for which the status-crazed Yuppies of our times pay gladly through their surgically reconstructed noses. It's far, far away from the world of Dwight's music, but just down the hill from his home.

I've been here a while now, swilling \$3-a-cup coffee under the snooty scrutiny of the hotel staff, because this is where Dwight's manager has suggested we meet before going to see Dwight himself. And Dwight's manager, after repeatedly rearranging my schedule these past few days, is of course late for this final date.

I say "of course" because the flavor of our negotiations so far has suggested that the Commandments of Cool, not the courtesy of country, are in force over the project. And Cool's First Commandment, obeyed religiously by all cool artists in their dealings with everybody but their bankers, is *Keep 'Em Waiting*. You're just not hip if you're on time.

I'm not surprised, therefore, but I am irritated. And gradually that irritation escalates. By the time my coffee bill reaches double digits I'm just plain offended by the whole *idea* of Dwight Yoakam. I've gotten to where a lot of other country music professionals have been ever since he first started making noise; the boy's cool pictures, hot words and borrowed music just plain piss me off. Consider first the cool pictures, those calculated studies in quintessential cowpunk chic; they're so perfectly

*by Patrick Carr*

# YOAKAM

## Remembers The Hillbilly Cats



*“Musicians shouldn’t really have to be good politicians, y’know?”*

late-80's *Vogue*-Western hip, affairs of such moody, hollow-cheeked, cooler-than-thou 1950's-retro rebel-without-a-cause trendiness, that unless you're one of the MTV-fixated bimbos at whom they seem to be aimed, you just want to puke. Splatter stale Schlitz and half-digested chili and less mentionable hard-core country commodities all over the stuck-up little fashion plate's skintight custom-kneeholed Levi's.

Then there's the borrowed music, Dwight's Retro Country style. It sounds good—in fact it sounds *real* good, a pause which refreshes mightily between all the bright whitebread pseudo-rock and lounge-lizard ballad schmaltz that passes for “country” radio these days—but don't you wonder why that's the music he's chosen? Could it not be that one day a few years ago in Tinseltown young Dwight was sitting around his Hollywood Hills apartment, wondering how to break out of his poverty rut, and all of a sudden it hit him with all the force of a macrobiotic vegetables *al dente* high: *Hip Retro Country! That's The Ticket!*

Yes...Could he not have decided to adopt the classic sound of post-World War II honky tonk because *a*) it would be a novel new ingredient in the local hip music scene, where the Hollywood purple-hairs had already demonstrated their appetite for Retro rock, blues and just about every other form of recycled American music *but* country; and because *b*) it had crossover potential? Might he not have realized—Oh, yeah, Bingo!—that he could sell this stuff not only to the hipsters of the young urban leisure class, but to a potentially much bigger market of hicks and squares, all those frustrated real-country record buyers strangling out there in the hinterlands on a force-fed diet of schmaltz and pseudorock? In other words, might this borrowed music not mean *Goodbye, low budget; hello, hillbilly heaven?*

All of which is bad enough—so far in this scenario what we've got is that despicable commodity, your basic big-city carpetbagger ripping off our roots—but the hot words are even worse.

Really now: where the hell does this Hollywood Hills hipster think he got the right to sit around out there in Tofuville, moaning about Nashville's middle-of-the-road, audience-expanding, tradition-neglecting way of doing things? Where was *he* when country wasn't cool, when all those hardworking music business executives he's always slandering were doing whatever they had to do to make our industry grow?

And doesn't he realize that in country, no matter how

nontraditional the music's gotten, certain old-fashioned rules of social behavior still apply? In country, for instance, you don't even *think* of calling somebody a “(male appendage)” in public, especially not the Nashville boss of a major recording label, even if you *do* happen to be in dirty-mouthed England at the time and the gentleman in question has just fired Johnny Cash for not selling enough records.

Really, what's this boy's problem? He doesn't like progress? He doesn't believe in manners? Where's his gratitude? He's got a recording contract; he's selling records; why doesn't he keep his opinions to himself, just shut up and pick like everyone else? Do what he's told and love it?

We've got an answer for that. Controversy begets publicity, doesn't it? Free advertising. Enhanced consumer curiosity. And just as Dwight could have realized that the Retro music angle was already a proven ticket to high record sales (thank you, Ricky Skaggs *et al* in the mid-1980's), he might also have figured out that Nashville system-and-executive-bashing was a surefire method of attracting as much press as he could ever want (thank you, Waylon and Willie and the boys in the mid-1970's). Nashville's bosses are so unaccustomed to criticism from the creators of their product, you see, that if they get it, they're going to overreact. The wires are going to hum, the gossip mill's going to go into overtime, and the critic's going to get famous.

Ultimately, then, what we have here might be an unusually smart, expertly manipulative big-city carpetbagger, a deft exponent of the sucker punch. When for instance Steve Earle voiced the feelings of a significant proportion of the Nashville music business community by scrawling the words *Dwight Yoakam eats sushi* on the walls of an MCA Records elevator, and that quote double-timed it straight through the gossip mill to every country music pressperson in the world, it's quite possible that Steve and everyone else involved might have been doing exactly what the sushi eater wanted them to.

**A**ll of the above is wrong. Sick, twisted, paranoid piffle. About as far from the reality of Dwight Yoakam as it's possible to get.

Dwight's reality dawns on me personally in stages. First, after his manager has whisked me upwards through the chic little curves of the Hollywood Hills streets to his home, there's the sudden shock of how he really looks and acts.



This can't be the moody, arrogant, ultracool hipster of the album covers. The man before me, simultaneously trying to control his dog, answer his telephone and brew me a cup of tea in his bare, scruffy, no-frills little one-bedroom apartment, acts like any good ole friendly boy and looks like he pumps gas for a living. The scuffed boots, the worn jeans, the black T-shirt, the black leather biker's jacket, the baseball cap with the hair straggling out this way and that; *this* image suggests the very reverse of urban trendiness, your basic smalltown Hank Jr. fan keeping his manners about him through a busy swing shift. Either that, or some sort of skinny, awkward, overgrown puppy tripping over his own enthusiasm. So forget Mr. Cool; he's an image in the purest sense, existing only in the camera's eye.

Forget too any suspicion that Dwight might have borrowed his music with impure intent. That possibility disappears pretty quickly once the tea's brewed and he and I settle down to talk.

We get to the question by an indirect route starting at the subject of material security; whether or not, after first album sales of some 850,000 and figures for *Hillbilly Deluxe* still climbing almost as high, Dwight Yoakam's career is firmly established. Dwight's opinion is "Hell, no. No way do I have it made."

Basically, the present satisfies him, but he doesn't count on the future at all. "You see," he says, "I've been very successful because a lot of people who work for a living have thought enough of the music to spend an hour's worth of their pay on a Dwight Yoakam record. That's afforded me the luxury of buying a real bed instead of just the mattress I slept on for nine years. It's moved me out of one room into this place, and it's provided the security to buy my own house up the hill here. But I'd be naive to think all this will continue. The music business is fickle enough as it is, and then too I may have done a great disservice to the music by my overzealous stating of my opinions. Politically, I'm not at all in good standing with the powers that be.

"So really, I have no idea how my career will go from one day to the next. That's why I bought the house. I figure that if nothing else, I'll end up with a place to live."

He laughs at himself. "I guess that's my working class background, y'know? *Get a house, get a mortgage, put the shotgun up over the front door so they can't rush you, take it away from you...* that's a big part of me, all that stuff. It's like really wanting to help my folks. Both my parents are still working, and one of my great hopes for my career is

that I'll be successful enough to help them quit early."

More or less accidentally, we've hit on something essential here; if you really want to know what makes Dwight Yoakam tick, what makes him make the kind of music and say the kind of things he's famous for, you ask him about his folks. Let him go back to Kentucky and Ohio in the 1950's and 1960's, remember the special world into which he was born. Let him tell you, for a start, about his father.

"My dad had a Texaco station, but before that he had a career in the Army," he begins. "He'd probably have stayed in if it hadn't been for me and my mother. He'd gone in right after World War II and he was a staff sergeant, y'know, a lifer, and he dug it. He was a hillbilly cat that saw the world; he was out there hittin' the juke joints, havin' the G.I. blues.

"So really, he was one of *them guys*. The black gabardine pleated pants with the little thin belt, the two-tone shoes, the pink and black gabardine shirt with the rolled-up sleeves—I mean, he had a pompadour with the curl, he had it all. And really, those were the cats. They were the beginning of White 20th Century Cool in America; the white curators of cool were the hillbilly cats. All those guys. Roy Orbison—I got to meet him on a plane a while ago, and you want chill factor? That guy had it, man! Carl Perkins. Johnny Cash with that gassed-back prison haircut, trembling and sweating out them bennies. Cash writing 'I Walk the Line' when he was on guard duty in the Army in Germany, man, pacing out them steps...That's it, man! That's it!"

Obviously, these images cut right to the quick of Dwight Yoakam. Expressing them, he's so excited that he's stamping his boots on the boards of his porch, bumping around in his chair. The tape from this moment sounds like a stampede of Fender-crazed hillbilly elephants.

He calms down and explains more clearly. "You see, all those Okies who jumped in the Navy to get away from Oklahoma, the guys like my dad who wanted to get out of the Ohio Valley; they changed the world. They were the first generation in this country—and the last—who could buy a house and a car on factory wages, and that affluence, and the spirit those guys had, is what made rock 'n' roll possible, and everything else—the space age, everything. And of course it's what produced *us*, my generation. It's what gave us everything we have.

"So why do I make the kind of music I do? It's because I remember my dad, the hillbilly entrepreneur, being the first guy to bring home one of them aluminum foil Christmas trees, man! It's from remembering when Mom finally got wall-to-wall carpeting. It's from listening to all those Johnny Cash and Johnny Horton and Buck Owens records my dad played. Stonewall Jackson, too, like when Dad bought 'Don't Be Angry' for Mom; you know, like, *Here you go, darlin', listen to this, here's the way I feel*. I mean, I wrote 'Readin', Rightin', Rt. 23' because I remember standing outside the house on a Friday night, watching all those Ohio and Michigan license plates heading for their old homes in Kentucky, then watching them all heading back north to the factories again on Sunday night. I know what it was like for all those families who went north to find work after World War II, left their whole world behind them. We used to joke that people like us, who ended up in Columbus, were the ones who ran out of gas before they got to Detroit. Hillbillies, man, out there struggling to get their kids a better life..."

He pauses a moment, gazing out at the fairytale lights of the Hollywood Hills as he gropes for the best way of expressing himself.

"It's not like I'm living in the past exactly," he says. "It's more like why I called the first album *Guitars, Cadillacs, Etc., Etc.*; as a real fond remembrance of my parents' desire to have an outward sign of their success, like owning

a Cadillac. We couldn't afford one—my aunt and uncle got the Cadillac, we had Buicks, big ole Electra 225 convertibles—but that's the world I'm talking about in my music, with as much affection as I can bring to it. I see the beauty of my people's lives, and the greatest debt I owe is to them. They're who gave me the spiritual fire that allowed me to recreate the images of that world in music."

It's unusual, but certainly not unheard of, for a man's creative imagination to remain under the spell of his childhood memories, either positive or negative, throughout his life. In Dwight's case, obviously, those memories are exceptionally positive, and then too there's the fact that the soundtrack of his early life, the music of those first hillbilly cats his father loved so much, is strong stuff. The country and rockabilly records of the late 1940's through the mid-1960's still reverberate powerfully in millions of record collections, mine included; they have something—fire, originality, perhaps just an essential rightness of form and content and expression—that just isn't there in a lot of older or newer popular music.

As Dwight puts it, "It's tough to define what that quality is. It's easier to say what a lot of later country music, the post-1970's stuff, lacks: emotional austerity. I mean, I get a lot of criticism along the lines of *Your music's too simple; it's not sophisticated enough*, but man, it's that real simple, austere stuff that moves me! You start sophisticating it, and you lose its heart! I mean, I do this music because I *love* it, and I love it because it gets to me."

The bottom line, then, is very clear. Dwight Yoakam's no Tinseltown Carpetbagger. He hasn't borrowed his music. His father gave it to him, and he's owned it ever since.

**A**s we've all gotten a bit tired of being told one way or another, Dwight Yoakam's had a problem getting his music accepted most of his life. This, it is said in the country music biz, has produced a chip on his shoulder, which in turn has caused him to say rude things about Nashville. In other words, his criticisms of Music Row individuals and practices are the result of personal sour grapes.

Let's talk about that.

Yes, it's true that Dwight's music was never very popular until it actually became available to large numbers of record buyers (at which point it became very popular indeed). When he was a kid in Ohio, tuned in to Buck Owens and The Stanley Brothers and Stonewall Jackson and all that other hard-line hillbilly stuff, his friends at school made fun of his tastes the same way the local adults mocked his parents' country accents. He'd be raving on about the echo effect on Hank Jr.'s cut of "Endless Sleep," they'd be wrinkling their noses, running for their Led Zeppelin records. When he first tried to sell his songs in Nashville, the best advice he got was that his stuff was just too country to record, he should take it to California, make a living on the Okie bar circuit. When he moved to California, nine years ago, he found that sure, he could make a living in the bars, but not with *his* kind of songs; he had to do covers of "Looking for Love" and all those other Urban Cowboy tunes. Even when Ricky Skaggs' success inspired Dwight to try Nashville again, in 1983, the message was the same: You're just too country, boy. People don't want that no more.

That's when he almost gave up. He'd been supporting himself with furniture-moving and delivery truck-driving jobs, the meanwhile trying to advance his music, for years, and he was tired, frustrated; going nowhere. He started thinking about giving up the music, ending up a teacher or something.

But he didn't. He'd fallen in with Pete Anderson, another hillbilly-cat worshipper from a transplanted country family, and together with their band, those two finally



"I see the beauty of my people's lives, and the greatest debt I owe is to them."

Dwight at 6 months with mother Ruth Ann. At age two and with family.



found a receptive audience: the roots-retro club kids who'd launched a fascinating variety of bands like The Blasters, Los Lobos, X, Lone Justice and others. So ironically, the first time Dwight Yoakam heard himself on the radio, singing a stone country song from the \$5,000, five-track E.P. which became the core of *Guitars, Cadillacs, Etc., Etc.*, it was part of a set which included songs by The Dead Kennedys, It Won't Hurt and The Butthole Surfers.

You know the rest. Dwight and Pete and the band got hot on the L.A. scene, Warner Brothers Records signed them to a national deal, allowing them to record exactly what they wanted exactly how they wanted (those were Dwight's terms), and the resulting album sold more than 850,000 copies.

That's a lot. One hell of a lot. Those sales did more than prove the point Dwight had been trying to make in Nashville for years: that a very large number of people out there share his memories and his taste in country music. The numbers also suggested that that audience is bigger than the audience at which the marketers of modern country music routinely set their sights; contemporary chart-topping country albums quite often achieve sales no higher than 100,000.

So really, Dwight Yoakam has nothing further to prove. He's been right all along, and all the career executives who've been refusing to let him into the Nashville family have been plain, no-doubt-about-it, absolutely, embarrassing!y, incompetently *wrong*. By sending Dwight packing to California they passed on the opportunity to a) expand the marketplace for Nashville music, and b) earn their parent companies a big fat wad of money.

That's something to think about when the subject of chips on the shoulder arises, isn't it? If you were a Nashville music business executive, wouldn't *you* be inclined to bear a grudge against somebody who's just demonstrated that basically, you don't know which way is



His dad, David, and grandfather Luther Tibbs.

*"They were the first generation  
in this country—  
and the last—who could buy  
a house and a car on  
factory wages."*

up? Might there not perhaps be a chip on *your* shoulder? Might *your* grapes not be somewhat less than sweet?

**D**wight's attitude towards his own big mouth is complex. The first thing he's going to tell you is that all the remarks that have gotten him in trouble with the Nashville brass have been about treatment of artists other than himself, like his daddy's hero Johnny Cash.

Another point he'll make is that many of his views are shared by many other country artists; they've told him as much since he's been on the circuit among them. His hero Buck Owens, for instance, is squarely in his camp, and has become his buddy; Buck went through a lot of bad stuff in the 1960's very similar to what Dwight's going through in the 1980's. And then too (though it's not Dwight, but me who makes this point) there are in fact many, many people outside the offices of the major Nashville record companies who agree wholeheartedly with Dwight. The nation is full of musicians, both legendary and otherwise, who would sound a whole lot more pleasing on the radio than many of the pseudorockers and lounge lizards on the major record companies' "country" rosters.

But oh, well, as Dwight himself admits, "Dwight Yoakam's opinion has little or nothing to do with what goes on in the music business at large," and personally, he has very powerful reservations about saying another word on the subject of country music politics. He's become a lightning rod for journalists looking for controversial-copy-voltage, and he's getting tired of the flak he takes for giving in to the temptation to speak his mind. That's why he's quit giving interviews.

Dwight thinks the controversy has probably hurt him more than it's helped. It's kept him off some radio playlists, which means that even though he sells more records than five or six other big country stars put together, he doesn't

get to the top of the charts. Then too, he suspects it's closed him out of contention for CMA Awards. (The California-based Academy of Country Music loves him, but the bigger, more influential Nashville body has ignored him since he hit it big.) Dwight says he would accept a CMA award with no hard feelings and "appear on the Award Show with all the graciousness I could possibly bring to the occasion, because the fans watching deserve my respect," but most pundits agree that most likely, he won't be given such an opportunity. That's how the powers-that-be get their revenge.

Dwight recognizes this problem, and says that "the combination of opportunistic writers and my mouth has hurt the success of my music. Things I've said have ended up being interpreted as attacks on the Nashville music community as a whole, when I never meant to insult Nashville; everything I've said has been about specific issues and specific individuals. And really, nothing I've said in defense of the music or my own musical heroes has helped anyone at all."

He recognizes, then, that he really was naive. "I spoke out purely as a fan," he says, "and I guess I thought that people would understand the spirit behind what I said; what an enthusiast, what a zealot for the music I was. But they didn't."

"I don't know," he sighs. "It was all very disheartening, very disillusioning. Musicians shouldn't really have to be good politicians, y'know?"

Personally, I'm pretty interested in finding out *exactly* what Dwight thinks of the state of the country music business these days. I want to match it up with my own opinions. So I start asking him to tell me. But then we scramble to shut each other up. It really won't help, publishing this stuff.

"Yeah," says Dwight. "Really. I mean, I'm just not getting paid enough to say all that. You know as well as I do what's wrong with Nashville, and what's wrong with New York and L.A. If someone wants to hire me as a consultant...But no. People are gonna pick up on even *that* remark, say it's arrogant. Let's talk about something that can't be sensationalized. Let's talk about music, man. Let's talk about Stonewall Jackson! Let's talk about Faron Young!"

So that's what we do. Stonewall and Faron, Lefty and Hank, Buck and Merle (and Bill and Charlie, Lester and Earl, Jim and Jesse and Skeeter and Webb), all the great records we both grew up on. We talk about Emmylou and Willie and Gary Stewart in the 1970's, Waylon in the 1960's: "Those were the hillbilly cats then, man. I mean, late-60's Waylon, that hair, that leather vest, that leather guitar..." Then we branch out from music into books, politics, drugs (Dwight, a lifetime teetotaler, sees drug abuse as the death of the American dream); religion (he grew up in the Church of Christ listening to gospel ballads like "The Old Rugged Cross" and "In the Garden"); and whatever else comes up. Eventually, long after I've realized that Dwight in reality is not just the ultimate fan and a nice guy, but a person of considerable intelligence and great creative energy who's a hoot to talk to (people who get carried away easily often are, just as they often trip over themselves and worry about it too much), we both get tired and need to go to dinner.

Before we leave Dwight's apartment, though, the boy just has to pull out his family photo album. He has to show me the places and people his music's all about, detailing each of them with pride and love in his bare little California kitchen.

They're your usual kind of mementos, a few semi-formal portraits and lots of fuzzy snapshots of beat-up guitars, Buicks that should have been Cadillacs, and hillbilly music fans. ■



**The Statlers bought their old schoolhouse for \$133,000. It serves as their world headquarters and museum. The Wurlitzer on the opposite page is full of Statler hits and memories.**

**S**taunton, population 21,500, a small, stately city nestled in Central Virginia's Shenandoah Valley, seems to have more to do with some previous decade than it does with the current one.

Staunton's (pronounced *Stan-ton*) past is visible everywhere. The skyline is dominated by the tall steeples of Victorian churches; the immaculately restored downtown district is flanked by staid, old middle-class neighborhoods full of aging brick and wood frame houses with rambling porches and shutters painted in Williamsburg colors. Along the city's main boulevard there is a refreshing shortage of fast-food outlets. Just up the hill, almost within sight of the dilapidated old Stonewall Jackson Hotel, is the Greek Revival-style house where Woodrow Wilson was born in 1856. And just across the way is the old Trinity Episcopal Church which served as the capitol building for the twenty-four hours or so during Revolutionary War days when Staunton became the nation's capital.

But from the country music fan's per-

spective, Staunton is also the embodiment of more recent history—a day and time they've come to know and love through the music of The Statler Brothers. This durable gospel quartet turned country legend has, in the past two and a half decades, made its evocative, nostalgic musical images of Main Street and small-town America synonymous with the sleepy little city which the group has always claimed as its hometown.

The Statlers' presence is felt in countless ways—some subtle and some not so subtle. The standard "Stop in Staunton" Chamber of Commerce brochure found in rest stops along nearby Interstate 81 sports The Statlers' familiar mugs and touts their museum. "Open to the public for tours every weekday at 2 P.M." A map of the tiny downtown grid reveals a "Statler Boulevard," a "Statler Plaza," and a "Statler Complex." And up on the northwest end of town, across from the old renovated school house that serves as the group's world headquarters/museum, is Gypsy Hill Park, where their annual charity

fund-raising Fourth of July bash drew some 89,000 people last year—about two and a half times the town's real-life population! Scattered around town are also numerous office buildings, apartment complexes and other real estate holdings in which The Statlers hold vested interests.

Finally, of course, there is "Statler Central" itself, where The Statlers, in their own sentimental, yet thoroughly practical way, have managed to keep their own personal pasts at a convenient arm's reach: the old Beverly Manor Elementary School. Founding Statlers Harold and Don Reid attended this school as boys, as did some of Harold's five children. Don's present-day office is in the room which was his seventh-grade classroom. The entire building is now the group's world headquarters.

It seems appropriate that The Stats were actually riding on their float in the town's annual Fourth of July parade when they first noticed the "For Sale" sign in front of their old *alma mater*. Discussions about purchasing the two-building complex began right then and



# THE STATLERS



## Staunton's Hometown Heroes Roll On

*Ask The Statler Brothers who they play for and they'll each say: the fans. And the fans have rewarded them with loyalty, adulation and acclaim. Bob Allen visits them in their offices and gets a behind-the-scenes look at how they make it in the music business without compromising their hometown values.*

*by Bob Allen*

there. Several months and \$133,000 later, it was theirs.

For another half-a-million dollars they had it refurbished in keeping with its original charm. The polished wooden floors and old steam heaters still creak and clank delightfully. The gymnasium gleams, its painted brick walls done up in the school colors, and the basketball hoops still hang forlornly, as if waiting for the class of '57 to return and replay their championship game. Outside in the courtyard, the American flag waves atop its flag pole just as it did way back when. One entire room in the large brick building has even been set aside and restored as a replica of an early twentieth-century classroom, complete with straight-backed old wooden desks and a Bible on the teacher's desk right alongside a formidable-looking wooden paddle.

But one of the most intriguing rooms of all is the one where all four Statler Brothers decide to convene for an interview on this brisk, sunny early spring morning: the old school library, which now serves as the conference room. The

walls of the large, airy, second-story room are still jammed with shelves full of the basic geography, math, science and adventure books that you'd expect to find in an elementary school library.

The Statlers have made relatively few changes to the old library and those in order to accommodate their present-day needs. Part of the room has been partitioned off as a video library. And an ornate gold chandelier hangs down over an 18-foot-long conference table surrounded by a platoon of tall-backed, red velvet-upholstered chairs worthy of a world superpowers summit meeting.

One by one, the four Statlers file in and take their appointed places designated with little inscribed gold place markers bearing their names.

"We modernized this building, but kept it like it was," explains the soft-spoken Phil Balsley as he glances affectionately around the room. "Even the shelves in here are exactly like they were when Don and Harold went to school."

"Sometimes I feel like I should still whisper in here," Harold shouts instead



with a playful burst of laughter that all but shakes the fancy chandelier. "About half the time when I leave home to come in here and work I still tell my wife, 'I'm goin' up to school.' When you spend seven very impressionable years of your life in a place, it's hard to get it off your mind."

"Some days you forget about it entirely," adds Don, who seems to be the most intellectual and literary-leaning of the four. He is an avid reader and book collector, and is particularly fond of the works of American novelist John O'Hara, whose thoughts, he says, have often found their way into his songs. "But other days, it's all you think about."

The Statlers are quick to point out that this old building, and this particular room with its physical and emotional ties to the Reids' own personal histories, is also where much of their music begins.

"Our albums start right here at this table," says Harold. "We sit down, just the four of us. We go over the songs—some of which even get written in here, and we talk about 'em. If anybody's got any new ones, we sing 'em to each other. Then a couple of weeks before the recording session, we sit back down here again and work out all the arrangements, so that when we walk in the studio in Nashville, we're fully prepared, and we're of one mind as to what we want."

"People in Nashville have said The Statler Brothers cut the cheapest sessions in town," he adds with a mild touch of disdain. "We take that as a compliment, because we do. We don't believe in wasting a lot of time or money."

Considering where their music all begins, it's not surprising that the past is so important in The Statler Brothers' music. Their four-part harmonies have specific links to the tradition of the rural white gospel quartet.

"Our earliest influences? That's easy," says Don. "The Blackwood Brothers, The Statesmen, The Harvesters: those groups would come through the area when we were kids. We bought every album, we learned every song. Those groups were our idols, and they were our education. Later, our whole objective was to take those gospel harmonies, and the structure of that whole thing which we found so appealing, and adapt it to country music. We thought we could bring the excitement of gospel over into country and open a whole new wave."

Even a Statlers' hit like their 1985 revival of Gene Pitney's "Hello, Mary Lou" seems to consciously vibrate with nostalgia—nostalgia for both the 1950's and the late Ricky Nelson's original ver-

sion of the song. And in The Statler Brothers' memorable original material—even that as recent as selections from their current album, *Maple Street Memories*—it is the past that most often stands as a yardstick against which present-day dreams and expectations are sometimes painfully measured. There is also a yearning for a return to the basics, to the innocence of small-town life.

"There's most definitely a yearning," Don agrees. "People do want to go back to the basics. I think everybody's scared of what's in the future, and certainly nobody knows. So that's the real comfort: to look back and enjoy the memories."

"People identify with small-town life even if they grew up in the slums of a large city," adds Harold. "Even if it's not in their background, they can identify with it. They see picnics in the park on a Sunday afternoon, and even if they've never been on one, they can identify with it."

"That's one of the most fulfilling parts of all this," Don intercedes. "Our mail is full of comments from people about what the sentiments of our music mean to them. Our music has been compared to Frank Capra's movies, and what greater compliment can you get than that? I'm sure that some see it as schmaltzy and corny, but most see it for what it really is. And we're glad that people can get that kind of comfort from it."

Sometimes though, as Don explains, their music is cut from whole cloth. Don, along with Harold, wrote "The Class of '57." But he readily admits that he's never been to a class reunion, and actually graduated from high school himself in the 1960's. "We saw the title in *TV Guide*," he remembers. "It was the name of an old *Ironsides* episode. We loved the title so much we just wrote the song and used our imaginations about going back to a reunion and all the feelings that come with it. You can put any year on it, and the lyrics still work."

The Reid brothers also concede that the mythical world which they sometimes invoke in their songs (which really is much like the imaginary Lake Wobegon of the radio show, *Prairie Home Companion*) is admittedly a different, more innocent place than the real-life world of Staunton, Virginia, which in its own small way, is susceptible to the same blights—unemployment, crime, drugs—that plague larger metropolises.

"Our songs have a tendency to convey the idea that Staunton is an island, a place set apart that is untouched by the rest of the world," says Harold. "But that certainly is not true. Whatever is happening in L.A. or New York is cer-



More than 89,000 people attended their 4th



The Statler Complex—one of many business interests.

tainly happening here on a smaller scale."

Later the four Statlers informally gather down in the first-floor hallway. As they put on their coats and prepare to scatter in four different directions for lunch—Harold has a 60-acre spread within the city limits, Don lives nearby, Balsley and Fortune live a ways out in the county, off in the other direction—there is a fleeting moment of reverie as we all glance up and down the walls and cases full of awards, trophies and mementos of a career that has now spanned nearly two and a half decades and thirty albums.

"But for the grace of God," Harold



of July celebration last year.



The museum is open for tours every weekday at 2 p.m.

had pondered earlier. "There are a lot more people out there with more talent than us, but we happened to be in the right place at the right time, and God saw fit to smile on us...."

Which leads one to ask, do the four of them ever stop and think about where they might be if The Statlers *hadn't* come to be....

*Don:* I think about it a lot. I would have liked to have been an English teacher. *Laughs.* But this got in the way of it. I'm not sorry...but it is one of those little unfulfilled dreams.

*Phil:* An accountant, perhaps. I did the books for the group for quite a while. Or maybe a teacher. I had a

teacher once that I greatly admired, and I wanted to do that, but...

*Harold:* To general laughter. He's in prison now, right!?

*Jimmy:* I've done about everything. I've always been interested in cars—working on them or whatever. I've always felt I had a talent for carpentry work.

Harold, as always, has an answer that is all his own and totally unexpected: "I'd probably be somewhere starving to death. I've got a real strange feeling I'd be begging, probably

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*"People identify with small-town life even if they grew up in the slums of a large city."*

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standing on the street with a real heavy coat on in the middle of summer, wearing an old slouch hat and needing a shave, begging alms for the stupid. *Outrageous laughter from all four.* I'm not kiddin'! I have no idea what I'd be doin'."

Of course, Harold's probably putting the world on...or then again, maybe he's not. Beneath his boisterous humor there's an intense drive, an overwhelming need to put his own dreams into action—a need which, the other founding members readily concede, is really what first turned The Statlers' own dreams into reality.

"Now, I don't wanta piss off the Chamber of Commerce, because I know just about anybody you ask around here today will tell you how they helped us get started," Harold's booming laughter again seems to rattle the windows and shake the pictures in their frames. "But the truth is, when we first started out, we received a lot more discouragement than we did encouragement. There's a little plaque in this gymnasium right down the hall, which is where we won our very first talent contest. Well, that's one side of the story. But I also had teachers and guidance counselors in my senior year, and they'd take me in for a meeting and say, 'Okay, Harold, you're gettin' ready to graduate, what are you gonna do?' I told 'em, 'I'm gonna sing.' They said, 'Well, okay, that's nice. You can sing in church on Sunday, but what are you gonna do...for a living?' I just said, 'That's what I'm gonna do.' So they'd immediately book me for another

session the next day with the school psychologist! *Again boisterous laughter from all four.* I remember this one lady told me, 'You know your odds must be a million to one?' I just said, 'Well, that's close enough for me.'"

A few years later, The Statlers—the two Reids, Phil Balsley and Lew DeWitt—were out there hitting it hard in pursuit of that dream. They were, most all of them, married by then and holding day jobs. They recall how they'd jump in the car, play dates all over two or three states, and often return home just in time to watch the sun come up as they changed clothes and went back to work. Times were tough, and exhaustion and desperation began to set in.

But all agree that it was Harold's aggressiveness which put the dream into action. With the help of an acquaintance, a local promoter, he had the nerve to slip backstage at a concert in Roanoke and introduce himself to Johnny Cash. He informed Cash he had a group that he'd like for him to hear.

Harold picks up the story from there:

"John agreed to come hear us that Sunday at a place called Watermelon Park in Berryville, Virginia. By the time the sun came up, we were already comin' into Berryville. Cash showed up, and we started playing. He just sat down on the edge of the stage and watched. We did well, and he came over and shook hands and said, 'Man, that's great, I think we can do somethin' together.' Then he just said, 'See you,' and got in his car and left. We were standin' there in the dust, just kinda thinkin', 'Well, that's great, but *what* did we get here?'"

Don continues the oft-told tale:

"From there, Harold pursued it. He somehow managed to get Cash's home phone number, and...*(Laughs uneasily.)* I don't wanta teach anybody else bad habits, but...he started running him down at recording sessions in Nashville. It was in August when Cash had first heard us, and by the following March, we still hadn't heard back from him, and we were at the end of our rope. We quit our day jobs, got us a little home-made trailer built, and took off. We said we're either gonna make it, or we ain't gonna make it. Our first stop was Canton, Ohio. Cash had a show there. We made contact with him and he said, 'Yeh, you can open for me.' So we took off. We didn't know if we were gonna get paid, we didn't know if we were gonna last more than one show with him. But we went out there anyhow, and we played. Afterwards he asked us to finish out the tour with him. We shook hands with him, and we were with him for eight years on that handshake."

As I listen to The Statlers' laughter

It's been six years since Jimmy Fortune joined The Statlers. Their popularity was never in doubt.



JIM FREY

and these affectionate, shared recollections of hard times so long ago, I detect the genuine appreciation they harbor for each other's sense of humor. These guys, despite—or may because of—all the years, all the millions of road miles and thousands of stage and studio hours, genuinely enjoy each other's company, and genuinely count on each other as good friends.

"Yeh," says Harold. "That's one good thing we've got going for us. And we *do* things for each other. For instance, I'm the only one who doesn't fly—it scares me to death. So these guys waste a lot of time riding on the bus with me. We went to L.A. about a month ago. Everybody got on the bus, and we rode out and rode back. They all made a two-and-a-half-day trip out of something which, by plane, could have been over in four and a half hours. Now, that's a big bite out of your life. But—yeh, we do those things for each other."

No question, The Statlers *do* have fun together; and nobody can tell you better than Jimmy Fortune that time *does* fly when you're having fun. Unbelievable as it seems, he's been with the group for six years now.

Already, he's written two Number One songs—"Elizabeth" and "My Only Love"—for the group, their first chart-toppers in quite some time, and has lent the quartet's graying respectability a new and youthful edge. "He's sure pulled his load," says Don. "He's brought a new freshness to us, and we're sure glad he did."

Fortune, who was working in a car

dealership in nearby Charlottesville, Virginia, playing clubs by night, and barely making ends meet when it all happened, seems to have taken it all in stride.

"I think if you'd asked me about all this seven years ago, I would have never dreamed it," Fortune shakes his head and smiles bemusedly as he leans back in his velvet-upholstered chair. "It was really weird: when I was working at the car dealership, this friend of mine came up to me one day and said, 'Hey listen, Lew DeWitt's been real sick and everything, and I've got a feeling that The Statlers are gonna call you.' I don't know to this day how he had any idea of what was going on, because at that point I don't think The Statlers even knew themselves. I just said to myself, 'There's no way that's gonna happen.' And when they *did* call, it was like, 'Am I dreaming?'"

Though he's told the story many times, Fortune still seems a bit awestruck when he recalls how he wrote "Elizabeth," which he figures was only the third or fourth song he'd ever written to completion in his life:

"We were on our way to a show, and we were watching a movie on the bus one night," he recalls softly. "It was *Giant*—with James Dean, Rock Hudson, and Elizabeth Taylor. And Elizabeth Taylor really got to me: she's just so beautiful, and I've always loved her anyway. Then I came back home, and I was in the supermarket, and it seemed like every little kid that was running around, their mothers would say, 'Eliz-

abeth,' or 'Beth, stop that!' That name just kept comin' to me. Later, we were on our way to Oklahoma City, and I had that melody and that harmony line in my head. I just said, 'Fellahs, I'm gonna go back and try and write me a song.' A little later, I came out and played it for them. And—thank goodness—they liked it."

Later in the day, after The Statlers have returned from lunch, you can catch glimpses of them wearing their other hats as small-town businessmen who oversee nearly every aspect of their own incorporated multi-million-dollar-per-year entertainment and investment complex. There's Harold sweating over a desk cluttered with computer print-outs and phone messages. And there goes Don down the hall carrying a briefcase stuffed with documents. "A lot of people can't understand that they're *businessmen*, too," says Ann Peters, the trusty office manager who is one of their four full-time office employees. "People think they just come home from their tours and lounge around their pools. But most days they're here in the office, working like everybody else."

Much of their activity on this particular afternoon has to do with the tour on which they will embark in a few more days. It will take them to the Houston Astrodome, where they will provide the entertainment for a livestock show. Then there are concerts in Austin and in a couple of other Texas cities. Then they swing over to Florida to play at a giant strawberry festival. There are also upcoming trips to Nashville to continue work on their *thirty-first* album and do some TV tapings.

"You're gonna ask us, do we ever get *wearry*?" Harold jokingly anticipates the next question. "Well, let's put it this way: my wife wrote me an excuse from the last tour. But they wouldn't accept it."

Don pipes up, "We gave him an *unexcused*. And then when we got back home, we gave him a 'zero' for the tour." (*General laughter from all four.*)

"The *getting there*, the same hotels, the same highways, that does get weary," Harold confesses. "But the fun part is always when they say, 'Ladies and gentlemen, The Statler Brothers!'"

"We don't think anybody is an authority on this business except the fans," says Harold.

"I don't claim to know that much about the music business myself," he adds. "I don't buy that many albums, I don't buy that many concert tickets. But the fans do. They know what they want. And if they don't think something's okay, then it's probably not, because they've got the last word."

"And it's those people we're trying to please, and only those." ■



TOM BERT

# DUANE EDDY

## Rebel Rouser's Song

*Duane Eddy's music has always appealed to country listeners who liked a little tinge of rock 'n' roll to their music. And in the world of rock 'n' roll, he was a big hero. The master guitarist's upcoming album reflects both those strains.*

□□□□□□□□□□ *By John Morthland* □□□□□□□□□□

**D**uane Eddy doesn't come up in too many discussions of country music. The man with the twangy guitar has always been perceived as a rock 'n' roller, period. But go back and look at the charts from his 1958-63 heyday and you'll see that country fans had no trouble embracing him—"Rebel Rouser," his calling card, rose to Number 17 on the country charts in 1958 despite the fact that it was released on a Philadelphia pop label with no promotional clout in the country field; several

other Duane Eddy instrumentals came close to crossing over onto the country charts as well. The affinity between Duane's brand of twang and several country guitarists of that era is too obvious to miss. And his influence on contemporary country is apparent enough, too, in any number of guitarists, most especially Richard Bennett, who plays with Steve Earle.

So it does not seem entirely inappropriate that Duane Eddy has been living happily in Nashville since the fall of

1985, even if his current comeback has again been in the pop field so far as chart-watchers are concerned. Or that he has played a few country sessions since coming to town. Or even that Duane himself always considered his Arizona instrumentals to be "country with drums." Duane Eddy is one of those musicians who always emphasized the similarities, rather than the differences, between popular forms. And he may not be insecure enough that he feels compelled to give the "I've always been country" litany, although his music speaks volumes on that subject. When prodded, he'll do the same.

"I was working with country groups in Phoenix from the time I started playing professionally at 15, but from the very beginning we had drums in Arizona because that was the influence of West Texas," he says today. "But the main influence was always Nashville, until Elvis and Jerry Lee came along and the drummer was added to everything.

"I always felt that rock 'n' roll grew out of country music basically, with a little rhythm and blues and gospel thrown in it. I kind of think Hank Williams influenced rock 'n' roll inadvertently by influencing Bill Haley and Elvis Presley and Jerry Lee Lewis. If you listen to some of Bill Haley's early stuff, it's just like 'Move It On Over.'"

Even Duane's recollections of those heady days of early rock 'n' roll suggest that for him the music represented not so much a threat to, but an extension of, country music. Speaking of the kind of audiences he was playing to in the Arizona clubs when he made his first record, he emphasizes, "Working people. That's the thing—everybody said it was kids' music but there were a lot of older people that liked it just as much. I don't know why the industry perceived it as a threat, that's just the way they thought about it. It was new and different and a lot of people perceived it as a threat in those days. Rock 'n' rollers were not exactly welcome in a lot of places in those days—it was keep 'em away from your daughters and keep 'em out of hotels, keep 'em as far away as you can.

"But it was kinda like being a safe rebel. You were rebelling against something that wasn't really gonna hurt you. It wasn't like you were out there fighting some kind of battle, but you were being a bit of a rebel by playing rock 'n' roll," he adds.

As a child, Duane identified with country music first and foremost. Sitting in the Capitol Records conference room on Music Row last fall, the burly, bearded 49-year-old guitar-slinger recalled listening to WWVA, the trucker's station out of Wheeling, West

Virginia, when he was growing up in Corning, New York. His father was a decent musician, though strictly an amateur, and Duane took up guitar at age five. By the time his family moved to Arizona—first Tucson, then Coolidge, then Phoenix—when he was in his early teens, he was already playing like Chet Atkins and Merle Travis, as well as session men like Grady Martin and Hank Garland whose names he hadn't learned yet. When he settled into the Phoenix club circuit for good in 1955, the typical country band there was using drums, bass, piano, steel and guitar; with this lineup, his own group did everything from "There Stands the Glass" to "Hound Dog" to "Bye, Bye, Love." In those days, Duane even sang a little—Louvin Brothers tunes were his favorites.

But Duane was a product of both his age and his environs. His take on country music came out just a little bit different from what people were doing in the Southeast, or even in Texas and California. Writing in the Phoenix weekly *New Times*, homeboy Jimmy Magahern pinned Duane's sound down wonderfully: "Slow-handed, ballsy, and couched in enough echo to fill the Grand Canyon, Eddy's patented guitar licks were reminiscent of what might have happened if a Scotty Moore solo had wandered out of a car radio on Route 66, got lost in the Arizona desert for a couple weeks, and then came crawling back into the city dirtier, more ornery and twice as big, fattened up on a steady diet of rattlesnake meat and cactus juice... Duane Eddy's guitar melodies always seemed to move around a beat the way most Arizonans move around a back yard in July: slowly and sparingly, growling all the while."

Duane Eddy and the Rebels were the first to turn instrumental rock 'n' roll into a hit-making style of its own, and he has his own description for how he did so. "The first time I went into the studio I knew from the little experience I had that bass strings recorded better. And I knew I had to have a melody, not just a bunch of hot licks, to put an instrumental together," he explains. "So I just got a couple good riffs to go along with the melody and played it all on the bass strings, and that's what I came up with. Simple, actually. Then we added the background and the use of what effects we had in those days like tremolo, and we used the whang bar on the guitar. A lot of guitarists played on the bass strings—there was nothing new about that. I got the idea mainly from Johnny Horton records, but there was Merle Travis too. I just doctored it up a bit and focused on it."

"Ramrod," a one-riff tune that was the first thing Duane recorded, was a

*"I always felt that rock 'n' roll grew out of country music basically, with a little rhythm and blues and gospel thrown in."*

stiff. "Movin' 'n' Groovin'," the followup, was kicked along by both a high and low riff, which turned the trick to the tune of 100,000 copies sold. "Rebel Rouser," which came next, caught the exact sound Duane Eddy was looking for, and went on to sell a tidy three million copies.

Duane's accomplice in all this was producer Lee Hazelwood, a local disk jockey who had won the young guitarist's friendship by filching him country records from the station's library. It was Hazelwood, hot off his success producing Sanford Clark's neo-rockabilly "The Fool," who suggested that Duane cut instrumentals, and while it's impossible to say at this point exactly who was most responsible for which aspects of the sound, Eddy gives the man more than token credit: "I'd say he knew exactly what he was doing. He'd sit there as a deejay and listen to those records and he wasn't listening to them the way I was—he was listening to how they were made. He was training himself as a producer by sitting there night after night and listening to those Top Ten records. The deejay job was definitely a stepping stone."

Hazelwood, in fact, stayed with Eddy through most of the glory years, adding partner Lester Sill and eventually moving the team's operation out to Los Angeles and expanding into areas like publishing, continuing all the while to produce Duane's records. He went on to write hits for people like Nancy Sinatra and Dean Martin. Duane and his trusty red Gretsch, meanwhile, stayed on the road; a 1959 trip to Nashville stands out strongly in his mind.

"I came through on a rock 'n' roll package show and met Hank Garland, and he took me down to meet Chet Atkins. Chet was playing in Printer's



TOM BERT

Alley then. Later on, Chet took me backstage at the Grand Ole Opry and I met Mother Maybelle. They invited me to be on that night but in those days they wouldn't allow a saxophone or drums on the Opry. They said I could take a set of cocktail drums out there but absolutely no saxophone, and I didn't wanna go out and play 'Rebel Rouser' without the sax because the fans would be disappointed that it didn't sound like the record," he says. "I opted to pass on it, even though it was a childhood, lifetime dream."

By the early 1960's, Duane was indulging his lifelong love for westerns and doing the teen idol bit as well for TV and movies. In 1960, he formed his own company to produce a series called *The Quiet Three*, which would feature himself, Sill and Hazelwood; those plans were squelched when Hazelwood and Sill dropped him temporarily to pursue other projects. He still appeared in such movies as *Because They're Young* (the title song was his biggest hit to date) and either wrote or recorded the theme music for *Pepe* and *Gidget Goes Hawaiian*. In 1961, he co-starred with Richard Boone in *A Thunder of Drums*, which led to some guest spots on Boone's *Have Gun, Will Travel* TV series, which had been the inspiration for Duane's first album title: *Have Twangy Guitar, Will Travel*.

In 1962, by which time the singles weren't charting quite as high, Duane and Hazelwood were reunited and the guitarist moved over to RCA. "(Dance With the) Guitar Man" became his biggest hit ever, and the album named after it was cut in Nashville. (So was the subsequent *Twanging a Country Song*, which spotlighted Buddy Emmons.) In 1962, Eddy also married for the second time, to one of his backup

singers, Mirriam Johnson—known today as Jessi Colter.

By 1964, however, Duane, like his entire generation, was being eclipsed by the English Invasion and Motown. He pulled back to concentrate on writing and publishing—with 15 Top Forty singles, about 20 albums, and some 100 million records sold worldwide, he could afford the break.

For years, he was unable to mount a comeback (except in England and Australia, where his popularity never waned). He had the occasional hit such as the 1970 "Freight Train," which topped easy-listening charts, but they were few and far between. He produced Phil Everly's first solo album, also some sides with Waylon and the original Crickets. In 1976, around the time he moved to Lake Tahoe, Nevada, he even cut a version of "You Are My Sunshine" with Waylon and Willie that managed to make little noise at a time when everything those two men touched was turning to gold. It's a period he now dismisses as quickly as he can. "I got into real estate and that sorta thing for a while," he mumbles, "just sorta made a living..."

Then in 1985, Don Randi, a jazzman who also works pop sessions in Los Angeles, invited Duane to play his club, The Baked Potato, out on Ventura Boulevard near Universal City. When Duane declined because he didn't have a band, Randi put one together for him with Steve Douglas (an original Rebel) on sax, sessions whiz Hal Blaine on drums and Ry Cooder on guitar. Terming it "an offer I couldn't refuse," Duane took the gig. It went so well that in no time he was back on the road, paired with guitarists like Albert Lee and playing before crowds that included adoring fans like rock stars Jeff Beck,

Eric Clapton, Lindsey Buckingham, Tom Petty and Ron Wood.

In 1986, the British rock group Art of Noise asked him to play on their dance-club remake of his "Peter Gunn." The best way to describe this band is to confirm that they are arty and they are noisy, relying on computers for their sound, but their brand of musical distortion jibed well enough with Duane's that the record won a Grammy in 1986. Surprisingly, it didn't alienate Duane from his old fans, most of them now into country or soft pop—even if they weren't real keen about the Brits. Duane capped the first stage of his comeback by opening a Huey Lewis tour, and then playing New England on his own before doing a huge show at the New Jersey Meadowlands with Chuck Berry and Jerry Lee Lewis.

On his way back to Tahoe, he stopped by Nashville to look up some old friends, particularly Jim Horn, another original Rebel and now the backbone of the Don Williams band. Nashville looked good. "I got to looking in my address book and I realized I knew more people here than I did in L.A. and Tahoe combined," he chuckles.

When it came time to record his 1987 album, called appropriately *Duane Eddy*, help came mainly from the generation of rockers he had originally inspired. It is not a bad little roll call of names. Art of Noise wrote and produced two cuts, and Duane did two more on his own. Paul McCartney produced a remake of his "Rockestra," and Jeff Lynne of Electric Light Orchestra produced three more sides. Cooder produced and played on two cuts. Among the guitarists joining in were James Burton, Steve Cropper, John Fogerty, George Harrison and David Lindley.

Now you might take this to mean Duane Eddy is back as a rock star, and you wouldn't be entirely wrong—but you wouldn't be entirely right, either. The way Duane Eddy sees it, he is back as a musician, period. He's done a session with Emmylou Harris and leans towards cutting an all-country album of his own one day soon. When he throws a record on the turntable at home, it's usually someone like Connie Smith or George Jones—but he's also partial towards Whitney Houston, jazz flash Stanley Jordan, even heavy metal band Bon Jovi.

"Everyone who picks up the guitar, whether it's rock, country, rhythm and blues, even heavy metal, they all have something to say, and it's all slightly different. I mean, Eddie Van Halen—it's the same damn instrument, but it's being played so differently," he concludes. "I guess it's just one of the all-time best instruments for people expressing themselves."

And he should know. ■

# D DAVID LYNN JONES

## The Prodigal Returns

*After some years of searching for what truly makes him happy, David Lynn Jones has come full circle. He now spends most of his time working at home on his music. His debut album gives a glimpse of what he has learned.*







As a "newcomer," David Lynn has had some very impressive backing. Waylon Jennings picked him as a leader of the new generation of country artists.

**H**ere he comes, hot as a pistol, packed with power and loaded for bear, a future of substance set in his sights. We're not talking cute here (though cute he is, or at least handsome); we're not talking catchy (though yes, he's that too, his songs hook with the best of them); we're talking smart, strong, stirring, soul-searching; we're talking Significant.

That's what David Lynn Jones' hype says—prominent mention of events like Waylon's characterization of him as "the leader of the new generation" and the use of his "Living in the Promiseland" song in the dedication of the renovated Statue of Liberty set the general tone—and gee, for once the hype might really be on the money.

Consider the content and quality of his debut album, *Hard Times on Easy Street*. Comparable in idea-for-dollar and surprise-per-track value with the fertile first works of groundbreaking writer/singers like Guy Clark or Joe Ely or Billy Joe Shaver, even Kris Kristofferson, it also has prime-time production values, real full-scale sock-it-to-you professional-class *music*; you can crank this sucker up the decibel scale, just as you can the late Gram Parsons' *Grievous Angel* or Steve Earle's *Guitar Town* or John Cougar Mellencamp's *The Lonesome Jubilee*, and really have yourself a ten-track time.

That combination doesn't come along very often, even in these adventurous days when a brand new hillbilly semi-genius is motivating at you down Music Row every time you stick your head out the window, so certainly *Hard Times on Easy Street* is significant; any album this good is. What makes it and its

maker Significant with a capital 'S,' however, is something else. It's the content, the words, the (yes) 'message.'

Well, messages. There aren't that many of them on the first side of the album, which deals mostly in the small scale of clever, sometimes funny, often very moving character studies and life stories—the truck-driving little sister in "Bonnie Jean," the sad old cowboy in "High Ridin' Heroes," the adult remembering his raising with thanks in "Home of My Heart" and his honky tonk road with humorous irony in "The Rogue"—but once you hit Side Two, you're into the wide and heavy. You're out there in the dark blue yonder of things it hurts to think about: war, for instance ("Tonight in America"), and a land of plenty trouble ("Hard Times on Easy Street" and "Living in the Promiseland"), and man as a blight upon a perfect earth ("Valley of a Thousand Years").

This is powerful stuff, and moreover it works. All of it is so beautifully rendered—each song such a differently and appropriately set gem of image and music and idea—that listening, you're on that old creative knife edge where the pain of what's expressed meets the pleasure of *how* it's expressed in a trance as subtle and ambivalent as a moment of reality. When the last chord fades away, then, you find yourself feeling something like you might after a beautiful requiem or a particularly dire but eloquent sermon: not quite sure if you're very disturbed or very much at peace, but dead certain that one way or another, you're moved.

You might also find yourself sort of stunned. As a rule, you really don't

by Patrick Carr

expect a spiritual experience when you drop the stylus on a modern commercial country album. Music Row coughs up plenty of clowns and cuties and posers and puppets and rounders and rebels, all sorts of good ole girls and bad ole boys (and also, to its credit, more than its share of wise old birds of all ages and sexes), but really now: how often does the brand new semi-genius motivating at you down that solid gold hillbilly boulevard turn out to be a real-life writing, singing, seeking, git-down preaching pilgrim?

**T**wo kinds of essential impressions of David Lynn Jones. First is something he says about himself when I call him on the telephone to find out what kind of fellow he is: "I've never had much of a problem forming or expressing opinions; whenever I get a chance to bombard someone with 'em, I let 'em have it." Second is a quote from his high school yearbook: "He never let his studies interfere with his education." Together those two quotes give you a fair idea of where the man's at today, and how he got there.

The 37 years' worth of biography-so-far describe a circle beginning and ending in the (very) small town of Bexar, Arkansas, where 20-plus years ago Pop was a farmer, Mom was—yup—a preacher, and David Lynn, one of five kids, was bored. Restless. At times argumentative, somewhat distracted, more than somewhat inattentive to his schooling; a born musician, in short. On those nights when Mom thought young David Lynn was staying over at a friend's house, perhaps studying, young David Lynn was in fact writing tunes and entertaining drinkers of beer and spirits down at the Blue Moon.

He resisted his calling, but not very

strongly and not for long. Married at 17 and inserted into a large dairy business with his father, he nonetheless made his first song-pitching trip to Nashville at the age of 19. Nothing much came of that initiative, but one year later (the word 'finally' doesn't quite fit here, but 'permanently' does) he opted out; traded a quarter of a million dollars in dairy business debt and a day job selling cars in Fayetteville for a bass guitar and life on the road with Freddy Morrison and the Bandana Blues Band. What happened to his marital status is unclear; he talks freely about his current five-year-old union and his two young children, and

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*"I've quit looking for songs; whenever they come, I work on them."*

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about the 19-year-old daughter from his first marriage who lives with him, but on the subject of himself and marriage in the intervening years—specifically how many times he took the vows—he ventures that he'd "better not say."

Whatever; now he's back in Arkansas, in the center of three generations of Joneses, and from there he says he isn't of a mind to wander either geographically or in matters of the heart. "I don't want to go to the moon, I don't want to go to Saturn," he says. "Everything I want to do is right here on this earth. I don't want to be a cosmic cowboy, float

on a cloud somewhere; I want to be riding my horses when I'm 95, seeing my great-grandson."

There are very definite echoes of the prodigal son theme, and of the years-in-the-wilderness theme, in David Lynn's recounting of his time away from home. You hear them not so much in the facts of geography and occupation—his years in Houston as a successful steady-working songwriter, studio musician and honky tonk bandmember; his multiple criss-crossings of the nation on the road with this outfit and that—as in his account of how he approached life then as opposed to how he approaches it now.

His songwriting, for instance. "I used to think I had to do it, so at times I'd sit down every day—ten, twelve hours a day—and just write," he says. "But now they either come or they don't. I've quit looking for songs; whenever they come, I work on them. I see that as growth. It's not a chore anymore. Now I enjoy it more than anything I've ever done."

That change of attitude and method went hand in hand with a more essential change: a radical shift in what he wrote about. "I used to write a lot of negative, lost-love kind of songs, because I grew up listening to the Grand Ole Opry and Hank Williams, and I guess I got the idea that that's what music was," he says. "But I didn't really like those songs much. I knew they were pretty good—they were better than what the average Joe was writing at the time—but apart from that and the fact that they made money, they didn't give me a whole lot of satisfaction; they weren't knocking me out."

Why not? I ask.

"Well, simple. I've been around a lot of heartbreak, you see, but I personally have never had my heart broken. So I wasn't writing what I was feeling. I only started to take real pride in my work when I started writing the truth. Saying something I really believed. Writing what I really felt. Now that's all I do. My songs are my opinions; there's a statement in every one of them. There aren't as many of them as there used to be—maybe there'll only be ten a year—but those few songs have a whole lot more value than all the other kind."

All of which begs another question: Why (and how) did this shift in approach take place?

But first the where, which was in the attic bedroom of a house in Fairbanks, Alaska, where David Lynn and his fellow bandmembers spent six weeks playing a club after a whole winter of touring.

He remembers it well. "That was probably the first time in my life when I was forced to live with myself in a situation I couldn't get out of," he says. "I mean, when it's forty below outside, you



Along with music, working with cutting horses is David Lynn Jones' favorite pastime. He was able to incorporate both in his video of "High Riding Heroes," which features Doc Guffee and Jim Gideon, both famous cowboys.

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ain't gonna be playing softball. So I spent a lot of time up in that attic trying to figure out why I was so unhappy, what I was looking for. It took a few years after that to finally get it figured out, but it turned out to be peace of mind. I needed to be able to look myself in the eyes in the mirror every evening, and say, 'You did something better today than yesterday.'"

He explains further. "You see, I'd had a bad attitude all along, and things just weren't happening. Like in the mid-1970's, I was making a lot of money—I'd never had any before in my life, and here I was getting \$25,000 checks—but I didn't get any satisfaction out of it. I didn't like myself that much. I made too many bad decisions for selfish reasons." He doesn't detail such decisions or reasons, just says they were "Oh, what everybody does, the usual kind of thing"—but he is very clear indeed about the conclusion he reached about what was wrong with himself: "I wasn't living by God's law, and that's what I had to do. I had to start living by the Ten Commandments."

Which he did, as much as he could, and does now as much as he can. "I ain't no saint, but whether you're religious or not, you can't argue with the ideas that you shouldn't kill somebody, you shouldn't take things which aren't yours, you can't disrespect the land and the people who love you—all those laws work for everybody, even the atheist. The Ten Commandments are the ten laws of nature, and you can't fight them. If you do, you pay one way or another. When you break God's law, you're on your own, buddy."

It was this change in attitude towards himself that necessitated a change in David Lynn Jones' music. As he explains it, "I started working on the way I was pursuing my career, rather than working on the career itself. I started trying to develop myself as a human being, and then develop myself as a writer. No matter what I was writing about, I'd ask myself, 'What is the real truth of this situation, and how does it relate to me? How would I *really* feel about this?' At that point, there's no excuse for not saying what you really think in your songs—and the truth is always right; the truth is always knowledge; it's wisdom. It takes a lot of trouble to make stuff up—you can waste a lot of time trying to manipulate things into a place they're not supposed to be—but the truth is usually real obvious; the right thing to do is usually the obvious thing. And that's how it works."

Such are the core beliefs of the prodigal son after his years in the wilderness, and they have served him well; virtue has been rewarded. After writing a whole new generation of songs



David was one of the "new faces" at this year's Country Radio Seminar.

stuffed with his personal truth, then connecting with effective people who saw their worth—a partnership quarterbacked by producer Richie Albright, Waylon's ex-longtime-drummer—Mr. Jones is now equipped with an eight-album contract from Polygram Records. As he puts it, "That pretty much cuts out what I'll be doing for the next seven or eight years."

**B**olstered by the security of his situation and by long experience of how *not* to do things, David Lynn goes about his work with an unusual degree of common sense. Rather than spending energy on the action in a large and lively "scene" like Nashville, for instance, he has arranged to eliminate distractions and simplify logistics by constructing his own little music world in Bexar; his rehearsal space, his pre-production studio, the beginnings of a full recording studio, and his band members (most of them old friends) are all within five minutes of where he and his family live in his grandfather's old house. So whenever he's ready to move a song out of his mind and into others' ears (which happens whenever it happens), or if he wants to crank up a new one by riffing with his musicians and seeing what comes of it, he just picks up the phone and he's there. And then, whenever he doesn't want to be doing that kind of stuff, whenever his Muse calls time out, he can walk out of the house and work with the cutting horses which are his main nonmusical passion, or just go fishing.

This kind of arrangement tends to work rather well for writer/singer/bandleaders—Bob Dylan's old setup near

Woodstock with the members of The Band, the famous "House at Big Pink," comes to mind—and together with the fact that David Lynn Jones already has somewhere between one and two hundred songs he considers worthy of recording, it promises well for both the artist's and the consumers' future. Second- or third-album burnout shouldn't be this particular semi-genius' problem.

As he and I talk on the telephone in the first days of 1988, David Lynn notes that *Hard Times on Easy Street* was "an introduction"; Side One featured older songs mostly concerning his personal life experiences, while Side Two conveyed newer ideas and preoccupations. The new album he is almost ready to begin recording, he says, will be somewhat different: "It'll be more of a band album, more the way I hear my music sounding." It will be produced by Richie Albright and Mick Ronson, the English guitarist/bandleader/producer whose superb sense of rock 'n' roll style so enhanced *Hard Times on Easy Street's* decibel potential; David Lynn figures that this time, given the "band album" approach, Ronson's contribution will be greater.

Which sounds good, sounds good; seems like we can expect some hotter, harder, funkier and perhaps even more beautiful trances from the new pilgrim on the block. And as to subject matter, for a while at least we don't have to worry about it getting too cute.

"I truly believe that what we're supposed to be doing here is developing the species and purifying the soul," says the pilgrim, "and I'm probably still in the mode of promoting human awareness of the condition we're in. Maybe I'm into it too much—I don't know—but I see an onslaught of destruction going on around us all the time, all because of greed, and it seems that what I want to say right now is, *Wake up!*"

I ponder the import of these words for a while, trying to align the concepts of country music, spirituality and social conscience, and then, since the pilgrim isn't your holier-than-thou kind of fellow—despite his essential seriousness, he's not stuck up at all—I figure it's okay to tell him, "Gee, David, that's a shame. I was kinda hoping you'd write some good songs about golf. That's what's on most big country singers' minds most of the time, and I've always figured it's kind of a crime they don't write about it."

He laughs. "Yeah," he says, "I could write some great songs about golf. That'd be fun. But oh, hell, I don't know. I hope there'll come a time when I can quit saying 'Wake up!' and start saying, 'Okay, buddy, relax.' But we certainly haven't reached that place yet. And I *have* to write what's on my mind." ■

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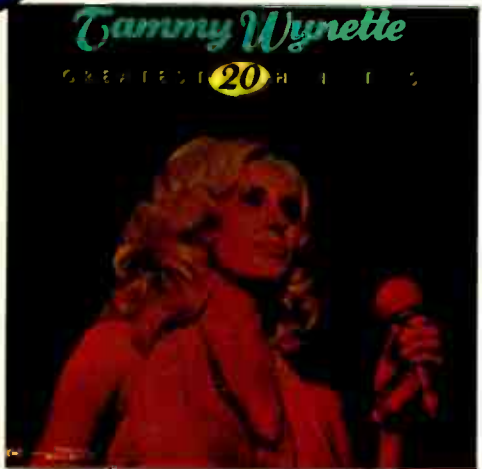
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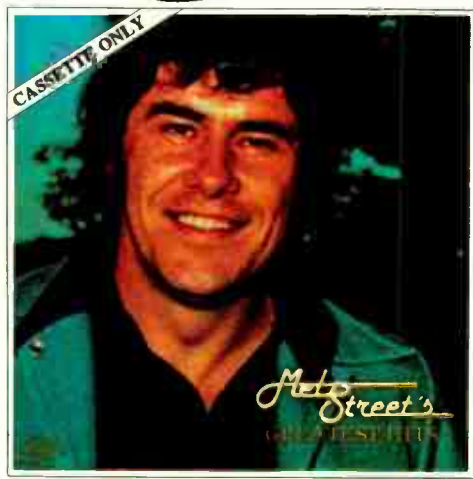
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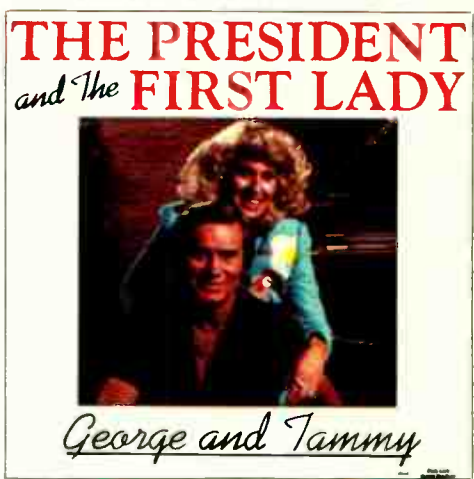
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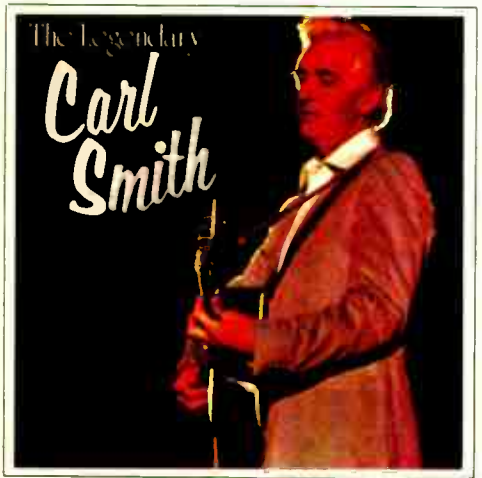
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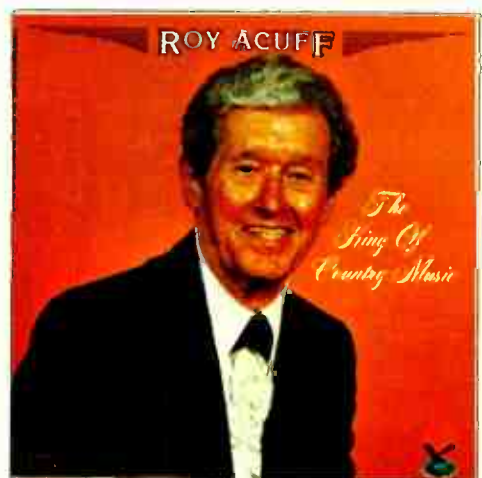
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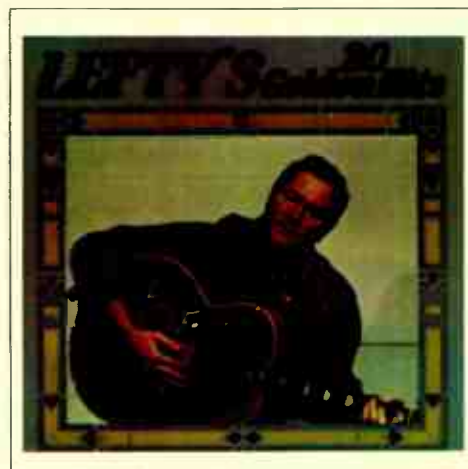
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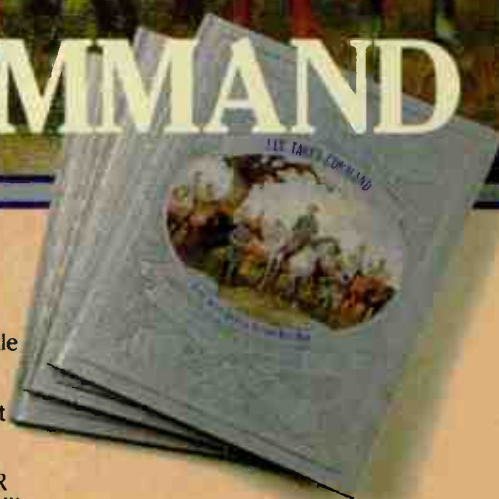
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# Record Reviews

## Nanci Griffith *Little Love Affairs* MCA 42102

For those familiar with Nanci Griffith's independent label releases, *Lone Star State of Mind*, her 1986 major label debut, was a mild disappointment because it had so few top-flight original songs and it lacked emotional focus. But disappointment is a thing of the past now that *Little Love Affairs*, Griffith's newest—and possibly best—album has arrived.

Never before has Griffith (with the occasional help of duet partners like John Stewart and Mac McAnally) used her voice, with all its charm and eccentric power, with such effectiveness. Plus, the songs she's come up with are among the best she's ever written—memorable, original songs such as "Anyone Can Be Somebody's Fool," "I Wish It Would Rain" and the title song, "Little Love Affairs." Her co-writers this time around are Tom Russell, Danny Flowers and James Hooker.

As a writer, Griffith is undeniably one of the chosen few. She is one of those narrow geniuses like, say, Tom T. Hall or John Prine, who is capable of packing an entire novel's worth of character development, mood, emotional shading and time and place into a few short song verses with utter clarity. You can hear what I mean on her own "Love Wore a Halo (Back Before the War)" or "Gulf Coast Highway" co-written with Danny Flowers and James Hooker.

Nor has Griffith (who co-



Nor has Griffith (who co-produced *Little Love Affairs* with Tony Brown) ever come up with so many provocative little brush strokes and subtle flourishes designed to rise above the limitations of her voice (specifically, its tendency towards shrillness). In addition to her wonderfully out-of-left-field duets with McAnally and Stewart, Griffith also duets beautifully with herself. Check out the exquisite double-track vocals on "So Long Ago" and "I Wish It Would Rain."

There are fine non-original songs on the album as well. Griffith manages, one way or another, to make almost every one her own: Harlan Howard's "Never Mind," John Stewart's "Sweet Dreams Will Come" and Robert Earle Keen Jr.'s "I Would Change My Life."

If I sound like I'm gushing, I am: *Little Love Affairs* is a knockout. It's a powerful, almost thematic exploration of all the crazy, hurtful, exhilarating romance, idealism, disillusionment and rejuvenation present in love in today's world. With its intelligence and emotional strength, it feels like the album Griffith has been waiting her whole career to make. She's certainly never made a better one. —BOB ALLEN

## Joe Ely *Lord of the Highway* Hightone HT8008

Joe Ely, supremely talented Texas roadhouse-style country-rocker that he is, had the misfortune to get

tangled up with the Nashville record industry in the wrong decade: the 1970's.

Even when Ely more or less on his own laid down such major career-building cornerstones as one or two critically acclaimed albums and got a write-up in *Time Magazine* and a fan following that included Linda Ronstadt, the boys at MCA—then his record label—who seemed to carry their musical tastes in their wallets either could not, or would not, do much with Ely. They chose instead to devote their modest talents to promoting the records of more socially acceptable acts like Barbara Mandrell and The Oak Ridge Boys. "What d'ya wanta do a story on Ely for?" a publicist at the label—a good friend of mine, actually—replied with irritation to my queries one day. "Why don'cha write about Mandrell: she sells records!"

So then a new decade rolled around. And, as luck would have it, just as Ely's contract ran out, Nashville woke up from its long sleep, and raw-edged artists like Steve Earle—a man who, to my taste, covers similar musical territory as Ely, but with considerably less finesse—became the new darlings.

But Ely was not to be counted out, even though he went three years without an album. It was six years if you disregard his very disregardeable 1984 *Hi Res* offering. He kept right on slugging it out on the road, where he has long been acclaimed as having one of the most high-energy, pull-out-the-stops live shows of anybody in the business.

And what goes round comes round. At least, with

## Record Reviews

*Lord of the Highway*, his new self-produced album for the small but highly regarded California independent label, Hightone, Joe Ely is back, and back with a vengeance—brasher and bolder (at least on record) than ever before. *Lord of the Highway* is simply a great album—one which sizzles and crackles like static electricity, and burns with such raw energy that it threatens to melt the vinyl that contains it and make your turntable smolder.

One of the key elements here is that Ely, the *song-writer*—so heartily in evidence on classic early albums like *Joe Ely* and *Honky Tonk Masquarade*—is back. “Me & Billy The Kid,” for instance, is a classic convoluted Ely story-song, full of comic surrealism and seedy wild west romanticism, rendered in the “Pancho & Lefty” vein. “Silver City” (Ely almost sounds like Tom Petty on this one) is about a young pilgrim’s hard knocks, and coming-of-age in some mythical wild west boom town. “Everybody Got Hammered” is an unrepren-

tant, hard-rocking anthem to a well-earned swing-shift hangover.

Then, too, there’s the great title song, written by long-time Ely associate Butch Hancock: it’s a restless, devil-may-care road song so full of reckless gusto that Ely will probably have no choice but to include it in his road show for years to come. Another standout, where the band really gets to strut its stuff, is Eddie Beethoven’s haunting “Don’t Put a Lock on My Heart.”

*Lord of the Highway* is essentially a “live” studio album. It was recorded on a shoestring in an Austin studio, and evidently Ely just let the tapes roll while he and the band burnt the barn down. Ely’s phenomenal band is the driving force behind each and every cut on here. Bobby Keys’ rhythm-and-blues-driven sax can be heard throughout, and he makes it sound like he’s the man who wrote the book on the instrument. Keys is a former Rolling Stones side and session man. Likewise with David

Grissom, the young, hotshot world-class electric lead guitarist whom Ely found somewhere. These two, with the equally inspired accompaniment of drummer Davis McLarty, bassist Jimmy Pettit and keyboardist/guitarist Mitch Watkins, really make the sparks fly and the bottles bounce. This bunch manages to make a top-notch band like Earle’s Dukes sound positively *geriatric* by comparison!

And all the while, there’s Ely himself, singing—or as is more often the case, shouting—with the abandon of a man so possessed by the runaway energy of his music that you fear he might actually pop a blood vessel or something.

What can I say, except that here, on vinyl for the first time, are the shades of greatness that almost anybody who’s seen Ely live or listened closely to his earlier albums knew were there all along. Listening to the fervor, the musical commitment one hears so clearly on *Lord of the Highway*, I am

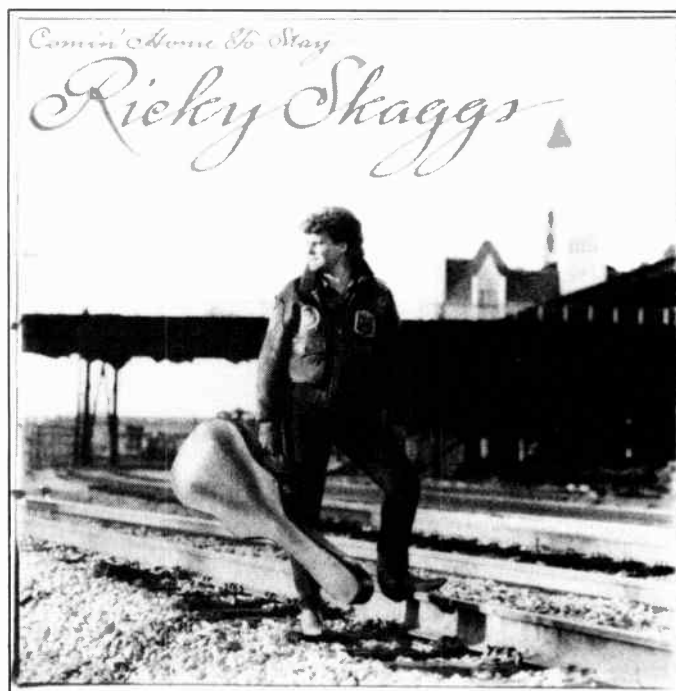
reminded of any number of other great artists, past and present—Waylon Jennings, Tom Petty, Roger McGuinn, Buddy Holly—when they were in their respective musical heydays.

*Lord of the Highway* is so raw, so damned fine and so damned satisfying, that it makes me want to stand up and dance on the table tops, kick over the beer bottles with my pointy-toed cowboy boots and shout at the top of my lungs: “Ooooooh—wheeee!! Joe Ely’s back! Back with a vengeance!”

—BOB ALLEN

**Ricky Skaggs**  
*Comin’ Home to Stay*  
Epic FE-40623

**W**hen I first started writing about music, maybe because I lived in North Carolina, I got sent to about a million bluegrass festivals. That’s when I first conceived of the theory that mandolins cause brain damage. I came



# FOR CMSA MEMBERS ONLY



## Lefty Frizzell Specials

Members have a choice of the long route to the goal of owning a good slice of Lefty Frizzell's music on record or the short, meaning, they can buy the complete box set of Lefty Frizzell put out by Bear Family Records, complete with book detailing Lefty's career from a musicianly point of view, or they can buy a one-album overview from Gusto. Charles Wolfe, who wrote the Legends article on Lefty in this month's CMSA Newsletter, included reproductions from Lefty's old songbooks and complete sessions discography in the book included in the box set, *Lefty Frizzell: His Life—His Music*, put out by Germany's Bear Family Records back in 1985 and reviewed by our own Rich Kienzle in Record Reviews in the March/April 1985 issue of *Country Music*. Covers of the 14 albums included in the box show Lefty at all various stages of his career, and the songs, well, they're all here. Album One starts with 1950-51, Album B3 concludes with 1973-74 and Album 14, the postscript, pick up various odds and ends. Lefty died early in 1975. Rich called this set "the finest reissue ever" in his review. For those who would like to go the short route, that's the one-album overview, Gusto Records' *Lefty's 20 Golden Hits* has the best-known Lefty songs all on one album. Titles included are: "If You've Got the Money, I've Got the Time," "I Love You a Thousand Ways," "Look What Thoughts Will Do," "I Want to Be With You Always," "Always Late With Your Kisses," "Mom and Dad's Waltz," "Travelin' Blues," "Give Me More, More, More of Your Kisses," "Don't Stay Away," "Forever," "Release Me," "Cigarettes and Coffee Blues," "The Long Black Veil," "Saginaw, Michigan," "She's Gone, Gone, Gone," "Watermelon Time in Georgia," "The Waltz of the Angels," "Signed, Sealed and Delivered," "California Blues (Blue Yodel #4)" and "How Long Will It Take to Stop Lovin' You."

## Members' Low Prices for Lefty Specials

The 14-album box set, *Lefty Frizzell, His Life—His Music* (BFX 15100), regular price \$225.00, is available to members for \$169.95 plus \$5 postage and handling. *Lefty's 20 Golden Hits* (P15595), regular price \$5.95, is available to members at \$3.95 plus \$.95 postage and handling. For *Lefty's 20 Golden Pieces*, specify records or cassettes.

## Kitty Wells Special

Another fine Bear Family box set, Kitty Wells, *The Golden Years: 1949-1957* (BFX 15239), 5 albums plus booklet, reviewed by Rich Kienzle in Buried Treasures in this issue, regular price \$90, is available to members at \$67.95 plus \$2 postage and handling. Rich has high praise for this set as well, and Kitty Wells is popular with our members.

## Other Buried Treasures Specials

All other albums offered in Buried Treasures this issue are available to members at \$2.00 off the regular price listed in How to Get These Treasures on page 73. Now's the time to get The Louvin Brothers, Rose Maddox, Roy Acuff, Hank Williams collector's items and more at member's discount.

## How to Order These Items

To order any item listed on this page or in Buried Treasures, send check or money order to *Country Music Magazine*, 342 Madison Avenue, Suite 2118, New York, New York 10173. Mark your envelope, Attention: Dept. 5688. Add \$.95 postage and handling for each item ordered, except add \$5 for Lefty box set and \$2 for Kitty Wells. Include your membership number.

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## Member Poll/May 1988

# VOTE

Your opinions can help influence record companies, radio stations, record stores, concert promoters, managers and performers. As a CMSA member, you have an organized way of making your opinion known, by filling out the Members Poll. We forward the results of the Polls to those involved in the business of country music who are interested in what fans are thinking and doing, and we publish the results.

### Bought Any Good Records Lately?

1. Did you buy any albums (records or tapes) in the last month?  
 Yes  No  
 How many records? \_\_\_\_\_ How many cassettes? \_\_\_\_\_

2. Which ones did you like best? List performer and album title.

- a. \_\_\_\_\_  
 b. \_\_\_\_\_  
 c. \_\_\_\_\_  
 d. \_\_\_\_\_  
 e. \_\_\_\_\_

### Your Choice for Album and Single of the Month

3. To vote, list the numbers of your top 5 favorites from the Top 25, page 68.

Singles (list 5 numbers)      Albums (list 5 numbers)

### Been to the Grand Ole Opry?

4. Did you ever attend the Grand Ole Opry when it was at the Ryman Auditorium?  Yes (How many times? \_\_\_\_\_)  No

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6. If you attended the Opry at both the Ryman Auditorium and Opryland, how do you rate the performance?

Opryland better  Ryman Auditorium better  About the same

7. Do you plan to go to the Opry in the future?  
 Yes  No

### Who Can Vote

Only CMSA members are eligible to vote. If you are a member, fill in your Membership Number \_\_\_\_\_

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# Record Reviews

to believe that somewhere along the line I had sinned grievously and that my punishment was to listen to "The Orange Blossom Special" and "Uncle Pen" until my teeth fell out and I got a graduate degree in American Folk Music.

As you might guess, I've never been a particularly big fan of Ricky Skaggs and the bluegrass side of the family.

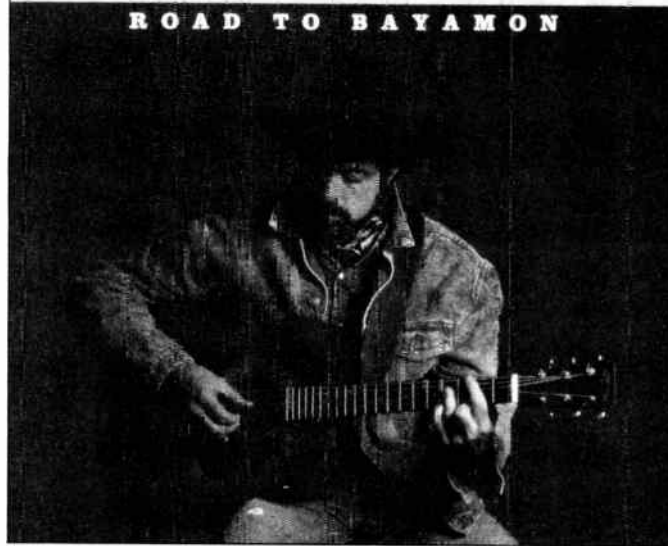
I've got to tell you, though, *Comin' Home to Stay* has its moments. Ricky continues in the vein he's mined so well—bluegrass traditionalist (well, let us say a bluegrass-styled traditional country music singer, as long as we're sifting categories).

I don't know—call me a cry-in-your-beer kind of guy—but sometimes I like music without any redeeming social value. Ricky thoughtfully included a couple of songs for me on *Comin' Home to Stay*. "Hold Whatcha Got" and "(Angel On My Mind) That's Why I'm Walking" are good songs. They're about cheating and women and being on the road and stuff like that. And I like them a lot. "Hold Whatcha Got" is a trucking song, sort of. I mean, it's got a truck starting up on the front and a truck winding down at the end and a pretty good tinkling piano in the middle. I like hearing trucks on country records, because trucks are so relentlessly out of style these days. Remember "Roll On, Big Mama"? Remember "Phantom 309"? More trucks, less sensitive men, *puh-lease!* "(Angel)..." I like because I like song titles in parentheses, something that Cowboy Jack Clement used to specialize in. It's also a straight-ahead weeper, beginning with fiddles and giving Ricky a chance to work out his voice a bit. It sounds like it was recorded around 1955, and it could suit your mood perfectly on a rainy afternoon with a couple of shots and a beer chaser.

The rest of the album, sad to say, is full of Jesus, true

## TOM RUSSELL BAND

ROAD TO BAYAMON



love, the nuclear family, sensitive men and enough sincerity to gag a pony. I wish there were an attachment for a stereo that kicked in a David Lee Roth record whenever sincerity and true love reached a certain level.

—MICHAEL BANE

### Tom Russell Band *The Road to Bayamon* Philo/Rounder PH-1116

**S**inger/songwriter Tom Russell has long been a presence on the national folk scene. He is also one of those die-hard musicians who has helped keep country music alive and kicking in the lower Manhattan bar and club scene during the last decade.

More recently Russell has begun to make a name for himself as a songwriter. Nanci Griffith, who wrote the liner notes to this album, has covered his tunes; Ian Tyson has had major hits with them in Canada. Russell himself is something of a star

in Scandinavia, where he has had Number One records of his own. On the side, he's also made a name for himself as a journalist, covering music and literature for various American publications. Nevertheless, Russell—who has been influenced by artists as varied as Lightnin' Hopkins and William Faulkner—is, so far, an unknown quantity to mainstream American country music audiences.

*Road to Bayamon*, Russell's fine new album, may be the first step toward remedying this situation. On it, all of his undeniable assets as an artist—his leathery yet emotionally compelling voice, his poetic edge as a lyricist and his razor-sharp band, which delivers both country and nuts-and-bolts rock 'n' roll with equal verve and confidence—have been brought into focus as never before. *Road to Bayamon*, recorded in Oslo, Norway, of all places, may be the best small-label release of late 1987.

First off, The Tom Russell Band proves it can hold its

own against the best in the business. Its ability is strikingly apparent on cuts like "Home Before Dark," "Downtown Train" (a wonderful cover of a Tom Waits song, and the only song by a writer other than Russell included) and "Definition of a Fool." On these selections, the band locks into a lean, muscular musical groove that is as grittily convincing as anything done by Steve Earle and The Dukers. Andrew Hardin's crisp electric lead is dominant. Then there are the added touches, like Fats Kaplin's tasteful accordion fills on "Definition of a Fool"—on this song the band particularly shines.

"U.S. Steel," quieter in style, is a flat-out country ballad, complete with steel guitars and a twangy, deadpan Johnny Cash-style vocal. The song deals with the grim blue-collar realities of poverty and despair in a depressed Pennsylvania steel town.

After several listens, Russell's poetic subtlety begins to reveal itself on moody, atmospheric ballads like "Alkali," a lyrically complex depiction of fatalism and death in the Arizona desert. "Wise Blood" is also fine—a gutsy, provocative tribute to the pain, suffering and truth at the heart of good Southern roots music. "William Faulkner in Hollywood" is a sad tale of an artist being ground up in the gristmill of commerciality, lifted directly from the life story of America's most gifted novelist:

*Yes, he longed for Mississippi  
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Sippin' bourbon and starin'  
through the trees  
But the Silver Screen and a  
money dream  
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And California  
Brought him to his knees...*

*Road to Bayamon* is proof positive of a starkly original talent at work—one that deserves a wider hearing than it's had so far. Now that

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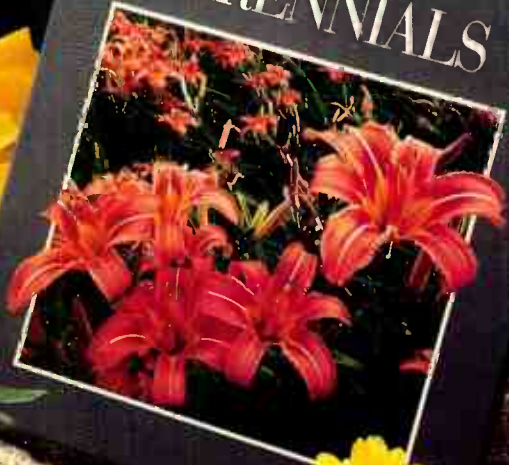
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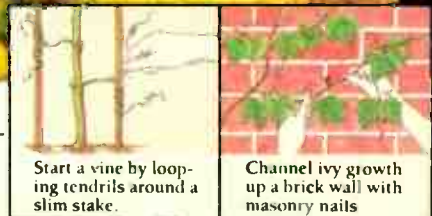
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# Record Reviews

the country mainstream has loosened up enough to accommodate such diverse artists as Lyle Lovett, Steve Earle and Nanci Griffith, it's time to make room for Tom Russell. —BOB ALLEN

## The O'Kanes *Tired of the Runnin'* Columbia B 44066

It took Jamie O'Hara and Kieran Kane over a year to put together this new album, and that's understandable, especially since the debut album yielded so many hits. Naturally, as one of their early boosters, I wondered if they could do it again. They did. Direction's the same, all but one song original, the band unchanged except for bassist Roy Huskey being replaced by veteran Nashville studio bassist Henry Strzelecki, who was playing on hits when Kane and O'Hara were in junior high.

Love songs are still the focus, no drinking songs, no remade classics or wimpy-sounding folk-pop numbers. The melodies are weird and often haunting, their bluesy overtones and odd rhythm shifts giving them the same hazy, mystical integrity as last time.

"If I Could Be There," with its Appalachian feel, is the best example of this style. Framed by fiddle and banjo, it sounds for all the world like something on the Country Music Foundation's recent *Bristol Sessions* anthology of 1928 mountain music, though Kane and O'Hara didn't consciously attempt to copy.

The playfulness of "Blue Love" likewise conjures up the Cadence-era Everly Brothers without trying. "All Because of You" celebrates joy and redemption from darkness. "Rocky Road," full of lost-love/desolation imagery, is abbreviated but compelling. The haunting mystery of "Bluegrass Blues"



from the first album is evoked in "Highway 55," a masterpiece of despair and anxiety. When did you last hear a country song with a line about kudzu? That's *real* Southern music.

"Tired of the Runnin'," a novel in miniature, combines sweet harmonies, a rocking arrangement and on-the-run/Death Row lyrics, dramatic yet understated. "In My Heart" is a stark drama of loss and pained acceptance. The weakest link is "I'm Lonely," an inferior throwaway. Jesse Winchester's "Isn't That So," a different (*very* different) type of gospel number, has an element of mystery heightened by its infectious Caribbean/Latin arrangement.

The band sounds like it used to, but as featured here in some breathtaking extended instrumental workouts, is more creative than ever, proving that less is more and that breaking the rules can work. I once loathed accordions, having taken guitar lessons from Henry Casale, who taught both

instruments and occasionally had me playing Johnny Cash boom-chuckas behind his squeezebox, but Jay Spell cuts any string section or synthesizer I've ever heard. If these guys don't get the 1988 "Instrumental Group of the Year," the CMA can... You get the point.

Look sharp, gang. O'Kanes imitators are probably right around the corner. But they'd damn well better be able to write—and pick—this good. No sweat, guys.

—RICH KIENZLE

## John Anderson *Blue Skies Again* MCA-42057

I'd often wondered why John Anderson has had so few hits in the past few years. After all, he started Nashville in the direction it's currently going. Back in the early 1980's when he was with Warners, he soared. "I'm Just an Old Chunk of Coal" and "Swingin'" remain two

of this decade's finest records by anyone, records that broke the Lefty imitator stereotype that many hung on John.

More recently, things haven't been so lustrous. His 1986 hit, "I'm Countrified," was so superficial! it reminded me of the time in the early 1970's when Merle Haggard, discussing *Hee-Haw* with an interviewer, recalled telling the show's producers, "Why don't you just get the pigs in here and let 'em s\_\_\_\_\_ on the floor?" Hit or miss, however, Anderson was still comfortable with that sound.

But this time, the direction is a mess, because there is no direction. Much as I admire Jimmy Bowen's work, he has tried to put Anderson into styles that simply don't fit. So long as they stick to his own sound, as they do on three numbers, everything falls into place. The title track is excellent honky tonk, with good lyrics and a lilting melody similar to 1930's pop songs. It fits him like an old shoe, as reflected in his spirited vocal.

Yet the Anderson-Lionel Delmore collaborations that were so successful a few years ago are overlooked or ignored. "There's Nothing Left for Me to Take For Granted" is an unsettling reminder of how special their songs can be—and how badly more of them were needed this time. "Just For You," written by Anderson and his wife, is less profound but still in character for him.

The operative word here throughout, however, is *mel-low* and Anderson, never much for yammery pablum, has to slog through too much of it. Mark Germino's "I Make It Hard to Lose" is utterly forgettable. "Quittin' Time," a perfect song for Kenny Rogers, has a saccharin sensitivity that annoys more with each listen. "Lying in Her Arms," which Anderson co-wrote with Paul Kennerly, whose songs can jump from brilliant to tedious, mines old

# Record Reviews

ground for the umpteenth time and comes up empty. Paul Craft's "His and Hers" is terminally trite.

And let's face it: a 1970's Outlaw Anderson isn't. "Somewhere Between Ragged and Right," a pretentious duet he shares with Waylon, may be great p.r., but musically it's a bad idea. Waylon's voice might be suited to such overblown melodrama, but Anderson's clearly isn't. If that weren't mistake enough, we then get "It's Hard to Keep This Ship Together," an Anderson/Fred Carter collaboration built on heavy-handed metaphor and a dumb bathroom pun.

In the duet with Waylon you'll hear a line mentioning "a busload of taxi drivers learnin' how to fly." That one line sticks with me, and I think I know why. Because except for the three songs I mentioned early on, that's about the best evaluation of the whole album, and reason enough that next time, Bowen had best let Anderson be Anderson.

—RICH KIENZLE

**Kathy Mattea**  
*Untasted Honey*  
Mercury-Polygram  
832 793-1 Q-1

**K**athy Mattea, a West Virginia native, has been one of the hottest new "bubbling-under" contenders on the country scene for several years. Her first two albums were promising efforts which somehow failed to fully capture the arresting charm of her husky, mid-range vocal style.

But then came her 1986 *Walk the Way the Wind Blows*, which was a real winner. Done with her long-time producer Allen Reynolds, it succeeded brilliantly where their earlier efforts had failed. It defined Mattea's strengths and charms as a middle-of-the-road stylist. It also propelled her, via her cover of Nanci Griffith's "Love at the Five & Dime," into the Top Five on the singles charts for the first time. *Walk the Way the Wind Blows*

was the first step in transforming Mattea from a mere contender to a major player.

*Untasted Honey*, Mattea's latest, is not quite as powerful as *Walk the Way the Wind Blows*. Where *Walk* bristled with a sort of free-wheeling "newgrass" vitality supplied by pickers like Pat Flynn, Ray Flacke, Bela Fleck, Jerry Douglas and Tim O'Brien—many of whom also play on *Untasted Honey*, *Honey* moves at a slower pace and is ballad-oriented.

Nevertheless, there are a number of wonderful songs here, where Mattea turns in some of her strongest vocal interpretations ever. "Goin' Gone," which recently became her first Number One single, may not be as bittersweet or as touching as Nanci Griffith's version of it. Yet Mattea manages to fill it with a more open, accessible feel which, in its own way, is nearly as satisfying.

*Untasted Honey* is also a bit of a showcase for fellow West Virginian Tim O'Brien, the multi-talented leader of the newgrass group, Hot

Rize. Mattea reprises two of O'Brien's outstanding originals here. One of them, "Untold Stories," is a particularly compelling song which has already been a bluegrass hit for Hot Rize. O'Brien (who plays mandolin and acoustic guitar on a few of the tracks) also joins her for a rousing duet on Schlitz and Overstreet's "The Battle Hymn of Love."

This album's major weakness lies in the one or two songs that hardly seem to work at all. Though Mattea has never sung with as much passion—and assurance—as she does on the title song or on the magnificent "Like a Hurricane" (by Patrick Alger and Mark D. Sanders), she falls flat on "Eighteen Wheels and a Dozen Roses." Schmaltzy, lukewarm performances like this are better left to Anne Murray or some other play-it-safe crooner.

Imperfections aside, *Untasted Honey* is a solid, commendable album. It's a building block in a career rapidly on the rise.

—BOB ALLEN



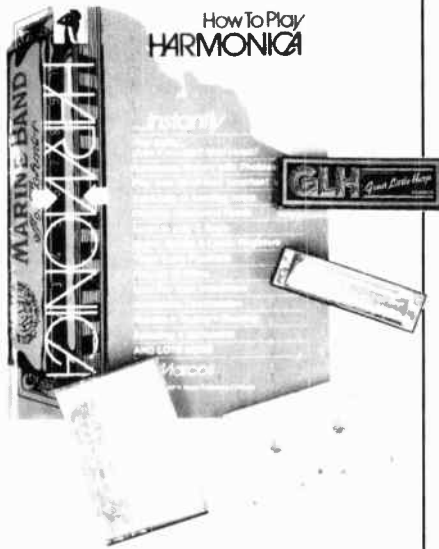


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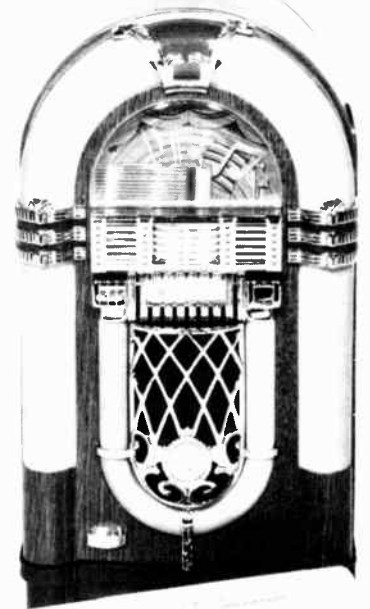
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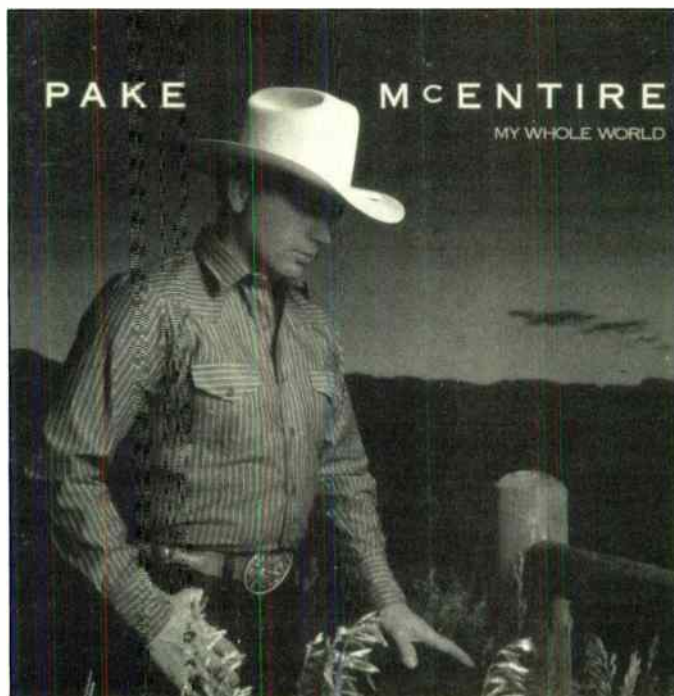
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## Record Reviews

**Pake McEntire**  
*My Whole World*  
RCA 6607-1-R

**P**ake McEntire reminds me of any number of journeyman country singers a few years back, say Johnny Duncan or Ronnie McDowell or someone cut from that mold. Give him the right song, and he's going to climb the chart and you're going to be humming him for a couple of weeks. But he's not—the kind of singer to inspire you to go out and search for his next album or call your favorite station and threaten suicide unless they play Pake for five hours straight.

*My Whole World* doesn't do much to change my opinion. Pake's voice lacks the depth and range of some of



the better known singers, but that's not necessarily a major negative. What it means is that song choice and arrange-

ment become even more critical than usual. Too many of the songs on *My Whole World* are a little too pedestrian, a little too safe, I think, to work for Pake. Where he really shines is when he's getting ready to kick some butt, like with the Leiber and Stoller warhorse "Ruby Baby." Pake tackles "Ruby Baby" like he was an opening act in a West Texas honky tonk, which is exactly the way it should be.

Pake also shines with Dave Loggins' "Hard To Be True," which is straight-ahead country with a good backbeat. "House Full of Love," a Glenn Frey and Jack Tempchin number, has a real nice George Jones feel to it that Pake carries off well.

On the whole, though, we're looking at too much filler and too little *oomph*.

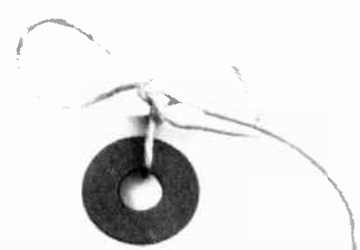
—MICHAEL BANE



356329. Randy Travis—Always And Forever, Forever And Ever, Amen. (Warner Bros.)

363465. Dolly Parton—Rainbow, The River, Unbroken, Two Lovers, plus more! (Columbia)

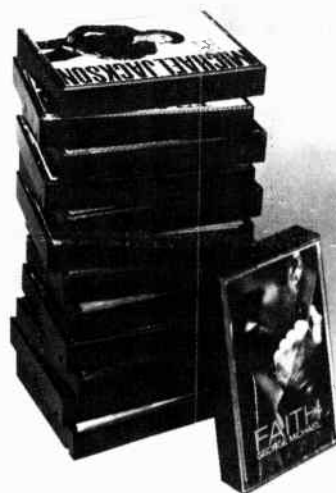
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356667 CAPITOL HEART BAD ANIMALS	352252 WARNER BROS HANK WILLIAMS, JR. HANK "LIVE"	361360 MCA/COLUMBIA THE BELLAMY BROTHERS CRAZY FROM THE HEART	364539 SCHULER KNOWLTON & BICKHAJDT MTM RO EASY HORSES	359901 COLUMBIA MICK JAGGER PRIMITIVE COOL	346635 EPIC EXILE GREATEST HITS
357426 EPIC TAMMY WYNETTE HIGHER GROUND	342105 COLUMBIA BANGLES DIFFERENT LIGHT	348115 MCA BUDDY HOLLY FROM THE ORIGINAL MASTER TAPES	349993 MCA JOHN CONLEE COUNTRY	356493 EPIC ASLEEP AT THE WHEEL TEN	380115 COLUMBIA BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN TUNNEL OF LOVE
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358515 PRIORITY ENGELBERT HUMPERDINCK NEW GREATEST HITS COLLECTION	346445† 396440 CAPITOL THE BEACH BOYS MADE IN U.S.A.	363697† 393694 ARISTA ARETHA FRANKLIN ONE LORD ONE FAITH ONE BAPTISM	320705† 390708 CAPITOL BOB SEGER LIVE BULLET	349571 MCA BOSTON THIRD STAGE	357581 MCA/LIBRA DESERT ROSE BAND FEATURING CHRIS HILLMAN, John Jorgensen, Herb Pedersen
321380 COLUMBIA BARBRA STREISAND'S GREATEST HITS VOL. 2	360057 EPIC T-BONE BURNETT THE TALKIN' ANIMALS	354910 WARNER BROS NITTY GRITTY DIRT BAND HOLD ON	361303 MCA LNYRD SKYNYRD BAND LEGEND	346478 SIRE MADONNA TRUE BLUE	345777 LIBRA PETER GABRIEL SO
356808 MCA STEVE EARLE & THE DUKE EXIT O	356279 EPIC GLORIA STEFAN & MIAMI SOUND MACHINE LET IT LOOSE	352946 A&R BRYAN ADAMS INTO THE FIRE	320911 A&R JOE COCKER'S GREATEST HITS	348938 EPIC MERLE HAGGARD OUT AMONG THE STARS	335435 COLUMBIA ROSANNE CASH RHYTHM AND ROMANCE
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359661 CAPITOL TANYA TUCKER LOVE ME LIKE YOU USED TO	329235 MCA BARBARA MANORELL/LEE GREENWOOD "MEANT FOR EACH OTHER"	355190 EPIC M. HAGGARD/W. NELSON THE SEASHERS OF OLD MEXICO	352765† 392423 COLUMBIA JOHNNY CASH Columbia Records 1958-1984	356139 CAPITOL ANNE MURRAY HARMONY	357194 COLUMBIA WILLIE NELSON ISLAND IN THE SEA
356030 COLUMBIA LACY J. DALTON BLUE EYED BLUES	329300† 399303 ARISTA THE EVERLY BROTHERS 24 ORIGINAL CLASSICS	362673† 392670 COLUMBIA JANIE FRICKIE CELEBRATION	359299 EPIC CHARLY MCCLAIN TEN YEAR ANNIVERSARY	350058 CAPITOL MEL McDaniel JUST CAN'T SIT DOWN MUSIC	319496† 399998 MOTOWN VARIOUS ARTISTS MOTOWN'S 25th HITS FROM 25 YEARS
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356964 WARNER BROS EMMYLOU HARRIS ANGEL BANO	362483 MCA ORIGINAL SOUND TRACK HALL HALL! ROCK 'N' ROLL	348904 EPIC GEORGE JONES WINE COLORED ROSES	345637† 395632 COLUMBIA WORLD'S GREATEST LOVE SONGS Kenny Rogers & The First Edition	354845 MTM JUDY RODMAN A PLACE CALLED LOVE	346536 ARISTA THEN AND NOW... THE BEST OF THE MONKEES
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355826 MCA REBA MCENTIRE GREATEST HITS	353540 EPIC RONNIE McDOWELL OLDER WOMEN AND OTHER GREATEST HITS	347187† 397182 SILVER EAGLE ROY ORBISON ALL TIME GREATEST HITS	326629 COLUMBIA BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN BORN IN THE U.S.A.	350272 CAPITOL/COLUMBIA MARIE OSMOND I ONLY WANTED YOU	351361 DISCO/EPIC VERN GOSDIN GREATEST HITS
349316 COLUMBIA WILLIE NELSON PARTNERS	345744 WARNER BROS THE BEST OF THE NITTY GRITTY DIRT BAND Twenty Years On Out	348953 WARNER BROS GARY MORRIS PLAIN BROWN WRAPPER	353383 MCA/COLUMBIA MOE BANDY YOU HAVEN'T HEARD THE LAST OF ME	364521 EPIC GEORGE JONES TOO WILD TOO LONG	342360 CAPITOL ANNE MURRAY SOMETHING TO TALK ABOUT
342113† 392118 SILVER EAGLE RICKY NELSON ALL MY BEST	358101 MTM HOLLY DUNN CORNERSTONE	345389 MCA GEORGE STRAIT #7	345793 MCA STEVE EARLE GUITAR TOWN	336750 WARNER BROS EDDIE RABBITT #1'S	362657 SIRE MADONNA YOU CAN DANCE
355321 MCA NANCI GRIFFITH LONE STAR STATE OF MIND	354076 COLUMBIA JOHN CONLEE AMERICAN FACES	349738 MCA/COLUMBIA BELLAMY BROTHERS GREATEST HITS Volume Two	345793 MCA STEVE EARLE GUITAR TOWN	336750 WARNER BROS EDDIE RABBITT #1'S	362525 ISLAND STEVE WINWOOD CHRONICLES
					362541 SIRE PRETENDERS THE SINGLES
					360974 A&M SQUEEZE BABYLON AND ON
					346510 WARNER BROS THE FORESTER SISTERS PERFUME, RIBBONS & PEARLS



**361006. George Strait—Greatest Hits Volume Two.** *All My Ex's Live in Texas*, etc. (MCA)

**358077. Hank Williams, Jr.—Born to Boogie.** Title hit, *Honky Tonk Woman*, etc. (Warner Bros./Curb)

**364042. Dan Seals—The Best, Three Time Loser.** *One Friend I Will Be There*, etc. (Capitol)

**354035. Dwight Yoakam—Hillbilly Deluxe.** *Little Sister*, *Little Ways*, more! (Reprise)

**356824. Rosanne Cash—King's Record Shop.** *The Way We Make A Broken Heart*, etc. (Columbia)

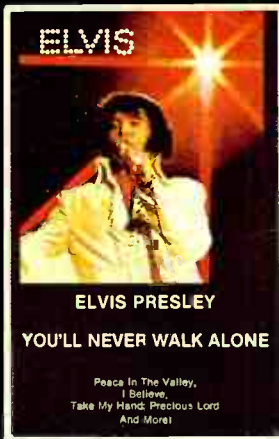
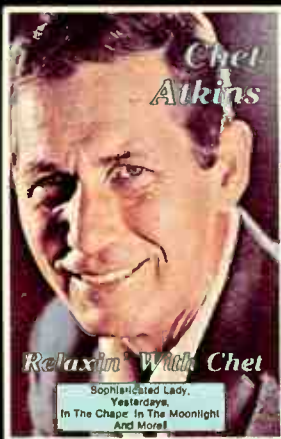
**361097. Reba McEntire—The Last One to Know.** Title cut, *The Stairs*, *Someone Else*, etc. (MCA)

361584 MCA JOHN SCHNEIDER GREATEST HITS	361576 MCA STEVE WARINER GREATEST HITS	<b>Classic Rock from the Sixties and Seventies</b>				362079 EPIC MICHAEL JACKSON BAD	365494 WARNER BROS. GEORGE HARRISON CLOUD NINE		
351478 COLUMBIA THE O'KAYES	364018 ATLANTIC FOREIGNER INSIDE INFORMATION	357616 397612 E-LATRA THE BEST OF THE DOORS	321067 EPIC THE CHARLIE DANIELS BAND A DECADE OF HITS	363655 ARISTA BARRY MANLOW SWING STREET	353847 COLUMBIA RICKY VAN SHELTON WILD-EYED DREAM	358925 398925 MCA ELTON JOHN LIVE IN AUSTRALIA LIVE AND MEMORIES MELBOURNE SYMPHONY ORCH.	359521 ELEKTRA THE CAR'S DOOR TO DOOR		
365502 EMI AMERICA GEORGE THOROGUDD AND THE DISTRIBUTORS BORN TO BE BAD	353649 MCA PATTY LOVELESS	219477 COLUMBIA SIMON & GARFUNKEL'S GREATEST HITS	318493 MCA LYNYRD SKYNYRD BEST OF THE REST	356444 ARISTA DIONNE WARWICK RESERVATION FOR TWO	361592 MCA RAY STEVENS GREATEST HITS, Vol. 2	359521 ELEKTRA THE CAR'S DOOR TO DOOR	357087 MCA GRATEFUL DEAD IN THE DARK		
360826 COLUMBIA FLATT & SCRUGGS GREATEST HITS	348979 CAPITOL TINA TURNER BREAK EVERY RULE	308049 398040 MCA CREEDENCE CLEARWATER REVIVAL CHRONICLE 20 Greatest Hits	246868 MCA JIM CROCE PHOTOGRAPHS AND MEMORIES HIS GREATEST HITS	358925 398925 MCA ELTON JOHN LIVE IN AUSTRALIA LIVE AND MEMORIES MELBOURNE SYMPHONY ORCH.	359521 ELEKTRA THE CAR'S DOOR TO DOOR	359521 ELEKTRA THE CAR'S DOOR TO DOOR	357087 MCA GRATEFUL DEAD IN THE DARK		
346288 COLUMBIA RAY CHARLES FROM THE PAGES OF MY MIND	362277 392274 COLUMBIA NEIL DIAMOND HOT AUGUST NIGHT II	286740 MCA LINDA RONSTADT GREATEST HITS	293597 ATLANTIC LED ZEPPELIN HOUSES OF THE HOLY	361170 ATCO YES BIG GENERATOR	350041 CAPITOL/CURB SAWYER BROWN OUT GOIN' CATTIN'	359521 ELEKTRA THE CAR'S DOOR TO DOOR	357087 MCA GRATEFUL DEAD IN THE DARK		
334391 ARISTA WHITNEY HOUSTON	357939 WARNER BROS. LA BAMB A ORIG. SOUNDTRACK	291278 WARNER BROS. THE DOOBIE BROTHERS BEST OF THE DOOBIES	287003 REBELUN EAGLES GREATEST HITS 1971-1975	355115 395111 MCA PRINCE SIGN O' THE TIMES	350041 CAPITOL/CURB SAWYER BROWN OUT GOIN' CATTIN'	359521 ELEKTRA THE CAR'S DOOR TO DOOR	357087 MCA GRATEFUL DEAD IN THE DARK		
257279 COLUMBIA BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN BORN TO RUN	363820 ATLANTIC AMERICA BILLY JOE ROYAL THE ROYAL TREATMENT	353573 MCA STEVE WARINER IT'S A CRAZY WORLD	357582 JANGCO THE INK SPOTS GREATEST HITS	344614 MCA GUITARS, CADILLACS, ETC.	359075 CAPITOL AEROSMITH PERMANENT VACATION	359521 ELEKTRA THE CAR'S DOOR TO DOOR	357087 MCA GRATEFUL DEAD IN THE DARK		
360727 MCA TANYA TUCKER TANYA TUCKER LIVE	354449 ISLAND U2 THE JOSHUA TREE	243741 393744 MCA PATSY CLINE THE PATSY CLINE STORY	349233 COLUMBIA THE GATLIN BROTHERS LARRY STEVE RUDY PARTNERS	336669 MCA STING THE DREAM OF THE BLUE TURTLES	321307 ARISTA AIR SUPPLY GREATEST HITS	359521 ELEKTRA THE CAR'S DOOR TO DOOR	357087 MCA GRATEFUL DEAD IN THE DARK		
352555 WARNER BROS. MICHAEL MARTIN MURPHY AMERICANA	335539 MCA MERLE HAGGARD HIS BEST	331645 MCA MADONNA LIKE A VIRGIN	360040 CAPITOL JETHRO TULL THE CREST OF A KNAVE	349544 MCA REBA MCENTIRE WHAT AM I GONNA DO ABOUT YOU	360107 LIBERTY BILLY IDOL VITAL IDOL	359521 ELEKTRA THE CAR'S DOOR TO DOOR	357087 MCA GRATEFUL DEAD IN THE DARK		
343582 WARNER BROS. VAN HALEN 5150	351403 MCA A NIGHT WITH CONWAY TWITTY	359307 WARNER BROS. CRYSTAL GAYLE/GARY MORRIS WHAT IF WE FALL IN LOVE?	357475 MCA RAY STEVENS CRACKIN' UP	336391 396391 COLUMBIA BILLY JOEL GREATEST HITS Volumes 1 & 2	353250 MCA GEORGE STRAIT Ocean Front Property	359521 ELEKTRA THE CAR'S DOOR TO DOOR	357087 MCA GRATEFUL DEAD IN THE DARK		
347096 WARNER BROS. SOUTHERN PACIFIC KILLBILLY HILL	346312 COLUMBIA BILLY JOEL THE BRIDGE	363879 MCA JUDY GARLAND FROM MGM CLASSIC FILMS	334466 MCA GEORGE STRAIT GREATEST HITS	344721 MCA LIONEL RICHIE DANCING ON THE CEILING	348896 EPIC RICKY SKAGGS LOVE'S GONNA GET YA!	359521 ELEKTRA THE CAR'S DOOR TO DOOR	357087 MCA GRATEFUL DEAD IN THE DARK		
335653 MCA BARBARA MANDRELL GREATEST HITS	343236 MCA WAYLON JENNINGS WILL THE WOLF SURVIVE	359620 EPIC EXILE SHELTER FROM THE STORM	362129 MCA BELINDA CARLISLE HEAVEN ON EARTH	351486 ATCO ANDY WILLIAMS CLOSE ENOUGH FOR LOVE	363242 MCA THE OAK RIDGE BOYS HEARTBEAT	359521 ELEKTRA THE CAR'S DOOR TO DOOR	357087 MCA GRATEFUL DEAD IN THE DARK		
344697 MCA CURB THE WHITES GREATEST HITS	335067 COLUMBIA WAYLON JENNINGS, WILLIE NELSON, JOHNNY CASH, KRIS KRISTOFFERSON HIGHWAY MAN	318089 EPIC MICHAEL JACKSON THRILLER	354720 MCA SCHUYLER, KNOBLOCH & OVERTREET—SKO	353755 MCA/CAPITOL LYLE LOVETT	355123 395129 MCA THE BEST OF LIBERACE	359521 ELEKTRA THE CAR'S DOOR TO DOOR	357087 MCA GRATEFUL DEAD IN THE DARK		
345785 COLUMBIA TOP GUN ORIGINAL MOTION PICTURE SOUNDTRACK	357376 CAPITOL T. GRAHAM BROWN BRILLIANT CONVERSATIONALIST	361139 MCA R.E.M. DOCUMENT	293589 ATCO THE DRIFTERS THEIR GREATEST RECORDINGS	345587 LAURENCE VARIOUS ARTISTS MILLION DOLLAR MEMORIES	311737 391737 OCEANIC LENA HORNE: THE LADY AND HER MUSIC LIVE ON BROADWAY	359521 ELEKTRA THE CAR'S DOOR TO DOOR	357087 MCA GRATEFUL DEAD IN THE DARK		
354464 MCA OAK RIDGE BOYS WHERE THE FAST LANE ENDS	359265 MCA GLEN CAMPBELL STILL WITHIN THE SOUND OF MY VOICE	355628 REBELUN VINCE GIORDANNA & THE NIGHTMARES DIGITAL SERENADE	336222 MCA DIRE STRAITS BROTHERS IN ARMS	220970 390971 EPIC BOBBY VINTON'S ALL-TIME GREATEST HITS	261248 MCA LORETTA LYNN'S GREATEST HITS	359521 ELEKTRA THE CAR'S DOOR TO DOOR	357087 MCA GRATEFUL DEAD IN THE DARK		
350090 EMI AMERICA DAN SEALS ON THE FRONT LINE	347104 CAPITOL T. GRAHAM BROWN I TELL IT LIKE IT USED TO BE	367089 397089 MCA THE MAGIC OF THE MANTOVANI ORCHESTRA	358085 MCA LEE GREENWOOD IF THERE'S ANY JUSTICE	314443 COLUMBIA NEIL DIAMOND 12 GREATEST HITS, VOL. II	355305 MCA JANIE FRICKE AFTER MIDNIGHT	359521 ELEKTRA THE CAR'S DOOR TO DOOR	357087 MCA GRATEFUL DEAD IN THE DARK		
359539 COLUMBIA T.G. SHEPPARD ONE FOR THE MONEY	345231 COLUMBIA JOHNNY CASH/WAYLON JENNINGS HER ODES	347757 MCA THE KENDALLS FIRE AT FIRST SIGHT	362681 MCA WAYLON JENNINGS A MAN CALLED HOSS	3346071 394601 MCA CARPENTERS YESTERDAY ONCE MORE	320191 390211 COLUMBIA JOHNNY MATHEIS THE FIRST 25 YEARS THE SILVER ANNIVERSARY ALBUM	359521 ELEKTRA THE CAR'S DOOR TO DOOR	357087 MCA GRATEFUL DEAD IN THE DARK		
331850 LAURENCE GREAT LOVE SONGS OF THE 50'S & 60'S	335109 MCA LEE GREENWOOD GREATEST HITS	234062 COLUMBIA WEST SIDE STORY ORIG. BOWY CAST	347054 WARNER BROS. DAVID LEE ROTH EAT 'EM AND SMILE	290171 CAPITOL THE STEVE MILLER BAND GREATEST HITS 1974-78	299370 BY WEST PAUL ANKA MY WAY	359521 ELEKTRA THE CAR'S DOOR TO DOOR	357087 MCA GRATEFUL DEAD IN THE DARK		
349897 ASYLUM LINDA RONSTADT ROUND MIDNIGHT NELSON RIDDLE AND HIS ORCH.	337972 ELEKTRA BREAD ANTHOLOGY OF BREAD	349985 COLUMBIA JOHNNY MATHEIS/MEMORY MASCINI THE HOLLYWOOD MUSICALS	344622 ELEKTRA ANITA BAKER CAPTURE	309633 EPIC GEORGE JONES & TAMMY WYNETTE ENCORE	317990 MCA MERLE HAGGARD & WILLIE NELSON PACHO AND LEFTY	359521 ELEKTRA THE CAR'S DOOR TO DOOR	357087 MCA GRATEFUL DEAD IN THE DARK		
340158 WARNER BROS. HANK WILLIAMS, JR. GREATEST HITS VOL. 2	341065 ARISTA FERRANTE & TEICHER A FEW OF OUR FAVORITES ON STAGE	339911 MCA JIMMY BUFFETT'S GREATEST HITS Songs You Know By Heart	338608 MCA ORIGINAL SOUNDTRACK SWEET DREAMS Life And Times Of Patsy Cline	360669 COLUMBIA THE STATLER BROTHERS THE BIG HITS	283887 COLUMBIA WILLIE NELSON STARDUST	359521 ELEKTRA THE CAR'S DOOR TO DOOR	357087 MCA GRATEFUL DEAD IN THE DARK		
357517 MCA JOHN SCHNEIDER YOU AIN'T SEEN THE LAST OF ME	362095 392092 MCA THE BEST OF PAT BOONE	352369 COLUMBIA DAVID ALLAN COE A MATTER OF LIFE AND DEATH	352757 EPIC CHARLY MCCLAIN STILL I STAY	315341 COL. HIST. SER. LEFTY FRAZZELL	327114 COL. HIST. ED. BILL MONROE	359521 ELEKTRA THE CAR'S DOOR TO DOOR	357087 MCA GRATEFUL DEAD IN THE DARK		
3616751 391672 MCA STING NOTHING LIKE THE SUN	361972 391979 COLUMBIA BILLY JOEL KONCERT (IN CONCERT)	361402 MCA TIFFANY	361519 ATLANTIC IN X KISS	330902 MCA WHAM! MAKE IT BIG	331819 LIBERTY THE BEST OF DOTTIE WEST	359521 ELEKTRA THE CAR'S DOOR TO DOOR	357087 MCA GRATEFUL DEAD IN THE DARK		
† Selections with two numbers are 2-record sets or double-length tapes, and count as two selections — write each number in a separate box.		© 1988 CBS Records Inc.		3524271 392423 EPIC TAMMY WYNETTE ANNIVERSARY 20 YEARS OF HITS	256560 MCA CAT STEVENS GREATEST HITS	359521 ELEKTRA THE CAR'S DOOR TO DOOR	357087 MCA GRATEFUL DEAD IN THE DARK		
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**JIM REEVES—ACCORDING TO MY**



The Mandrell family dynasty has wound its way through country music for the better part of thirty years. Barbara, Louise and Irlene have picked and sung (or, in Irlene's case, drummed) their way through everything from the Grand Ole Opry to regular network television. We caught up with the intrepid Mandrell sisters at the taping of the 20th Anniversary Hee Haw show in Oklahoma, where sister Louise agreed to sit still for a quick 20 Questions.

# 20 Questions with LOUISE MANDRELL

by Michael Bane

MARIA CASILLI



1

**So what's the middle Mandrell sister up to these days?**  
Well, I'm working at being a mommy and an entertainer, and I'm extremely busy with the two.

2

**How old is the object of your affections these days?**  
Meegan Nicole is four years old. We call her Nicole, and she's in several of the commercials I've done on TV. God really knew what he was doing when he sent us Nicole.

3

**Isn't it hard to handle a precocious four-year-old out on the road?**

No, not at all. It's even more of a joy than being by yourself. We like the same movies; we like the same food. She likes to entertain with Mommy. So it actually works out great.

4

**What's going to happen when she starts to school?**

I guess I'll start to school, too! Oh, really, I don't know. I try not to think about it. I guess Daddy will get to see her more. We thought about a tutor, but I believe kids need to be in school.

5

**Is she going to grow up to be a singer?**

She says she is now. And I'm not trying to discourage her.

I just keep telling her that a woman can be other things as well, such as the President of the United States. I guess I just want to teach her the same priorities that my family taught me: God, family, then business. When you can have all three, great.

6

**Do you take Nicole with you a lot?**

All the time. She calls herself my road baby. She loves it. And we both seem to get homesick at about the same time. . .

7

**When is that?**

About three weeks into the tour. Or if it's boring. We both like to do something to break up a boring stretch. Today we went horseback riding.

8

**Anything else on the mommy front?**

Well, you know R.C. and I are still trying to have a child — Nicole is adopted. They say when you adopt a child, you get pregnant right away. Well, Nicole sleeps close to us, and nothing happens (*laughs*).

9

**How long have you and R.C. Bannon been married?**

(*Laughs*.) We're celebrating our tenth anniversary next February 6. We're going to re-do our vows and have a ceremony for the whole family. In fact, we feel that people should re-do their vows at least once every ten years.

10

**We hear the three sisters are getting a bit competitive on the sports front, something about a golf game.**

R.C. now has his own golf show starting on *The Nashville Network*, and guess who three of his first guests were? You know, he's a big time golf fan, and now he says he can get paid for it. Barbara and Irlene and I played, and we weren't great,



but we weren't bad. I can't tell you who won — we're all sworn to secrecy until the show airs. But you can probably guess from this much that it wasn't me.

**11**

**Golf's not the only sport you three are competing in.**

Well, there's Barbara's celebrity softball tournament coming up. I'm going to be there, and I'm really excited, although Barbara hasn't told me which team I'm going to be playing on. If I'm playing really good, I'll be on her team.

**12**

**Who's the better softball player?**

I am. Barbara will tell you she can run faster, so she doesn't have to hit the ball as far.

**13**

**You've gained a tremendous amount of visibility through television commercials, especially White Rain shampoo. Do you use the products?**

Of course. I love commercials, but I'll only do them if I'm proud of the product. I wouldn't do some product I didn't like, because one of my fans might buy it and be mad at me.

**14**

**How did you end up doing a duet with Eric Carmen?**

Actually, I'd recorded a couple of his songs, and he kept calling the house to see how they were doing. He kept calling and calling, and finally I just asked him if he'd like to record one of them with me.

**15**

**This isn't your first duet, right?**

The only other one I've done was with R.C., and R.C. produced the record with Eric Carmen.

**16**

**This *Hee Haw* special is the**



REILY SHIPLEY



**first time that all three sisters have been together on stage in a while. Any particular reason?**

Well, we agreed to do it because Irlene is a regular on *Hee Haw* and Barbara is hosting the show. Normally, you know, we don't perform together. In fact, when we all get together at one of our homes, the last thing we even talk about is music. Barbara has a two-year-old; Irlene has a two-year-old and a three-month-old and I have Nicole.

All our effort and energy go into watching the kids.

**17**

**You perform together on the show?**

Yes. In fact, we do a song about sisters that R.C. wrote.

**18**

**You wrote a successful history of the Mandrell family a few years back. Are there any other writing plans in the future?**

Believe me, I have discovered that having a four-year-old cuts down pretty heavily on your writing plans! I have written a couple of stories, fiction, and I really think that when Nicole starts to school, that's something I'd like to pursue.

**19**

**Do you have any time off the road?**

Not much. At this point, I'm on the road all the time. But I love it, even the road.

**20**

**Okay, okay, we're bowing to pressure here — let's hear about a certain embarrassing moment that happened to you recently on the road.**

Okay — I'm on stage in Vegas doing a big dance number, wearing this big white flowing dress and moving across stage. All of a sudden, one of my shoulder pads came loose and fell out, right there on stage. I mean, it was a shoulder pad, but the audience thought it was something else. When I was done singing, I picked it up and tossed it to a guy in the audience. I told them that if it had been something else, I would have been sure to pin it in. ■

# Buried Treasures

Reissues,  
Rarities and the  
Hard-to-find

**Kitty Wells:** Everyone knows Kitty Wells opened the door for Patsy, Loretta, Dolly and every other female country singer since. She wasn't the first successful female solo vocalist. Others had isolated hits before her, but Kitty was the first woman to become a permanent presence on the country charts of the 1950's. Now, with the same extraordinary care and attention that went into their magnificent Bob Wills box sets, Bear Family Records in Germany has compiled everything from Kitty's peak years with Decca/MCA into *The Golden Years: 1949-1957* (BFX 15239).

Kitty's early experience and first solo recordings came singing with her half of Johnny and Jack. It's here with that legendary duo that the album begins in 1949, with her early country and gospel records for RCA; these take up half of the first record. Her delivery is competent enough, but this material is valuable mainly as a way of hearing her style take shape. As you quickly discover, she really didn't have to evolve all that much.

Record One, Side Two features the original 1952 Decca recording of "Honky Tonk Angels," a response to Hank Thompson's hit "The Wild Side of Life." Here begins her true golden period. Her early Decca recording, built around Shot Jackson's keening steel guitar, was close to the Roy Acuff sound apparent on her two 1955 duets with Acuff. It worked so well for her that producers Paul Cohen and Owen Bradley didn't alter it for over three years.

"One By One," her 1953 hit duet with Red Foley, a more sophisticated vocalist, and her enduring 1955 hit version of Jimmy Work's "Makin' Believe," hewed to that basic sound. Not until 1956 did



Owen Bradley begin to broaden her style slightly by adding twin fiddles and piano. Her 1956 duets with fellow Decca megastar Webb Pierce were every bit as good as the duets with Acuff, though Kitty and Webb didn't have a hit together until 1964.

As with Ernest Tubb, Decca fostered an admirable consistency in recording Kitty, no screwball experiments—even in the 1956-1957 era there was nary a stab at rockabilly. Some might complain the ballads get repetitious. Indeed, anyone this stylized is vulnerable to such criticism. However, it's a measure of her popularity that of the 95 songs on these five LPs, recorded over a period of six years, only four were unissued.

Charles Wolfe, nominated for a Grammy for his notes for the CMF's recently released *Bristol Sessions* album, has done an outstanding job on the enclosed booklet, which combines rare photos with a comprehensive history of Kitty's peak years. Assisted by Kitty and Johnny, who gave their bless-

ing to the project, Wolfe provides some fascinating insights into the early days of recording in Nashville. My sole gripe is that Wolfe's comprehensive presentation of how Kitty came to record most songs, often explained in her own words, should have been included in the booklet itself, and not on the album covers.

**The Louvin Brothers:** If we wait long enough, I suspect Stetson will eventually get around to reissuing all The Louvin Brothers' classic Capitol albums. *Ira and Charlie* (HAT 3057), originally released in 1960, is as exquisite as the two previous Louvin Capitol reissues, *Tragic Songs of Life* and *My Baby's Gone*, reviewed in Buried Treasures in the January/February 1988 and March/April 1987 issues. Covering other artists' hits with an emphasis on ballads, the material ranges from The Louvins' own composition, "Are You Teasin' Me" (a hit for Carl Smith), and Jimmie Davis' "Nobody's Darling But Mine" to Jimmy Work's "Makin' Believe" and an exquisite

"Tennessee Waltz" that for my money equals anybody's.

This album compares well to the brothers' earlier albums. Their compelling harmonies and sparse, clean instrumentation (one electric guitar, Ira's mandolin, Charlie's acoustic guitar, brushed snare drum and bass) remain consistently fine. If you liked the other Stetson albums, you'll definitely want this one. (What about the Louvins' *Tribute to the Delmore Brothers* next, Stetson?)

**Rose Maddox:** Stetson also just released another magnificent Rose Maddox Capitol album. *The One Rose* (HAT 3056), her 1960 debut for the label, features Rose backed by her brothers Cal and Henry, singing 12 of their superb 1940's-early 1950's numbers associated with their old act, the legendary Maddox Brothers and Rose. They reprise their hot versions of Hank Williams' "Honky Tonkin" and "Move It On Over" (arranged to sound like George Jones' "White Lightning"), ballads such as Woody Guthrie's "Philadelphia Lawyer" and upbeat arrangements of traditional tunes like "Sally, Let Your Bangs Hang Down."

The instrumentation is even sparer than what you'll find on the original recordings, with only mandolin, bass, snare drum and lead guitar. Rose's laserlike vocal intensity on ballads like "At the First Fall of Snow" and "Tramp on the Street" is still impressive 28 years later. These recordings lack the rawness of the original late 1940's 4-Star 78's, but the energy is still there.

**Wanda Jackson:** Wanda Jackson was the greatest female rockabilly of all time, bar none. But her hits for Capitol were solid country. *Wonderful Wanda*, re-

released on Stetson's sister label Jasmine (JAS 304), was released originally on Capitol in 1962. It chronicles her early country hits. The hard-edged sound of her Decca recordings is replaced here by Nashville Sound strings, ooh-aah choruses and Wanda's toned-down singing, closer to Brenda Lee. The upshot is radically different and to her rock fans may be a letdown of sorts.

Two of her early hits—"In the Middle of a Heartache," Number Six in 1961, and "If I Cried Every Time You Hurt Me," Number 28 in 1962—are included, along with a cover of "A Little Bitty Tear" and Don Gibson's "We Could." I prefer her rockabilly material and the early Decca sides, but if you like her more mellow, toned-down sound, this is a good sampler.

**Roy Acuff:** In the mid-1950's after leaving Decca and MGM, Roy Acuff signed with Capitol Records, where he remained for about two years until he signed with his own Hickory Records. Enough Capitol sessions took place to provide album material well into the 1960's including, in 1964, *The Great Roy Acuff*. Reissued by Stetson (HAT 3055), the material is obscure but raw country that constituted some of Acuff's last really good recordings.

Roy was in excellent voice when these records were made, and his performances on the largely moralistic numbers—titles like "Don't Judge Your Neighbor," "Sweep Around Your Own Back Door" and "Please, Daddy, Forgive" are a pretty good indicator—were some of his best later work. Likewise, the Smoky Mountain Boys were solid during this time, with Jimmie Riddle on piano, Onie Wheeler's harmonica, Howdy Forrester's fiddle and of course Oswald's dobro. Since only Os survives today from the old band, this is a valuable document of its sound at its peak.

**Eddie Adcock & Talk of the Town:** Eddie Adcock, former sideman with the legendary bluegrass band The Country

Gentlemen, and, in the mid-1970's, leader of his own band The Second Generation, has been a solo recording artist long enough to know what he's doing. His current touring act, Talk of the Town, includes his wife Martha on rhythm guitar, bassist Missy Raines, fiddler Susie Gott and drummer Jody Maphis, Joe's son.

*Eddie Adcock & Talk of the Town* (CMH-6263) is a good indicator of the talents of Adcock, a legendary 5-string banjoist and acoustic and electric guitarist. Known for his eclecticism, the material here is consistent with that, ranging from Peter Rowan's "The Hotter She Burns" to old standards like "Long Black Veil" and The Louvin Brothers' "Give This Message To Your Heart." It also includes Adcock's own "Windy Woman," "Renaissance Man" and "Dreams Are Made to Remember."

But he goes further, freely mixing in Fats Domino's "I'm Walkin'," Arthur Gunter's "Baby, Let's Play House" (an Elvis Sun recording), 1940's rhythm-and-blues legend Louis Jordan's "Saturday Night Fish Fry," Blind Lemon Jefferson's "Matchbox Blues" and even John Fogerty's "Up Around the Bend." If the mix of modern bluegrass and acoustic rock seems unsettling, rest assured it won't after the first few plays.

**Asleep At The Wheel:** A few readers took issue with my review last year of Asleep At

The Wheel's Epic album *10*, which I compared unfavorably to their previous Capitol albums. Whether you agreed or disagreed (I stand by my comments), it's worth checking out *The Very Best of Asleep At The Wheel* (SEE 81) from See for Miles Records, an anthology culled from their 1973 debut album for United Artists and their 1975-1979 Capitol albums.

From the United Artists album comes Hank's "I'll Never Get Out of This World Alive," Moon Mullican's "Cherokee Boogie," featuring leader Ray Benson, and "Space Buggy," featuring former vocalist Chris O'Connell. Among the four highlights from their 1975 Capitol masterpiece *Texas Gold* are Benson's "The Letter That Johnny Walker Read" and the brilliant "Runnin' After Fools," featuring the sadly underrated singer-composer Leroy Preston.

From later Capitol albums come such gems as Preston's original 1977 version of his composition "My Baby Thinks She's a Train" (Rosanne Cash's first big hit), done up Sun Records style. The Wheel's stomping boogie interpretation of "Route 66" and their 1978 Grammy-winning version of Count Basie's big band classic, "One O'Clock Jump," round things out nicely.

**Hank Williams:** Polygram recently released the final half of their comprehensive Hank Williams reissue series of eight 2-record sets. Since

this material is essential to everything that's happened in the past 40 years, any regular reader of this magazine owes it to himself or herself to get the complete set. The final four include *Long Gone Lonesome Blues* (831 633-1 Y-2), *Hey, Good Lookin'* (831 634-1 Y-2), *Let's Turn Back the Years* (833 749-1 Y-2) and *I Won't Be Home No More* (833 752-1 Y-2).

The material covers all Hank's issued recordings, including his Luke the Drifter recitations (an acquired taste for many), together with a few alternate versions of existing numbers (not the big deal they seem) and some newly-issued demo recordings thrown in. Among the never-formally-released highlights on the final volume is "Apology," a morbid spoken recording made when Hank couldn't make a 1951 gig in Baltimore due to back surgery (really).

The importance of Hank's music is beyond question and having it in one place is a relief, since this material has been spread across any number of albums in the past. Despite some rare photos, the packaging remains the weakest link. Though trumpeted as "chronological" (in the order the original records were released), the inclusion of undated recordings still leaves the listener up in the air in some respects.

Annotators Colin Escott and Hank Davis, best known for their rockabilly research and notes on foreign reissues, are way out of their element in country, a fact evident in their liner notes. I do credit them, however, for finally acknowledging some sources, such as, for example, the CMF's Bob Pinson, the authority on Hank's music, uncredited on previous volumes. These and the two CMF sets, *The First Recordings* and *Just Me and My Guitar*, give you nearly all the Hank material that's known at this time, save a few radio shows. Don't be surprised, however, if more rarities surface as time goes on. They always do. —RICH KIENZLE

### How to Get These Treasures

In records or cassettes, at prices shown: Adcock and Talk of Town, *Eddie Adcock and Talk of the Town* (CMH-6263), \$7.98/Louvin Brothers, *Ira and Charlie* (HAT 3057), \$10.98/Rose Maddox, *The One Rose* (HAT 3056), \$10.98/Wanda Jackson, *Wonderful Wanda* (JAS 304), \$10.98/Acuff, *The Great Roy Acuff* (HAT 3055), \$10.98/Williams, *Long Gone Lonesome Blues* (831 633-1 Y-2), \$14.98/Williams, *Hey, Good Lookin'* (831 634-1 Y-2), \$14.98/Williams, *Let's Turn Back the Years* (833 749-1 Y-2), \$14.98/Williams, *I Won't Be Home No More* (833 752-1 Y-2), \$14.98. In records only, Asleep At the Wheel, *The Very Best of Asleep At the Wheel* (SEE 81), \$14.98/Wells, *The Golden Years: 1949-1957* (BFX 15239), five albums plus booklet, \$90.

To order, send check or money order to *Country Music Magazine*, Dept. 0506, 342 Madison Avenue, Suite 2118, New York, New York 10173. Add \$1.95 postage and handling for the first item ordered, \$.95 for each additional. CMSA members, see For Members Only page for discounts. Do not use your Top 25 discount here.

# RECOMMENDED READING FO



WITH ELLIOT WIDNER AND WALTER CARTER

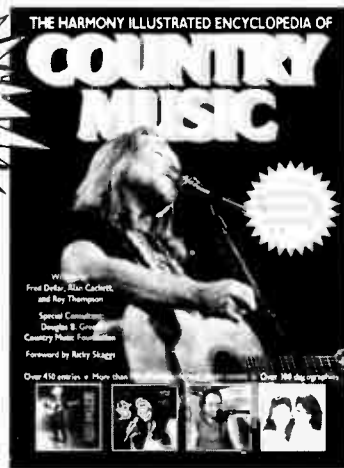
## THE OAK RIDGE BOYS: OUR STORY

They've weathered more than 40 years of ups and downs and as many changes in personnel. While this great new book offers a complete history of the group, it is the foursome of Duane Allen, Joe Bonsall, William Lee Golden and Richard Sterban that has made The Oaks so worthy of this in-depth look. Each tells his part of The Oaks' story in a no-holds-barred style that's certain to please and surprise fans. Their stories reveal the problems of booking such a diversified group; the trials and tribulations of spending two-thirds of every year on the road; the temptations of drugs, booze, and groupies; and the sheer joy of singing and performing amid the fickle whims of the music business. The recent vote excluding William Lee Golden from the group that shocked the music industry now makes this new authorized biography an even more absorbing story to read. Hardcover...6 x 9...192 Pages...50 B&W Photos. Item No. B2D—NOW \$16.95



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Whether you favor old masters like Ernest Tubb and Kitty Wells, ageless superstars like Johnny Cash, or brilliant newcomers like Dwight Yoakam, this book gives you the essential facts about their lives and careers, and leads you to their best recordings. The rich heritage of country music is preserved with definitive profiles of the likes of Jimmie Rodgers, Patsy Cline and, of course, the legendary Hank Williams. Unparalleled as a reference source, *The Illustrated Encyclopedia* provides at-a-glance details about more than 450 artists: Birthdate, birthplace, album titles, record labels, awards and highest chart positions of top hits. This brand new edition is an absolute must for every country music fan. Softcover...8 1/2" x 11 3/4"...208 Pages...Over 500 Photos & Album Covers in Full Color...Over 300 Discographies. Item No. B5V—NOW \$14.95

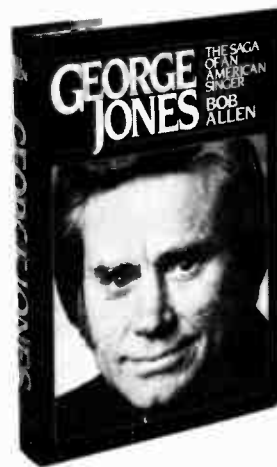
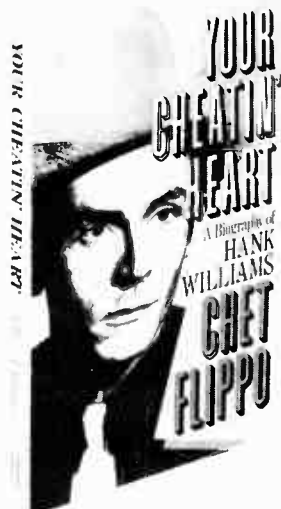


## OUR BRIGHTEST STARS IN COUNTRY MUSIC

Here is a brand new book that's made to order for every country music fan. You get 56 revealing profiles and 80 outstanding photographs. All your favorite superstars are included, like Dolly Parton, Willie Nelson, Barbara Mandrell, Johnny Cash, and Loretta Lynn. There are great legends from the past, like Ernest Tubb, Jim Reeves, and of course Hank Williams himself. And plenty of the new breed like Randy Travis, The Judds, The Forester Sisters, and George Strait. Here are the personal details, the humorous anecdotes and the triumphs and failures of the people who sing the music you love. Paperback...8 1/2" x 11"...Fan Club Information. Item No. B3Q—ONLY \$6.95

## YOUR CHEATIN' HEART: A HANK WILLIAMS BIOGRAPHY

No serious country music fan should go without reading this classic 1981 bestseller by noted writer Chet Flippo. Here's just a little of what has already been said about it: "The consummate Hank Williams biography...the explosive life story that deserves to be read by every urban cowboy in America."—*Playboy*. "I'm sure Hank would be glad you done it this way."—*Waylon Jennings*. "Flippo has managed to put flesh and blood on the sturdy bones of the Williams legend."—*People Magazine*. It's truly a country classic. Softcover...251 Pages...Illustrated. Item No. B9F—ONLY \$8.95



## GEORGE JONES: SAGA OF AN AMERICAN SINGER

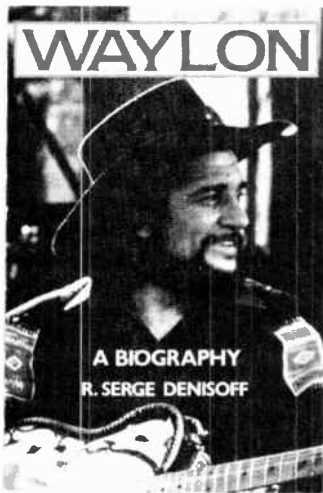
Now, noted country music author Bob Allen reveals the true story of this music legend...from his early life in the isolated and storied Big Thicket of Southeast Texas to his gradual ascent through the ranks to emerge as one of the stellar figures in the checkered world of the country music industry. Allen examines the conflicts that have haunted Jones throughout his career. He explores the stormy marriages and reviews George's lengthy struggles to overcome alcoholism and drug addiction plus the myriad legal complications and ill-advised business decisions that threatened to ruin him. It's a fascinating story you should not miss. Hardcover...312 pages...40 B/W Illustrations. Item No. B2Y—NOW \$15.95

# ARE YOU COUNTRY MUSIC FANS!



## LIFE WITH ELVIS

At the age of sixteen, author Dave Stanley found himself on top of the world as a personal aide to his stepbrother Elvis Presley. In this revealing book, he tells about living at home and on the road with the King of rock 'n' roll. He reflects on the fun times, their crazy escapades, Elvis' moments of glory and his tragic demise. Dave also reveals the darker side of his own life as a member of Elvis' entourage...and how life in the fast lane came to a grinding halt that fateful day in August, 1977. Hardcover—14 Pages Of Photos—Item No. B21M—NOW \$13.95



## WAYLON: A BIOGRAPHY

Based on interviews with Waylon's family, friends and associates, author Serge Denisoff follows this legendary country performer from his rural Texas roots to his current superstar status. As much a story of the music scene as it is forceful biography, the book features Waylon's stormy relationship with his record companies and the Grand Ole Opry style establishment. Waylon fan or not, you won't want to miss this great oversized paperback. Paperback...9 1/4" X 6"...375 Pages...50 B/W Photos. Item No. B6A—ONLY \$10.95

## HEARTWORN MEMORIES: A DAUGHTER'S PERSONAL BIOGRAPHY OF WILLIE NELSON

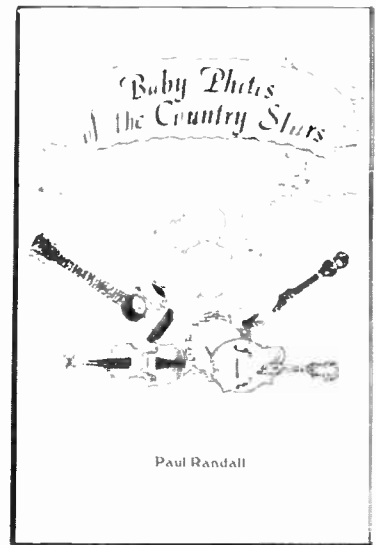
Willie has won the hearts of music fans everywhere, with a style and repertoire that ranges from country to popular, from gospel and blues to rock. The bittersweet story of his long struggle for fame and search for personal happiness is now told in this new book. In a down-home, no-holds-barred style, daughter Susie interweaves her own story with that of her father and the family. "There's a lot of pretty salty stuff in the book," says *Publishers Weekly*. But the book is "authorized," that is, Susie ran it past her father and excised a few things he disapproved of. All in all, it's a lively tale for every country music lover. Hardcover...48 Page Photo Insert...228 Pages. Item No. B7J—NOW \$17.95



## SPOTLIGHT ON THE PICK OF THE MONTH

### BABY PHOTOS OF THE COUNTRY MUSIC STARS

We chose this book for this issue's Spotlight because we felt it was perhaps the most unique country music book to come along in years. *Baby Photos of the Country Stars* was originally planned as a 6-month project which would feature the childhood pictures of about 35 stars. The first format was for it to be about 60 pages. But as author Paul Randall says, "I just kept adding artists that I wanted in the book and eventually it grew to become over 190 pages featuring over 150 country music stars." All of your favorite headliners are included, both as they were then and as they are now: Willie Nelson, Dolly Parton, George Jones, Hank Williams Jr., Reba McEntire, Randy Travis, Johnny Cash, Ricky Skaggs, Barbara Mandrell and The Statler Brothers, just to mention a few. We agree with Mr. Randall when he says, "The finished project, I believe, any country music fan will enjoy for many, many years." Paperback...321 B/W Photos. Item No. B30—NOW \$10



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# TOP 25

## Singles

1. The Judds ..... *Turn It Loose*
2. Reba McEntire ..... *Love Will Find Its Way To You*
3. Eddie Rabbitt ..... *I Wanna Dance With You*
4. George Strait ..... *Famous Last Words of a Fool*
5. Charley Pride ..... *Shouldn't It Be Easier Than This*
6. Ricky Van Shelton ..... *Life Turned Her That Way*
7. K.T. Oslin ..... *I'll Always Come Back*
8. The Bellamy Brothers... *Santa Fe*
9. The McCarters ..... *Timeless and True Love*
10. Rodney Crowell and  
Rosanne Cash ..... *It's Such a Small World*
11. Ronnie McDowell ..... *It's Only Make Believe*
12. Johnny Rodriguez ..... *I Didn't (Every Chance I Had)*
13. Highway 101 ..... *Cry, Cry, Cry*
14. Holly Dunn ..... *Strangers Again*
15. T Graham Brown ..... *The Last Resort*
16. Lee Greenwood ..... *Touch and Go Crazy*
17. Vince Gill ..... *Everybody's Sweetheart*
18. Eddy Raven ..... *I'm Gonna Get You*
19. Tom Wopat ..... *A Little Bit Closer*
20. Hank Williams Jr. .... *Young Country*
21. Waylon Jennings ..... *If Ole Hank Could Only See  
Us Now*
22. Steve Wariner ..... *Baby, I'm Yours*
23. Moe Bandy ..... *Americana*
24. Lyle Lovett ..... *She's No Lady*
25. Patty Loveless ..... *If My Heart Had Windows*

## Albums

1. Randy Travis ..... *Always & Forever*
2. Ricky Van Shelton ..... *Wild-Eyed Dream*
3. George Strait ..... *Greatest Hits, Vol. 2*
4. K.T. Oslin ..... *80's Ladies*
5. Reba McEntire ..... *The Last One to Know*
6. Hark Williams Jr. .... *Born to Boogie*
7. Rosanne Cash ..... *King's Record Shop*
8. Merle Haggard ..... *Chill Factor*
9. Billy Joe Royal ..... *The Royal Treatment*
10. Alabama ..... *Just Us*
11. Highway 101 ..... *Highway 101*
12. Randy Travis ..... *Storms of Life*
13. Dwight Yoakom ..... *Hillbilly Deluxe*
14. Vern Gosdin ..... *Chiseled in Stone*
15. Reba McEntire ..... *Greatest Hits*
16. Lyle Lovett ..... *Pontiac*
17. The Judds ..... *Heart Land*
18. Tanya Tucker ..... *Love Me Like You Used To*
19. George Jones ..... *Too Wild Too Long*
20. Dolly Parton,  
Linda Ronstadt,  
Emmylou Harris ..... *Trio*
21. Dan Seals ..... *The Best*
22. Sawyer Brown ..... *Somewhere In the Night*
23. Restless Heart ..... *Wheels*
24. Kathy Mattea ..... *Untasted Honey*
25. Conway Twitty ..... *Borderline*

## A 25% Discount For CMSA Members Only

Here it is, folks! Your quick and easy order form for *your choice* of the Top 25 albums. Members of the Country Music Society of America get 25% off the list price of these albums or cassettes (no 8-track tape available). The rest of you poor unfortunates have to pay the full price. So fill out the order form below and send it in, so that *you too* can be listening to the sweet and easy and hot and cool sounds of George Strait, The Judds, Willie, Reba McEntire, Alabama and more. While supplies last...

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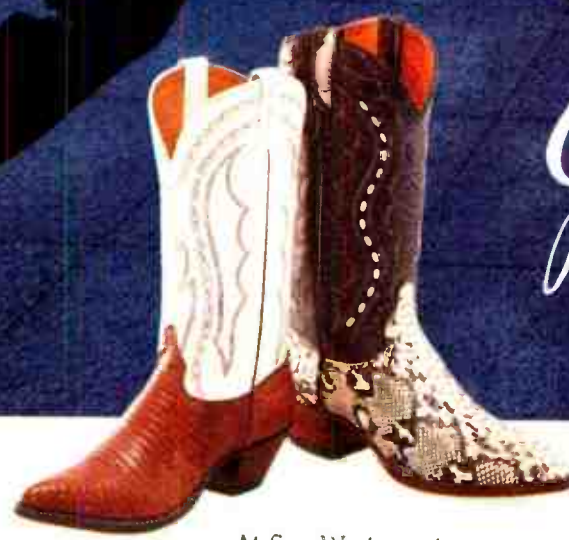
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