

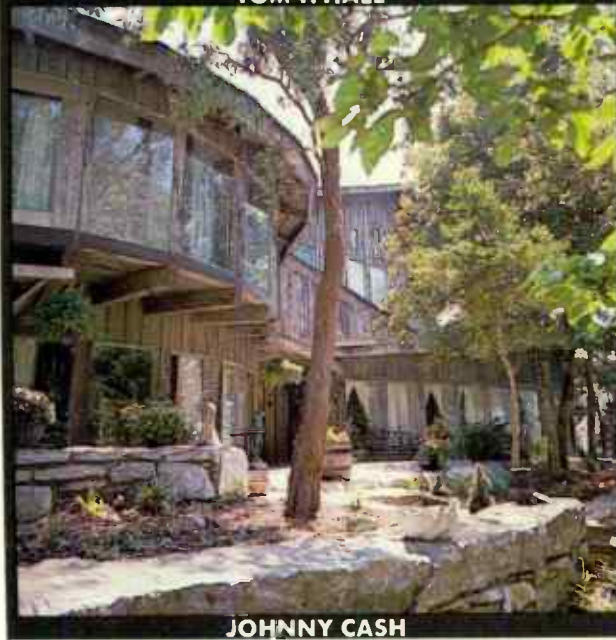
*Country Music*  
**STARS**  
*and their*  
**HOMES**



**TOM T. HALL**



**DOLEY PARTON**



**JOHNNY CASH**



**LORETTA LYNN**



*Elvis' birthplace in Tupelo, Mississippi, is a far cry from Graceland, showing vividly how far the King traveled.*

*From Graceland to the Promised Land. Elvis' mansion in Memphis is still a magnet for his millions of fans.*



## ELVIS PRESLEY

**I**n all of American popular culture, there's only been one Elvis Presley. Elvis touched us deeply, in ways that go beyond the usual relationship between audience and entertainer. It's useful to take a look at where he began, his humble birthplace in Tupelo, Mississippi, and where he ended up, his mansion in Memphis—Graceland—named for his beloved mother. He took country music to unheard-of heights in the early-1950s, then almost destroyed the form in the cataclysmic birth of rock 'n' roll.

Elvis' story is an American fable. Born in Tupelo in 1935, Elvis sang in the church, and by the time the family moved to Memphis when Elvis was 13, he was an accomplished performer. While driving a truck after graduation from high school, Elvis linked up with producer Sam Phillips of Sun Records.

Phillips had been producing many of the rhythm and blues artists who made their homes in and around Memphis, and in Elvis he heard the future of music, a white boy who could sound black. Elvis recorded a wild version of blues singer Arthur "Big Boy" Cradup's "That's All Right, Mama" and Bill Monroe's "Blue Moon of Kentucky," and the world rocked.

Throughout his career, he continued to confound critics, who were quick to point out that he had little left to contribute.

Ironically, after holding the rock world in thrall for decades, Elvis found his way back to country music. In the last years of his life, he consistently placed on the top of the country charts. His death in 1977 triggered an unprecedented wave of national mourning. He remains the King, not only of rock, but of country as well.

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*Country Music*  
**STARS**  
*and their*  
**HOMES**

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# WILLIE NELSON



*One of the late additions to Willie's cabin was a porch completely surrounding the house.*



**A**top a high hill surrounded only by deer, jack rabbits, rattlesnakes, cedar trees and a panoramic view of the Texas Hill Country stands the newest home of the biggest superstar in country music, Willie Nelson.

As a result of record sales nearing the 20-million mark, sold-out concerts, a television interview with Barbara Walters, an invitation to the White House and an expanding movie career, Willie has become a household word throughout the country.

Not only is Willie Nelson revered by his peers in the music business for his singing and his songwriting, his reputation as a laid-back, sage performer who beat the Nashville

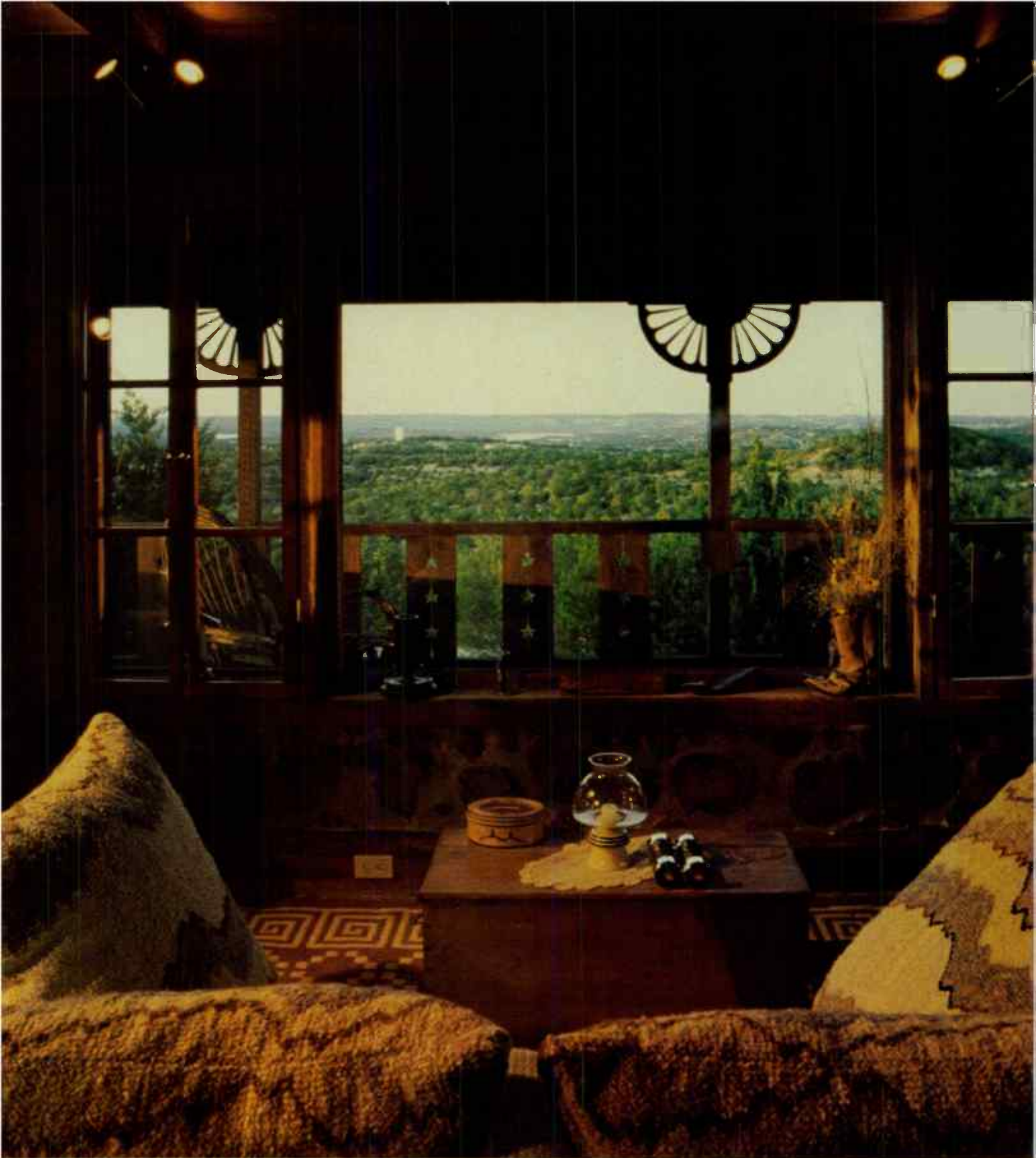
system has put him first on the invitation lists of many of America's rich and famous.

It seems that, these days, everybody wants Willie, and he's unusually generous with his time. But sooner or later, a man has to take a break.

In recent years, Nelson has headed for his family compound in Colorado or his house in Hawaii when he needed a rest. Still, though, he's always felt most at home in Texas. He kept his house on the Pedernales River near Dripping Springs for several years, but as his fame spread and the location of his house leaked out, the songwriter's privacy vanished like an armadillo in the sagebrush.

*Country music legend Willie Nelson knew the kind of home he wanted.*

*The view out the front window is pure Texas, the rolling hill country near Austin.*



*Willie's house is a reflection  
of Willie's music—simple and deeply rooted  
in the landscape of Texas.*



*Each of the cabin's door knobs and cabinet pulls is hand-carved and then cast in bronze.*



*The dining area of the cabin's main room features a redwood table made by the Rev. R.M. Coolidge in California.*

## WILLIE NELSON

So in August of 1982, Willie went to his private hill near Lake Travis and placed four stones to mark the corners of a log cabin he wanted to build, a retreat from the stress of life on the road. He planned to have just one room, one window, one door and no electricity—basic.

A year-and-a-half later, Willie had his cabin. But by the time it was completed, it looked a little like a presidential hunting lodge, with its horse stables, satellite dish and main room with enough space and electricity for the Nelson Family Band to set up and play for friends.

**T**he construction of the house took the same course as the writing of some of Willie's songs. Starting with an idea so simple and clear, it grew and was changed again and again, added to by friends and embellished by relatives. But in the end, it bears the unmistakable craftsmanship of a Willie Nelson production.

After placing the stones on the hill, Willie made a trip in search of cedar logs for the cabin. Along the way he met Rick Nation, a singer-songwriter turned builder. Nation had built a cabin for a friend utilizing stacked-wood masonry, a technique in which the logs are laid sideways rather than the more typical lengthwise and set in a mortar



## WILLIE NELSON



*Arrowhead collections flank the five-sided window near the cabin's entrance.*

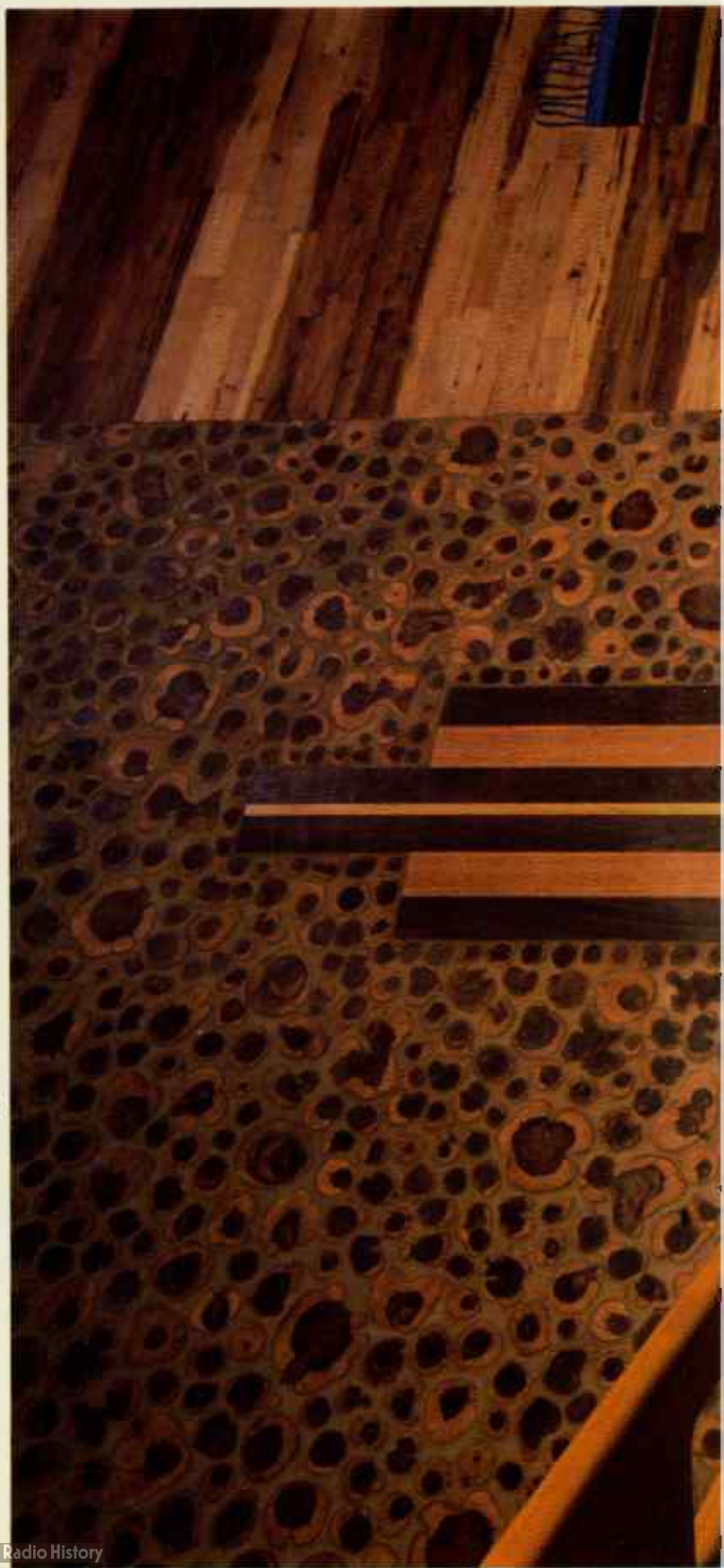
mixture so that only their ends are visible.

According to Nation, the process originated with the first New Englanders when they began their settlements. They built small homes of stacked-wood masonry to see them through the first couple of winters while they waited for the logs for their main houses to dry. Once they built their permanent homes, the first house became a smokehouse or a utility building.

After seeing the cabin that Nation had built, Willie asked him to build the one that he had envisioned for his hill. Nation, a big Willie fan, readily agreed. Nelson showed him the stones and explained what he wanted—one room, one door, one window, no plans. It sounded simple enough.

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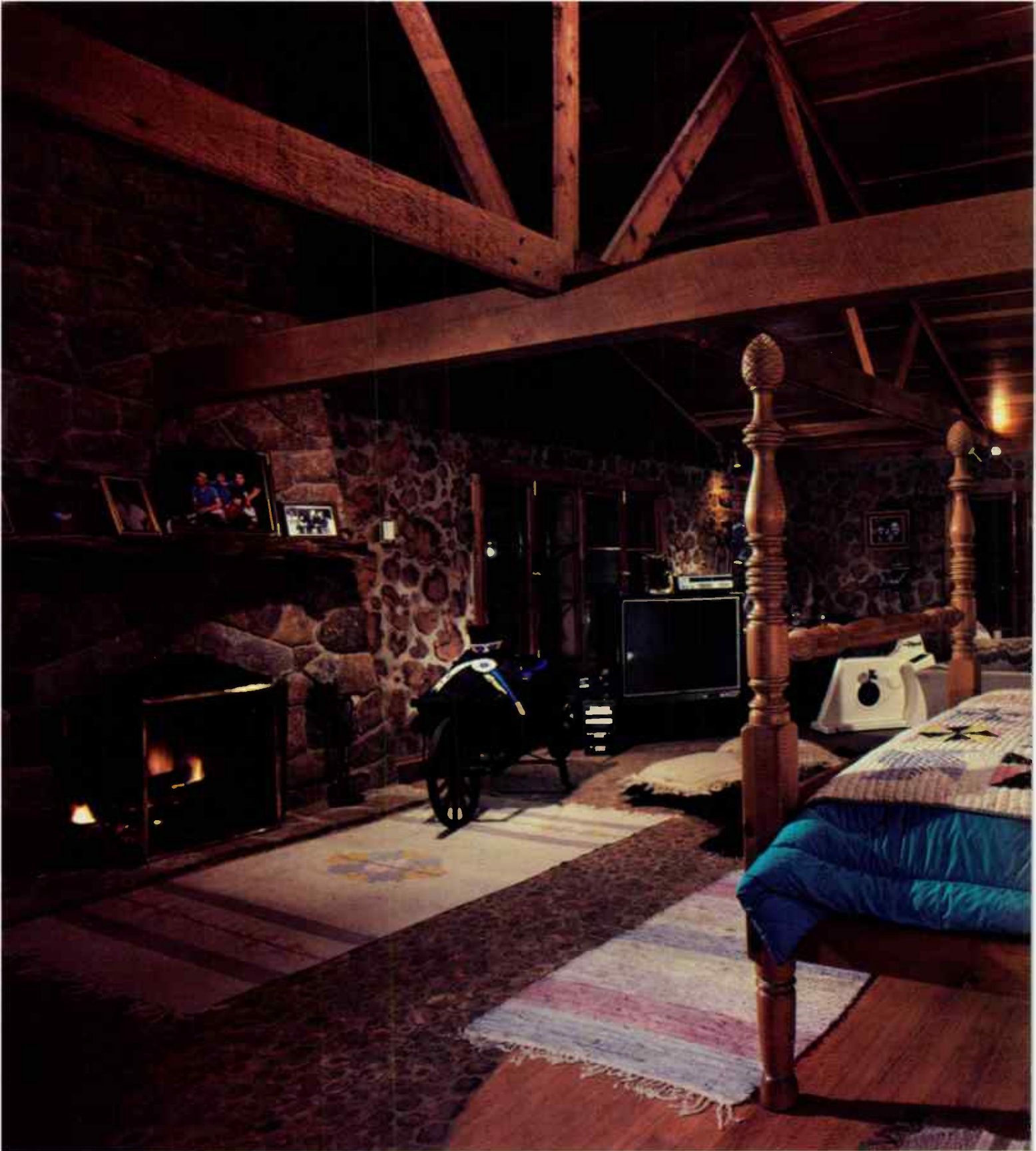
*An intricately inlaid floor design featuring an eagle was planned and constructed of Texas hardwoods by builder Rick Nation.*





*What started as a small cabin  
with one room, one window and one door grew into  
this wood-and-stone masterpiece.*





*Builder Rick Nation used stacked-wood masonry on Willie's cabin. The method originated with the first New Englanders.*

## WILLIE NELSON

**I**n the following months, however, the collaboration between Nation and Nelson expanded—and so did the cabin. “Every time Willie came to town, he’d stop by with a new idea,” says Nation. “Then he’d go on the road for a couple of months, come back, and want something new. Sometimes we had to tear things down to be able to build what he asked.” But doing that didn’t bother Nation. His respect for Willie and knowing what he and his team were creating kept him motivated.

As it turned out, Nelson’s unique spirit seems to have played a role in the construction even when he wasn’t around. With a crew of local workers, all of whom happened to be musicians, Nation gradually realized they were creating a house of musical proportions.

For the exterior walls, Nation used cedar logs that had aged 30 to 60 years, and he personally cut 18 cords’ worth with a chain saw. He cut another ten cords for the interior. The mortar mix was strength-

---

*The mantel above the bedroom fireplace is reserved for family photos. A wheelbarrow holds jogging clothes and the hat he wore on the cover of the Stardust album.*

## WILLIE NELSON



*Surrounding the bathroom door are stacked-wood masonry walls nine inches thick. Inside are an antique vanity and cabinets.*

ened with additional cement to support the weight of the tin roof.

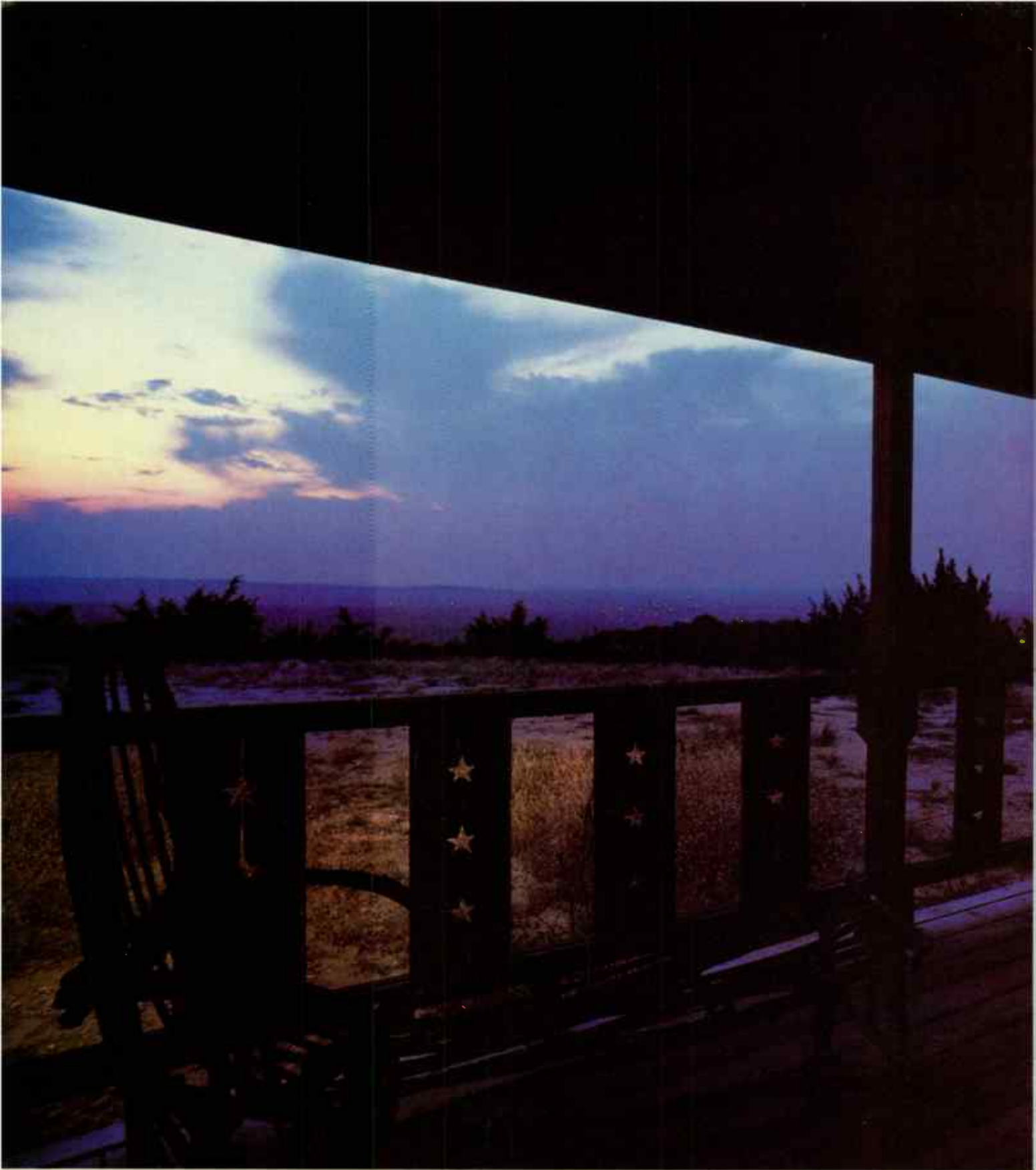
**T**he wrap-around porch (a late addition), all cornice work and the ceiling were built of California redwood, as were the

kitchen cabinetry, interior doors, and shelves around the entertainment center in the main room. Kitchen countertops were cut from cypress slabs, and the front door and two fireplace mantels were cut in solid pieces from a single cedar

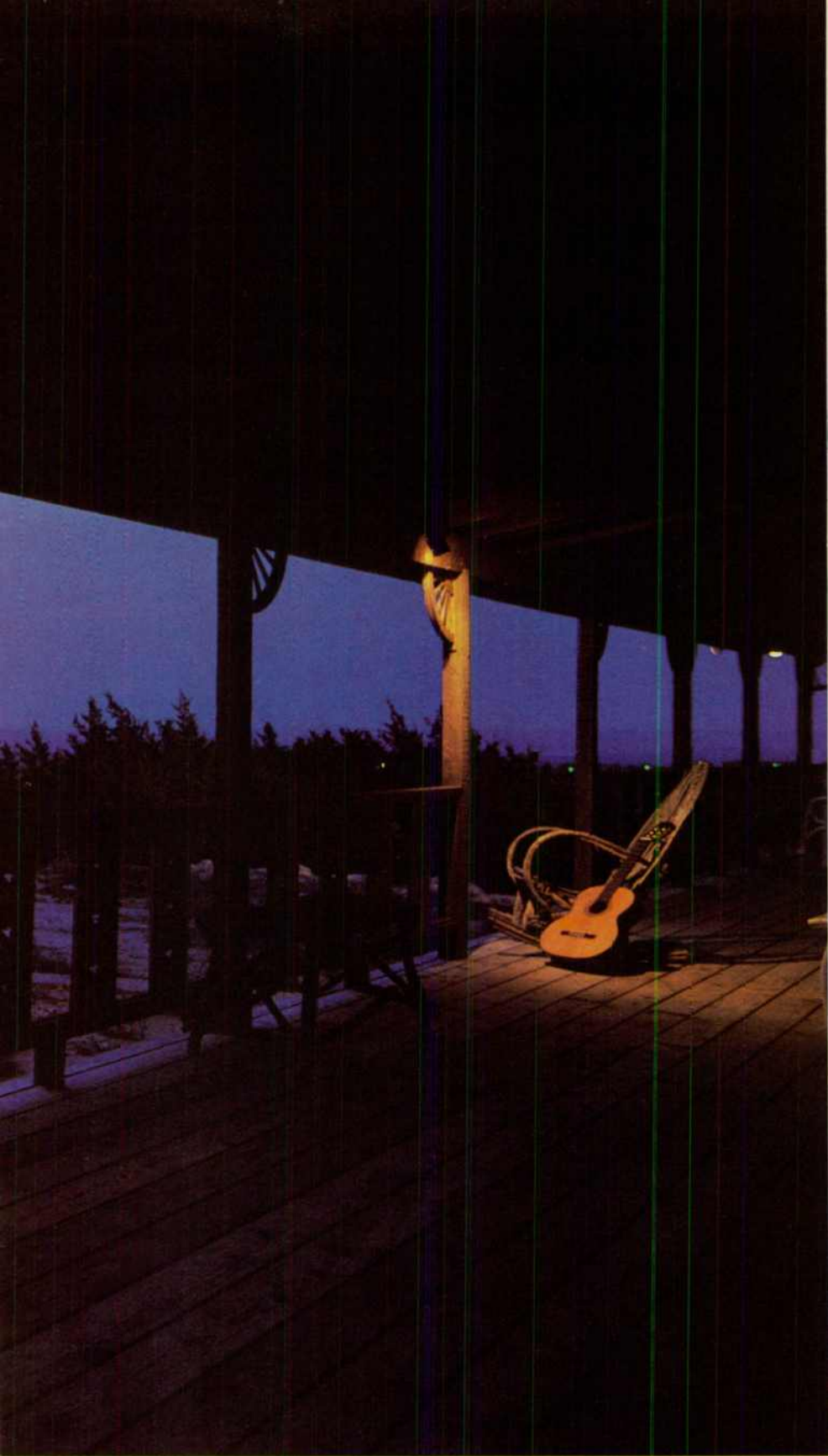
*Cedar posts aged fifteen years were used to support the interior beams, adding to the timelessness of the cabin.*

*The cabin's front door is a solid piece of cedar cut from a log found near the house during construction. Limestone circles the Lone Star inlay just inside the front door.*





*Willie hopes to spend enough time  
in the Austin cabin to write some songs,  
maybe while sitting in this bent willow  
rocker.*



## WILLIE NELSON

log found near the cabin site. Cedar posts aged 15 years were used to support interior beams. Other than the Italian tile in the kitchen area, all floors in the house are an unusual and intricate combination of wood—mainly mountain cedar, with strips and inlays of pecan. For the floor of the large main room, Nation designed and inlaid an eagle made of mesquite, Texas walnut, red elm, mahogany, Texas hackberry and Texas cherry.

**W**illie's daughter Lana supervised the furnishing, which includes a huge handmade dining table made of California redwood by Rita Coolidge's father, the Rev. R.M. Coolidge.

Knowing the extent of Willie Nelson's success, it's easy to imagine that he could have built a sparkling mansion on the hill. Instead, he built a home that's as comfortable and as finely crafted as his songs, and one that may endure almost as long.

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*Here's the grandstand view of the Texas hill country off Willie's porch. It's beautiful enough to inspire anyone.*

# THE JUDDS

**S**ince exploding onto the scene in 1984, the mother-daughter team of The Judds, Wynonna and Naomi, has galvanized country music. Their acoustic harmonies on such songs as "Girls' Night Out," "Why Not Me," and "Mama, He's Crazy" have gathered notice not only in the music press, but from such publications as *Time* and *Newsweek*. The prestigious *Washington Post*, in reviewing "Why Not Me," wrote, "Seamless, flowing harmonies . . . in a warm tapestry of acoustic instrumentation . . . the rich liquid vocals of daughter Wynonna are marvelously unaffected, her sultry stylings casually touching on blues, jazz and rock . . ."

The Judds story reads like a contemporary fairy tale—from the hills of Kentucky to Hollywood, back to Kentucky, then on to success in Nashville. As the visitor to The Judds' tour bus can readily see, Wynonna and Naomi share a fondness for shades of the color purple. The Judds' bus is lavish, almost a necessity for a duo that spends a staggering amount of time on the road—they're barely able to sandwich in recording sessions between their performing and television dates. One thing for certain, The Judds have helped revitalize country music, bringing back the acoustic sounds of the mountains.



*Plush is definitely the word for The Judds' touring bus.*





*The main suite features an impressive makeup table as well as video and audio equipment.*



*The bed in the back of the bus is covered with a unique Judd-like quilt.*

# DOLLY PARTON



*This is Dolly's beautiful home outside of Nashville. Cows roam the lawn.*

**O**f all the stories of famous entertainers to come out of Nashville, Dolly Parton's saga is, if not the strangest, at least the most outrageous. She has gone from impoverished country girl to international superstar, from struggling songwriter to screen actress to owner of a theme park named in her honor. Through it all Dolly has produced some of the most memorable and most moving country music of the last 20 years, with songs such as "Coat of Many Colors" and "Jolene" standing as country classics.

Born on a plain dirt farm near Locust Ridge, in the mountains of Sevier County, Tennessee, January 19, 1946, Dolly was the fourth of 12 children. From the beginning music was her life, and as soon as she graduated from high school, she

headed for Nashville. Her big break came when she linked up with Porter Wagoner on his successful syndicated television show. For six years the duet team of Porter and Dolly was one of the top combinations in country music, nailing down hits and awards. Dolly, though, moved on as a solo act, becoming one of the most influential and successful women singers in country.

But even that position was more a beginning than anything else. At some risk, she edged heavily into pop, then films, both of which paid off big. Her most recent venture is Dollywood, a 400-acre, multimillion dollar theme park in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee, just a few miles from the cabin where she was born, a gift, she says, to her fans and her home.

*The Parton tour bus, complete with Dolly Parton. It's a plush palace on wheels.*



# THE STATLERS



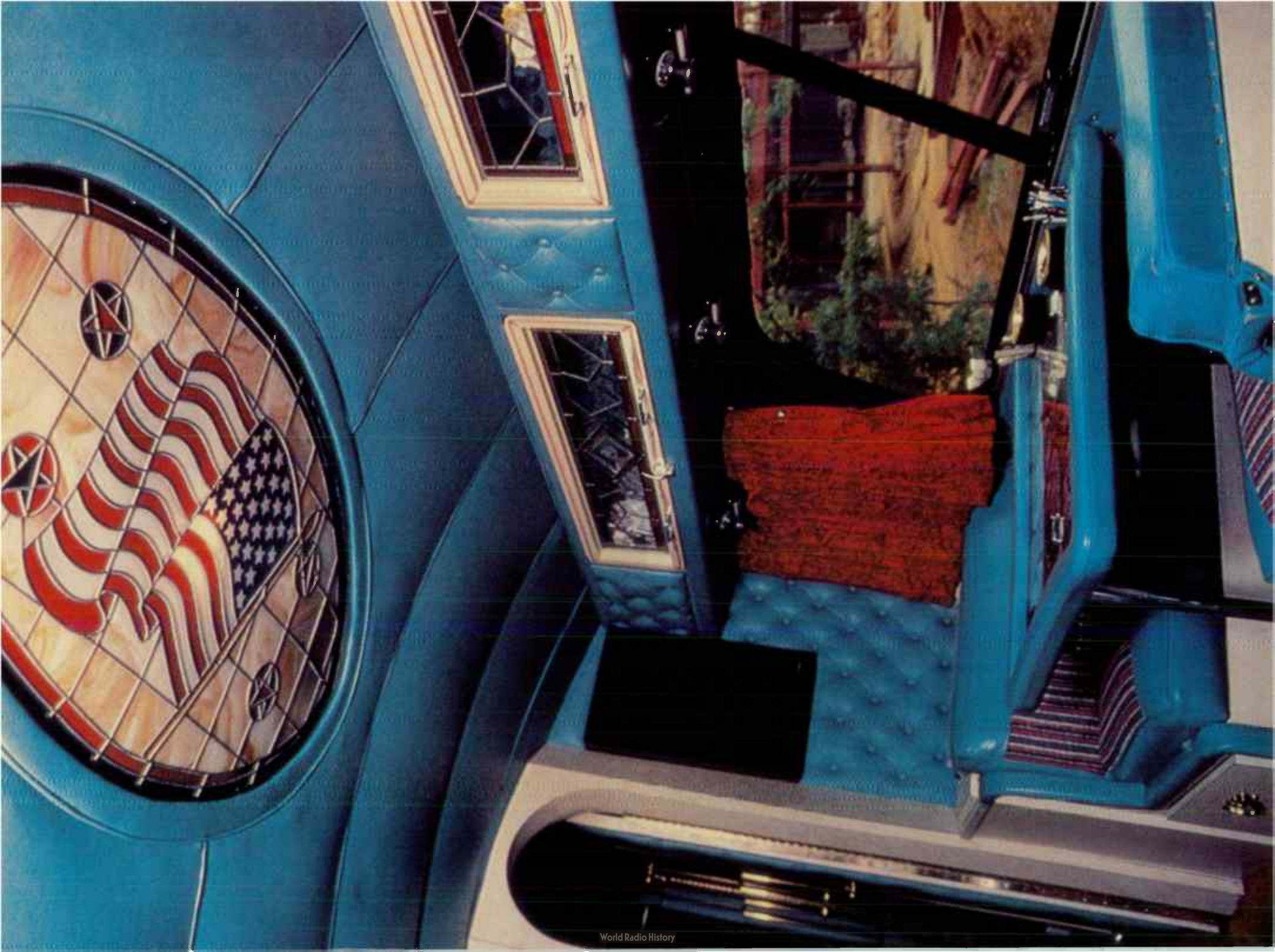
*The Statlers get behind two of their buses to pose for pictures. They're always accessible to their fans.*

*Inside the Statlers' bus is a movie theater on wheels, complete with a projector television and a video recorder.*

**T**he original Statler Brothers—Don and Harold Reid, Phil Balsley and Lew De Witt—began singing together at the Lyndhurst Methodist Church in Staunton, Virginia, in 1955. In the early 1960's the group got their first break, becoming part of the Johnny Cash Show. That's when they changed their group name from The Kingsmen to The Statlers, a name they picked up from a box of tissues in a hotel room.

The song that really broke through for them came in 1965 when Lew De Witt penned and the group recorded "Flowers on the Wall," a song writer Kurt Vonnegut called, "A great contemporary poem . . . about the end of a man's usefulness . . ." The Statlers went on to become one of the most successful groups in the history of country music, grabbing the Country Music Association award for vocal group for years in a row. They recently added a new member, Jimmy Fortune, when Lew De Witt was forced to retire from the group for medical reasons. A Jimmy Fortune-penned song, "Elizabeth," returned the group to the top of the charts in 1985. The group's bus is solid American, red, white and blue all the way, with Old Glory in stained glass.

*The main "room" of the bus—notice the fancy stained glass work, including the American flag in the ceiling.*

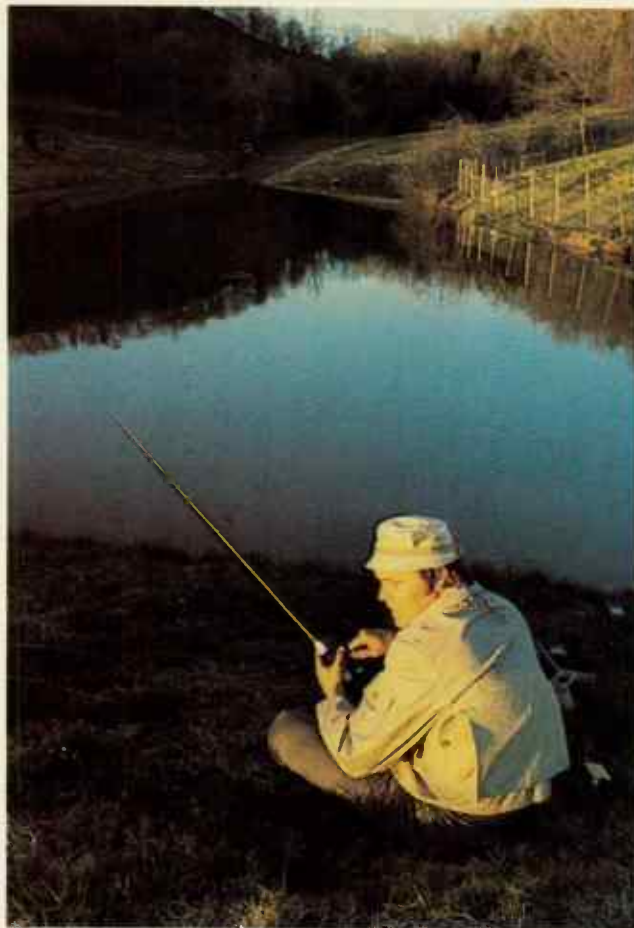


# TOM T. HALL



**W**hen Tom T. and Miss Dixie Hall moved into their then-new Fox Hollow farmhouse and held their first party, the den caught on fire and burned down. "We were having a housewarming party," says Tom T., "of all jokes." Tom T. Hall, the Storyteller, has made his reputation with finely crafted stories in song, so it's not surprising that his home has its own story. The 60-acre farm in northern Williamson County near Nashville, was originally conceived as a copy of *Rosedown*, one of the grand antebellum mansions located in St. Francesville, Louisiana, and now open to the public as a national landmark. *Rosedown* was one of the few plantation mansions to escape destruction during the Civil War, because, ironically of a combination of dense river fog and an extensive collection of statuary along the driveway entrance. When the Yankee troops came through the gates, late at night and in a heavy fog coming in off the Mississippi, they thought they were in a cemetery. The troops staged a strategic withdrawal, and *Rosedown* was spared.

The Fox Hollow house was al-



*This is one of Tom T. Hall's favorite pastimes, and it's easy to see why.*



*Top left: Fox Hollow from the front, a recreation of the Louisiana plantation *Rosedown*.*



*The Hall library, one of Tom T.'s favorite rooms. It includes his favorite chair and a collection of drawings and paintings of birds.*



*The dining room in all its baronial splendor, watched over by portraits of King Henry VIII and his daughter, Elizabeth I.*





## TOM T. HALL



ready under construction when Tom T. and Miss Dixie spotted it on one of their forays through the beautiful countryside. "I liked this house because it had an upstairs porch," Tom T. says. "I stood on the landing and looked out over the property. It is beautiful up there. I just said, 'Gol-lee, this is it.' So I convinced Miss Dixie we'd be able to finish it."

There were no plans for the house, so its construction involved numerous trips to Louisiana to photograph and sketch the original. The result is a house and estate that one writer described this way: "It looks like the kind of simple little country estate where a retired U.S. Ambassador of the old school might spend his twilight years writing books on orthinology and entertaining minor royalty with good fresh garden vegetables and per-

haps a Tennessee ham cured in the smokehouse by the Master himself."

**T**om T. Hall first made his mark in country music as a songwriter. A stint as a disk jockey yielded his "DJ For a Day," a major hit for Jimmy Newman in 1963, followed by Dave Dudley's version of "Mad" the following year. Tom T. headed for Nashville and his own recording career, which got a tremendous boost in 1967 when Jeanne C. Riley recorded his "Harper Valley P.T.A.," a song that became more a national mania than anything else. Tom T. then began penning and singing a string of classic songs, including "A Week in a Country Jail," "The Year That Clayton Delany Died," "Old Dogs, Children and Watermelon Wine," and "I Love."



*Not surprisingly, the Hall country kitchen is a congregating place for guests and visitors.*

*The center of attention in the living room is a music box on the center table.*

# BILL GOLDEN



*Golden Era, William Lee Golden's home, was built in the 1700's.*

**W**illiam Lee Golden of The Oak Ridge Boys lives in a renovated 18th century farmhouse in Hendersonville, Tennessee, complete with Civil War bullet holes in the wall. The house, dubbed Golden Era, was built in 1780 and features 14-inch thick brick walls. William Lee joined The Oak Ridge Boys, then a long-established gospel group, in the mid-1960's, and was joined a year later by Duane Allen. Under the leadership of Golden, The Oak Ridge Boys began moving away from gospel music, where they had consistently held down the top position, to country music.

"Bill is the dreamer," says Duane Allen of William Lee. "He is a planner who thinks months ahead. Bill used to think in concepts that we couldn't even dream of, and now they're happening . . ."

*Bill and his impressive collection of Indian memorabilia.*

*Bill strikes a relaxed pose.*





*The Golden bedroom, showing the simple country elegance of Golden Era.*



*The bus "Chocolate" looks like it might have drawn its inspiration from the Y'all Come Back Saloon. Notice the top-notch stereo (near right) and the plush surroundings (above). Over the bed is—what else—the indispensable telephone.*



# THE OAK RIDGE BOYS



**F**rom the top of the gospel world to the top of the pop charts, The Oak Ridge Boys have broken all the rules. In the 1960's they helped modernize gospel music, winning numerous awards and opening the door for a host of newer, younger gospel pickers. In fact, one critic described The Oaks' gospel as in a class by itself. They were the first gospel group to hire a band and carry their own sound equipment. They sang all types of gospel, and sang it all well.

Then The Oaks decided to begin their assault on country music. The foursome—William Lee Golden, Duane Allen, Joe Bonsall and Richard Sterban—never doubted their ultimate success. “I would

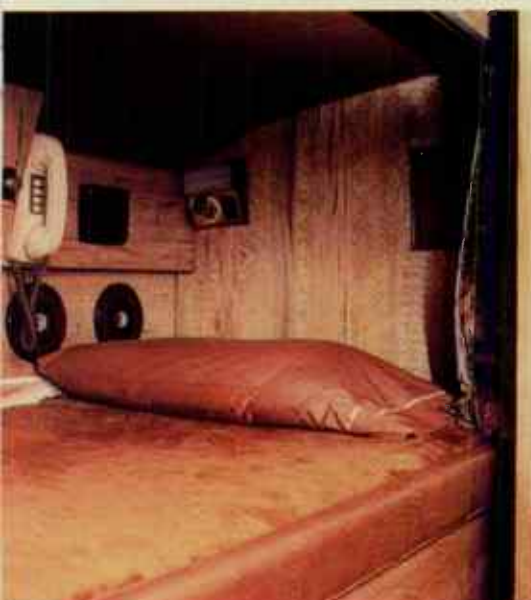
like to think that we might have an effect on helping revolutionize some of the Southern music to a degree,” William Lee said in 1978. “That may sound crazy, but I think it's a goal that we can work toward.”

That was on the eve of the tremendous success of “Ya'll Come Back Saloon,” the first of The Oak Ridge Boys' many country hits. They'd been working country and pop into their act on a regular basis, but the move still made headlines. Their secret weapon, though, was a powerful, dynamic stage show—something The Oaks still concentrate on. An Oaks show is an emotional experience, a legacy of their gospel days.

“If we ever hit a show where we cannot get to the audience, really rattle them loose from their seats, then the whole bunch gets depressed,” Golden says. “We can't settle for just being mediocre.”

Touring buses for bands like The Oaks are both a necessity and a luxury. The Oaks' bus, fondly nicknamed “Chocolate” for its warm brown color, has a front lounge, six bunks and a bathroom in the middle compartment and another, more private, lounge in the back. Not surprisingly, the bus has a super sound system.

*“If we ever hit a show where we cannot get to the audience, then the whole bunch gets depressed. We can't settle for just being mediocre.”*



# MINNIE PEARL

**M**rs. Sarah Ophelia Colley Cannon, better known to the world as Minnie Pearl, lives in an exclusive section of Nashville, hardly the place for frumpy, old maid, man-chasing Minnie! But Minnie Pearl is a very special person. Brought up in a well-to-do Southern family, Sarah Colley raised eyebrows when she announced her intention of becoming an actress. At the height of the Depression, while working with the

recreation department of the WPA, Sarah Colley created a character, a country girl named Minnie Pearl. Talent scouts for the Grand Ole Opry spotted her somewhere along the road, and in 1940 Minnie Pearl made her first Opry appearance. She's now an Opry legend, and one of the treasures of country music. Minnie Pearl's rowdy "Howwww-Deeee!" is as well-known and well-loved as the springtime season in Tennessee.



# LITTLE JIMMY DICKENS



**I**nducted into the Country Music Hall of Fame in 1983, Little Jimmy Dickens is another Grand Ole Opry legend. Like many other country music greats, Little Jimmy Dickens came out of the mountains of Appalachia. Unlike many of the earlier country artists, though, Jimmy Dickens came out honky tonkin'. He used amplifiers and electric instruments and specialized in raucous novelty songs

such as "I'm Little But I'm Loud" and "May the Bird of Paradise Fly Up Your Nose." Jimmy's been touring steadily since the 1940's, and when he's not on the road, he's at his sprawling home in Nashville's Brentwood suburbs. Just as his music has remained close to his Appalachian roots, so have his hobbies. When there's time, you're likely to find Jimmy Dickens on a lake or in the woods, fishing and hunting.



# LORETTA LYNN



*The Coal Miner's Daughter and her main bus, the place she's the most comfortable.*

*The inside of Loretta's traveling home, more familiar to her than her Nashville home.*

**T**he Coal Miner's Daughter has come a long way since the early, hard days in Butcher Holler, Kentucky. Nowadays, home is the new house in Nashville or the 3,000 acre farm in her own town, Hurricane Mills, Tennessee, or the cozy confines of her tour bus. In fact, Loretta Lynn's happiest when she's on the road. "Sometimes when I'm home," she says, "I just long to get in the bus so I can start goin' down the highway and be by myself."

Literally and figuratively, Loretta wrote the book on rags-to-riches country legends. She was born into poverty in the Kentucky mountains, married at 14 to a coal miner and ex-moonshiner named Oliver "Mooney" Lynn Jr., the mother of four kids by the time she was 18 and a grandmother by 29. She didn't start singing until she was 28. Since then, she's won a Grammy, numerous Country Music Association awards, including Entertainer of the Year in 1972, performed for Presidents, written a best-selling autobiography and seen her life profiled in a wildly successful movie, *Coal Miner's Daughter*, which won an Academy Award for its star, Sissy Spacek, in the role of Loretta and was second only to *Star Wars* at the box office in 1980.

Loretta recently returned to recording after a three-year absence. "I always go with my feelings," she says. "I don't have to prove anything. I've had Number One records for 20 years in country music, and that's a good record."

*Loretta in front of her spectacular home in Hurricane Mills, Tennessee.*







*Hank Jr.'s private space features a comfortable chair and lots of sound and video equipment.*



*In the front portion of the tour bus, there's sound equipment and living space.*



# HANK WILLIAMS JR.



**B**ocephus, as his famous father called Hank Williams Jr., has done a little touring in his time. In fact, Hank Jr. went on the road for the first time when he was eight years old, playing a show in nearby Georgia. Since then, he's been on the road almost continually, crisscrossing the country, playing his own special kind of music.

The Hank Williams Jr. story is a strange one. Born the only son of country music legend Hank Williams, who died when his son was three years old, Hank Jr. seemed preordained for performing. In his earliest years, Hank Jr. sang his father's music, over and over again—headlines even described him as the reincarnation of the great Hank Williams. However bizarre the packaging, Hank Jr. was a natural showman, and his father's songs had lasting value. The son quickly rose to the top of the country music field.

But like his father, he was plagued by the demons of the road, and even as his star rose, Hank Jr. seemed headed for an untimely end. What he did, though, was decide to do his own music, regardless of the consequences. Hank Jr. recorded his now-famous *Hank Williams Jr. and Friends* album, a collection of Southern rock and honky tonk music that was unique not only for Hank Williams Jr., but for country music as well.

Before he could tour to support the record, he was almost killed in a fall in the Montana Rockies. His struggle to perform again and overcome his demons has been chronicled in a best-selling book, *Living Proof*, and television movie, written by *Country Music Magazine* Editor-At-Large Michael Bane.

Not only did Hank Jr. return to the road, he became one of the biggest artists in country music, at one time having six albums on the charts at the same time.





# JOHNNY CASH



*Cash and Carter (top) welcome The Nashville Network into their home.*

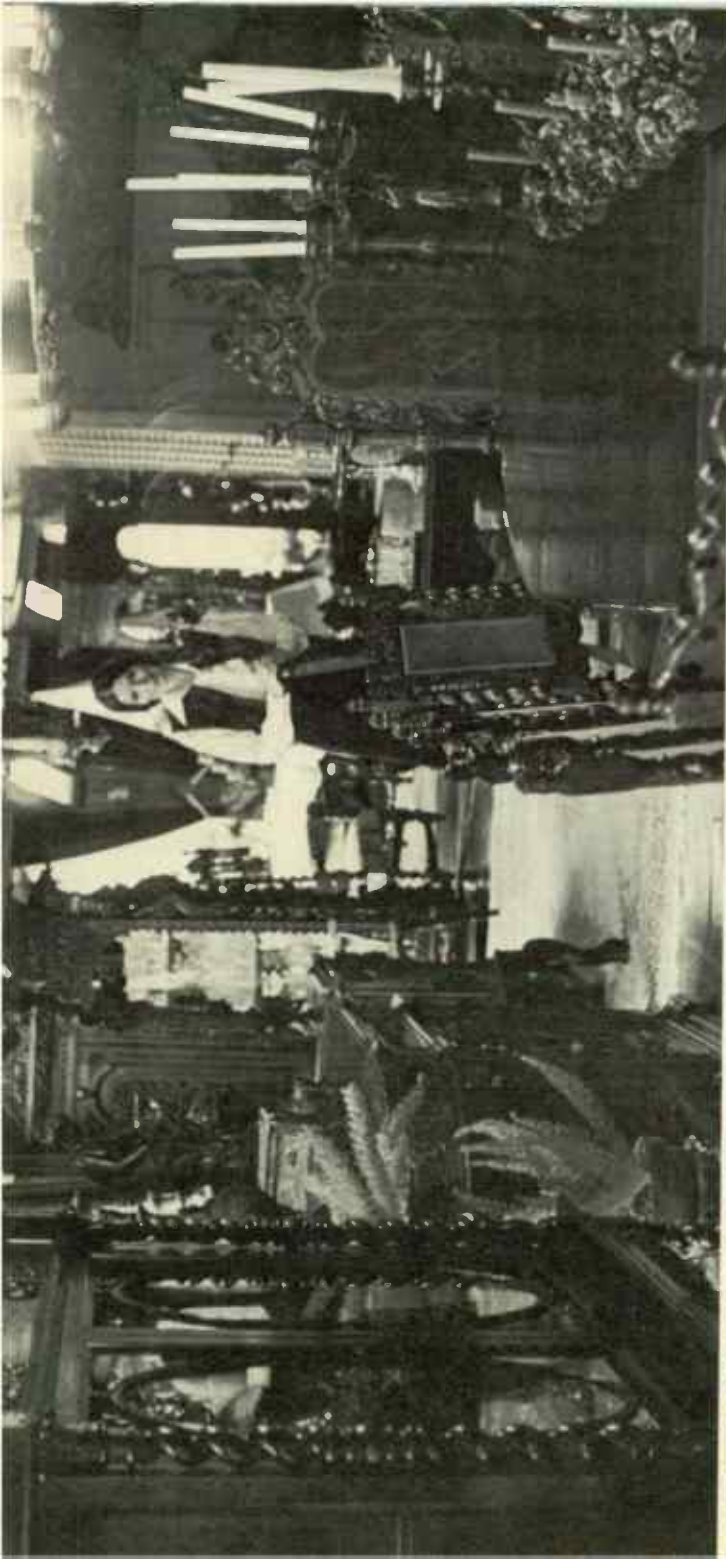
*June and some of her favorite antiques.*

**J**ohnny Cash and June Carter's beautiful home on Old Hickory Lake is a fitting mansion for a pair of country music legends. The home overlooks the lake and has its own boat dock and two swimming pools. Inside is June's formidable collection of antiques.

The Cash saga begins in Arkansas, where the son of an impoverished cotton farmer dreamed of singing his songs. Before he got that chance, Johnny Cash worked the fields, drifted to Detroit to work in an auto assembly line and worked in a margarine factory sweeping floors and cleaning the vats. During a stretch in the air force, Johnny learned the guitar and finally began writing his own songs.

In 1954 he left the air force and headed for Memphis, where strange things were happening. Memphis was a boiling cauldron of musical activity, and Cash, with buddies Marshall Grant and Luther Perkins, got an audience with Sam Phillips of Sun Records. Phillips, an accomplished rhythm and blues producer, heard a sound in his head and was looking for others working in the new music. It wasn't country and it wasn't jump blues and it wasn't rhythm and blues—it was something new, rock 'n' roll.

Johnny's first Sun sides, "Hey, Porter" backed with "Cry, Cry, Cry," were instant hits. The follow-



## JOHNNY CASH

*June Carter in the baronial dining room, surrounded by some of her antiques.*

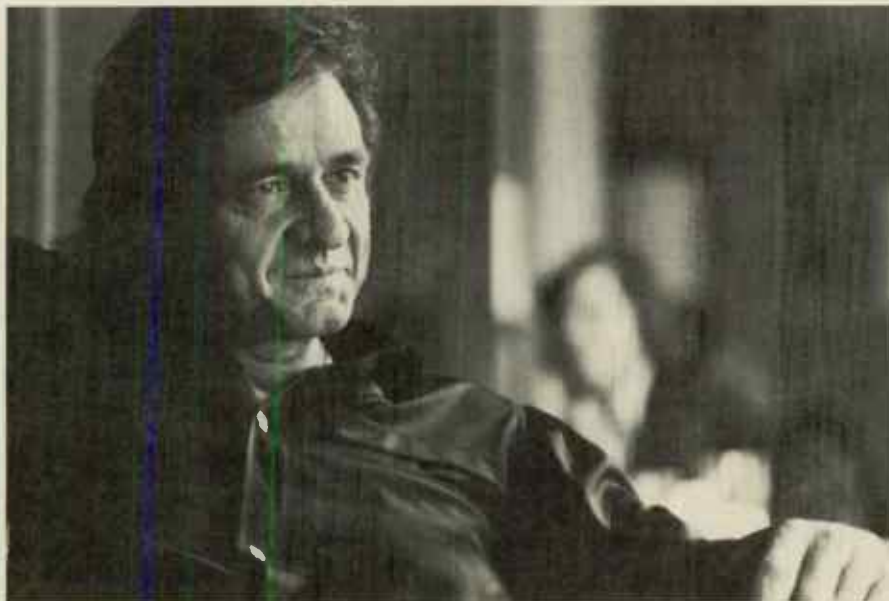


*Johnny Cash and June Carter's magnificent home overlooking Old Hickory Lake outside of Nashville.*

up song would eventually have a life of its own. "Folsom Prison Blues," first released in 1955, was a third Cash hit, and hit for Cash again in later years.

Unlike Elvis Presley and Jerry Lee Lewis, whose music was becoming more and more exclusively rock, Cash's music was steady coun-

try; in fact, he joined the Opry in 1957. In the early 1960's Cash moved to Nashville, eventually sharing a place with another newcomer named Waylon Jennings. In 1961 Cash began working with June Carter, a talented songwriter and co-author of "Ring of Fire," who eventually became Mrs. Cash.



# CHARLY MCCLAIN

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**E**ven the close confines of a tour bus aren't enough to keep Charly McClain from her regimen of exercise. While they're on the road (and that's most of the year) the five-foot one-inch Charly and her new husband, Wayne Massey, work out with weights and exercise to the Jane Fonda videos. Obviously, the workouts are paying off—both Charly and Wayne are appearing not only in music magazines, but fitness magazines as well.

Charly was already an established country music star when she met Wayne, who'd found his success playing a country idol, Johnny Drummond, on television's *One Life to Live*. Wayne came to Nashville to start a career as a real-life country singer and agreed to appear in one of Charly's videos if she'd appear in one of his. The results were nothing short of a pure lightning strike, eventually leading to wedding bells and, perhaps not surprisingly, a hit duet.



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# MARGO SMITH

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**M**argo Smith was a school-teacher before she went on the road full time as a country music singer. Her bus, her home away from home, reflects her devotion to a life on the road. She originally kept her teaching job until she had a successful record, which came in 1975 with "There, I've Said It." She continued with a string of successful records, including "Save Your Kisses," "Take My Breath Away" and "Love's Explo-

sion." In the late 1970's, Margo became one of the first women artists to look back to the 1950's for material, a trend that would gain momentum in coming years. Margo recorded "Don't Break the Heart That Loves You," an old Connie Francis number—her version went straight to Number One. She followed that up with "It Only Hurts For a Little While," another successful 50's styled performance.







# BARBARA MANDRELL



*Barbara Mandrell at home—she sets a wicked table.*



**B**arbara Mandrell's beautiful home sprawls on the shore of Old Hickory Lake. It is an interesting collection of casual and formal—a custom Austrian chandelier in the formal dining room off a casual country kitchen where the

Mandrell family tends to congregate. Barbara, husband Ken Dudley, children Jaime and Matthew and new baby Nathaniel share the rambling home, which includes a swimming pool overlooking the lake and a fully equipped exercise room—as you can see, Barbara makes extensive use of the equipment; Ken maybe not so extensive use.

Barbara has been involved in show business much of her life. Born in Houston, Texas, in 1948 but raised in Los Angeles, she had learned to play the steel guitar by the age of 11. Her first big successes came in the late 1960's with her cover versions of rhythm-and-blues hits. That gained her, in fact, a solid following on rhythm-and-blues as well as country stations.

Beginning in the mid-1970's, Barbara came out with a series of stunningly successful songs such as "Sleeping Single in a Double Bed" and "Woman to Woman," which catapulted her to superstardom. In

*The Mandrell-Dudney home—stead outside Nashville.*



*In the master bedroom, it's white all the way. The walls are upholstered with a white-on-white cotton fabric.*



*Barbara in the nursery that's home to the newest Mandrell/Dudney collaboration, Nathaniel.*





*The Mandrell clan—Jaime, Barbara (with Nathaniel), Matt and Ken.*

*The stunning dining room features one of two handmade Austrian chandeliers.*

1980 and again in 1981 she won the coveted Country Music Association Entertainer of the Year award, becoming the first artist to win that award twice. She followed that up with a television show on NBC, *Barbara Mandrell and the Mandrell Sisters*, which became a surprise hit.

In recent years, following the television show with her sisters Louise and Irlene, Barbara has emerged as one of the most successful stars in the history of country music. Early in 1986 she returned to the road after a layoff brought on by a serious automobile accident, playing to packed houses across the country. Barbara went back to television as well, with a starring role in a television movie. All in all, Barbara Mandrell has been one of the landmark stars in recent country.



*Barbara in her garden, enjoying the benefits of a Tennessee springtime.*



**BARBARA MANDRELL**



*Behind the pool stretches Old Hickory Lake.*

*Barbara has no trouble staying in shape; Ken, on the other hand . . .*



*The Mandrell kitchen is a common gathering place.*

# ALABAMA



## RANDY OWEN

**A**labama has changed all the rules about country music. It is the most successful group—in fact, the most successful act—in the history of country music. Alabama has won virtually every award in country music, they've had more consecutive Number One records than anyone else in country, their records have routinely gone platinum, signifying 1,000,000 albums sold. Neverthe-

less, these boys have country roots. Randy Owen's father was a farmer in Alabama, and Randy and Teddy Gentry were childhood friends. Owen's family didn't get a radio until he was nearly 12; he'd been picking guitar since he was old enough to hold one. It was in 1973 when Owen, Gentry and Jeff Cook, a "city" boy from metropolitan Fort Payne, decided to go full-time into music. The rest is, history.



*Top: A sign on the gate to Randy Owen's home reads "Feels So Right," and that's appropriate. The house looks like a gingerbread castle.*

*Bottom: Jeff Cook had his own studio as well as a home in the pine woods.*

## JEFF COOK

**J**eff Cook, the son of an auto parts salesman, was the head of his own rock band called The Viscounts, and had even gone as far afield as Chattanooga to cut a record. Gentry and Owen not only liked the way Cook played, they liked the fact that Cook had his own guitar amplifiers. Such are the factors great bands are built on.

Their first date earned them the princely sum of \$5.37 apiece. Even-

tually, they found their way to a Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, bar called The Bowery, where they played six days a week for tips. In addition to the cover versions of popular songs, they hammered out the first versions of the songs that would make them famous, songs like "Tennessee River" and "My Home's in Alabama." "We never did dwell too much on tryin' to sound like anybody else," Cook says.







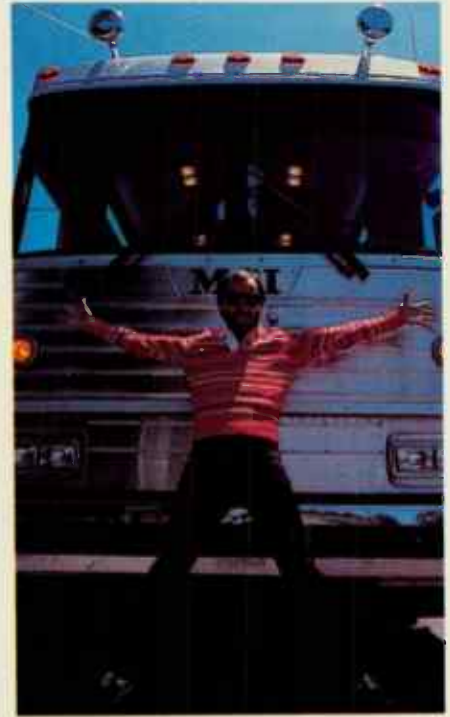
*Here's Lee in his comfortable traveling home.*

# LEE GREENWOOD

**T**here's nothing fishy about this fisheye view of Lee Greenwood's traveling home base. Everybody should have keyboards in the bedroom. They're definitely fitting for Las Vegas' favorite son, who zoomed to the top of the country music field in just a few short years. To make that move, Lee had to give up a comfortable niche as a lounge headliner in Las Vegas, Tahoe and Reno, a position many entertainers dream of reaching. Earlier, he'd made a try at pop stardom in Los Angeles, which ended up with Lee cooking and selling fried chicken—an inauspicious start!

"I knew when I left Vegas that I was going for the marbles," he says. "When I had gone to California to record, it was just a disaster and I had to come back to Vegas that way . . . It was a long way back, so when I left Vegas for Nashville, I wanted to be sure."

In Nashville, though, Lee, who's worked the casinos as more than just a singer, began rolling steady sevens. "(It Turns Me) Inside Out," "Ring on Her Finger, Time on Her Hands" and "She's Lying" quickly established Lee as a major country talent. His raspy, sandy voice and his powerful emotional delivery captivated audiences around the country, and pretty soon Lee found the tour bus to be his real home. In what has to be one of the highest



points in any entertainer's career, Lee's "God Bless the U.S.A." was adopted as the theme song for President Ronald Reagan's 1984 reelection campaign, and Lee Greenwood, who spent years scraping to get by in California and Las Vegas, found himself singing for the President and some of the most powerful people in the world. Quite a change for a country boy.



*Lee often uses time on the road for composing new songs or working out arrangements.*

# GEORGE JONES



*George and new wife Nancy—things are looking good again. Right, the tastefully furnished bedroom.*



*Above: George and Nancy's new home, one of the many Jones houses in the course of a long career.*

*Right: There's nothing better for relaxing after a long road trip than this sunken tub.*

**G**eorge Jones, sang Hank Williams Jr. a few years back, is finally getting straight. George and his new bride Nancy have settled into a lifestyle in his new Texas home that shows little sign of the destructive behavior that has long haunted this great country star. Since he first hit big in 1955 with "Why, Baby, Why," George Jones' life has been one of

controversy, turmoil and brilliant country music. His singing style is best described as hard, hard country, and in recent years it's been good for guaranteed trips to the top of the charts. George Jones represents a living link with country music's hardcore past and is, in the opinion of many, one of the greatest country singers ever. His new lifestyle suits him very well.



# RICKY SKAGGS



*The Skaggs tour bus (above) is one of the most striking in country music. Right, the home of Ricky Skaggs and Sharon White.*

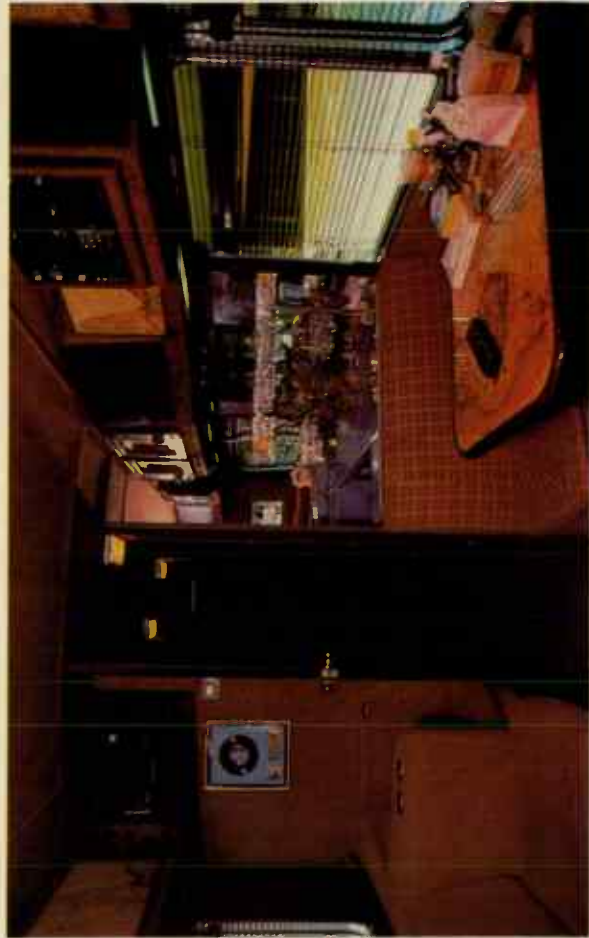
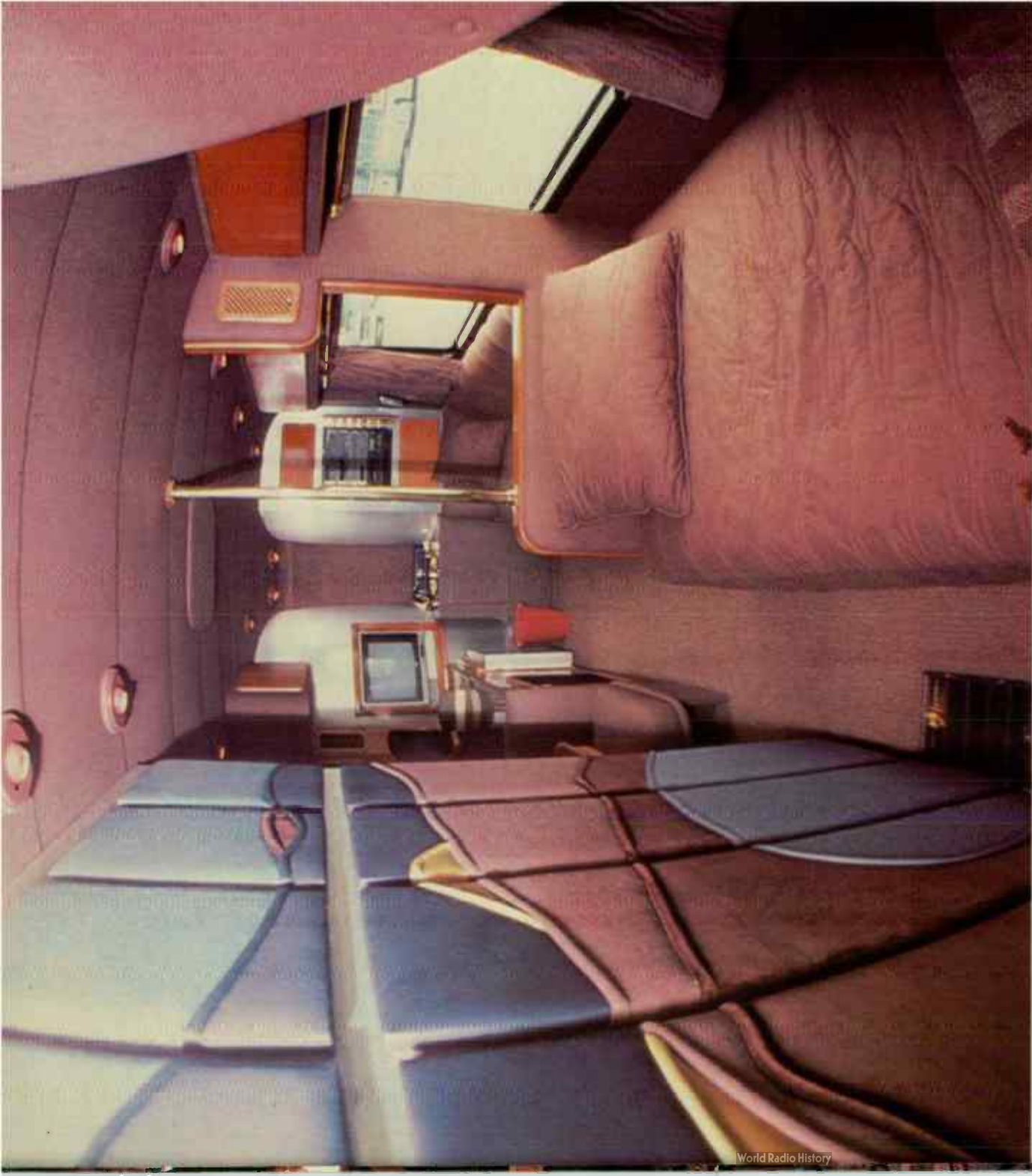


**N**o other artist in recent years has created the excitement of Ricky Skaggs. His traditional stylings—the high, lonesome sound of the mountains—have stood country music on its ear and shot such songs as “Country Boy” to the top of the charts. Ricky’s touring bus (which, on the front, says “Ricky Who?”) is a tasteful reflection of Ricky’s music—simple, yet finely styled. In fact, the plum-

colored bus is unique among country music tourers, the interior more closely resembling a deco-styled New York City apartment than the home away from home of a country music traditionalist who got his start with Bill Monroe.

The Skaggs home, which he shares with his wife Sharon White, of the hit recording group The Whites, is more true to his mountain raising.

*The interior of the Skaggs bus hardly looks like it belongs to a country boy. Note the sound and video equipment (above) and the flashy sink (right).*





*David's bus is eclectic, a collection of Western memorabilia he's picked up in two decades on the road.*

*Indian rugs highlight the living space of David's bus. The ornate silver jewelry, by the way, is David's.*





# DAVID ALLAN COE



*On the back of his bus is an ornate mural, featuring Texas and Confederate flags over a portrait of David.*

**I**f David Allan Coe's bus looks different, it's only fitting—David is a very different country act. With his long braided hair and his pounds of silver jewelry, David looks like a cross between a prophet and a cattle rustler. To hear him talk, maybe there's a little of both in him. For sure, he had a hard early life, including stretches in prison in Ohio. When he was finally paroled in 1967, the first thing he did was head for Nashville.

As soon as he got to Music City, he began crafting a finely tuned mythology, including the bigger-than-life Mysterious Rhinestone Cowboy. The Cowboy, dressed in black and rhinestones, complete with a bejeweled mask, hung out next to his black hearse, parked next to the Opry at the old Ryman. What a way to get noticed!

When the Opry was over, David would head over to Tootsie's Orchid Lounge, haul out his Mysterious Rhinestone Cowboy guitar and invite himself to play. And when some six-foot plus cowboy covered with 300 prison tattoos and with his name spelled out in rhinestones on the back of his shirt, wearing a black mask and black patent leather boots, driving a hearse and wearing a Tom Mix hat bigger than a Volkswagen asks you to listen, you listen.

His first musical break came when Tanya Tucker recorded David's mystical "Would You Lay With Me (In a Field of Stone)." From there on David's career has proceeded by fits and starts. He recently had his biggest hit with "Mona Lisa Lost Her Smile," an uncharacteristically soft ballad.

# ROY ACUFF

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**H**e is the King of Country Music, spokesman for the Grand Ole Opry and the man who drove the "Wabash Cannonball" to international fame. Roy Acuff joined the Grand Ole Opry in 1938 when the Opry was just beginning to shift from string bands to vocalists. In short order, Acuff became the Opry's first great singing star.

"I'm happy about being on the

Opry," Acuff said a few years back. "As long as I can yo-yo and balance a fiddle bow and hit a few jigs and sing a song now and then, and so long as someone can appreciate it, well, I want to stay on the Opry. I don't like the word retire. I can't retire; I ain't got time." His home in Nashville is typical of the man—stately, but country to the very core.



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# JOHNNY RODRIGUEZ

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**L**egend has it that Johnny Rodriguez arrived in Nashville with a paltry \$8.00 stuffed in his boot. To be sure, Johnny Rodriguez has had his ups and downs. He was discovered by Tom T. Hall and Bobby Bare when they heard him singing at the Alamo Village resort in Texas. Johnny went to work at Alamo Village at the behest of a kindly Texas Ranger, who thought that a steady job would help

Johnny mend his wayward ways. He didn't come to Nashville until months later, when he finally got a job as a guitar player in Hall's band.

When he began recording in 1972, his songs quickly topped the charts. At the peak of his success, he weathered a bad period with drugs. Today, once again on the straight and narrow, Johnny is picking up his career where it left off, once again cutting hit songs.



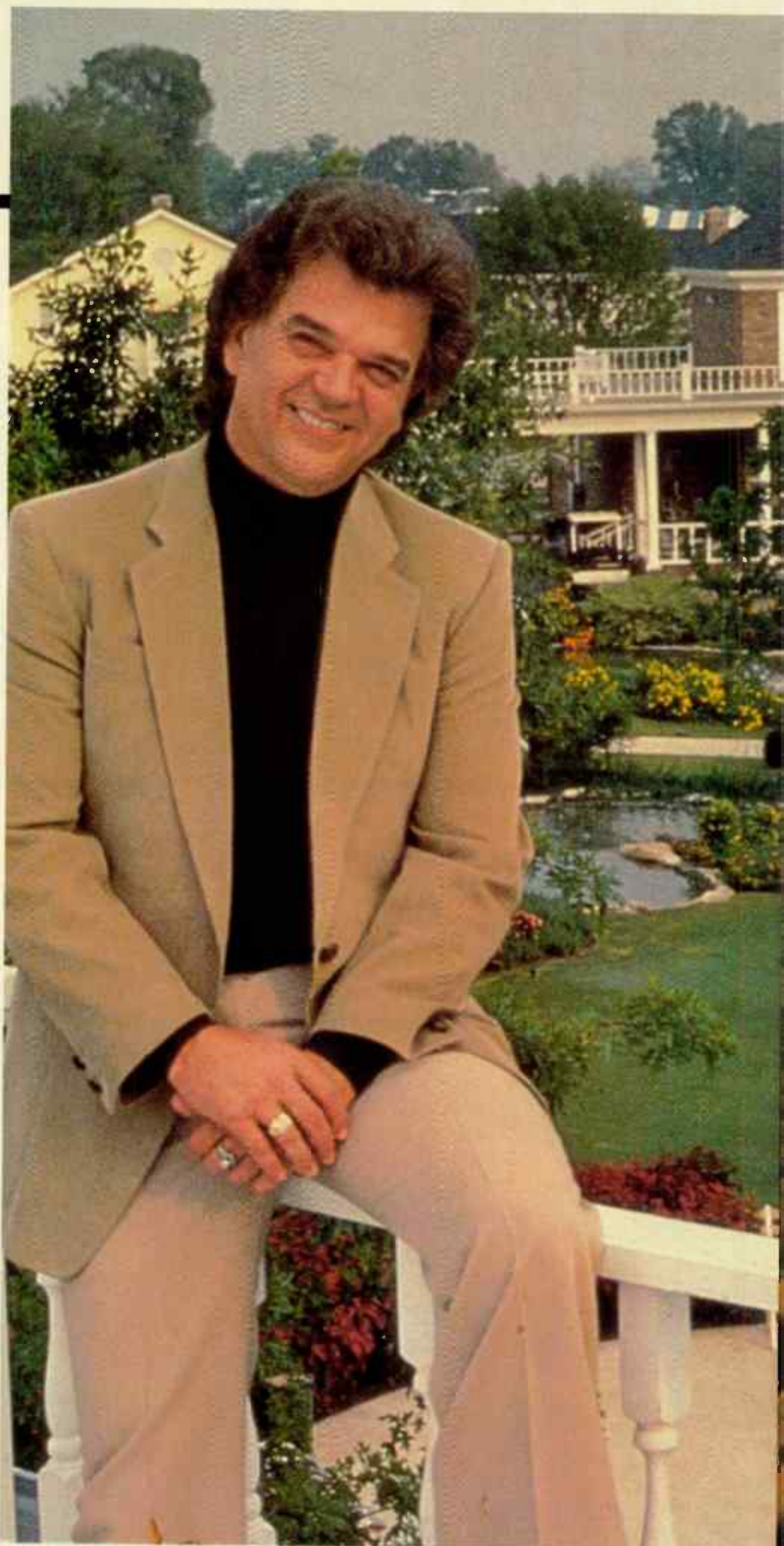


# CONWAY TWITTY

**C**onway Twitty and his family are on stage 365 days a year. When he's not out working the road—which he usually is four out of seven days—he's at home in Twitty City, a unique tribute by a major artist to his fans. Twitty City, north of Opryland in Hendersonville, Tennessee, is Conway Twitty's dream of practicing what he preaches, that the fans are the most important aspect of the music. Twitty City is a mini-Disney-World dedicated by Conway Twitty to his fans. The multimillion dollar complex includes a super-sophisticated multi-media museum focusing on Conway's career, an office complex from which Conway runs his myriad businesses, gift stores, gardens and, most amazingly, homes for the whole Twitty family, including Conway, his four children and both his own and his wife's mothers. The gardens and the walkways of Twitty City are designed to allow fans the best possible views of the Twitty residences, including the joint swimming pools.

"Really," Conway says, "that one little country fan sitting there with his white socks is the bottom line to it all—what he or she thinks is the very bottom line." Twitty City keeps growing, just as Conway's career shows no sign of slowing down. If you visit, don't miss his lime green 1956 Thunderbird convertible, with 61 miles on the odometer!

*The king of Twitty City believes that fans are the most important aspect of country music. Accordingly, Conway has built his home to allow fans a glimpse into his lifestyle.*





# TAMMY WYNETTE



*Here are George and Tammy in their earlier, happier days.*

*Tammy today, on the road with all the comforts of home.*

**I**n the late 1960's George Jones and Tammy Wynette became the official First Couple of country music. George Jones' honky tonk ballads and Tammy Wynette's spunky odes to True Love seemed well-suited to each other, as did the brooding Texan and the Mississippi girl made good.

At one point the couple shared a palatial home on Franklin Road. That Spanish-styled house featured a whopping 17,600 square feet, 12 bedrooms, 15 baths, an Olympic-sized swimming pool, a playground, nine-and-a-half acres of terraced lawns and a decorative wrought-iron frontispiece that displayed the music notation from Tammy's hit "Stand By Your Man!"

The two produced a series of duets, including "Two Story House" and "Golden Ring," that established them as the biggest act in country music until their widely chronicled divorce in 1975. After a long fallow period, Tammy Wynette recently began a comeback, concentrating on major dates.

"The thing is," she says, "that I've kind of been in a rut for the past five, six, seven years. I've just been pinned down, and I really didn't try, myself, to be a lot different."

Her first stunning success came in 1966 when Virginia Wynette Pugh, a Mississippi hairdresser, came to Nashville to interest someone in the songs a friend had written. Producer Billy Sherrill heard her sing and was blown away, but Virginia Wynette Pugh just wouldn't work. So Tammy Wynette she became, and her first song, "Apartment No. 9," launched a major career.



*Here's a view of the front of the palatial house in Nashville.*



*The gateway to Tammy's dreamhouse is often photographed.*

# WEBB PIERCE



**T**here's nothing shy about Webb Pierce. Once, during Country Music Week a few years back, he hired an airplane to fly around pulling a promotional banner for his newest song, "The Good Lord Giveth (And Uncle Sam Taketh Away)." And, of course, there's the legendary guitar-shaped swimming pool, the one-time white-hot center of Nashville controversy. Webb's pool, which cost about \$50,000 back in the early 1970's, attracted hordes of country music tourists.

The constant tramping of tourists annoyed some of the neighbors, including Ray Stevens, who complained to the city. Eventually, Webb closed the pool to tourists.

These days, Webb is retired, off the road for good, he says. In his heyday, he was one of the most dynamic artists in the field. With

his flashy suits and his band's driving pedal steel (which he pioneered in country music), he hit the stage flying. Songs like "There Stands the Glass" and "I Ain't Never" picked up the grand honky tonk tradition of Hank Williams and carried it into the next decade. Webb chalked up 28 Number One records, and at one time, in 1953, had six songs in the Top 30.

He's even retired his legendary 1962 Pontiac Bonneville, decorated by the equally legendary Nudie with rawhide seats, saddles, guns for doorhandles and all manner of Western excess. You can see it at the Automobile Hall of Fame, near Music Row.



*Webb Pierce was one of country's biggest stars in the late 1950's and into the early 1960's.*





World Radio History



*The legendary guitar-shaped swimming pool, now closed to tourists.*

*Webb's house, one of the prime stops on any bus tour of Nashville.*



# PORTER WAGONER

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**P**orter Wagoner's home belies the flashy reputation of its owner. For Porter Wagoner, one would expect at least rhinestone curtains and flashing purple lights on the lawn. Porter, of course, is famous for his fashion sense. He was one of the first country entertainers to wear flashy suits with rhinestones and garish colors—the fans, Porter has said, want showbiz, and entertainers have a

responsibility to give it to them.

In recent years Porter has become increasingly in demand, working extensively with the Grand Ole Opry and touring with his new all-girl band. Although he is best known as the man who “discovered” Dolly Parton, his contributions to country music have been many and varied, including the tremendously successful *Porter Wagoner show* on television.

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# MARTY ROBBINS

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**T**he late Marty Robbins is one of the great figures in country music history. An Arizonan, Marty's style was unique and not derived from any particular tradition or artist. His singing voice was overwhelming—strong, caressing, it even included a yodel or two. He crossed over onto the rock charts in the mid-1950's with “A White Sport Coat and a Pink Carnation,” and even cut some rockabilly sides and a couple of calypso songs. Of

course, he's best known for his “gunfighter” ballads, starting with the back-to-back hits “Big Iron” and “El Paso.”

Later in his career, he returned to the theme of El Paso with his hit “El Paso City.” He died on December 8, 1982, the victim of a fourth heart attack. Marty Robbins brought a strong western flavor to country music, and still stands as one of country's giants, even after his untimely death.

**A RARE INSIDE LOOK  
AT YOUR FAVORITE SUPERSTARS' HOMES:**

**WILLIE NELSON • DOLLY PARTON  
TOM T. HALL • WILLIAM LEE GOLDEN  
MINNIE PEARL • LITTLE JIMMY DICKENS  
ELVIS PRESLEY • JOHNNY CASH  
BARBARA MANDRELL • ROY ACUFF  
RANDY OWEN • GEORGE JONES  
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TAMMY WYNETTE • WEBB PIERCE  
PORTER WAGONER • MARTY ROBBINS**

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