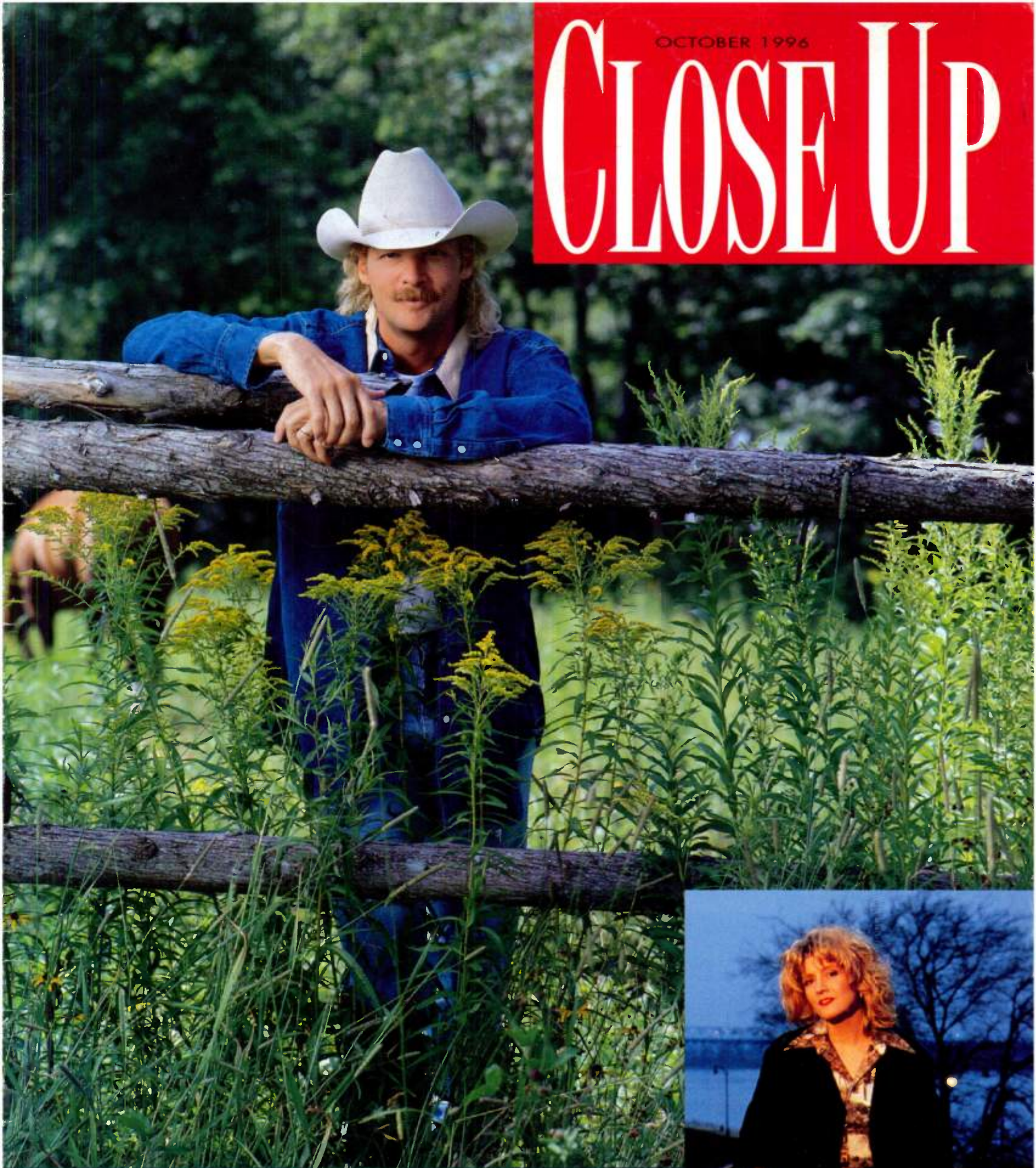


OCTOBER 1996

CLOSE UP



Inside:

Ray Price

Bryan White



**"I'm happy
with what
I'm doing."
Bryan White
-page 4**

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ALAN

Remaining a poet of the working man can be tough when you've just sold your publishing rights for \$13 million. Yet, Alan Jackson recently told CLOSE UP in a casual interview at his manager's office, he tries to remain true to his fans, his family and himself. He seems comfortable and content as he approaches the release of his latest Arista Nashville lp, EVERYTHING I LOVE.

CU: *Some people say stick with what works. Some say you've got to change with the times. What do you think?*

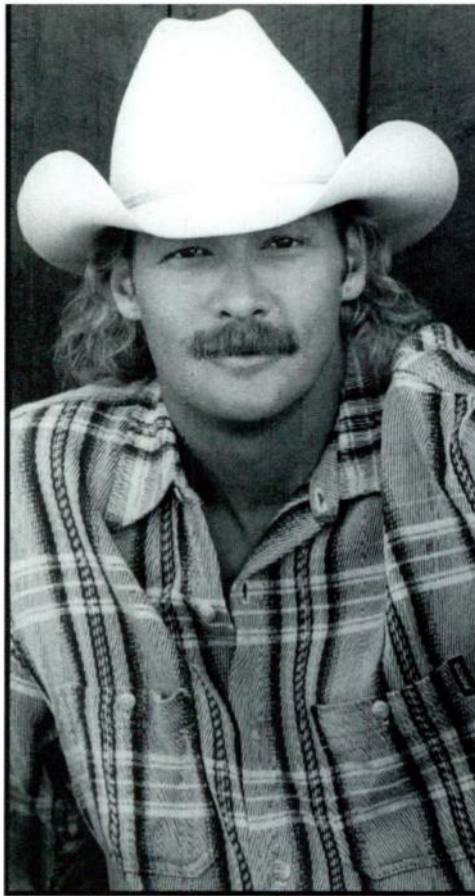
AJ: I don't really think much about it. I just do what I like. That's what I've always done. I've noticed with a lot of artists that have a lot of success, sometimes they get separated from reality. 'Cause it is a weird life. And for me, anyway, it's hard to stay in tune with where you come from as far as regular people, which is what most of my fans are - working class people.

CU: *It is hard for you to keep in touch with that?*

AJ: Well, it is. I try to, and I think I've done all right with it. But as an artist becomes successful, your lifestyle is most of the time totally different from what it's been and from your fans. So it's hard to stay in touch with what they're thinking and doing.

And then it's real easy to fall into that feeling where you want to save the world and think your music is medicine. You get so many letters with people saying how much it's changed their lives, you start to think you're supernatural. I try to remember it's entertainment. Some of it's healing, some of it's fun. It's songs about life, good and bad.

I just try to make every album something that I like. And I guess that's why they are similar in style. I've stretched a little here and there. I think no matter which direction you take it, it just matters how good the songs are.



CU: *When do you find yourself writing?*

AJ: Whenever they make me. About two days before the album is ready. I've always been that way about waiting until the last minute. I was that way in school. I'd have a book report due, and I wouldn't do it until that morning before school. I'd just read the first paragraph and then make up the rest.

CU: *You've changed managers three times. Why?*

AJ: Barry (Coburn) was the first manager I had. We kind of grew apart. The relationship

"I still don't like being in a room with a bunch of people I don't know."

just wasn't going good. He's a really good man, and a hard worker. But success sometimes, it's hard not just for the artists. After Barry, I didn't really know any managers. Gary Overton was a friend that had helped me from day one, and he decided to take the job. He did a good job and I hated to see him go, but after a year...he got tired of it. It's a real tough job and then he got an offer at EMI.

I think things just work out the way they're supposed to because Gary got what he wanted,

JACKSON

and after he left I went with Chip (Peay). I like him better than anybody that's ever managed me overall. He's wonderful at dealing with people. He's a real positive person. He knows how to handle everybody that comes in with a request. He's considerate and doesn't take the position that "Hey, I'm the boss. I'm the manager of a big star." That's what I like. He manages the way I would want to manage someone.

CU: *You seem very close to your family - your wife and daughters as well as your parents. Tell me about some of the values your parents taught you.*

AJ: I wish I knew what they did. I don't think they know. I'm trying to learn those secrets now as a parent myself. How did my parents raise five kids that turned out to be successful and have a lot of initiative and do all we've wanted to do in life and, you know, stay pretty normal. I don't know what they did. I think they're just really nice people themselves.

Even though my daddy didn't say much to me growing up as far as advice, his character was witness enough for me to learn from, and I still do. They were always there for us. Even though they might not have said I love you every day, it showed. I think when you have people that care about you and are there for you, it's going to effect how you turn out. It builds confidence in a child and makes them believe they can do anything. That's what they did.

CU: *And you were the baby.*

AJ: Yeah, I was spoiled rotten. The only boy and the baby.

CU: *Did you get your sense of humor from them?*

AJ: My daddy's real dry-witted. He doesn't say much, but when he does say something it's really funny. And my momma is just the opposite. She's real outgoing and real talkative. I got

...continued on page 9



Bryan White


You can hear the excitement in Bryan White's voice as he talks from a phone at the Virginia State Fair, where he's conducting a sound-check before performing at an evening show. Just a few days earlier, Bryan had gotten the news that he has two 1996 CMA Award nominations - Male Vocalist and the Horizon Award.

An avid bass fisherman, Bryan was reportedly on his boat when he got the news. "I was just blown away," he says. "I think I'm a fairly new artist, so I didn't have any idea that it would happen this soon. But I was truly thrilled."

"You don't have to have money."

The rise to stardom has been fast for the 22-year-old Oklahoma native. By age five, Bryan began playing drums. At the age of 17, he switched to the guitar and started writing songs. After graduating from Putnam City West High School in Oklahoma City, he set off to Music City. Within three months of Bryan's arrival, he landed a staff songwriter's job and artist management deal with Glen Campbell Music and GC Management, respectively.

In 1993, Bryan reached another turning point when he was signed to Asylum Records. His first release, "Eugene You Genius" cracked the top 40 in late 1994. Bryan ushered in 1996 with "Rebecca Lynn",



which became the first number one Country hit of the year. The multi-talented performer says he can't pinpoint a favorite song from his current album, *BETWEEN NOW AND FOREVER*, but he feels lucky that he got to record "I'm Not Supposed To Love You Anymore". The song, written by Skip Ewing and Donny Kees, reached number one and provided a monumental launch for *BETWEEN NOW AND FOREVER*.

"It's good to play songs now that people know."

"I think all the songs have potential to be singles. I can't choose one. That's honestly how I feel about it. Bonnie Raitt had 'I'm Not Supposed To Love You Anymore' on hold. It's a wonder she didn't take it and make a big hit out of it. It's really funny, because she's actually one of my favorite artists."

Bryan cowrote four of the 10 cuts on the album, and he says the project is more of a reflection of who he is than his first album.

"This album definitely has a more mature sound and shows where I've come from as an artist. In writing for the new album, I've gotten a chance to showcase a lot of my creativity. I feel like every time I write, it's something fresh. Sometimes you have to write 20 million songs to get to a good one."

"Sometimes you have to write 20 million songs to get to a good one."

"I love songwriting, and you'll see more from me. I'm thinking ahead about song candidates for the next album."

At the start of his career, Bryan performed with just his acoustic guitar on several dates with major artists. Performing unfamiliar songs without a band was risky, but he says it paid off.

"Right after the radio tour in 1994, I decided to go out on the road for some acoustic dates. "I couldn't afford a band. Diamond Rio and Pam Tillis were the two acts that let me go out like that. I was performing for anywhere from 4,000-8,000 people."

"...it's good to give kids something to look up to."

"It was a good way to get my feet wet. Believe it or not, the crowds were pretty generous. I did a lot of preparing before I had a record out. It's good to play songs now that people know."

Future tour plans include a stint with Vince Gill in 1997.

"I'm really honored. I think it would be fun to work up a song with him. Something like that would be great. Of course, I'll be nervous as all get out."

In the last several months, Bryan has become a teen sensation, with features in publications like *TIGER BEAT* and *TEEN*. He also performed in Dallas recently as part of a "Young Guns" series of concerts. The show was opened to an under-21 audience and served no alcohol.

Bryan says he's staging more of these type of shows in order to reach his younger fans.

"We started noticing that a lot of kids would hang out in the parking lot. I'd go out and talk to them, and they would tell me they couldn't get in. I got tired of seeing that."

"I think nowadays with all the mess that's going on in the world, it's good to give kids something to look up to. I like for them to see that if you dedicate yourself to something, you can succeed at it. It's a risk you take. That's what life's about. It's not gonna fall in your lap. You don't have to have money. I had \$500 to my name when I came to Nashville. I'd like to think these teenagers are inspired."

As for his own inspiration, Bryan says he's been influenced by many artists, some of whom are also nominated for CMA Awards this year. If he had to pick any winners, Bryan says he would vote for Martina McBride, who received three nominations.

"There's a girl that I think is one of the best singers around. I'd love to work with her. As they say, Martina's the real deal. I really think that she is a true artist."

Is there anything Bryan wants to change about his career at this point?

"I'm happy with what I'm doing. I think every artist should do what they want and not go everybody else's route."

-Mandy Wilson

Let The Buyer Beware - Or Benefit!

In today's ever-changing economic climate, buying talent and producing a high quality yet profitable concert could become a lost art. CLOSE UP caught up with three of Country Music's most respected talent buyers, Gil Cunningham and Bob Romeo of Don Romeo Agency and Gary Osier of Gary Osier Presents, who share their perspectives on the state of this important aspect of the industry.

CU: *How has live entertainment and concert promotion changed in the last five years? Are these changes for the better or worse?*

Romeo: I think it has become increasingly difficult in the promotions business. Not only do we face artist price increases, but we also see increased prices in production and other costs related to putting on a show. In addition to the financial concerns, we also have political concerns which hamper the promoter. Such as, which radio station, do we work with when we have two reporting stations in the market? Many promoters would love to give the presence to one station which would allow us to financially make a better deal. But with the politics involved, this is becoming very difficult to do. Therefore, sometimes we are not able to cut as good a deal as we would like.

I feel that many artists are not aware of what the cost is to promote a show. It's not only the cost of the entertainment we face, but other costs such as stagehands, catering, production, building rent, box office rent, security...the list goes on. Today, to buy an artist for \$40,000 or \$50,000, we also incur approximately \$25,000 in ticket price based on the number of people we expect to draw for any particular show and hopefully, make a small profit.

Cunningham: With the success of so many major Country acts, including Reba McEntire, Brooks & Dunn, Tim McGraw, John Michael Montgomery, Vince Gill and Alan Jackson, there have been more opportunities and bigger venues for these artists to play. Also, Country Music has its first megastar, Garth Brooks. These acts elevated Country Music to a new level exposing them to many new fans.

This exposure has been great for Country Music. The question remains, "Can the popularity of Country Music continue?"

Osier: In the past couple years, "middle class" acts aren't doing the same business as during the boom. Although there are a few exceptions, big acts are big, and the rest are for the most part "babies". Album sales appear to be holding in, but people don't seem to be anxious to "dress up and play cowboy". Tickets used to sell to Country shows just because they were Country. That is no longer the case.

CU: *What is your forecast for the 1997 touring season?*

**"If an act, young or old,
is of value to a promoter,
it will get work."
- Gary Osier**

Romeo: I feel that 1996 was definitely down this year and that 1997 will be worse. In surveys that we have done with many of our clients, it appears that there are eight or nine acts that we have ranked at the "top of the heap". Once we get past those first eight or nine acts, it becomes a confusing mess. I think everyone in the industry can look at the tours this year and find a number of them that were not too impressive. I believe the numbers will become worse next year.

Cunningham: We are seeing a softening of Country Music artist ticket sales. This trend began in the summer of 1995 and has increased through 1996. We anticipate this trend to continue through 1997.

Osier: I think most will survive, but not especially put a lot of money in the bank.

CU: *What are the main obstacles that a talent buyer/producer must overcome? What changes need to happen to make your job easier?*

Romeo: I think more and more acts need to become more realistic in their pricing structure, and the industry as a whole needs to look at where Country Music is going. I see we have more acts available than we have ever had before, but we have less and less places to play these acts. The club business has been hit very hard this year, and the fair business, at least in the Midwest, has been hit very hard too. The promotions business has also suffered a definite decline across the board. Couple these decreases with decreases in the Arbitron ratings for many of our Country radio stations and the decrease in record sales, it does not make you feel very positive about the state of the industry. I feel that many artists are in the dark and are not apprised as to the seriousness of this downturn in Country Music.

Cunningham: Country Music artists, managers, agents and producers need to pay special attention to shifts in the marketplace and make necessary changes in order for everyone to continue to be successful in this business. Pricing is of the utmost concern. An artist that charges \$25,000 to perform and consistently loses money on promoted concerts needs to re-evaluate his or her pricing structure or get off the road. Buyers must select wisely or run the risk of losing lots of money for their clients or themselves. In 1996 alone, as much as 50 percent of our promoted Country shows have lost money. This cannot continue. We are seeing a defi-



“I feel that many artists are not aware of what the cost is to promote a show.” - Bob Romeo

nite shift from Country Music shows to alternate types of music including classic rock, pop, alternative rock, etc. I don't believe that everyone in Nashville is accepting the severity of the problem. The business is very soft and will get softer.

Osier: I have a great job and have formed some invaluable relationships in this business. I personally wouldn't make any significant changes.

CU: *Of all the shows you've been involved with, which one has the most significant memory for you?*

Romeo: When I started in the business with my father 20 years ago, I remember booking my first act, the Oak Ridge Boys, when they had their first number one single, “Y'All Come Back Saloon”. I booked them on four or five dates that year, and it was my first experience of seeing an act really grow and blossom. It was nice to be a part of this and to look back and really see a relationship that has lasted all these years.

More recently was this year at Cheyenne Frontier Days, an account we produce, to have someone the stature of Garth Brooks show up and play that event based on a handshake from two years ago. This made me reflect back to the time when a promise

and a handshake really meant something in our industry. Again, we had no contract or a rider on Garth, just a commitment from two years ago to be at the 100th for the same deal we had then. If I look for a bright spot in the business, I can truly say that this would be my “bright spot” for 1996. Maybe there is a message in this for the industry, that integrity and commitment can still prevail.

Cunningham: John Michael Montgomery at the Country Thunder Festival in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin in 1994 and Tim McGraw at the Country Stampede Festival in Manhattan, Kansas in 1996.

Osier: Musicianship. Although I haven't sat through any one particular show in quite a while, hearing Vince Gill, Steve Wariner or folks like Lee Roy Parnell play guitar, I find very enjoyable. Wade Hayes could be in that same group without much effort.

CU: *How difficult is it for new Country Music acts to be booked into venues when there are still so many artists like Willie Nelson, George Jones and Merle Haggard still touring?*

Romeo: I think it is difficult for new Country acts to get booked into many venues because when an act has one or two hit singles, there seems to be a perceived value established. Unfortunately, this perceived value is actually much lower than people want to believe...unless an artist has an exceptional song that can truly sell millions of albums.

I think that many artists need to realize that the market is much more competitive than it was 10 years ago. Everywhere we turn, we see more and more artists being booked on top of other artists in the same marketplace competing for the same ticket dollars.

Again, the cost is the same if we put two or three “new” artists together for one show as it is if we would use Willie, Merle or George alone. Unfortunately, the buildings, advertising, stagehands and other costs associated



“Country Music artists, managers, agents and producers need to pay special attention to shifts in the marketplace...” - Gil Cunningham

with the shows are not discounted because we are using “new” artists. The prices for these services stay the same whether we use Terri Clark or an established artist like Brooks & Dunn.

Cunningham: New Country Music acts, or “baby acts”, will have fewer opportunities to work the fair, festival and rodeo business, because the number of those events booking Country Music will decrease in 1997. Also, with many Country Music radio stations playing eight, 10 or 12 in a row, the new Country acts don't get the individual exposure, and thus it takes longer to build name recognition in the market place. This makes it harder for the traditional small fair or rodeo to sell tickets for a baby act.

Osier: There are vintage Country acts I wouldn't play, and new Country acts that will never mean anything. If an act, young or old, is of value to a promoter, it will get work.

- Lyn Aurelius

KIM RICHEY

sits in the studio glowing like a proud new parent as the song "I'm All Right" comes through the speakers. The song is just one of many of her compositions that will appear on Kim's upcoming album, set for release in January.

Growing up in Ohio, Kim developed her musical tastes listening to records from her aunt's record shop. By high school, she had learned to play guitar. That skill came in handy when she met Bill Lloyd at Western Kentucky University. Lloyd, who would later go on to be part of Foster & Lloyd, asked her to join his band. After the group broke up, Lloyd would continue to be a major influence in Kim's career by sending her music. It was after hearing Steve Earle's lp, *GUIAR TOWN*, that she decided to make the move to Nashville in the late '80s.

The Ohio native's self-titled debut lp, *KIM RICHEY*, was released in 1995 to critical reviews. *GUIAR TOWN* producer Richard Bennett also produced that album, making it a dream come true for Kim. But for her second album, Kim decided to recruit her friend and frequent songwriting partner, Angelo as producer. Kim thought of Angelo after Bennett decided to go on tour with Mark Knopfler.

"I was really happy for him (Bennett) because it was something he wanted to do. I thought, 'Okay, this isn't going to work. Who do I want next?' I immediately thought of Angelo, because we work so closely together making demos."

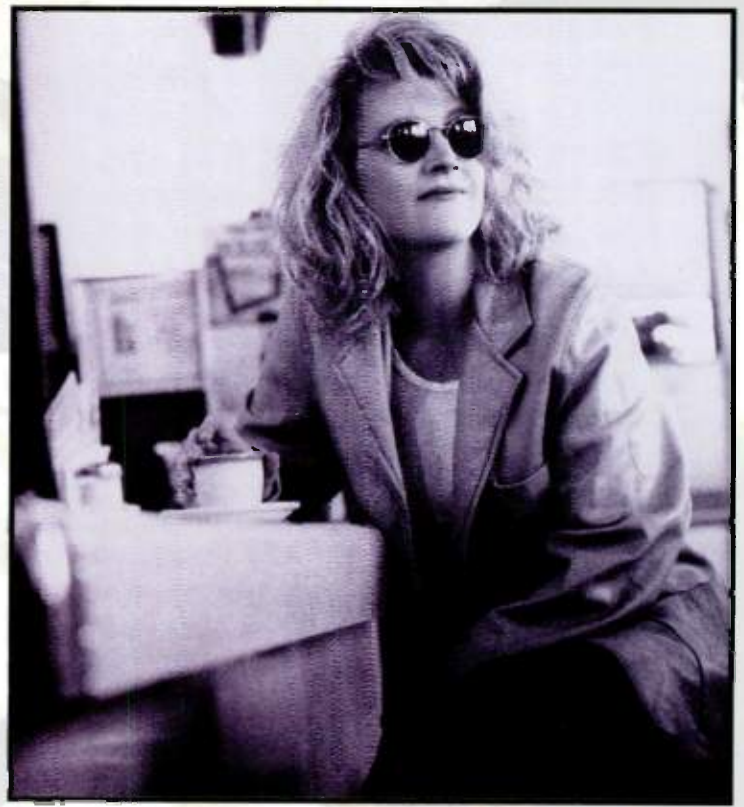
Kim wasn't sure that her idea would fly with Mercury Nashville president Luke Lewis.

"I was driving over to Luke's house, and I started thinking about who would produce the next album. I thought about Angelo again. I wanted to ask Luke what he thought, but it was like, 'Yikes! I'm going to ask if someone who's never produced a record can produce my all important sophomore effort!'"

"I said something like, 'I have this idea that I want you to think about. Don't say yes or no yet.' I kept putting him off, and finally he said, 'Just ask me.' I asked him, and then he said, 'How much money do you need?' I hadn't gotten nearly that far in my brain yet, I was simply presenting it. That's the thing that's really great about Mercury. The people there will come over and listen to what is happening in the studio, and they are very supportive."

Performing the songs in concert before actually recording them proved to be valuable.

"You can tell whether people like songs right off the bat. I can't remember what song it was, but we started in on the lick and people started clapping. I was like, 'You've never heard this song. What's up?' I'm really excited about one song called 'Falling' that I wrote with a guy named John Crook who's in a band called Jolene."



Besides penning songs for her own albums, Kim has also had cuts by other artists. Currently Trisha Yearwood is climbing the charts with the Richey tune "Believe Me Baby (I Lied)".

"I'm not very organized in the way that I write songs," Kim relates. "A lot of people have one approach. They may have titles that they start with first. I never do that. It's too organized. I just finished a song with Andrew, one of the guys in my band. We did the music first. Then we picked up some lyrics. The only lyric I could think of at first was 'Should have put a warmer jacket on'. I thought, 'What in the world does that mean?' It's kind of like a puzzle where you try to figure out what a phrase makes you think of, and you build a song from it."

Besides sharing her songwriting talents with Yearwood, the two also embarked on a tour along with Mary Chapin Carpenter earlier this year. Kim says it is one of the highlights of her career thus far.

"I'd have to say the tour with Mary Chapin Carpenter and Trisha Yearwood is about the most fun I've had. We all just got along so great. The cool thing for me was that I'm the baby act, and Trisha and Chapin would come out and sing with me before their sets ever started. We went back and forth like that every show throughout each other's sets. One night it was totally ridiculous because we had everybody on the stage including the band. It felt like there were a million people."

"After our tour was finished, on the last night, Trisha followed us to North Hampton where I was doing a show at this club, The Iron Horse. She came up and sang with us. I think the people really dug it. Trisha had just left the stage, and I said, 'It only cost you \$10 to get in the door, but now that Trisha has performed, it will cost you \$10 to get out of here.'"

With her talent and smart career moves like that, like the song says, Kim Richey will be all right.

-Mandy Wilson

DEBUT

RECORD LABEL: Asylum Records
MANAGEMENT: Dan Cleary / Dan Cleary Management & Assoc.
BOOKING AGENCY: Monterey Artists
ALBUM: MANDY BARNETT
SINGLES: "A Simple I Love You", "Maybe", "Now That's All Right With Me"

Crossville, Tennessee native Mandy Barnett has dreamed of a musical career all her life. It's a dream that has come true in more ways than one for the big-voiced young woman who is barely old enough to vote. Her self-titled debut Asylum lp was released to critical acclaim earlier this year. The collection was hailed as one of the best major-label Country debuts of the last 12 months by ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY, and PLAYBOY's Dave Marsh wrote, "Barnett has grace and energy. The throaty intensity with which she delivers ballads and the expert way she balances a feel for pop melody without sacrificing any Southernness are remarkable."

Signed to Capitol Records at the age of 12, Mandy recorded enough demos and development projects to fill a record store bin, learning the basics of studio recording and sharpening her own musical instincts. Finally released from the dormant deal in 1994, she found an active recording home with Asylum Records. Many perceive Mandy's breakthrough as the starring role of Patsy Cline in the Ryman Auditorium's "Always...Patsy Cline" show, where she performed to sold-out audiences for two years.

a little bit of both of them, I think.

CU: *Seems like you've been having fun with your sense of humor in your songs, working with Jeff Foxworthy and all. Is that a luxury that comes with success?*

AJ: I don't really know...People think I'm really quiet and shy and laid back. I'm really not like that as much as people think.

I'm pretty funny. I'm wide open...I'm not a serious person at all.

CU: *Do you ever get nervous about anything?*

AJ: I'm very high-strung and nervous. My wife laughs all the time when people think I'm calm. I'm probably more anxious than she is. I'm a lot better than I used to be, but I still don't like being in a room with a bunch of people I don't know. My chest almost tightens up, I'm so anxious about it. I'm not nervous on stage anymore. I've gotten used to that. The stage is kind of like my own little world, you know. I'm in charge of it.

"I think things just work out they way they're supposed to..."

CU: *So why choose such a public profession?*

AJ: I guess you don't think about that. You don't know what that career is. When I'm sitting down in Georgia driving a forklift and singing with a little band on the weekends and I see George Strait at the awards shows on television, you have a whole different idea of what that lifestyle is. You don't know about all the things that end up being your life after you become successful. All you know is I like to sing, I like Country Music, that's what I want to do. So that's how you get started in the business with a personality like mine.

CU: *What's the best thing about your job?*

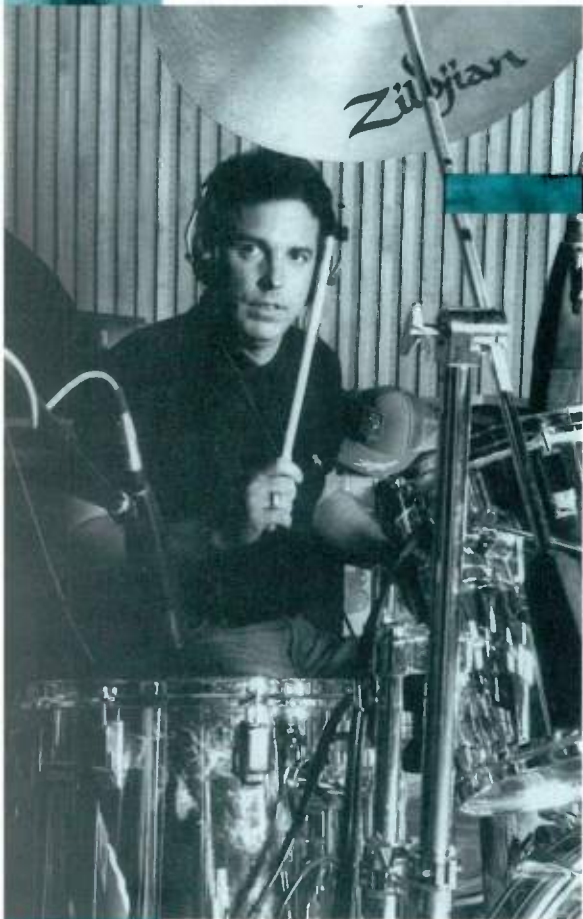
AJ: I didn't have to wait in line at Disneyworld. No, just kidding. I don't know, there's a lot of things. Of course, financially, I'm better off than I ever would have been doing anything else that I know of. Giving things to my family, not just my children but my parents, things they always wanted and never had. That's been the most rewarding part of the money side of it...

And having people on the payroll - it's a good feeling to see all these people and their families living off the success. Of course, a lot of them contributed to it. There's that, and doing something I love. I've gotten spoiled rotten now. I just walk out there and sing and write songs. From a creative side, it's real rewarding to write songs and make records that people like...I could go on and on about the good things. **CU**

- Shannon Heim

MUSICIAN
of the Year
NOMINEES

Who better to pay tribute to this year's CMA Award nominees for Musician of the Year than the producers of Music Row? "The hit records that come out of this town would not be possible without each of these tremendous talents," says Mark Wright. Kyle Lehning adds, "Everyone of these guys has the ability to stretch in so many different directions. It's their depth of experience that gives them the confidence and ease to create the illusion that what they do is so easy."

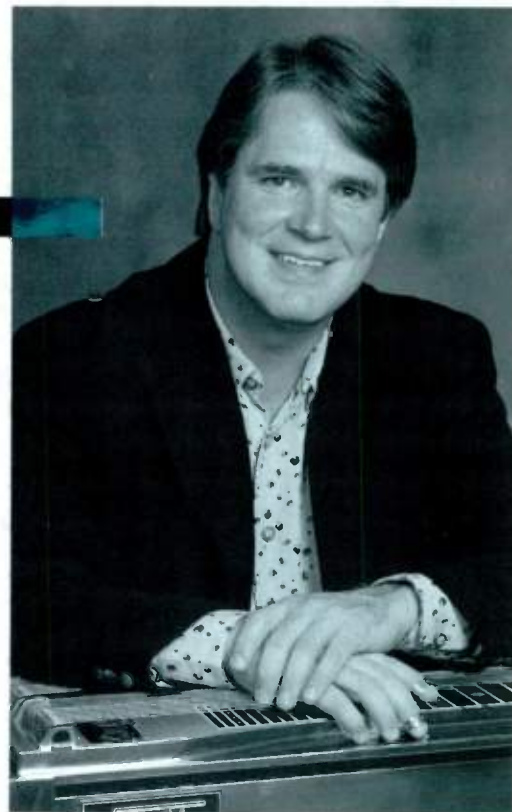


EDDIE BAYERS / DRUMS

"When I'm in the studio with Eddie, I always know the groove is going to be great. He brings incredible talent to the session. When I retire, I hope to be his drum tech." - James Stroud

"Eddie is not only a drummer, he is a musician. That is what makes him great." - Nelson Larkin

"There's a reason his nickname is 'Steady Eddie.'"
- Scott Hendricks



PAUL FRANKLIN / STEEL GUITAR

"Paul always plays exactly what you want to hear, where you want to hear it." - Chuck Howard

"In my dreams, I play like Paul Franklin."
- Steve Fishell

"He is a master at his instrument. With his vast experience, he brings incredible diversity to the session." - James Stroud

BRENT MASON / GUITAR

"Brent has the perfect combination of good taste, great tone, flawless execution and a fun personality; he's 'hot licks' personified." - *Steve Fishell*

"He's every guitar player's nightmare and every producer's guarantee for a great intro and solo." - *Tony Brown*

"Brent has a style that's all his own. When you need the 'Brent Sound', you hire Brent." - *Chuck Howard*

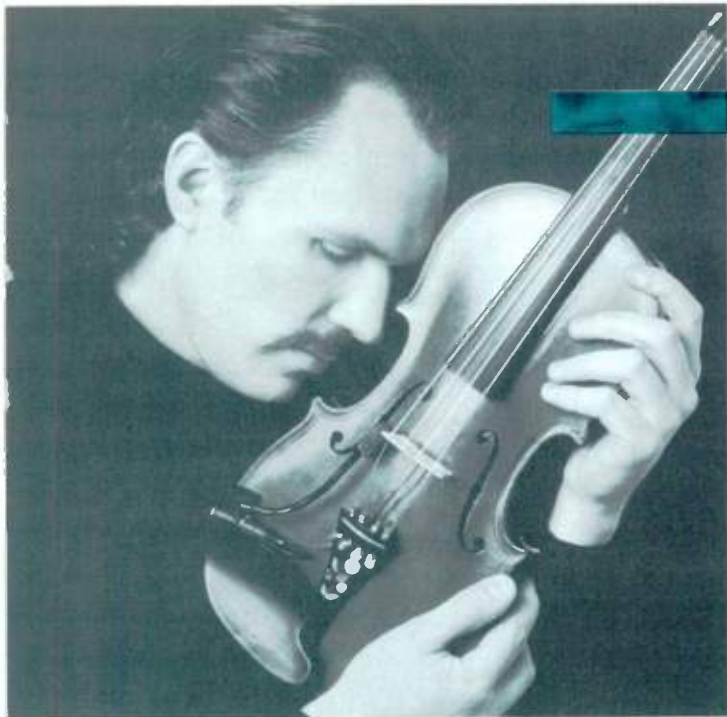


MARK O'CONNOR / FIDDLE

"I'm not worthy to comment on such an incredible talent, but I will...he kills me!" - *Tony Brown*

"Mark O'Connor is simply the best master of his instrument I've ever heard." - *Nelson Larkin*

"In a league of his own! He has mastered his instrument and taken it to a level never heard before." - *Scott Hendricks*



MATT ROLLINS / KEYBOARDS

"If piano ever becomes a religion, he is the glorious leader." - *Tony Brown*

"An amazing piano player, versatile in playing anything from jazz to honky tonk." - *Scott Hendricks*

"His chops are awesome, and his playing inspires every session." - *James Stroud*



A CHEROKEE COWBOY,
A COWBOY'S SWEETHEART
AND

A GOOD OLE BUCKAROO (IN THE KEY OF D)

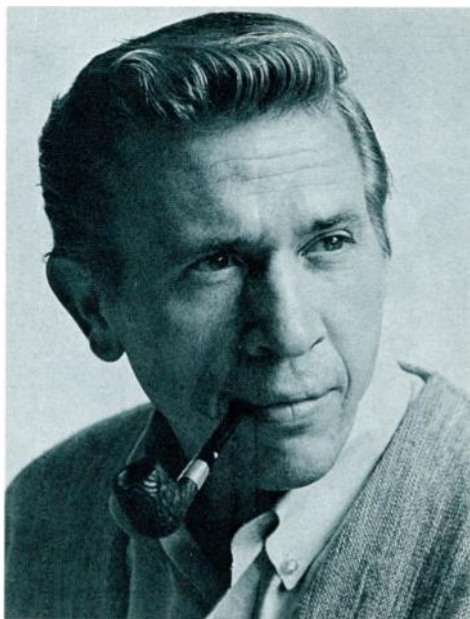


*Nero played the fiddle as Rome burned to the ground
When he kicked off "Crazy Arms", the whole place came unwound
They were caught up in the spirit of the fire and the fiddle
The spirit said come along now fiddle
I'll show you Scotland and Ireland too
We'll start us a music, just me and you
We'll call it Country, and we'll take it to town
We'll play for the world as it goes spinning 'round
It will be as timeless as the ages as they go flying by
We'll make them laugh
We'll teach them to cry*

This same spirit still guides Country Music. It moves us and touches our hearts. It was present at the beginning when Ralph Peer recorded Jimmie Rodgers and the Carter Family, when Roy Acuff recorded "The Great Speckled Bird", when Hank wrote "I Can't Help It If I'm Still In Love With You". It was seen singing along with Vince Gill on "When I Call Your Name". The Spirit will undoubtedly be felt tonight when Patsy Montana, Buck Owens and Ray Price are inducted into the Country Music Hall of Fame.

Buck, Ray and Patsy always delivered through the spiritual conscience of Country Music. Their work has stood solid in the face of time. Their music can be studied, enjoyed and lived from now on. It has already inspired new legions of fans and followers and contributed to the very soul of Country Music.

BUCK OWENS PATSY MONTANA RAY PRICE



Country Music wouldn't be what it is without Ray Price. It didn't take Bud to teach me that, but he did remind me how much we owe Ray. There's an old hustler's line, "You've got to be smoother than what you're working on." Bud was smoother than me. He knew my weak spot, an old Nudie suit that belonged to a great Country singer. He came with his case prepared.

When it was time to do business concerning Ray's suit, I asked him if he'd take \$450. Bud said, "This man is going to be in the Country Music Hall of Fame." I said, "I know, but he's not there yet, and until he is, it's worth \$450." When Bud finally agreed, I gave him \$1000 - \$500 for the suit and \$500 for reminding me how much I love Ray Price.

You can still buy a ticket to see him perform somewhere this weekend. He has a great band. He can still make time stand still when he sings. I dearly love seeing a star still standing after years and years of buses, bands, hits, fame, money and friends that come and go. I'm proud of Ray Price. It's a night like tonight that balances years worth of sacrifice with victory and valor. It's a noble moment for Country Music as it invites Ray Noble Price into its most precious realm.

Bud said one last thing to me as he was about to walk off my bus, "You know, Price has gone through more buses than Greyhound, and if you're

ever thinking of buying one off him and he looks you dead in the eye and says, 'Son, I'll tell you the truth about this bus...' Hoss, he's fixing to lie to you - bad!"

P.S. Willie Nelson wanted me to remind you to be on the lookout for Ray's new soon-to-be published biography "For The Good Times - My Ass".

Also pick up a jar or two of Ray Price's "Burning Memories" hot sauce.



ACT NATURALLY BUCKAROO

The summer of 1987 was no fun. I was learning how to live through a divorce and a record deal gone bad. So I did what dozens of others had done - I called Harlan Howard, knowing that he was an expert on divorce and a master of Country Music. He gave me directions to his house and granted me an appointment.

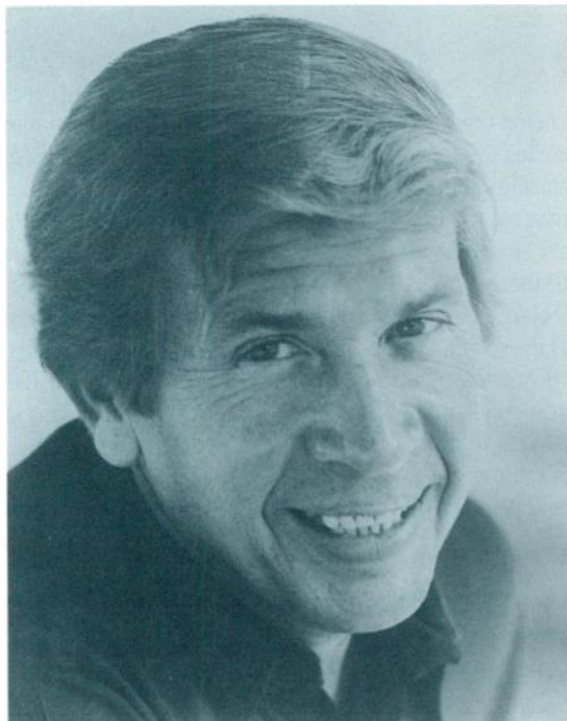
The only vehicle I had at the time was a jeep that had no top. I cranked it and set out across town to see Harlan. It started out as a beautiful sunny day that went from bright and lovely to dark and dreary in a matter of minutes as God treated me to a world class southern monsoon. The ink on the paper with directions to Harlan's house had blurred, and I got lost. When I finally located his house, I knocked on the door and asked him for a clothes dryer, a drink and some real Country Music.

His advice about D-i-v-o-r-c-e was, "Well, what do you want kid, a smooth life or some great inspiration for songs? You'll get over your broken heart and if you handle it right, you'll make thousands off of your misery." On Country Music, he reminded me that it was about evolution, changing times and real life drama. However, there are some things and some people who will always be timeless. I told him that I needed a new lease on life. He said, "A new lease on life is a fresh vision with a hit song wrapped around it." Then he got out a tape and put it on. Before he played the song, he

said, "I wrote this. Buck had a pretty good record on it." The song was "Above and Beyond". It went straight to my heart and made me cry. I had him play it over and over. It reminded me of how much I loved Country Music and why. In less than three minutes, I had my life back. Thanks to Ol' Buck and Ol' Harlan, I saw the first glimpse of color in a world that had been on the dark side of black and white for a long time.

"Above and Beyond" is a perfect picture of early Buck Owens and his style of Country Music. It's a masterpiece that features Ralph Mooney on the steel guitar, Don Rich on the fiddle and one of the greatest Country singers on the planet singing a song that he wrote with one of the greatest Country poets. It was designed to make you feel good. Twenty-seven years later, it was still doing its job. One of Buck's greatest contributions is the good feeling that Buckaroo music has spread out over the earth. Buck Owens has caused a lot of people to dance away their troubles.

I had a feeling that anybody who knew how to do such a good job of making people forget their troubles had seen his own share of them somewhere along the way. Today Buck is the undisputed King of Bakersfield. However, there was a time before Bakersfield was a kingdom and Buck was a king.



COUNTRY MUSIC HALL OF FAME

He was born Alvis Edgar Owens Jr. on August 12, 1929 in Sherman, Texas. The Great Depression drove his sharecropper family out of Texas and to the promised land of California. The reality of the

promised land became Mesa, Arizona. Buck said, "It was like the Grapes of Wrath, except we didn't make it to California. We were all packed into a little car. Five adults, five kids with the mattress on top. We ended up in Arizona because the trailer broke down. We just couldn't go any further."

Along about that time, Buck got his first musical instrument as well as a taste for the responsibility of life. To help the family he harvested crops and hauled produce. It's bound to have been during these times that Buck came up with that atom bomb determination to succeed. "I was working all sorts of jobs, but I was also learning to be a performer from anybody who would take the time to teach me." He got a radio show on station KTYL in Mesa when he was 16, and from there began sowing the seeds of Honky Tonk stardom around the clubs in Phoenix.

One of the local bands was Mac's Skillet Lickers. It featured a singer named Bonnie Campbell. Buck and Bonnie soon married and started their own family while still teenagers. He continued pursuing music and hauling produce between Arizona and California's San Joaquin Valley.

There seems to be a velvet chain that runs from the edge of the Mojave to Joshua Tree up to Bakersfield. It's the same one that runs from the Mississippi Delta up to Memphis on to the Appalachians down to Montgomery across Alabama straight into Texas before disappearing into the heavens. These places are blessed. There are thousands of songs and some unforgettable performers that came from there as proof.

I have a vision of Buck Owens the truck driver hauling vegetables through the desert, but the mother lode is what he was hauling in his heart and soul. Something that no truck can carry. Unexplainable sights and sounds that are only worked out mile by mile in that uncharted territory between him and his maker. As great as Ol' Buck is, he ain't Moses. However, Moses also endured his share of hard times and heartaches before God sent him into the unknown time and time again before giving him victories for the world to see. Who knows what secrets the spirit and the San Joaquin revealed to Buck on those runs through the middle of nowhere? Sometimes the middle of nowhere is the busiest place on Earth. Perhaps it was there that he was granted a vision and told to go forth using a Fender Telecaster as his staff and knowing that an unseen spirit would guide him through the wilderness. Moses was sent to Mount Sinai, Buck Owens was sent to Bakersfield.

One hundred miles north of the glamour of Hollywood, Kern County's glamour was its crops, oil rigs and Okie soul. In so many ways, Bakersfield and its surrounding areas are the subtotal of the Tom Joads. It's the land

of the Dust Bowl children. People miles away from who they are and what they were. And where there's a Tom Joad, there's a soul that's hungry for home. That's the beauty of Country Music - its spirit understands that feeling. Bakersfield didn't know it yet, but a king was coming to make his kingdom.

Success came slow and not so easy for Buck Owens in Bakersfield. He started as guitar player and band leader with the Schoolhouse Playboys at a nightclub called the Blackboard Club. "I just wanted to be a picker, and the boss told me to fill in for the singer who was gone that night. It was either sing or lose my job, so I sang and I just kept on singing." He also found work in Los Angeles as a session guitarist around Capitol Records. Staff Producer Ken Nelson hired him to work on recordings by Tommy Collins, Wanda Jackson, Faron Young and Tommy Sands.

Buck also recorded 10 sides for Lewis Talley's Pep Records under the name Corky Jones. Fearing Columbia was about to sign him, Ken Nelson put him under contract to Capitol Records on March 1, 1957. Some of his first sides for Capitol were "Second Fiddle", "Under Your Spell Again", "Above and Beyond" and "Excuse Me (I Think I've Got A Heartache)".



Buck moved to Tacoma, Washington briefly in the early '60s to do television and radio. It was there he met his musical soulmate, Don Rich. The unique sound of Buck's voice could carry a record, but combined with Don Rich, an extraordinary magic occurred. They were a terrific duo. Hiring Don also marked the beginning of the legendary Buckaroos.

The style that Buck Owens was developing on the backroads of the West Coast was a sound that was being polished for the world stage. All he needed was a smash. "I was doing O.K. with head above the water hits like 'Kicking Our Hearts Around' and songs like 'Loose Talk' and

'Mental Cruelty' with Rose Maddox." But it was in 1963, with the across-the-board success of "Love's Gonna Live Here" and "Act Naturally", that Buck Owens became a superstar and a household name. "Act Naturally" went into the pop charts. Even the Beatles covered it.

There's a looseness and a freedom found in West Coast Country Music. It has an edge that Nashville never subscribed to. There was a rock 'n' roll sensibility that surrounded the Buckaroos. They played hard-core honky tonk music, but it was presented in a way that was universal. The Grateful Dead and The Byrds were inspired by them. Creedence Clearwater Revival honored Buck with the lyric "dinosaur Victrola listening to Buck Owens" in a song called "Looking Out My Back Door". It worked as rock 'n' roll but from the Country listener's perspective, it was pure as moonshine.

Buck had 26 number one songs during this period and had a dozen number one albums. Some of the hits were "Together Again", "Love's Gonna Live Here", "Sam's Place", "Crying Time", "My Heart Skips A Beat", "I've Got A Tiger By The Tail", "Where Does The Good Times Go", "Just As Long As You Love Me", "Open Up Your Heart" and the instrumental "Buckaroo". He came under fire from the Country Music establishment for

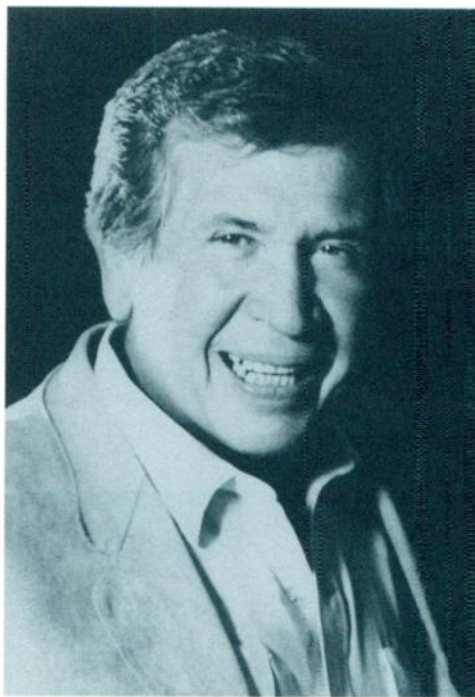
the latter. The charge was that Buck was trying to go pop. Waylon's line comes to mind when he was accused of the same thing. He said, "Hoss, I couldn't go pop with a mouthful of firecrackers." It did stir a tension that made the waters cool in Nashville for Buck. However, he was white hot, and he played by his own rules. The truth is by this time he didn't have to play by anyone else's. Bakersfield had been dubbed "Buckersfield."

In the early 1970s, Buck signed on as co-host of the CBS network show "Hee Haw". It went on to become the most visible and accessible show pertaining to Country Music, showcasing two decades worth of Country entertainers.

Buck was still making hits, touring nationally and internationally, winning awards, overseeing his management and publishing companies, radio stations and television shows and running a band. But the death of Don Rich in a July 1974 motorcycle accident stole his fire for a long time. "From the day of Don's death I went through the paces, things were over for me at the time."

He continued on "Hee Haw", signed a new record deal with Warner Bros., re-evaluated his personal life and went undercover for a more peaceful existence.

However, the profound effect that Buckaroo music had on a new wave of Country singers was growing. It's never gone out of style. Moving effortlessly alongside the changing times of Country Music. Emmylou Harris is a champion of Buck's. She even bought a Telecaster and learned "Buckaroo"



for her concerts. Dwight Yoakam still delivers the message of Buck to an even newer crowd. The likes of me, Brooks & Dunn, Travis Tritt, Pam Tillis, Vince Gill, Rodney Foster, Alan Jackson and Joe Diffie all know from whence we twang. And I suspect anybody that's ever strapped on a Fender Telecaster is applauding Buck Owens as he's inducted into the Hall of Fame.

Buck Owens' God-given talent and his drive took him to the top. He'll probably tell us that success is sweet, but so is the journey.

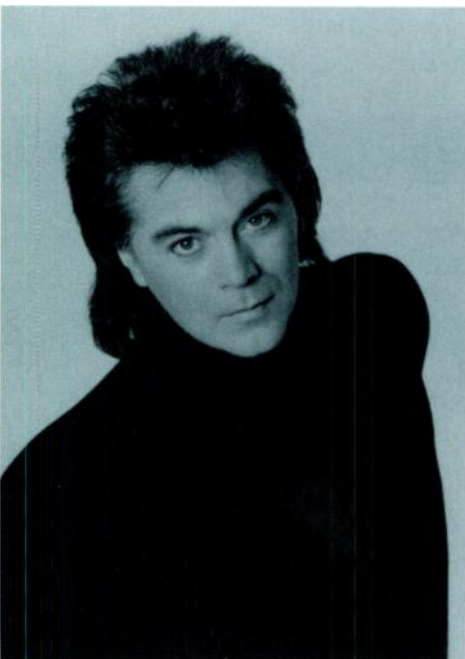
Somewhere in California there's a forgotten old Dodge truck with a camper on it that hauled Buck Owens & the Buckaroos from show to shining show.

If you scratched around in that camper, you'd probably find some of Don Rich's MAPES guitar strings, a button from a Nathan Turk cowboy suit, even a forgotten song or two. If you're

lucky, you will feel the spirit of Tom Brumley, Willie Cantu and Doyle Holley.

Tonight as Buck Owens looks down from the top of his world, I have to believe of all the memories he's created, some of the most cherished were those brief years when he and the band were out there like warriors, fighting the good fight, song by song helping make Country Music great.

Thank God for Buck Owens and The Buckaroos.



*And the spirit came down
Like a lonesome bird
He danced across the room
And whispered these words
"I'm in search of three hearts that beat tried and true
A Cowboy, A Sweetheart and a cool Buckaroo."*

- Marty Stuart

In addition to promoting today's Country Music around the world, MCA singer/songwriter Marty Stuart also serves as president of the Country Music Foundation, ensuring the preservation of Country Music's rich heritage.

**CMA
BROADCAST
AWARD
WINNERS
NAMED**

CMA congratulates the winners of

the 1996 CMA Broadcast Awards.

"The CMA Broadcast Awards have become the most respected and coveted in the industry because of the way in which they are judged.

We are pleased to acknowledge the outstanding contributions of these fine stations and personalities," said CMA executive director Ed Benson.

Following are the winners of the 1996 CMA Broadcast Awards:

Station of the Year
major market



KKQB
Houston, TX

large market



WSIX
Nashville, TN

medium market



WUSY
Chattanooga, TN

small market

GOOD TIMES & GREAT COUNTRY!



103.3

WTCR
Huntington, WV

Broadcast Personality of the Year

major market:

large market:

Tom Rivers
WQYK
Tampa, FL



Dixie Lee/
Skip Mahaffey
WCOL
Columbus, OH



medium market:

small market:

Bob Robbins
KSSN
Little Rock, AR



Dana Carole &
Mike Lawrence
KGEE
Odessa, TX



INTERNATIONAL UPDATE

★ The "30th Annual CMA Awards" will be seen and heard on the Armed Forces Radio and Television Service (AFRTS), which covers 135 countries and three U.S. territories. The CMA Awards have also been licensed to Denmark in addition to previously announced territories.

★ A new non-stop Country Music show, "Dalle Praterie Al Mare: Il Country In Riviera", has been created in Italy by Maurizio Benvenuti. For more information, contact Benvenuti at (39) 0721/34200.

★ A collection of 17 songs from artists such as Steve Earle, Kathy Mattea and Kim Richey, among others, is being released in the U.K. as the first volume in a series titled AMERICAN SONGBOOK. A 120 page full-color book featuring artist interviews, discographies and reviews is included with the CD or cassette. For more information, contact Richard Wootton or Claire Horton at 0181-542 8101.

★ Imprint Records recently signed a licensing agreement with Paradoxx Music for distribution of their products in Brazil. In addition to the Paradoxx agreement, Imprint has also entered into a licensing agreement with BMG-Canada.

★ VH-1 announced it will begin broadcasting in Scandinavia starting October 1. In addition, the network is planning to develop localized versions of VH-1 to replace the current VH-1 U.K. in countries outside of the United Kingdom.

★ CMT: Country Music Television has begun telecasting 24 hours a day in the U.K. and Europe via Astra ID, transponder (channel) 51, horizontal. CMT, which currently reaches over 46 million homes in over 50 countries, formerly had only limited hours in these areas and is expecting an increase in ratings from this added availability.

Thanks

CMA thanks the following members who recently recruited new members:

Chris Caravacci, Stephen Crosby, Dianna Maher, Diane Richey, Smokey Rivers, Tina Smith, Cynthia Whillington and Richard Wilkie.

AWARDS

Country Radio Broadcasters, Inc. is now accepting entries for excellence in Country radio promotion in its 10th Annual Promotion Awards competition. Awards will be presented to winners in the small, medium and large market categories, March 8, 1997 at the close of the 28th annual Country Radio Seminar to be held March 5 - 8, 1997 at the Opryland Hotel and Convention Center in Nashville. In order to be eligible for the contest, promotion must have been conducted between November '95 and November '96. CRB also will present its Artist Humanitarian and Radio Humanitarian Awards during CRS. The awards will be given in recognition of outstanding public service performed between November 1, 1995 and November 30, 1996.

CRB has awarded four \$5,000 scholarship to broadcasting majors currently enrolled in an accrediting broadcasting/mass communications program. The winners are Elizabeth Przymus, a senior at the University of Nebraska; Joy Andrea Snyder, a junior at Ball State University; and Anthony Lenzi and Paul Breton, both seniors at the University of Oregon. Additionally, a second-year scholarship was awarded to Chad Tyler Rice at Oklahoma State University. For more information, contact CRB at (615) 327-4487; fax (615) 329-4492.



A mischievous Wade Hayes takes charge of director Steven Goldmann on the set of his latest Columbia/DKC video, "Where Do I Go To Start All Over". The clip was shot on location near Palmdale, California.

quality, uncompressed editing.



"The Virtual Musician: A Complete Guide to Online Resources and Services", written by Brad Hill and published by Schirmer Books, is the first book about the Internet that is specifically addressed to musicians. The guide, which comes equipped with a CD-ROM, begins on a simple level and then progressively turns to more in-depth issues.

Hill, a musician and composer, has authored several books on music, technology, computers and telecommunications.



Brent Mason and Hot Licks Productions have released a new instructional video, "Nashville Chops & Western Swing Guitar", designed to teach some of Mason's signature playing techniques. Mason, recently signed to Mercury Nashville, covers styles of techniques of legendary players Jerry Reed, Chet Atkins, George Benson and Lenny Breau. For more information, call (800) 388-3008.



Author Janet Byron and St. Martin's Press collaborated on "The Country Music Lover's Guide To The U.S.A.", a guide to Country Music attractions and

MEDIA

Gary Chapman is the new host for TNN's "Prime Time Country", beginning Monday, October 7. Chapman is a Grammy Award-nominated performer who has won recognition in contemporary Christian circles for his songwriting, performing and producing. He is currently the Gospel Music Association's Male Vocalist of the Year.



Henninger Elite Post (HEP) recently installed a state-of-the-art Quantel (Editbox) editing suite at the company's Music Row location. The new edit suite offers clients options in non-linear editing previously available only in New York, Los Angeles, Chicago and Atlanta. The off-line suite enables HEP to provide digital, broadcast-

curiosities from Bakersfield, CA to Bell Buckle, TN. This state-by-state guide covers museums, halls of fame, birthplaces, Country Music shows and other highlights in more than 35 states, plus selected sites in Canada.

NEW COMPANIES

Pam Tillis will host the annual **DreamMakers Celebrity Waiters Luncheon** at the Wildhorse Saloon on Tuesday, October 15. The luncheon benefits DreamMakers, a non-profit organization that grants wishes to area children with life-threatening illnesses. The event, which also includes a celebrity memorabilia auction, gives fans an opportunity to mingle with celebrities from music, sports and entertainment. For more information, call (615) 327-2747.

nu.millennia, inc. has entered into a distribution deal with **BMG Distribution** for their new artists via record channels. nu.millennia, inc., the first multimedia record label, also specializes in producing and distributing enhanced CDs.

Country Radio Broadcasters, Inc. has unveiled its website, which can be accessed through the Internet. The site, located at www.crb.org, features CRB-related information as well as information on the annual Country Radio Seminar.

Blake Mevis Music and Lapis Management announced they have joined forces to develop new artists. Mevis will oversee all production and artistic duties, while **Charlie Rodgers**

and **Vena Seibert** will supervise all management areas. The companies are piloting the career of Atlantic singer **Mila Mason**. For more information, call (615) 329-9186; fax (615) 321-5179.

Hamstein Cumberland Music and parent company **Hamstein Music** have moved to 914 18th Avenue South, Nashville, TN 37203; (615) 320-9971; fax (615) 322-9288.

Dick McVey and **Lou Byrd** have relocated **ABM Recording Studio** to 903 18th Avenue South, Nashville, TN 37203. The new 1200-square-foot location is refurbished and features a drum isolation booth, two tracking rooms, control room, kitchen and lounge area. For more information, call (615) 259-0701; fax (615) 259-0708.

Crystal Clear Sound Music Distribution and **Crystal Clear Sound/Steve Record Labels** have moved to 10486 Brockwood Road, Dallas, TX 75238. The phone number is (214) 349-5707; fax (214) 349-3819.



During his recent number one party for "Don't Get Me Started", Decca's Rhett Akins shared the stage with his son, Thomas Rhett, who delivered his own winsome rendition of the tune.

ON THE MOVE

Bill Johnson has been promoted to vice president, creative services, for **Sony Music Nashville**. Johnson was most recently senior creative director for the company. **Dean Broadhead** was promoted to vice president, marketing & artist development. Broadhead, formerly vice president, marketing and artist development, Epic Records Nashville, will be responsible for the creation and implementation of artist development, advertising and video development.

John Briggs and **Ralph Murphy** have each been appointed to assistant vice president to **ASCAP**. Briggs, who most recently served as Nashville director of membership relations, will continue to oversee the signing of new members from all genres of music, as well as assisting writers and publishers with the royalty and distribution process. Murphy, who was Nashville director of creative services, will continue to act as liaison between ASCAP



Patty Loveless and director Gerry Wenner discuss filming strategy for the video of "Lonely Too Long". Produced by Planet Pictures, the Epic clip was shot at the Shaker Museum in South Union, Kentucky.

members and will sign new writers and publishers.



Andrew Vaughan, formerly editor of COUNTRY MUSIC INTERNATIONAL magazine, has been named director, public relations, GWSC Europe. Vaughan, who is based in the company's London office, is responsible for public relations and press relations for CMT: Country Music Television throughout Europe.



Rick Shedd has joined the staff of Arista/Nashville as senior director of sales. Shedd, formerly sales manager of BMC Distribution in Minneapolis, will oversee all sales activities of Arista/Nashville, Career Records and Arista/Texas.



Chad Schultz has been upped to Southwest regional promotion manager for Mercury Nashville. Schultz, previously national GAVIN promotion coordinator, has worked on promotion and campaigns for artists Clint Black, Lorrie Morgan and David Lee Murphy.

Angela Hart has been named Reunion Records' public relations manager. Hart, formerly of The Press Network, will be responsible for creating and implementing the master publicity plan for the label as well as overseeing national media for the artist roster.



Pamela J. Marcy has joined Image Management Group, Inc. as associate manager. Marcy previously was associate manager with International Management Services and Chip Peay Entertainment.



Don DeGregorio, **Matt Woodard** and **Lara Mansell** have joined the staff at Country Club Enterprizes (CCE). DeGregorio, previously with Pony Express in New York, has been hired on as manager of national promotion. Woodard will be the executive assistant to Wynn Jackson, and Mansell will serve as project coordinator.



Chip Hardy has been promoted to vice president/creative services at Hamstein Cumberland Music Group. Hardy joined the company as professional manager in 1992.



Steve Baker has joined the staff of AristoMedia as video marketing assistant. Prior to joining the company, Baker was the national radio promotions manager for First Media Communications. Baker will act as a liaison between video outlets with radio station tie-ins and other key video outlets across the U.S.



P.J. Olsen has been appointed to director of regional promotion/West Coast for Decca Records. Olsen was the national director of adult contemporary promotion for MCA Records for the last three years.



Steve Goetzman has signed on with The Bobby Roberts Company, Inc. as vice president, sharing in artist management duties. Goetzman, previously Arista Records' manager of office services and executive assistant to Tim DuBois, will oversee operations, acquisition of new talent and take an active role in the company planning. Also joining the company are **Mike Mascioli** as agent representative for the Western U.S. and Canada and **Dana Fiser** as marketing manager. **Travis James** has been promoted from agent assistant to agent representative for the mid-section of the U.S.



Happy & Gene Anderson of A-Team Promotions, a Nashville-based publicity and promotions

TALENT POOL

CALVIN GILMORE

Owner, Calvin Gilmore Productions



On May 2, 1986, Calvin Gilmore opened "The Carolina Opry" in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, launching what many consider to be the premiere entertainment venue on the Eastern seaboard. In the ensuing decade, Calvin has added to his entertainment holdings with The Dixie Jubilee, Candock Recording Studio and other ventures, such as the new Serenade Show in Charleston, that attract thousands of tourists each year to the Carolina region.

"I've always been a singer," Calvin says. Growing up in the Ozarks, he aspired to a career in entertainment. He moved to Nashville to seek a record deal and soon realized that if he wanted to get his songs heard, he had to demo them himself.

"I decided that I needed to raise enough money to finance my recording career, so I got in the real estate business. I was somewhat successful in the real estate business, started making some money. But after 10 years, I said, 'I don't want to be in real estate. I want to be in entertainment.'"

"I've always been a singer."

His real estate background not only brought the financial flexibility to open his own theater, it also provided him the insights to find the right market. Calvin had been to Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, a golf resort community. While the majority of tourists came to play golf, he realized there was a great void to be filled once the sun went down. When he opened The Carolina Opry in a 1,000-seat theatre, it was the only theatre in Myrtle Beach.

Today, The Carolina Opry is housed in a 2,200-seat, state-of-the-art facility, built in 1992. And although Calvin and his talented cast still pack the audiences night after night, he doesn't foresee building a larger theatre. "People don't come to Myrtle Beach to come to live shows. They come for golf and the beach, and it's a nice by-product that we can get them out to the show."

"Golf is to Myrtle Beach what theaters are to Branson."

When he came up with the idea of live entertainment, the community thought he was out of his mind, because they didn't think anybody would go see a live concert without food or alcohol being served. "There were a lot of skeptics. Fortunately, we were able to prove them wrong. In fact, we were the only real entertainment going for seven years. Now that's all changed with the other theatres. We're sort of on dangerous ground right now, because we don't have a critical mass here to attract people for entertainment. The market is really overbuilt now."

Many compare Myrtle Beach to Branson.

"When people say that, they're talking about entertainment or talking about theaters. There are a lot more people coming to Myrtle Beach than Branson, but it's for different reasons. Golf is to Myrtle Beach what theaters are to Branson. Most people here play golf. Golf courses haven't been too successful in Branson."

Calvin's vision is far greater than just the Carolina region. In 1993, he formed a strategic partnership with The Family Channel and MTM Enterprises. Country fans will recall seeing numerous Country Music specials - taped at The Carolina Opry - on the Family Channel.

"Of course the benefits are deep pockets and staying power. Our goal in aligning ourselves with a major network was to create value in our theaters, in our artists. Right now we are not getting much use of that network (due to changes in personnel). The people who came in and were so committed to it in the beginning are not there now. So it's like a whole new set of people. We just keep pitching new ideas, and it's just a wait and see. We just have to wait until somebody says okay we like this and we'll do it. But it remains a tool, an asset."

Another business venture he would like to get into is that of a record company.

"I'm looking to activate a record label and have been talking to several majors in Nashville. Hopefully within the next year or so, we'll be able to make an announcement. A record company is a good way to expose people to what's going on here. There's some really great talent here that people don't see otherwise."

But with all the operations Calvin has to oversee, audiences still find him onstage during every show at The Carolina Opry. "I came here to be a singer. That's what it's all about. I'm here because I'm in it for the singing. As a part of the business, I had to get into a lot of other things, but being in business is a by-product. It just lets me get up on stage, and that's what I really love to do."

- Janet E. Williams

COUNTRY MUSIC



mark hagen

VH-1 Europe's Mark Hagen (also a contributor to MOJO and COUNTRY MUSIC INTERNATIONAL) presents an on-the-spot view of Country Music across the Atlantic. A Country Music advocate, Mark is responsible for Country's presence on VH-1 Europe and does frequent reviews for publications. He is this year's recipient of CMA's Wesley Rose International Media Achievement Award.

We're not like you guys,

OK? We live in a world where refill coffee is not free, where service is something you do to your car and where Emmylou Harris sells a lot more records than Shania Twain. In our world, a man can go out on a Monday night and see green-haired punks pogoing to the songs of Merle Haggard as performed by BR5-49 or hear teen dance group MN8 sing the songs of Marcus Hummon.

It's a world where The Mavericks are all over VH-1 like a rash and where Garth Brooks sings his heart out on MTV's hippest show. Where John Berry can bring the German Rock Am Ring festival to its knees armed only with an acoustic guitar and a big voice, where Martina McBride can bring herself and a hushed English theatre to tears over a Scottish tragedy and where Steve Earle can bring rappers, rockers and reggae stars to the same studio and have a hit with the result. It's a world of potential, and it's only a couple of flights and a three-hour layover in Detroit away.

But despite the funny money, never being quite sure which side of the road to drive on and the fact that European beer is just a touch stronger than the domestic variety, you do seem to like us, at least if the last year is anything to go by. It began and ended with the Divine Ms. H., who played a startling series of European shows in support of her indisputably classic WRECKING BALL album, a record on the verge of gold status here and which marks yet another renaissance in the career of this remarkable performer and national treasure. From huge outdoor festivals to intimate nightclub sets, Emmy and her band (which latterly included the phenomenal Buddy Miller) were simply the best.



dead reckoning

Some of the boards trod by Emmylou in the course of 1995-96 belonged to London's Shepherds Bush Empire, an old music hall now converted to live music after many years as a BBC-TV Studio.

On the night that Travis Tritt came to town, you could have sworn that it was a Georgia roadhouse, such was the reaction that his debut U.K. performance whipped up. Pensioners and pre-teens alike revelled in the soldout show, and those scenes were repeated throughout Europe as the barnstorming bill (which included Victoria Shaw and Confederate Railroad) cut a swath across the continent.

Giving the airlines the most cash had to be the Dead Reckoning roster, who popped up every three or four months in a bewildering variety of combinations; hollering the iniquities of the royalty payments to Bo Diddley or tracing the delicate path of Scots and Irish folk melodies across the Atlantic, they were a constant delight. In a similar vein were the all too brief Euro jaunts of Dave Alvin, Gillian Welch, together with David Rawlings, and Stephen Bruton. If only Garth had played some shows! At least the Spanish soccer sweat-shirt won him a lot of friends.

emmylou harris



AROUND THE WORLD



BR5-49

High on the list of people we'd like to have back as soon as possible are BR5-49 and The Delevantes. The eponymous Bob'n'Mike found out the hard way that European audiences take their Country very seriously - apparently 12,000 Dutchmen hanging on your every word is a bit alarming! And as for those BR boys...I doubt if Hamburg has been rocked like that since John Lennon was doing unspeakable things to nuns back in the dawn of time.

Mary Chapin Carpenter and Lyle Lovett on the same bill was a marriage made in heaven, as was the George and Tammy roadshow (just ask Elvis Costello and Nick Lowe) and the Martina McBride/Ty England pairing. Alison Krauss won our hearts, Steve Earle rocked our socks off, and Shania hasn't

steve earle



played here yet either.

Video hits came from Junior Brown, the epic Dwight, Reba's Country summit and that strangely familiar woman in the leopardskin and rhinestones who used to be Trisha Yearwood, not to mention Jo Dee Messina and

the awesomely promising Paul Brandt (although I'm not sure about that bloke kissing the fish; he looks more like the sort of person who would write the music for films of a dubious nature). Records we loved: John Berry's FAITHFULLY, made especially for us; Gretchen Peter's peerless THE SECRET OF LIFE; Dale Watson's CHEATIN' HEART ATTACK and BLESSED OR DAMNED and Willie's indomitable SPIRIT. And my tip for the top: George Ducas.

But in the end, the European Country year could only belong to The Mavericks. By common consent the band most likely to break it big over here, they came, we saw, they conquered. A chart album, a sold-out tour and a guitarist who used to live in Surrey...how could they fail? Even in Spain, a country not previously known for its wholehearted embrace of all things twangy, the streets were thronged with people desperate for tickets, autographs or at least a glimpse of Robert Reynolds' increasingly bizarre trousers. The Mavericks knew that the way forward was to get to that audience that didn't yet know they liked Country Music and that if they did that, the rest would - and will - follow. It didn't do them a tremendous disservice that in Robert and Paul Deakin, they have the best (and funniest) ambassadors for the music that it is possible to have, a journalist's dream and a viewer's delight. If Country makes a great European leap forward in the next couple of years, then these are the people who have forged the trail. Them, and Robert's grandmother Millie. Never, and I mean *never*, try to outlast her in a bar. **CU**

the delevantes





Ray Price, one of Country Music's most influential performers, celebrates his induction into the Country Music Hall of Fame this year. Still playing 150 dates a year, the famed Cherokee Cowboy reflected on his storied career during a 12-hour layover in Nashville to appear on "Prime Time Country".

CU: *Since you've been responsible for so many classics, you must know the secret of what it takes for a song to be a classic.*

RAY: It's got to be something that grabs you right off the bat. Something that touches something way down deep inside and keeps your attention and just builds and builds and builds. When you get through hearing it you say, "Oh, I want to hear that again." Time after time, maybe for hours, you're still listening to it, you drive everybody on the bus crazy! We've been real lucky. I've got some good songs. I must have listened to 10 million, but a good song is where you find it. It's like a good boss or a good woman.

CU: *What's the latest Ray Price record?*

RAY: Well, I've been recording in Spanish in the last year or two. We've done an album in Spanish. It's a great album. We're trying to figure out the market, how we can get it out there. We took a bunch of them over to Ernest Tubb (Record Shop), and they've been selling the devil out of them. It's kind of surprised us. The most beautiful songs of the last 50 or 100 years of Mexico, and I used strictly a Mexican group. In fact with my show, I use a Mariachi band.

CU: *Do you speak Spanish?*

RAY: I speak it a little bit but not enough. I understand a whole lot more than I speak. But Blondie (my bandleader) has taught me. I've known him for 30 years. For about five years, he kept bringing Mexican newspapers on the

bus with him and would say, "Here, read this for me." And what he was doing was getting me ready.

CU: *That's a clever way to get you speaking Spanish.*

RAY: Well, we're really good friends. In Mexican, you're "compadres", which means the very closest of friends. When I first hired him, my band wanted me to fire him after about three or four days, so I put him in charge of the band.

CU: *You must have heard some fussing then!*

RAY: Not long - he fired all of them.

CU: *Any regrets?*

RAY: If I've done anything to hurt anybody's feelings, I do - I have regrets. I ask for forgiveness for that. I don't know what I've done, but if I have, I want them to forgive me and go on with it. I'm too old to change now. I can't back up...Everyone has regrets, doing dumb things. Sometimes I think of the dumb things I've done and almost break down and laugh.

CU: *You've recorded so many incredible songs. Do you have a special favorite?*

RAY: It's really hard for me to say. "For The Good Times" is a great song, and I love doing it, and I love "Spanish Eyes". I like all of my songs, but every now and then there's one that I especially like to do that didn't do too much. Willie (Nelson) wrote it... "Should Be Easier Now". It's a beautiful song. (sings) *Now that I've made up my mind that you're gone, it should be easier now, perhaps now my heart can stop hanging on and it should be easier now.* Beautiful song.

CU: *Willie was just one of the many people who came out of your band.*

"I learned a lot
by watching
and listening"

RAY: Roger Miller, Johnny Paycheck, Buddy Owens, Jimmy Davis...Jimmy's back in the band now...Dale McCart, Johnny Bush...Yeah, I had some good musicians.

CU: *What did you see in Willie Nelson when you hired him?*

RAY: I had a production company with some partners, not just me...Al Smith and I. Willie was one of our writers. Paycheck was kind of young and wanted to go out on his own. We needed a bass player, and Willie said, "I'm willing". He looked funny in Paycheck's uniform. Willie was always a great musician and a great entertainer. We've been friends all the time. Willie was one of the first to recognize the fact that I did help him and all the musicians...I thought they were good, and they proved it.

CU: *You had such an impact on so many careers. Who had an impact on yours?*

RAY: I was brought here by Hank Williams. Hank and I had an instant friendship. I lived with Hank for about a year, upstairs, he lived downstairs. When he left here and went to Shreveport, The Drifting Cowboys and I got together. Some of them wanted to go with him, but their homes were here, their wives were here. It made it tough. The band went with me, and (people said) I sounded like Hank. But I didn't sound like Hank at all. The band sounded like Hank. One night in Grand Junction, Colorado, somebody said, "Boy, you sound just like old Hank, and I sure am proud." That night, me and the band broke up. I told them, "I love you all, but I've got to sound like I want to sound."

I would have to say Hank...Ernest Tubb had a great influence. Roy Acuff had an influence. I was lucky. I came along at the time when there were a lot of great ones, and I learned a lot by watching and listening.

CU: *It was a smaller community then.*

RAY: All a family, honey, it was all a family. We may be a little nippy at one another every now and then, but it was all a family. When someone got hurt, we all was there. It's not no more. Everything turned to hype, and people got sick of it. The pitiful part is that the stars that were are going to have the worst problem now. We got to do something. Maybe some will make it, but like I said the family was what we were made of and that's the truth. When the big money starts coming in, the heart goes out.

CU: *In the middle of your career, you changed your sound and took Country Music to a new level.*

RAY: I took it with me, and I've still got it with me. I never left. I never turned my back on it.

CU: Did a lot of people accuse you of that?

RAY: Yeah, and it hurt a lot. When a lot of my friends, or so-called friends, made vows about Country Music, that hurt me more. I was doing what I felt like they (the fans) wanted to hear, and I'm still doing it. I'm 70 years old. I'm still packing the house. I'm proud of the (Hall of Fame) award. I'm proud of everything that is happening. I am just glad they're finally kind of backing up a bit and said well maybe we were wrong. That's all it takes.

CU: *Did you ever doubt yourself?*

RAY: No, I knew what I was doing. I had to do it. I don't know why I had to do it, but I did it. And I'm proud of it. That's just the way it is.

CU: *It's hard to believe people said you turned your back on Country Music.*

"Country Music is beautiful songs. Why not do the best for it you can?"

RAY: Country Music is beautiful songs. Why not do the best for it you can? It costs you a little money, but give up a little bit, you

know. When I asked Clive Davis, "Please let me do 'Danny Boy' the way I want to do it. I promise you, you won't be sorry," he looked me right in the eye and said go for it! And I did - 42 pieces, and everybody loved it.

CU: *You're still on the road more than you're at home. Do you think you're ever going to quit?*

RAY: I hope I don't have to. I probably will slow down, but I hope I won't have to. I'm interested in maybe Branson next year. I've been real successful everytime I've gone up there, and we're gonna try to go back. We're looking at two theatres. One of them I think we'll get, and then I will do 300 shows next year.

CU: *But in one place for the most part.*

RAY: For the most part. Not every day. But I want to do it. I won't deny the fact that it would be easier sitting down than it will be running up and down the road!

- Janet E. Williams

“Ray Price deserves everything that our industry bestows upon him. He's one of the creators and founders of our music today. I enjoyed every day I spent working with Ray when I was getting started. He taught me many valuable rules of the music, and I am indebted to him. He's like all treasures - he can't be replaced, only admired and respected.”
- Johnny Paycheck

SONG of the Year CMA AWARDS NOMINEES



"ANY MAN OF MINE"

Shania Twain / R.J. Lange

Shania Twain and her reclusive songwriter/producer/husband R.J. "Mutt" Lange collaborated for one of the most popular songs to be released in 1995. "Any Man Of Mine" is the '90s version of "I Am Woman", offering a straightforward directive on how a modern woman can assert herself with the man in her life. Shania says Mutt helped her become confident about her songwriting. "He said, 'I want to keep this as much you as I can. It's important that your personality and your character come out in this music.' 'Any Man if Mine'...those are things that I would say. It is part of my daily dialogue, the way I talk. I am very frank and demanding that way. We meet in an area where I am already myself, and he works with that."

"CHECK YES OR NO"

Danny M. Wells /
Dana Hunt Oglesby

When songwriters learn that George Strait is recording their song, they usually experience elation and relief, knowing that the smooth vocals of the Texas stylist often results in tunes that quickly become popular with both fans and critics. For Danny M. Wells and Dana Hunt Oglesby, learning that Strait was ready to record "Check Yes Or No" was perhaps the ultimate songwriting experience, especially since it was the first cut for each. Danny, who once toiled in the Warner Bros. mailroom, never relinquished his dream of songwriting. Even while working in corporate promotions, he kept putting pen to paper, teaming up with Dana Hunt Oglesby to write what would become one of the biggest songs of 1995. Dana, a former professional water skier, brought her own brand of determination to Music City. As she says, "This is a great start, but I know I haven't written my best song yet. I'm still learning."



"GO REST HIGH ON THAT MOUNTAIN"

Vince Gill

Vince Gill, who already has CMA Song of the Year awards to his credit for "When I Call Your Name", "Look At Us" and "I Still Believe In You", calls "Go Rest High On That Mountain" the song that "means more to me than anything I've ever done." He started the song in 1989, just weeks after Keith Whitley's death, but put the song away out of respect for the late singer. Following the 1993 death of his brother Bob, Vince remembered the unfinished tune. "Losing my brother gave me a really valid reason to finish it," he told COUNTRY AMERICA. "When he passed away, I brought it back out (because I needed) to deal with this emotion...I know how positive that song is. I know what it

did for me a in a positive way, dealing with something as sad as losing somebody."



"KEEPER OF THE STARS"

Dickey Lee / Karen Staley / Danny Mayo

Veteran Dickey Lee teamed with Music City stalwart Karen Staley and publicity-shy Danny Mayo to write what is quickly becoming one of the most enduring love songs Country Music has offered in decades, "Keeper Of The Stars". Dickey Lee signed his first recording contract in 1957, finding fame with the heartfelt hit "Patches" a few years later. He also wrote another classic, "She Thinks I Still Care", which Elvis Presley pledged to one day record. He did so shortly before his death in 1977. Karen Staley recently signed a recording contract of her own with Warner Bros. Other hits in her discography include "Take Me As I Am", "Let's Go To Vegas", "Face In The Crowd" and "She Took It Like A Man", the latter with Danny Mayo. During his career as a hit tunesmith, Danny has become one of Music Row's mystery men, preferring to write songs instead of enjoying the limelight that frequently accompanies success. He's also written "Feed Jake", "If I Had You" and "Jesus And Mama".



"TIME MARCHES ON"

Bobby Braddock

With 12 number one hits to his credit, it's no wonder that Bobby Braddock is one of Country Music's most in-demand songwriters. He came to Music City not as a tunesmith, however, but as a piano player for the legendary Marty Robbins. Shortly after teaming with Curly Putman, Bobby found himself in the songwriting spotlight with a sky-rocketing Tammy Wynette hit, "D-I-V-O-R-C-E". He and Putman also collaborated on "He Stopped Loving Her Today", which garnered CMA Song of the Year Award in 1980 and 1981. The youngest songwriter ever elected to the NSAI Songwriters Hall of Fame, Bobby is known for his distinctive lyrics and creative melodies. "Time Marches On" is just one of the tunes the Florida native has composed as a result of his burning interest in Americana. His discography boasts cuts spanning three decades, including classics "Golden Ring", "Hard Times" and "Texas Tornado".



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DATEBOOK

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OCTOBER

- 1** BMI Country Awards / Nashville
- 2** 30th Annual CMA Awards / Grand Ole Opry House / Nashville
- 3-5** SRO / Nashville Convention Center / Nashville
- 3** CMA Annual Membership Meeting / Nashville Convention Center / Nashville
- 3** SESAC Country Awards / Nashville
- 20** 8th Annual Country Gold Festival / Aspetta / Kumamoto, Japan / Contact Judy Seale, Refugee International at (615) 256-6615

NOVEMBER

- 13-14** CMA Board of Directors Meeting / Brown Hotel / Louisville, KY



The members of Lonestar dropped by CMA recently to present Ed Benson, executive director, with a gold album of their self-titled BNA debut.

- photo by Glen Rose