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Hank Snow/Jeannie C. Riley**

AMERICA'S NUMBER ONE COUNTRY PUBLICATION

DECEMBER, 1980 \$1.50

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HEAD GAMES

24325

**Waylon Jennings**



Armed Forces  
Armed

34320

**FLEETWOOD MAC**  
RUMOURS



24025



Fleetwood Mac

- KENNY ROGERS 4 2 8 5 4  
THE GAMBLER
- SPINNERS 3 4 1 9 3  
DANCIN' & LOVIN'
- BEST OF THE BEST 3 3 5 0 5  
MERLE HAGGARD
- BARBARA MANDRELL 3 4 3 7 5  
MOODS
- EAGLES 2 3 4 8 1  
GREATEST HITS 1971-1975
- SISTER SLEDGE 4 4 3 9 0  
LOVE SOMEBODY TODAY
- FOREIGNER 2 4 0 7 3
- CHIC 3 3 5 2 6  
RISQUE
- FREDDY FENDER 3 3 3 5 2  
Before The Next Teardrop Falls
- TAVARES 3 3 7 4 0  
SUPERCHARGED
- THE KENDALLS 3 4 1 8 4  
JUST LIKE REAL PEOPLE
- JIM ED BROWN 2 4 5 8 1  
HELEN CORNELIUS  
I'LL NEVER BE FREE
- FLEETWOOD MAC 3 4 2 9 1  
TUSK
- QUEEN 1 4 6 0 9  
LIVE KILLERS
- DONNA SUMMER 4 4 0 7 9  
ON THE RADIO / GREATEST HITS  
VOL. 1 & 2
- THE GRAND OLE OPRY 0 4 4 4 2  
1926-1974
- ELVIS' WORLDWIDE 1 3 6 9  
Gold Award HITS  
Parts 1 & 2
- BARRY MANILOW 2 3 2 9 5  
GREATEST HITS
- BEACH BOYS 2 3 5 5 9  
ENDLESS SUMMER

- BARRY MANILOW 4 4 2 1 5  
EVEN NOW
- BOB SEGER 4 3 9 3 4  
AND THE SILVER BULLET BAND  
NIGHT MOVES
- CRYSTAL GAYLE 4 2 5 7 3  
WHEN I DREAM
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COMMUNIQUE
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FALLING IN LOVE AGAIN
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WHAT CHA GONNA DO  
WITH MY LOVIN'
- THE STATLER BROTHERS 2 1 6 7 2  
ENTERTAINERS  
ON AND OFF THE RECORD
- NEIL SEDAKA SINGS 2 4 1 7 1  
His Greatest Hits
- THE BEST OF 3 0 6 4 2  
DONNA FARGO
- BROTHERS JOHNSON 3 4 0 1 6  
LIGHT UP THE NIGHT
- KENNY ROGERS 3 4 3 5 3  
TEN YEARS OF GOLD
- DR. HOOK 1 4 5 3 6  
PLEASURE & PAIN
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SHORT HAIRIES
- 38 SPECIAL 2 4 4 8 5  
ROCKIN' INTO THE NIGHT
- RONNIE MILSAP 3 3 4 1 8  
IT WAS ALMOST LIKE A SONG
- BEST OF 3 3 5 0 8  
DOLLY PARTON
- VILLAGE PEOPLE 2 4 2 7 6  
CRUISIN'
- ABBA 5 4 2 3 9  
GREATEST HITS VOL. 2
- DAVE & SUGAR 5 3 9 3  
STAY WITH ME / GOLDEN TEARS
- ANNE MURRAY 2 3 6 6 3  
LET'S KEEP IT THAT WAY

- CHUCK MANGIONE 3 3 6 7 9  
FEELS SO GOOD
- VILLAGE PEOPLE 4 1 8 7 6  
MACHO MAN
- WAYLON JENNINGS 3 2 1 4 2  
"LIVE"
- WAYLON 3 3 2 3 1  
GREATEST HITS
- GLEN CAMPBELL'S 2 4 1 0 7  
SHEA
- FOGHAT 3 4 0 2 9  
LIVE
- GREASE 3 3 6 0 6  
Original Broadway Cast
- WARREN ZEVON 2 2 8 7 4  
BAD LUCK / BREAK IN  
DANCING SCHOOL
- ROY CLARK'S 2 3 6 4 4  
GREATEST HITS
- COMMODORES 1 3 9 4 5  
MIDNIGHT MAGIC
- NAZARETH 4 3 9 9 9  
MALICE IN WONDERLAND
- ABBA 4 4 1 0 8  
VOULEZ-VOUS
- RONNIE MILSAP 3 3 7 3 5  
IMAGES
- LINDA RONSTADT 2 3 6 6 6  
LIVING IN THE U.S.A.
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LIVE  
AT THE GRAND OLE OPRY
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CROSS
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HEAVEN'S JUST A SIN AWAY
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MINUTE BY MINUTE
- HELEN REDDY 3 2 3 0 2  
GREATEST HITS
- JOHN CONLEE 1 4 6 3 9  
ROSE COLORED GLASSES
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GREATEST HITS  
1974-1978
- STYX 3 0 3 9 5  
PIECES OF EIGHT
- DON WILLIAMS 3 4 3 3 6  
EXPRESSIONS
- VAN HALEN II 4 3 3 4 1
- KENNY ROGERS 3 4 3 5 7  
OAYTIME FRIENDS
- CAMEO 2 3 5 6 7  
SECRET OMEN

- STYX 4 2 4 0 6  
CORNERSTONE
- THE BEST OF THE 1 3 5 7 2  
STATLER BROTHERS
- EAGLES 3 0 0 3 0  
HOTEL CALIFORNIA
- DIANA ROSS 4 3 7 3 3  
THE BOSS
- BEST OF THE 4 3 7 3 8  
DOOBIES
- KENNY ROGERS 4 3 8 0 9
- LITTLE RIVER BAND 3 3 7 7 3  
FIRST UNDER THE WIRE
- ABBA 1 3 6 8 2  
GREATEST HITS
- ANNE MURRAY 3 4 1 1 7  
NEW KIND OF FEELING
- BEST OF THE 2 3 9 4 6  
BEACH BOYS
- PROFILE: BEST OF 1 3 9 7 5  
EMMYLOU HARRIS
- NAZARETH 3 3 7 4 7  
HEAVEN'S JUST A SIN AWAY
- DOLLY PARTON 3 4 1 3 4  
HERE YOU COME AGAIN
- SUPERTRAMP 5 3 6 1 4  
BRIKFAST IN AMERICA
- THE BEST OF 2 4 2 7 4  
DON WILLIAMS, VOL. II
- ROCKY 2 2 8 6 8  
ORIGINAL MOTION  
PICTURE SOUNDTRACK
- RONNIE MILSAP 3 3 5 4 9  
ONLY ONE LOVE IN MY LIFE
- TOM JONES' 2 3 6 7 4  
GREATEST HITS
- CHRIS REA 4 4 3 7 1  
ROCKY SERVICE
- THE WEEPERS 3 4 2 9 9
- JIM ED BROWN 5 3 5 5 5  
& HELEN CORNELIUS  
YOU DON'T BRING ME FLOWERS
- THE BEST OF 1 4 9 1 3  
FREDDY FENDER
- RICKIE LEE JONES 4 3 1 9 7
- ROGER WHITTAKER 2 4 4 4 4  
VOYAGER
- CRYSTAL GAYLE 3 3 5 6 2  
WE MUST BELIEVE IN MAGIC
- CONWAY TWITTY'S 2 3 4 1 9  
GREATEST HITS

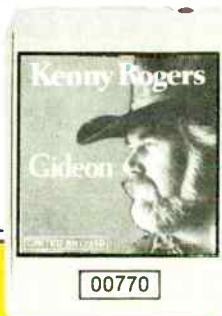
- ROBIN WILLIAMS 0 3 4 2 0  
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WE SHOULD  
BE TOGETHER
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JUST FOR THE RECORD
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DOUBLE VISION
- RUD STEWART 3 4 0 8 8  
BLONDES HAVE  
MORE FUN
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OBEY YOUR BELLIE
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SWEET MEMORIES
- STYX 3 0 4 5 3  
THE GRAND ILLUSION
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FLY LIKE AN EAGLE
- KC AND THE 5 0 0 2 8  
SUNSHINE BAND
- KC AND THE 3 7 0 0 0  
SUNSHINE BAND
- RAY GOODMAN 2 4 5 4 3  
& BROWN
- BEST OF MEL TILLIS 2 4 4 5 3  
& STATESIDERS
- ABBA 2 4 2 3 7  
THE ALBUM
- KENNY ROGERS 3 2 8 6 4  
AND DOTTIE WEST
- WAYLON AND WILLIE 3 4 2 3 4
- THE ENOVS 3 3 2 0 1  
BED WEDDING
- THE KNACK 4 2 1 1 0  
GET THE KNACK
- KC & THE SUNSHINE BAND 3 4 3 2 3  
GREATEST HITS
- THE CARS 2 3 3 3 4  
CANDY-O
- DOLLY PARTON 4 3 3 5 9  
GREAT BALLS OF FIRE
- THE KINKS 3 3 5 5 4  
LOW BUDGET
- CHIC'S 3 3 7 1 3  
GREATEST HITS
- VILLAGE PEOPLE 4 2 4 8 7  
GO WEST
- EDDIE RABBITT 3 3 2 9 9  
LOVELINE



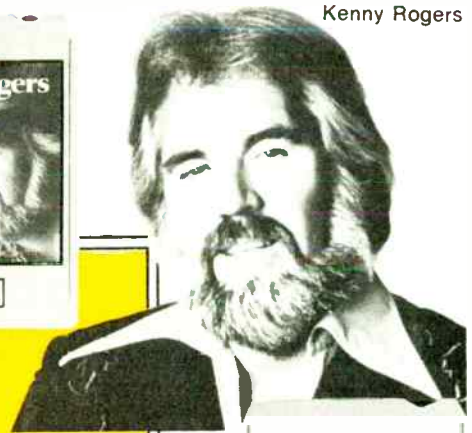
Waylon Jennings



Foreigner



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Kenny Rogers



32320



Barry Manilow

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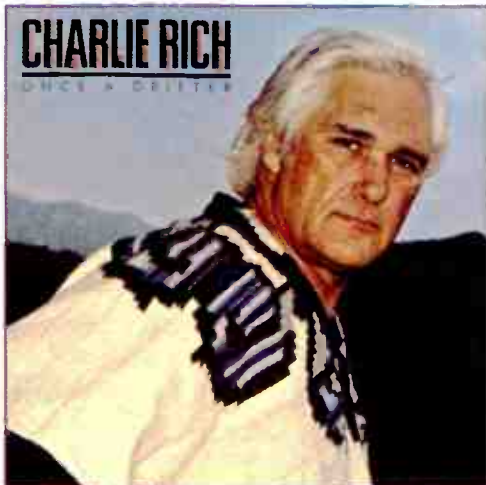
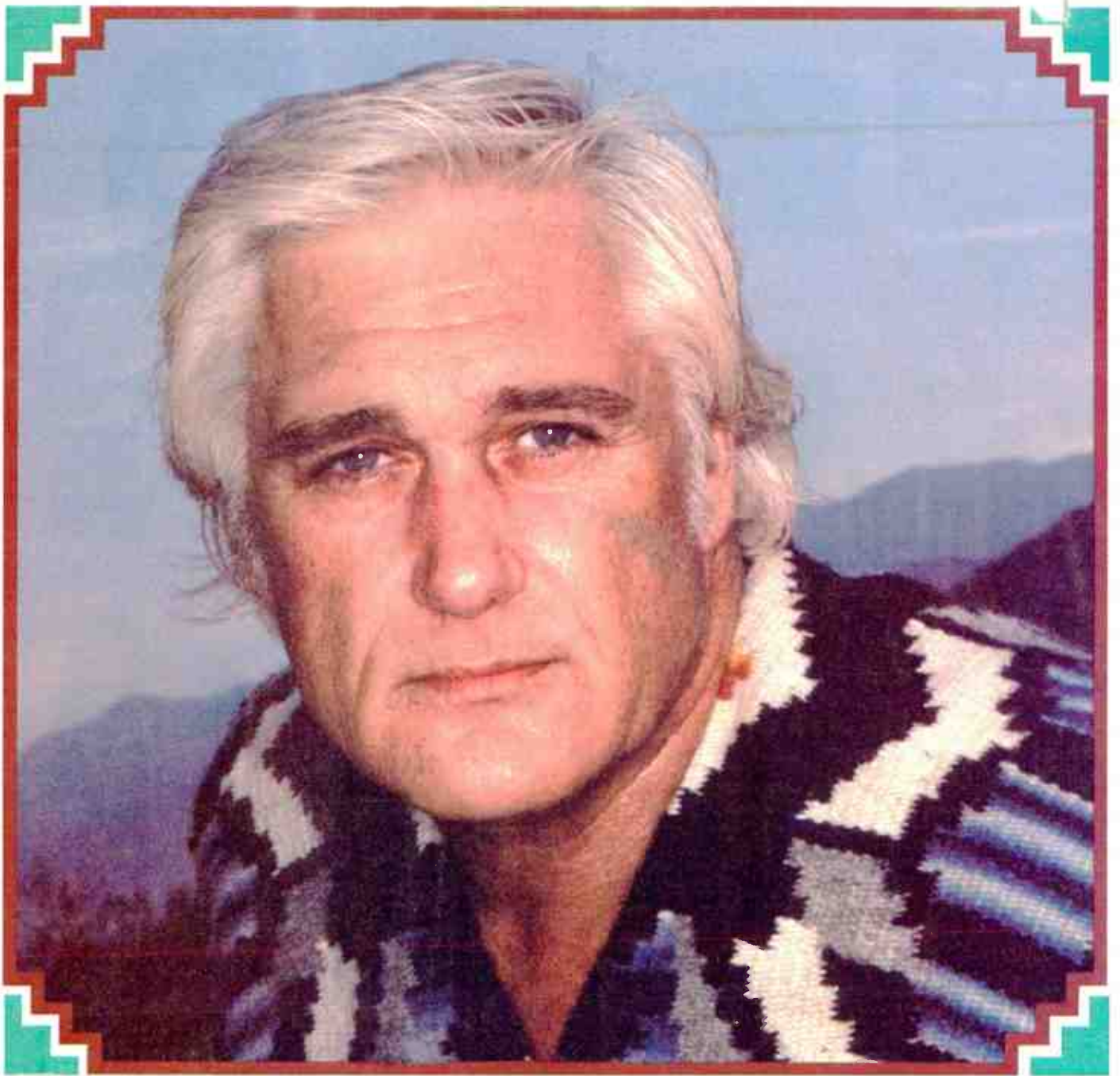
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Featuring "A Man Just Don't Know What A Woman Goes Through."  
Produced by Jim Ed Norman for Hin-Jen Productions



# Letters

## Willie The Movie Star

I just read your article about Willie Nelson in *Honeysuckle Rose*. I liked it so much I went to see the movie and I absolutely loved it. There were parts where I laughed and parts that brought tears to my eyes. Willie did a great job of acting and I was surprised by the job Dyan Cannon did. I also purchased the soundtrack. I would recommend that all Willie Nelson fans, and all country music fans in general see it.

C. SHUSTER  
ELY, MINNESOTA

As a subscriber of *Country Music*, I've enjoyed many articles in your magazine. But now I would like to make a comment on the article published in the October issue by Bob Allen concerning Willie Nelson. I am very disappointed in your magazine for what appears to be the casual acceptance of drug use by Willie Nelson. The smoking of joints and the term "stoned" were mentioned more than once.

Does your magazine condone such usage? Is it necessary when writing a story to discuss this type of thing? I feel it is very inappropriate and certainly does not set a good example. I do not think this adds anything to an article in your magazine.

JEWELL B. WHITEHEAD  
DENHAM SPRINGS, LOUISIANA

## Willie The Man

What a perfect combination — *Country Music Magazine*, the Number One publication in its field and Willie Nelson, the Number One performer in his field! I must congratulate you on the excellent cover photograph of Willie because it is not only your most unusual, but also your best to date. You can see the many miles and the many places that he has journeyed in his quest for the top etched in his face like an elaborate road map, showing that he has been "on the road again" bringing music to his friends, time after time. I am sure that Willie will be around for a long, long time doing the things we admire most in him — singing his songs, strumming his guitar and best of all, just being himself.

CHARLES G. GESSNER  
KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE

## Country Music On City Airwaves

Us country music fans in the New York City—New Jersey—Connecticut area no longer have to worry, for we now have an

FM country station: WRVR—106.7, which changed Monday, September 8 from jazz to country. It's about time NYC caught up with other states in having FM country music stations.

THOMAS ANDRASCIO  
CLIFTON, NEW JERSEY  
*WRVR has changed its call letters to WKHK.*  
—Ed.

## Roses For Emmylou

Thank you for the Rose.

I go back with the great music of Emmylou to the brilliant days of Gram Parsons. And through those years Emmylou has never let me down. I am one of those fans that will buy her albums "no matter what." May I also add that I have traveled numerous miles to catch her shows. Why? Because she above all represents a style like no other, and creates a magnetism that absorbs a crowd like catnip on a kitten.

Whether she rises or falls, I along with other true fans will pave her road with roses and delight in the music of the one and only Emmylou. And I thank you *Country Music* for representing our lady in such a gracious and warm manner.

BEV PATTERSON  
LITTLETON, COLORADO

I wanted to write and thank Kip Kirby for the great article on Emmylou Harris. I felt for the first time (and I've read a lot about her) that I got an intimate look at her and her private family life. I am one of the "rock-oriented" young people she spoke of, who still listens to rock but turned to Emmylou's music for something extra, and now she is my favorite singer.

She has come to Maine only twice, but both times we had a foot-stompin' fantastic show. Albert Lee and Ricky Scaggs both deserved standing ovations. She sure has a fine bunch of musicians!

So, thanks again *Country Music Magazine*—you did great as usual. I plan on saving this issue to frame alongside your September 1976 cover of Emmylou. Thanks also to Emmylou for her "special magic!" I want her to know she's more than welcome in our "Pine Tree State" and that she'll soon be getting a new member to her International Fan Club.

SUE ANKETEY  
GRAY, MAINE

## Vernon's True Blue Country

Hearty congratulations to John Pugh and

*Country Music* for the excellent article on "The Vernon Oxford Conspiracy." I had the pleasure of meeting Vernon Oxford on two occasions: to know the man and his music is to experience a "born again" confirmation of one's faith in the spirit and nature of true country music. It is rather sad that — for whatever reasons — much of the American listening public has been denied the pleasure of experiencing his artistry, for Mr. Oxford, in my opinion, represents the very best of what country music has to offer.

Fortunately, I sense that the "too country" sound of this gifted performer will continue to be with us long after the watered-down "country pablum" sounds which now occupy the country-politan station programming and crossover charts are but a dim memory of what crass commercialism can do to a pure art form.

CHARLES F. GRITZNER  
SOUTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY  
BOOKINGS, SOUTH DAKOTA

I was so happy to see a story by John Pugh in the October issue on Vernon Oxford (a great job). He is one of the best sounds in country music today.

I am happy that Rounder Records is recording him. I have had the pleasure of ordering records from them. They are the nicest, most considerate people I have ever done business with.

I sincerely hope this will be Vernon Oxford's best year yet. He deserves a break.

JEAN SHORT  
PORT EWEN, NEW YORK

## A.C.E. Alive and Well

I'm writing in regard to a statement made in the article about Webb Pierce in your October issue. Your writer states that he first encountered Webb at a show sponsored by the now defunct group called A.C.E. I would like to tell you that A.C.E. is very much alive and growing strong. I am a member of A.C.E. and was privileged to appear on their show this past June 15 at the Grand Ole Opry House. I just couldn't let that statement pass.

REESA KAY JONES  
ADDRESS UNKNOWN

*Due to our great volume of mail, we regret we can't answer all letters individually. We welcome your opinions and will publish the most representative letters in this column. Let us hear from you. — Ed.*

# PICKERS

By Rich Kienzle

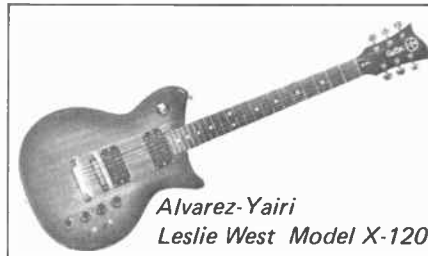
## How to go about picking out your first electric guitar

I'll never forget my first electric guitar. It was a golden sunburst Kay, Model #1961, and came with a tiny Kay amplifier with an 8 inch speaker. The guitar itself was simple enough: a small body, two pickups, hard rock maple neck and tone and volume controls for each pickup. I got it in the spring of 1964, just as the Beatle juggernaut was rolling across America for the first time, shortly after I turned 13.

Having a guitar of any sort at that time was a status symbol, and an electric made it that much better. It was also welcome in view of the fact that I'd been taking lessons for several months on a cheesy little acoustic I'd rented from my teacher, a guitar so wretched I thought it came out of a cereal box. And there was yet another advantage. My teacher didn't even play guitar, but somehow managed to teach four or five kids my age while he wheezed away on an accordion or chord organ. He got carried away at times, and sometimes it was hard to hear yourself. An amplifier gave me an edge, and though there were some embarrassing moments, like the time it picked up a police call right in the middle of an anemic rendition of *Camptown Races*, I was happy.

Like I said, those kind of memories don't fade quickly. Soon after I got started, every adolescent kid across the country, it seemed, had an electric guitar, and was playing rock 'n' roll with other kids in someone's garage or basement. And that electric guitar market mushroomed. You could get a good, American-built electric with amp, for between \$150 and \$300. Sears even sold one with the amp built into the case. But the Japanese electrics of that period were even cheaper. Kids snapped them up because of their flashy colors, up to four pickups (most of which were dummies) and ignored the workmanship, which was shoddier than most beginning wood shop projects.

There wasn't much in the way of consumer information back then, either. Most of my peers aspired to own guitars like their idols played. I did, and wound up trading in my Kay for a \$300 model long associated with the Beatles. I did it for no other reason but the brand, one also associated with other performers including some well-known country artists. It was a piece of junk. It wouldn't stay in tune and sounded tinnier than most Japanese



Alvarez-Yairi  
Leslie West Model X-120

models. I kicked myself often, and hard, for dumping the Kay.

But that was all over 15 years ago, and everything's changed. Today, with magazines like *Guitar Player* about, everyone's aware that electrics and acoustics are related in name only; otherwise they're apples and oranges. There are still American companies that make fine beginners' model electrics (at prices well above \$150-200), but only a handful. The majority of lower-priced electrics now come from the Far East. Even Kay, once made in Illinois is now an import. But no longer are the words "Japanese" and "junk" synonymous. Today, Japanese guitars are as excellent as their audio products, and many run well over \$1000, endorsed by top stars. Alvarez-Yairi acoustics, for example, have been endorsed by a raft of country stars. But even lower-priced Japanese models offer excellent quality and sound for a reasonable price. Oh, you can still find the \$25 models around, but be warned: masochism is not a desirable trait in a beginning electric guitarist.

Still, for a new player (or one who's come over from acoustic), it can be confusing. For our purposes, "inexpensive" is defined as anything from \$150 to \$550. Budget at least an added \$200 to \$300 for a small amp.

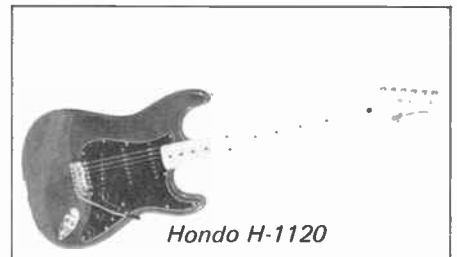
Visiting a music store can be unnerving, especially for the player unfamiliar with its contents. If you can, take a more knowledgeable friend along who can keep you from being steered to something that won't suit your needs. But if you go alone, keep these rules in mind:

1. **Have Your Price Range Clearly Defined.** The salesperson, to be effective has to know what amount you're prepared to spend to direct you to the right models, and to steer you away from guitars beyond that range.

2. **Try The Guitars.** If you've played at all you should ask the salesperson to hook

you up to an amplifier similar in size and price to what you have or plan to buy. It's easy to make a \$250 guitar sound fantastic through a \$900 amp, but it won't sound the same through a \$200 amp. This is a trick no honest store would use, but it has been done.

3. **Check Them Out.** Play on each guitar. Is the body comfortable to hold? Are the frets smooth (as they should be) or are there rough spots? If there are, reject the guitar. Is your left hand comfortable on the neck? Hold the guitar like a rifle, sighting along the neck. Note how the strings lay above the neck. The edge should be roughly parallel with the strings. If there is a bend in the middle, the neck may



Hondo H-1120

be bowed. Move on to another guitar. Listen closely to each string at a volume you're comfortable with, and check for strings buzzing. Turn each volume and tone control back and forth slowly, listening for clicks, pops and other noise; there should be none. Flip each switch slowly, back and forth.

All of this will take a while, but remember it's *your* money. Most music dealers will be patient with you; they know that's part of making a sale. Still there are a few that may hassle you for taking too much time (unless you came in five minutes before closing). If you are confronted by a salesperson who seems to be rushing you or doesn't want to waste his/her time showing you what's available, leave. If they can't waste time on you, don't waste your bucks on them.

4. **Buy The Best Case You Can Afford.** Having no case is an invitation to damage. If you can afford a wooden hardshell case (some stores include the case with the price), that's best, especially if you are spending \$300 or more. If all you can get is chipboard (a plasticized form of carboard), it's still better than nothing.

Now, you're probably wondering just what is available. Actually, quite a bit, though there are fewer American models



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Gibson SG Deluxe

in this range. Many of these are copies or variations on the designs of classic American electrics like the Fender Telecaster and Stratocaster, or the Gibson SG or Les Paul models. A few have more original designs. Here are some models, with current prices.

As I said, American-made models may be fewer, but that doesn't mean there's any lack in quality, so we'll start with those. Peavey, a Mississippi-based company best known for its superb amps and sound systems, makes a fine guitar in the solidbody T-60. The T-60, built in their automated, computerized Mississippi plant, comes in sunburst or natural finishes, has advanced pickup design, a phase switch, metal nut, two-piece neck and hard plastic case for around \$375.

And Peavey has an even greater bargain in their new, double-pickup T-15, recently unveiled, which features a synthetic body (made of material other than solid wood), a new trend in guitar-building. At \$179.50 with case included, this could mark a new

trend in inexpensive guitars. This is certainly a decent domestic model at a reasonable price.

Gibson's solidbody Firebrand models are at the upper end of our price range (around \$550) but have the legendary Gibson quality in two distinctive models, featuring the Paul, with the classic Les Paul body, a natural body finish and hot pickups. The SG Deluxe is in the double cutaway body style of other SG models. These are guitars you could use for a long time, for performances as well as for learning.

Gibson also just introduced three new models in their Sonex-180 series. These, too, feature synthetic bodies, humbucking pickups, and special tone-altering devices in two of the models. These include the Deluxe, the Standard and the Custom, which range in price from \$299 to \$449.

Guild, another great American guitar manufacturer, has a fine beginner's model in its solidbody model S-650, a single humbucking pickup that gives you the option of a clean, natural guitar tone or the hotter,



Guild S 650-D-M

distorted sound, for around \$359.

The Carvin company is certainly one of America's more unusual guitar manufacturers. The company, over three decades old, has no dealers anywhere in America and never has. They sell strictly by mail-order, eliminating the middleman (and the added consumer costs). As a result they've never become as big as Gibson or Fender, yet their products have always been of the highest quality, and are sent with a 10-day trial period, and a 5 year warranty. Their DC 150, priced at \$450 with case, certainly has features not normally found on guitars of its price, including a solid brass nut, Schaller Machine heads, maple fretboard, phase switching, stereo wiring, brass bridge and two high-powered humbucking pickups. This one, too, could easily sustain many professional players. Ditto for Carvin's CM-130, a single cutaway model for \$395. For a Carvin catalogue, the address is 1155 Industrial Ave. Escondido, CA 92025.

Japanese electrics in this price range are plentiful, and here are some of the better brands, models, and approximate prices. Hondo II makes some of the finest low and medium-priced electric models around today. Their Standard Series features guitars from \$136 to \$259. The single-pickup H-740, inspired by the classic sunburst Les Paul (\$209) and the double-cutaway body of the H-727 (\$194- are all fine bargains.

Hondo's Professional Series is higher priced, but worth it with the added option of DiMarzio pickups, some of the finest American-made pickups in the world, capable of a variety of sounds on all models, as well as other features normally found on more expensive electrics. Included in this group are the H-1010, a double cutaway model (\$305), the H-1020 (\$339) and the double-cutaway H-1030 (\$479). And \$100 to each of these prices for the DiMarzio option. Also in the Professional Series are the H-1040 (\$495), with a body like the expensive B.C. Rich guitar, the H-1051 and 1052 (both \$319), the hollowbody H-1060 (\$519), the H-1090 (\$399), with Telecaster design and the H-1100 (\$469) in the Stratocaster body style.

Electra also offers high-quality, inexpensive electrics including some with special, plug-in modules. These modules can give a variety of sounds, and are probably for the more advanced player who's concentrating on sound as opposed to technique. However, the Leslie West model, named for a popular rock guitarist (\$499), does fall within this range, as do the X 960 Ultima (\$539), the Powered EQ Model (\$499), a non-modular model and the lower-priced Invicta which has less features, but still enough for any beginner at \$299. Electra's Omega Series includes three models: the X220 (\$425), the X230 (\$425) and X240 (\$449). All of these have Tone Spectrum Circuitry, a means of combining your pickups five different ways for a variety of sounds. Their Rock Models are even less expensive, with humbucking pickups in the Les Paul style and range in price from \$399 to \$420, including the 2242 (\$399), and 2245 (\$395), the unusual, maple 2249 (\$450) and the Ivory-finished 2264.V with a pickup combination switch for \$420. Their Old Standby models, double cutaway with special features, such as the carved body of the 2247 (\$485) and the plainer 2259 (\$375), are simpler models, equally good for the beginner.

Aria's Pro II series includes the TS-500, a solidbody with a 6-position tone selector, phase switch and built-in pre-amp that could sustain a beginner far beyond learning the first chords (\$499). Conn's C-Series guitars also fit into a beginner's budget, ranging in price from \$199 to \$499.

There are other, equally good Japanese models around in most stores, and since many stores do offer discounts, the price, even on the guitars I've mentioned can often be less than the list prices shown here (an advantage if you want to buy the more expensive hardshell case).

I haven't talked a lot about the beginning electric country guitarist, because advice for selecting an electric for a beginner is the same regardless of one's musical style. Many country players might well prefer to look for a used name brand model. But you needn't feel confined anymore.



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# PEOPLE

By Bob Campbell

Three of the four **Oak Ridge Boys** have purchased new homes in the past few months. **Duane Allen** moved to a new country home and **Joe Bonsall** moved into a larger suburban home. **Bill Golden** fulfilled a lifelong dream and bought a 200-year-old huge home outside of Hendersonville, Tenn. built by Revolutionary War Captain **James Franklin**.



*Margo Smith*

Tennessee was a part of North Carolina when the house was built. The walls are made of brick and are 14-inches thick. Golden is refurbishing the house in period antiques and has recently returned to the house a painting of James Franklin's son, taken 104 years ago. The painting was shot

full of holes and slashed with a saber by Union soldiers during the Civil War. Three years ago, a previous owner found \$12,000 worth of gold coins under the basement during a restoration project. And Bill's son, **Craig**, and his new wife live in a slave cabin out back.

For 10 years **Randy** and **Gary Scruggs** have played alongside their father, **Earl Scruggs**, in the versatile and talented **Earl Scruggs Revue**. Now, Randy and Gary are going out on their own as **The Scruggs Brothers**. They toured under that name in 1968-69. "It's just that at this time in our careers Gary and I want to do some other types of projects," Randy, 27, said. "We'd like to pursue a little different kind of sound—something a little more pop oriented. It is a very amiable parting, though, with no hard feelings at all." **Earl Scruggs** said he plans to keep the revue together.

Anyone who has seen the seductive album jacket of **Diamonds and Chills** might have a hard time believing the lady on the front and back cover is **Margo Smith**, but it is indeed her. "I cut my hair, dyed it blond, lost a bunch of weight and just generally changed my image," Margo said. "People have always thought of me as the sweet school teacher and I am that, but it is not the only side of me. I love to entertain. I think women can have many roles, and the risqué humor and sassy demeanor that you see and hear on my new album are just as real as any other part of who I am. You know, you can be a school teacher and a truckstop waitress at the same time . . . it's fun."

There is yet another book due to be released on the late **Elvis Presley**. Written by **Albert Goldman**, who authored a book on **Lenny Bruce**, the biography will be called **Elvis** and relies heavily on the recollections of **Lamar Fike**, who worked closely with Presley. Among other things the book will offer "a complete demystification of Presley" and will portray him as a "horse ridden to death." Presley's relationship with his manager, **Col. Tom**



*Jerry Jeff Walker*

**Parker**, is described as "two people who didn't like each other from the beginning."

There have been some rumors circulating around Nashville that **Loretta Lynn** was considering retiring from playing road dates, but Loretta's manager, **David Skepner**, said Loretta is only going to cut back some on road appearances. "She had made some conversation about quitting, but that came when she was trying to keep up her road schedule after the movie came out and she was trying to promote it. That would kill anybody. She is basically going

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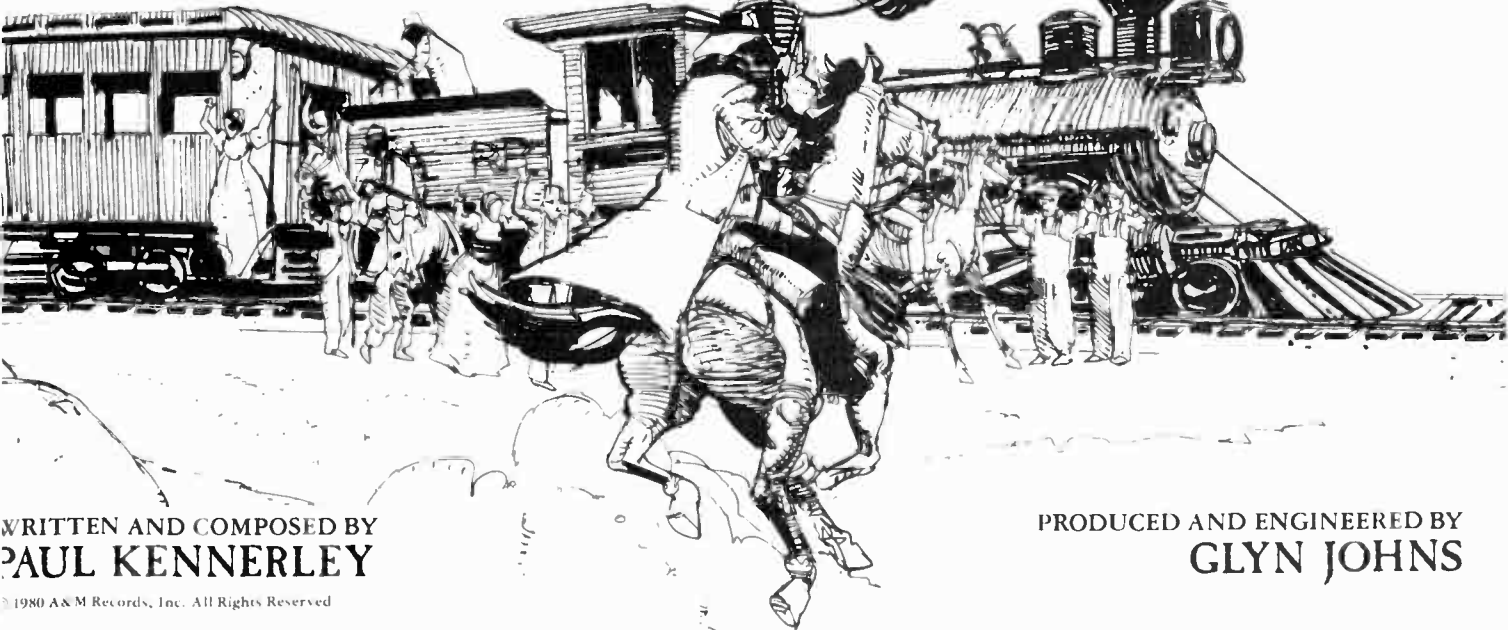
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Gary Stewart and Aunt Frona Combs

to be more selective now. Instead of playing three concerts in an area, she will now play one big coliseum and do one show. Her object now is to enjoy her work on the road." Skepner also said Loretta's emphasis in the next year will be on her recording career, which she neglected while *Coal Miner's Daughter* was in production. "In the past year or so, she

had to go in the recording studio when she wasn't totally prepared, but Loretta is going to work harder on recording this next year."

**Reba McIntire**, whose latest album is *Feel The Fire*, is a genuine cowgirl and was raised on a ranch. Reba is a veteran barrel racer and her father was a rodeo rider. In fact, last summer, Reba sang at the annual Pendleton, Ore. Roundup where in 1947 her father won the title of All-Around Cowboy. Reba is married to rodeo rider and the couple live on a ranch in the small town of Stringtown, Okla.

Now that **Dolly Parton** and **Willie Nelson** have done it, **Charlie Rich** has gotten into the movies. Rich plays a major role in the upcoming movie, *Take This Job And Shove It*, based on the hit song. Rich plays a mean rich executive who tries to buy out an Iowa brewery. His wife, **Margaret Ann**, plays Rich's secretary. Among other things, Rich had to endure being sprayed with beer through a fire hose for 12 long hours one day on the set. "I had a ball," Rich said, "but getting up at 5 a.m. to be on the set at 6 isn't exactly my cup of tea."

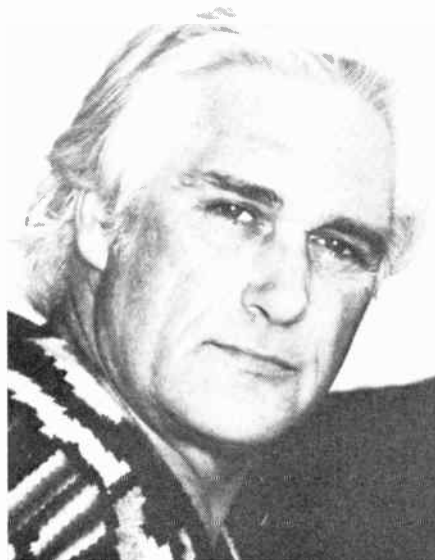
**Mickey Gilley** received a surprise visitor backstage following a Fort Worth, Texas concert a couple of months ago. **Maria Elena Holly**, widow of **Buddy Holly**, is a big fan of Gilley and she told him how well she liked his version of *True Love Ways*,

which Holly wrote. "*True Love Ways* has always been my favorite song," Mrs. Holly said. "As a matter of fact, it was our song. Many people have cut it, but this is the best I have heard since Buddy recorded it."

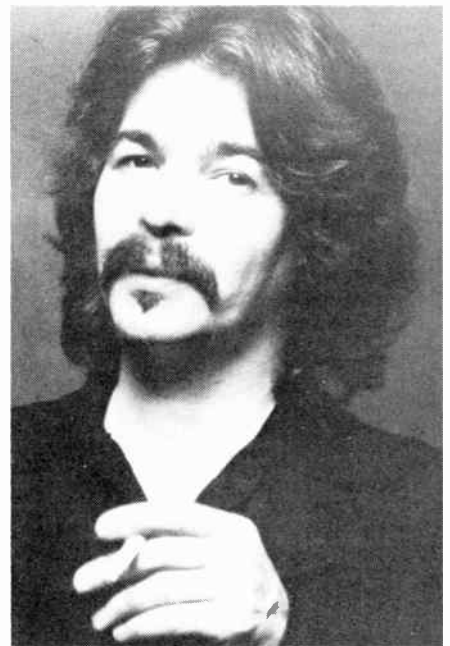
**Waylon Jennings** has been in a lot of places and done a lot of things in the last few years, but he said it was a "real experience" when he took his son, **Shooter**, to the zoo recently. Shooter is at the ripe old age of one, and Waylon said his boy reacted in a funny way at the sight of all the animals. "He can't talk yet, so when he sees a strange animal, he just walks over to cage, points, and makes some kind of a crazy sound." After a full day of showing Shooter all the animals, Waylon said he heard his son making more noise than usual. "When I turned around, he was pointing and laughing at me," Waylon grinned.

When **Gary Stewart** finished his set at an appearance near his native Letcher County, Ky., his 78-year-old **Aunt Frona Combs** was waiting for a big hug. Gary was unaware she was coming to the concert, which was a benefit for June Appal Recordings, an Appalachia-based company specializing in traditional and mountain music. Over 1,000 hometown fans and old neighbors attended the concert. The son of a coal miner, Stewart lived in Eastern Kentucky until he was 13-years-old.

**THE RUMOR DEPARTMENT:** We hear that gifted writer/singer **John Prine** has moved to Nashville. Prine has always wandered in and out of Nashville, but maybe he is here to stay now. And . . . **Jerry Jeff Walker**, whose wild exploits with the bottle and whatever else have earned him a legendary reputation in his home state of Texas, has reportedly settled down and is leading a clean, alcohol-pure life. Among other great songs, Jerry Jeff is the author of the classic *Mr. Bojangles*.



Charlie Rich



John Prine



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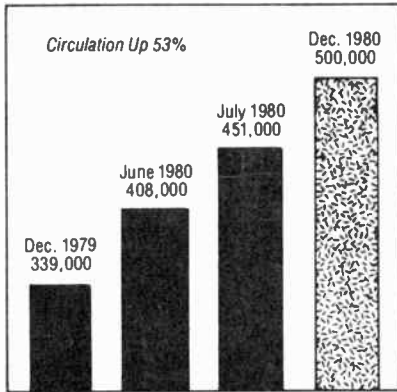
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## America's Hottest Media Subject

From Park Avenue to Sunset Blvd. the media have jumped on the country music bandwagon. **MOVIES:** John Travolta, *Urban Cowboy*; Sissy Spacek, *Coal Miner's Daughter*; Robert Redford, *Electric Horseman*; Willie Nelson and Dyan Cannon, *Honeysuckle Rose*; Dolly Parton, Jane Fonda and Lilly Tomlin, *Nine to Five*; Dolly Parton and Burt Reynolds, *Best Little Whorehouse in Texas*; Clint Eastwood, *Every Which Way But Loose* and *Bronco Billy*. **RADIO:** The biggest country music radio stations in the world are WHN, New York and WMAQ, Chicago. Nearly 2,000 radio stations program country music. **TV:** Tune in Carson, Griffin, Donahue, Snyder, Douglas for the latest, such as: George Burns' country hit record, Roy Clark's signing the biggest Vegas contract ever at the Hughes Hotels, stars from country-connected hits like *Dukes of Hazzard*, *B.J. and the Bear*, *Sheriff Lobo*. Watch Johnny Cash do 50 minutes on *Tonight*, and you'll see why

his recent TV special was No. 4 in the week it ran.

Why all the media interest?

## When Products Move Can Media Be Far Behind?

When you rush out to get your stick-shift, 4-wheel drive vehicle, better stop at Bloomingdale's for some Ralph Lauren boots, Calvin Klein jeans and a Stetson. Check in at Sam Goody for a few cassettes—for your \$800 car stereo system—some Willie Nelson, Crystal Gayle, Dolly and don't forget Kenny Rogers (after all he was the world's highest paid entertainer last year, grossing nearly \$20,000,000.) (You can't give away a full-size family sedan and the rock 'n' roll business is in a depression. But those little pick-up trucks are moving like hot cakes, and country music record sales are up 12% at a time when total record sales are down 12%. Recent industry data shows country sales have moved ahead of pop music for the first time.)

Then drive on down to New York's hottest nite spot, The Lone Star Cafe (on 5th Ave. mind you) and rub elbows with the cast from *Saturday Night Live*, some Pulitzer Prize writers and a few Madison Ave. creative types.

## America's Heartland: The Baby Boom Grows Up

Those post-war babies are now 25-35. They grew up on music, it's integral with their lives. They have been with *Country Music Magazine* for 8 years. Our record buyers spent \$644 a year on albums, grabbing an average of 7 albums a month of the racks. And, they've invested an average of \$904 in playback equipment.

Seventy-four percent own a pickup, 4-wheel drive, RV or other specialty vehicle (47% alone own pickups). And, while they're driving, 39% have stereo radios to listen to, plus 42% have tape players.

Data: Yale University subscriber survey. Telmar/Simmons. Audit Bureau of Circulation.

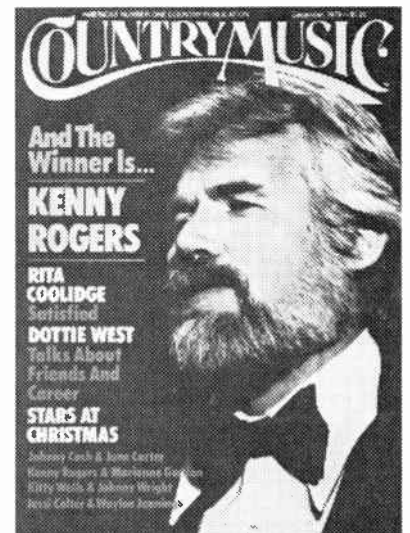
Sixty-seven percent own two or more cameras; 22% own boats; 40% go camping; 60% own fishing gear and the same for hunting. (With all this active buying and using, it's amazing they have time to consume so much liquor and tobacco.)

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## George Burns A Big Hit In Nashville At 84

He is 84 now with some 70 years of show business under his belt, but George Burns is going full blast and is still as sharp as your grandfather's old straight razor. Burns has turned his full attention to country music now. In the fall he spent nearly a month in Nashville taping his *George Burns In Nashville* prime-time television special, making his first appearance on the Grand Ole Opry and recording his second country album for Mercury Records. Burns' new single is *Here's To The Man In The Moon*, written by Sonny Throckmorton, who also penned *I Wish I Was Eighteen Again*, a country hit for Burns last year.

While in Nashville, Burns also held a full-media press conference in the Opryland Production Studios which was taped to be included, in part, in his television special. Under bright lights and standing alone behind a podium, Burns completely enchanted and entertained some 50 press members with his one-liners and remembrances about his long career. He is a gentleman, a complete professional, and he treated the press corps to a performance which would go for top dollar on a Las Vegas stage. He fielded questions on every topic from the actor's strike to Dolly Parton to his advice for senior citizens.

The media seemed slightly intimidated by the cameras and lights and instructions from the show's director, but Burns immediately put everyone at ease when he walked to the podium to the tune of a standing ovation from the press.

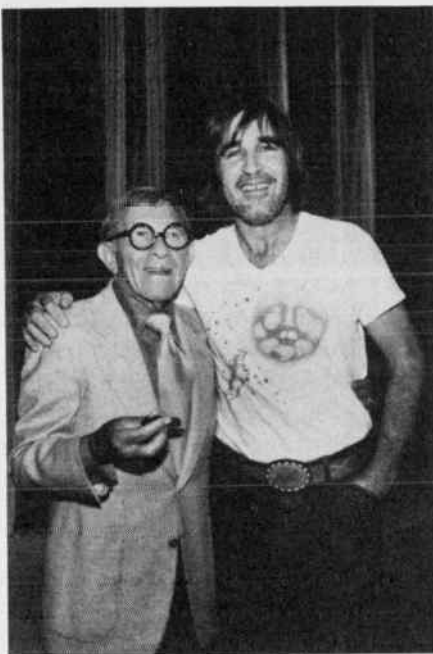
"What are we supposed to do here?" Burns asked, waiting for a cue from the director. "I'm supposed to just stand here. Is this the whole bit. Can I go home now? Hey, where is my ashtray?"

"What do you think of the actor's strike in Hollywood?" asked one newsman to get the ball rolling.

"Well, I think it will get settled soon, actors will get residuals, and 30 or 40 years from now I will sit back and get paid," quipped Burns, holding his familiar cigar.

"Do you wish you were 18 again?" asked another writer.

"No, I was old at 18. I was a failure until I met Gracie at 27, then I was happy," said Burns, dressed impeccably in a grey sportcoat with matching tie and shirt. "I am happy now. I made my dramatic debut



in a movie at 79, I played God at 81 and cut a hit record at 84."

Burns insists he was a flop at Vaudeville until he met Gracie. She became his wife and zany comedy partner. Together, they were a huge hit for years on radio and eight years on television. Gracie retired in 1958, and died in 1964.

"She would have loved all this," Burns said, referring to his late wife. "I see her once a month and talk to her. I don't know if she hears me, but I tell her funny jokes and things that have happened to me at parties. I told her I was coming to Nashville. After all, she's the reason I am here."

Most of the press conference followed a light vein, and Burns threw out quick lines one right after another.

"What made you decide to be a country singer?"

"Sonny wrote *I Wish I Was Eighteen Again* and they looked around for an old singer. They couldn't get Moses so they got me," Burns said.

"Have you met Dolly Parton yet?"

"I haven't met her. I've seen her. I said hello twice."

"How did you like working with Brooke Shields," asked another writer.

"She is a delightful girl to work with.

She's a little too tall for me, though."

"Mr. Burns, when does sex stop?"

"I don't know about you, but it stopped for me about two o'clock this morning."

Burns was also asked if this was his first appearance in Nashville. But he had been to music city a few years back.

"I played the Princess Theater here in 1921," Burns quipped. "They must have liked me because here it is only 59 years later and I'm back. I did a very bad act when I was there. In fact, my trunk is still there—the manager kept it." During the course of the press conference, Burns was asked the inevitable questions about old age. One writer asked if Burns had any advice for senior citizens.

"I don't think I am ever going to quit working," Burns said. "I can't get old because I am old. My advice to senior citizens is not to retire and get out of bed. I found out I couldn't make any money in bed."



And when someone asked him his secret for longevity, Burns answered, "I smoke 15-20 cigars a day—at my age you have to have something to hold on to. I drink a lot of martinis and I dance close."

Burns was also asked who his favorite comedian was that he had known over the years. "Charlie Chaplin," Burns replied. "Charlie Chaplin was a delightful man."

Finally, a writer asked Burns how he would like to be remembered.

"Do you mean what I would like to have on my tombstone?" Burns inquired. "I would like it to read, 'I'd rather be standing here reading this.'"

The press conference ended on that note, and Burns spent a few minutes posing for pictures and signing autographs before leaving to begin taping his television show.

## Roy Acuff Museum Houses Rare Instruments

Visitors to the Roy Acuff Museum at Opryland Park in Nashville, may well find themselves in awe of the extensive collection of old musical instruments and musical artifacts . . . and for good reason. The museum contains one of the finest, most valuable collections of its kind in the world. Housed in a modern, white building in a quiet corner of Opryland, literally hundreds of instruments are displayed in spotless glass cases bathed in soft light. Each wall is lined with glass cases filled with instruments, and 16 glass cases are spaced on the floor of the three large rooms and spacious hallway. The museum contains everything from old wire recorders to a huge Latin harp.

This museum stands as a testament to the longevity of Roy Acuff's career and his long standing interest in the preservation of music history. For years, Acuff has collected old and rare instruments and when Opryland opened its doors in 1972, Acuff decided to house all his instruments in a first-class display under one roof. He personally oversees much of the operation of the museum and is understandably proud of the collection.

"I've had a lot of this stuff for years and years," Acuff said. "I have always been a collector of old artifacts and people send me stuff from all over the world.

"There isn't another collection like this anywhere that I know of," Acuff added. "A lot of these instruments are originals. The Smithsonian Institute came down here to look at the collection and they said they didn't have anything like it."

The fiddle collection is an important part of the museum. Included in the museum is a twelve dollar fiddle that Acuff bought in a pawnshop in Gapolis, Ohio that he used on most of his early recordings, including *The Great Speckled Bird* and *Wabash Cannonball*. Most of the fiddles that belonged to the early pioneers who played on the Grand Ole Opry are also displayed in the museum. "I've got all the old fiddles that the early performers used," Acuff said. "After their deaths, the families would usually give them to me. I even have Uncle Dave Macon's fiddle (Macon was the first Opry fiddler). The most valuable fiddle in the museum and one of the most valuable instruments in the collection is a violin made in 1516 that is valued at \$60,000. The violin is one of only four of its kind left in the world and was



**ROY ACUFF MUSEUM**—This is one of three huge rooms in the Roy Acuff Museum at Opryland that displays hundreds of old and rare instruments.

made by Gaspar Duiffoprugar before Amati or Stradavari were even born. The Duiffoprugar violin is displayed by itself in a special glass case and features an inlaid likeness of the Vatican on the back. The head of the instrument is carved into a likeness of Duiffoprugar.

Many of the artifacts and instruments preserve strong memories for Acuff. For instance, the 1920, 78 rpm recording of *Forki Deer (River)*, a fiddle hoedown by Uncle "Am" Stuart, is a record that Acuff played over and over in his youth when he was learning the rudiments of fiddle. And the museum also contains an old Zenith battery-operated radio that was owned by Acuff's mother.

Each room is filled with dulcimers, old recorders, old records and instruments from other parts of the world. In one room, a collection of Gibson guitars line an entire wall. Not all the artifacts are instruments, however, A hat worn by Patsy Cline, Minnie Pearl's hat and a suit worn by Hank Williams is also displayed in a glass case. Acuff has a memory or favorite story for nearly every item on display.

Acuff is a religious man whose values have been expressed through the music he has sung to millions, and it is probably fitting that displayed in the middle of all the instruments are olives taken from the Garden of Gethsimane and Holy Water from the Jordan River.



**EMMYLOU VISITS RALPH EMERY**—While Emmylou Harris was in Nashville this fall, she made a guest appearance on Ralph Emery's nationally syndicated radio show. During her Nashville visit, Emmylou made a surprise appearance on *The Grand Ole Opry* and taped *Pop! Goes The Country*.

## Dolly Parton Promotes Tourism In Tennessee

Recognizing one of its most arresting natural resources, the state of Tennessee has enlisted the help of Dolly Parton in a new promotion campaign designed to bring tourists to Tennessee. Thirty tractor-trailer trucks, bearing a 7' x 7' four-color, silk-screen likeness of Dolly, are crisscrossing 13 states enticing motorists to "Follow Me To Tennessee." The likeness of Parton is a copy of the cover of her *Dolly Dolly Dolly* album.

Parton kicked off the promotional campaign last fall with a surprise visit to a Truckstops of America in Nashville. Accompanied by Tennessee Gov. Lamar Alexander, Dolly christened the first of the 30 tractor-trailers with a bottle of champagne. Approximately 200 truckers, summoned by CB radio, cheered Dolly on in the

misting rain. Dressed in a black pantsuit and grey silk blouse, Parton was congenial and humorous as she spoke to the crowd.

"I appreciate you standing out in the rain like this," Dolly said to the crowd. "It is a nice compliment that you are so loyal, and it's a nice compliment to be on all these trucks going out from Tennessee. I'm real proud."

Some of the truckers shouted out questions from the crowd and one question was, "what is your CB handle?" Adding humor to the occasion, Dolly answered, "Well I don't have one really. What do you think would be good? May 'butterfly' or—I know, 'booby trap.'"

Climbing up on metal portable stairs to christen the 18-wheeler, Dolly's efforts to break a bottle of champagne against the

truck failed and the bottle finally broke on the ground. But Parton scooped up a cup of the bubbly liquid and tossed it on the truck, saying, "Now, here's some of the real stuff."

After signing countless autographs and talking with fans, Dolly climbed into the huge truck for a quick trip around the block. Then she waved goodbye and sped off in her black limousine. The Tennessee promotional trucks will be traveling through Tennessee, Kentucky, Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Michigan, Ohio, West Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York and Massachusetts.

After finishing work on a new album this fall, Dolly will begin production in January on the upcoming movie, *The Best Little Whorehouse In Texas*.

### Movie Possible On Patsy Cline

Fans of the late Patsy Cline may be able to see a film biography of her life in the next couple of years. David Skepner, Loretta Lynn's manager, is working with Universal Studios in Hollywood in developing a movie about the late country singer. Although she died in March, 1963, Cline's recordings have sold consistently well over the years, and her popularity has never been higher because of her exposure in the movie *Coal Miner's Daughter*.

Although Skepner is enthusiastic about the idea of a movie based on Cline's life, he insists the project is still in a preliminary stage.

"The status right now is that we are in the process of separating fact from fiction on all the stories told about Patsy," Skepner said. "Then we will know if we have enough good material to proceed with a film. I hope we can make a valid decision by early next year."

"To me Patsy has always been a viable entity," Skepner added. "When I was with MCA (Cline's record label), it always killed me that MCA didn't really market her and her records kept selling. Now, all of a sudden, people are asking about her since they saw her part in *Coal Miner's Daughter*. With no marketing at all, her records sold 75,000 copies this year."

Skepner added that no actress had been yet chosen to portray Cline, but that he and Bernard Schwartz, producer of *Coal Miner's Daughter*, have put together a list of writers who are in consideration for writing the screenplay.



**DOLLY PROMOTES TENNESSEE TOURISM**—Among her many other projects, Dolly Parton is lending a hand in the promotion of Tennessee tourism. The top photo is one of 30 trucks bearing Dolly's likeness that is criss-crossing 13 states this year. In the photo lower left, Dolly christens the truck with champagne, and in the bottom right photo, Dolly and Tenn. Gov. Lamar Alexander visit with the crowd of truckers who came to the Nashville truckstop where Dolly kicked off the campaign.

## J.R. MEETS MINNIE PEARL Television's Meanest Man Visits Opryland

The meanest man on television paid Opryland a visit late last summer and managed to charm most of the audience of 15,000 who saw his four, one-hour appearances at the entertainment park. Larry Hagman, who portrays J.R. Ewing on the popular TV show, *Dallas*, answered questions from the audience and traded hats and jokes with Minnie Pearl, Charlie Daniels and Roy Acuff during his shows. While in Nashville, Hagman also made a guest appearance on The Grand Ole Opry. "In my wildest imagination, I never thought I would be on the same stage as Minnie Pearl," ended Hagman.

During his first show, Ms. Pearl visited Hagman on stage and gave him the old Minnie Pearl routine. "Ain't he the handsomest man you've ever seen," Minnie asked the audience. She presented Hagman with one of her trademark \$1.98 straw hats from her collection, and Hagman took off his rattlesnake-skin cowboy hat and immediately put hers on. Charlie Daniels walked on stage the next day with a hat of his own for Hagman . . . a beautiful black one," Daniels told Hagman, "I wondered whether to give you a white hat or a black one, and I figured a black one would be more appropriate."

During his appearance on The Grand Ole Opry, Hagman met Roy Acuff, and Acuff had a present of his own for Hagman. He gave Hagman a huge Opryland USA flag. "I've heard about those parades you have on the beach at Malibu and I wanted you to have a flag to lead the next procession," Acuff kidded Hagman.

Hagman rarely makes personal appearances, but he said being a part of such institutions as Opryland and The Grand Ole Opry interested him. He also figured the broad audience at Opryland would enjoy meeting the man they love to hate. The audience was enthralled with his presence and asked him questions ranging from serious to ludicrous. And Hagman constantly teased his audience by slipping in and out of the J.R. role.

"Why did you come to Nashville," one member of the audience asked?"

"For the money," Hagman answered with his best J.R. Ewing smile.

"And the smile is natural," he told another questioner.

At one point, Hagman told the audience he knew the J.R. mania couldn't possibly last, and he denied knowledge of the answer to the big question . . . Who shot J.R.?

"I wish I had a penny for every time I have been asked who shot J.R.," Hagman said. "I don't know. I honestly don't know.

If I knew, I would sell it to you. That's for damn sure."

During two of his shows, Hagman heard Louisville, Ky. radio personality Gary Burbank perform his song, *Who Shot J.R.?* Hagman wished Burbank well with the record, adding, "I hope you make a lot of money with the record."



**J.R. VISITS OPRYLAND**—Larry Hagman of the TV show, *Dallas*, visited Opryland last summer. The "meanest man on TV" is shown here visiting with Minnie Pearl and Charlie Daniels.

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8 TRACK TAPE - 18C-1035 \$4.98

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

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

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

**BING CROSBY - SM-11737 ALBUM \$2.98**  
Oh Lonesome Me; Heartaches By The Number; Four Walls; Bouquet Of Roses; Wabash Cannon Ball; Wolverton Mountain; Hellow Walls; A Little Bitty Tear; Jealous Heart; Still.  
8 TRACK TAPE - 8TM-11737 \$4.98

**TOMMY DORSEY - ANL1-1087 ALBUM \$2.98**  
Marie; Star Dust; Little White Lies; I'll Never Smile Again; Yes Indeed; Boogie Woogie; Opus One; Song of India; Who?; Royal Garden Blues; Once In A While; I'm Gettin' Sentimental Over You.  
8 TRACK TAPE - ANS1-1087 \$4.98

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

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

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

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

**FREDDY MARTIN - SM-11886 ALBUM \$2.98**  
Tonight We Love; Santa Catalina; Warsaw Concerto; Why Don't We Do This More Often; Bumble Boogie; Grieg Piano Concerto In A Minor; I've Got A Lovely Bunch Of Cocomans; Cumana; Managua, Nicaragua; The Hut-Sut Song.  
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**CLYDE MCCOY - SM-311 ALBUM \$2.98**  
Basin Street Blues; Farewell Blues; Sugar Blues; Hell's Bells; Slues In The Night; Sugar Blues Boogie; St. Louis Blues; Limehouse Blues; Memphis Blues; Mama's Gone, Good-bye; Wabash Blues; Tear It Down.  
8 TRACK TAPE - 8TM-311 \$4.98

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**TAMMY WYNETTE - BN-26486 ALBUM \$2.98**  
Stand By Your Man; Singing My Song; Take Me To Your World; Apartment No. 9; I Don't Wanna Play House; D-I-V-O-R-C-E; Your Good Girl's Gonna Go Bad; Run, Angel, Run; Too Far Gone; Almost Persuaded; My Elusive Dreams.  
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**FRANKIE YANKOVIC - CS-9287 ALBUM \$2.98**  
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8 TRACK TAPE - TRR-254 \$4.98

## NEW CMA SURVEY Country Music TV Shows Boom In Popularity

The results of a recent comprehensive survey of 135 television stations across the country conducted by the Country Music Association (CMA) in Nashville indicate the popularity of country music TV shows is thriving, and the viewing audience is ready for even more shows featuring country music. Ten or 15 years ago, country TV shows drew a limited audience and were not treated seriously by the major networks. But times have changed, and shows such as the annual CMA Awards Show have proved that quality programs utilizing country music can attract name sponsors and a sizeable audience.

The report stated that "in nearly all regions and market sizes, the number of country programs carried by representative stations has increased markedly in the past three years, with well over 50% describing country as more popular in their respective areas than it was three years ago." In addition, in terms of advertising and viewing audience, the report said a majority of stations "felt country programming had much unrealized potential on their stations."

Of the stations who participated in the survey, over 70% carry some form of country music programming, either syndicated or locally produced shows. The average number of country shows aired by the surveyed stations is 2.3 per station. Also, of the stations surveyed, 21.3% of all local country programs are aired on weekdays,

67.6% on Saturdays and 11.1% on Sundays. On weekdays, over half of these shows are programmed during prime time. The average number of country-oriented programs is greatest in the South Atlantic region, with an average of 2.37 shows per station, and least in the mountain region with 1.63 programs per station.

Forty-two different programs are represented in the survey. Twenty-three of the country shows are syndicated and 19 are locally produced. *Hee Haw* is the most frequently programmed show with *That Nashville Music* a close second. *Pop! Goes The Country* is third and *Nashville On The Road* is the fourth most frequently programmed country show. Since the release of the CMA study, at least one new country TV show has been syndicated and three nationally televised country specials have aired. *Backstage At The Grand Ole Opry*, a 30-minute weekly talk and music show hosted by Bill Anderson, has been syndicated in approximately 125 markets this fall. This show is a new concept which features Opry members on stage and then interviews backstage by Anderson. *Pop! Goes The Country* has also been syndicated in more markets this fall, including Chicago, San Francisco, Washington D.C. and Dallas.

The CMA Awards Show drew a large audience again this year, and the *George Burns In Nashville* special and *Nashville Palace* special have aired.

## Jimmy Bryant 1925-1980

Guitarist Jimmy Bryant, long considered one of the greatest guitarists in country music and a pioneer of what's come to be known as "country-jazz," died late September in his hometown of Moultrie, Georgia, after a two-year battle with lung cancer. Bryant, 55, had started out as a fiddler and switched to guitar while recovering from wounds suffered in World War II. After his discharge, he moved to Los Angeles, and developed a distinctive guitar style that incorporated jazz and country elements, building it around an ability to play rapid-fire, molodic cascades of notes. After joining Cliffie Stone's *Hometown Jamboree* in Los Angeles, he not only became a sought-after studio musician who recorded with countless artists (including Tennessee Ernie Ford's earliest records), but gained fame in his own right for his adventurous instrumental duets with steel guitarist Speedy West. The two recorded several hits, including *Stratosphere Boogie* in the fifties. Through the sixties Bryant did session work in L.A. and was acclaimed for his abilities by the Academy of Country Music. In the seventies he moved to Nashville. Even after his illness was diagnosed, he continued to play and performed at a benefit show in L.A. organized on his behalf by the local musicians' union. Bryant's playing gained praise from jazz and country pickers alike, and influenced younger pickers like Albert Lee.

RICH KIENZLE

## Barbara John Adds Polish to Country Concerts

Back a couple of years ago, Conway Twitty's career was causing him concern. True, his concert attendance and record sales were still good, but his records were not automatically hitting the top spot of the charts. After 10 years of number one records, Conway was slipping. Perhaps his music and style had grown stale, Twitty and his management wondered. Shortly after, Conway changed record producers and called in Barbara John, an independent consultant specializing in the production of stage shows and who "polishes

diamonds." Within several months Twitty's records shot back to the top, he had adopted a more natural, wavy hair style, lost weight and his stage show reflected excitement and freshness.

Much of the credit for Twitty's resurgence goes to Ms. John, a 25-year entertainment veteran who learned the ropes in Hollywood and New York, and now prefers to work with country acts. She has worked closely with Gene Autry, Dick Clark, Johnny Cash, and is experienced in virtually every area of television, radio, and concert production. After living in Nashville in the late '60's and early '70's and moving away, Ms. John returned to Nashville in 1978 and has since worked with Twitty, T.G. Sheppard, Moe Bandy and Joe Stampley, Johnny Duncan, and Crisly Lane.

"Cindy Rose of United Talent (Twitty's booking agency) heard about me and told Jimmy Jay, who manages Conway's booking agency," Ms. John said. "Jimmy Jay asked me to come and meet Conway and his manager. I had met Conway years earlier when he was a rock star. I was introduced and Conway said, 'I remember you.' He asked me if I would come to Vegas and see his show. I have so much admiration for this man I can't tell you. After the show Cindy and Jimmy took me to his dressing room, and there must have been 20 people there. He asked me the toughest question any talent could ask. Surrounded by all these people, he asked, 'Have you got anything to work with?' Well, I sure did! His next question was, 'Do you want me to change my hair?' My answer was not necessarily. I said, 'If you



want to go ahead and change your show and do things differently, learn to walk and talk on stage, well that is a lot. Your hair is so bad it is almost a trademark.' Everybody laughed and we never talked about it again. In January 1979 three months later, he asked me to come to see him. I walked in, and there was his next hairstyle. On September 22 of that year he debuted his new show to rave reviews at the Nugget in Reno, Nevada."

Another favorite of Ms. John's is Johnny Cash. In fact, her first exposure to country concerts was a Johnny Cash show she promoted in 1967 in California when she worked for radio station KGBS in Los Angeles. With television production experience under her belt, Ms. John wanted to apply some of that knowledge to live concerts, and Cash served as her first experiment.

"I was doing some staging in those days, and on that first show I said, 'Mr. Cash,

could you start your first number without playing the guitar. He asked me what I had in mind. I asked him to stand on a black box. I had a gold lame curtain in back. I turned out every light in the house and wouldn't let a deejay go on stage to give him a long introduction. Instead, a voice announced 'Here is the king, Johnny Cash.' The curtain opened with John just standing there. You could see the audience come out of their seats. It was different. That started me, and I have been doing it ever since."

Cash was also responsible for her moving to Nashville in 1969. When he began taping his television show in 1969 as a summer replacement series Ms. John was hired as a liason between Cash and the press. At the time Cash was still sensitive about his drug problem and a previous marriage, and she acted as a buffer for him.

"I have always had a wonderful

relationship with John and June, and I moved here because of him," Ms. John said. "After three shows were already taped, John and June asked me to dinner one night in May of 1969. He asked me to move to Nashville because he wanted me closer. I asked him why he wanted me here, and he said, 'Miss Bobbi, I don't know. I just know I need you around.

"Well, it took me three years to appreciate Nashville, I like jeans and sweatshirts, but I was New York and Hollywood," she added. I am a basic honest person and don't like phoniness of any kind in people, and that is why I am in country music. I had put in three different stints with Dick Clark. I am not saying he is phony, but I didn't like rock people. I am in country by choice and will stay here. I don't even like all the music, but I like the people in it. Country entertainers are basic, honest, and earthy—not complicated."



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## Renovated Exit/In Club Re-Opens In Nashville

Nashville welcomed back an old friend Sept. 19 when the historic Exit/In Club held its grand re-opening after being closed for eight months. Supported by new ownership and a complete \$300,000 face-lift, the Exit/In is bigger, brighter and more healthy than ever. The club is once again providing Nashville with some of the finest music in the country.

Formed on a low budget in 1971 by Nashvillians' Brugh Reynolds and Owsley Manier, the club was conceived as a place where young, unknown musicians and songwriters could showcase their music and be heard—any conversation during a performance was frowned upon by the management. The Exit/In was definitely not a pin-ball, bear-guzzling joint, but a listening room designed for artists and connoisseurs of good music. With this attitude permeating the atmosphere, the creative element of Nashville—pickers, writers, producers and just plain music lovers—gravitated to the club and made it a home away from home.

The place was small and often cramped,

with a tiny bar, a few booths and a listening room capacity of 225. But the word stretched out beyond Nashville about the Exit/In, and many performers, now stars, played the club when they were unknowns. Linda Ronstadt, Steve Martin, Billy Joel, Melissa Manchester, Jimmy Buffet and Barry Manilow are a few acts who played the club in the early '70s. And there were nights of pure magic . . . for instance, in 1974 when John Prine welcomed guests such as Kris Kristofferson, Steve Goodman, Chris Gantry, Shel Silverstein, Linda Hargrove, Waylon Jennings, David Allen Coe and Johnny Rodriguez on the stage—all in one night.

In the late '70s, because of rising costs, financial problems hit the Exit/In, and the club finally declared bankruptcy. The club changed ownership several times, and the club's future looked dismal until Dec., 1979, when Steve Greil, Charlie Daniels, Joe Sullivan, Daniels' manager, and Henry Hillenmeyer and Wayne Oldham bought the club. Since then, the new owners have redesigned the club, installed a new state-

of-the-art sound system, enlarged the bar and listening room and built new, plush dressing rooms, along with other changes.

The club featured local artists' Tracy Nelson, Jimmy Hall and Thomas Cain on its opening night, and the owners plan to utilize much of the vast talent in Nashville. But Greil, president of Exit/In entertainment, also said the club will try to showcase new avenues of entertainment.

"We absolutely intend to promote local talent," Greil said last fall. "We will use Nashville acts as opening acts, but we will headline some of them too. We are also planning Nashville Talent Nights and Nashville Songwriters Nights, hopefully twice a month each. We expect these to be popular and with a two dollar ticket price, they should be accessible to nearly everybody. We are trying all kinds of things, new and old.

Since the club opened, acts such as the Dixie Dregs, Barefoot Jerry, Delbert McClinton, Asleep At The Wheel, Bobby Bare, Rodney Crowell and Rosanne Cash have played the Exit/In.



**BILL GOLDEN ON THE MOVE**—In between touring with The Oak Ridge Boys and buying a 200-year-old country home outside Hendersonville, Tenn., the Oaks' Bill Golden took time out a couple of months ago to visit his folks in Alabama and attend a music industry party in Nashville. In the top left photo, Golden poses with his mother and father, Ruth and Luke Golden. In the bottom left photo, mother, Ruth gets a hug in the Alabama home where Golden was raised. In the far right photo, Golden chats with Ed McLaughlin, president of the ABC Radio Network, which will air the new *Silver Eagle Radio Show*, featuring top country artists.



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# Barbara Mandrell

## CMA Entertainer of the Year

*Last year, Barbara Mandrell's perseverance and determination finally paid off when, after four consecutive nominations, she walked away with the honored Female Vocalist of the Year award. That may have been prize enough for the lovely singer, but the Country Music Association felt her more deserving yet, and at this year's ceremony bestowed her with their ultimate tribute: Entertainer of the Year. Awards in hand, Barbara Mandrell's career is accelerating even more quickly than she could have dreamed . . . and she now moves beyond the concert stage to prime-time status on national television, along with sisters Louise and Irlene on their new network TV show.*

# Can The Mandrell Sisters Make NBC-TV Famous?

By Gail Buchalter

The *National Enquirer* labeled Barbara Mandrell a "blonde bombshell," and the diminutive singer and her tunes of sin and unbridled lust have successfully continued adding to that stage image. Therefore it was a shock when she opened her hotel door, bare-foot and wearing an ankle-length, high-necked, long-sleeved yellow bathrobe. She explained apologetically that she was exhausted, though she didn't look it. In fact, Barbara, 31, appears younger in person, something Johnny Carson remarked to her off camera when she was on his *Tonight Show*. The only sign of the frenetic pace she was keeping was her peeling nail polish—no time for a manicure.

Her sisters immediately filed in from the other room and sat down to begin what was the first interview they had ever given together. Louise, 26, is the tallest and dark-haired, while Irlene, 24, is as petite as Barbara but a little taller. The most noticeable thing about the three of them is their huge lumi-

nescent eyes — all perfectly made-up.

They had flown in from Nashville that morning for a brief stay in Los Angeles. It was to be a quick business trip, for there were a lot of details to work out.

Fred Silverman, the President of NBC-TV who's known for his radical network programming, gave Barbara, and sisters, his ultimate compliment. He cancelled their upcoming TV special (which had the dual purpose of being a pilot) and created a series for the three women, *Barbara Mandrell and the Mandrell Sisters*. Though the format isn't completely set, the show will air on November 18, Tuesday night, at 8:00.

"The television show's been in the works for several months," says Barbara, tucking her feet under as she settles into the sofa. "In the back of my mind I knew I wanted to do my own Special, but I never wanted a series—I've even said that in interviews. In the last two-and-a-half years, I've turned down three different ones. I do a lot of television because

I like it, and up until now I've been satisfied with being on other peoples' shows, so I could be seen in different ways."

The Mandrell family represents everything that is American and their show could easily be a blend of *Little Women* and *The Waltons*, with a touch of *Ed Sullivan* thrown in for variety. The newly-proposed series involves all of the sisters, but Barbara emphatically denies that they were her reason for finally accepting the offer.

"NBC and the Kroffts, who'll be producing the show, convinced me this is what I want to do, not my sisters. Louise and Irlene and I have a unique relationship. Each one took me aside and told me not to let them influence my decision."

Barbara said "yes," though she wasn't jumping up and down with delight. The contract stipulates a minimum of six weekly, one-hour comedy-variety shows. The Mandrells plan on being in Los Angeles for at least three months.

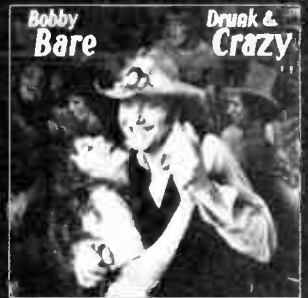
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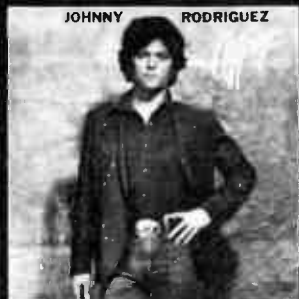
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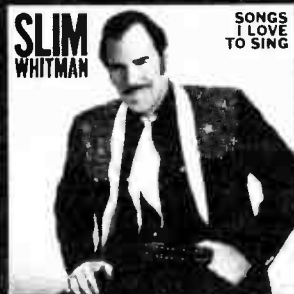


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Johnny Rodriguez has some red-hot hits on his new album, including "North Of The Border" and "I Think We've Let It Slip Away Again." A classic in the Rodriguez tradition.



Slim Whitman's first all-new album in a decade has some of his best performances ever, including "When" and "I Remember You."



George and Tammy are "Together Again" for ten all-new songs. Including the big hits, "Two Story House" and "A Pair Of Old Sneakers."



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# Can Nashville Run Backwards Fast Enough to Catch Slim Whitman?

By Patrick Carr

It all began with the TV commercial, and the commercial was a beauty. To the sweet nostalgic strains of such songs as *Rose Marie* and *Vaya Con Dios* and *Red River Valley* and *Ramblin' Rose*, there appeared still-lives of a yodelling gentleman who looked like some gas-pumping remake of Clark Gable, a dashing character from an old family snapshot, remarkable in his evocation of a bygone and somehow heroic America. This man, they told us, was Slim Whitman, the Slim Whitman, and his music was what we wanted to hear, and the price was right. All we had to do was send in the money, and the package was ours. It was not, of course, available in stores.

The commercial — which, like the music and the man, seemed to have been created back when Sputnik 1 was merely a glimmer in some Soviet committee's collective eye — stood out from the modern electronic trash around it like a State cop at a teenage Angel Dust party, and what's more, it just kept coming. You couldn't hit the "on" button without being exposed to it within minutes, and this went on for weeks, months, almost an eternity. It became part of life; it entered the electronic subconscious of the nation, and there it stayed. Soon, people were not saying "Who, who?" They were saying "It's Slim again."

Everybody knew about Slim. The older folks became convinced that they remembered him from way back when, even if they didn't, while people in their thirties and forties remembered how their elders remembered him, even if they didn't, and the kids — well, the kids went nuts. They wore Slim Whitman mustaches and Slim Whitman string ties, they wrote letters requesting photographs, they formed Slim Whitman Appreciation Societies and held Slim Whitman parties, they showed up at political candidates' college visits waving banners which said "We Want Slim!" FM radio stations began playing cuts from the album between Fleetwood Mac and Bob Seger and Elton John tracks, and the Slim fans multiplied accordingly. Slim stood for nostalgia, rebellion, bad taste, corniness, humor,

irrelevance. Slim became a great symbol. It was Slim's time.

The album sold and sold and sold. Even the kids bought it. By July of 1980, more than a million copies had been sold and the figure was creeping slowly but surely. *All My Best* was the hottest-selling record in TV mail-order history, moving upwards of two million copies.

Ottis Dewey ("Slim") Whitman, now a Cleveland International/Epic Records recording artist, is 56. He lives in Florida with his wife of 39 years, and looks back on thirty years of recording. He is the owner of a delicate, almost light-operatic set of tenor pipes, and is an absolute master of the yodel. A World War II Navy veteran and ex-baseball player (as a pitcher, he went 11-1 and batted .360 for the Plant City Berries of the Orange Best League in 1947), he achieved his first Top Ten hit record, *Love Song of the Waterfall*, with Imperial Records in 1952. *Indian Love Call*, *Keep It A Secret*, *Rose Marie*, *Red River Valley*, *I'll Take You Home Again Kathleen*, *Secret Love* and many others maintained his popularity; the yodelling Slim, a hunk of a man and an eternal sentimentalist, was a steady feature of the 1950s country scene.

The 1960s saw him slipping somewhat in his native land. It was music business power shifts, taste changes among the public, whatever — and the 1970s found him gone, defunct, a real non-seller of the first order. Overseas, however, in England and Australia and associated markets where people have always liked their country music and pop ballads old-fashioned to an almost fanatical degree, he was still deeply appreciated. He tried to score in the U.S., but it just wasn't on, and so he worked the overseas market instead. He went out on tours which were great financial and emotional successes, returned to Florida for a couple of months' worth of fishing and family life, then went back to Europe and Australia again. It was a good life. A very nice living could be made: just last year, for instance, his light, classically senti-

mental version of *Rose Marie* rode the Number One spot on the British pop charts for eleven straight weeks. The proceeds from that sort of thing are comfortable, very comfortable.

Then, like a 106-mile-an-hour pitch from a veteran curveball specialist, Suffolk Marketing's TV mail-order record campaign came smashing into his life, and suddenly the ballgame was something entirely different.

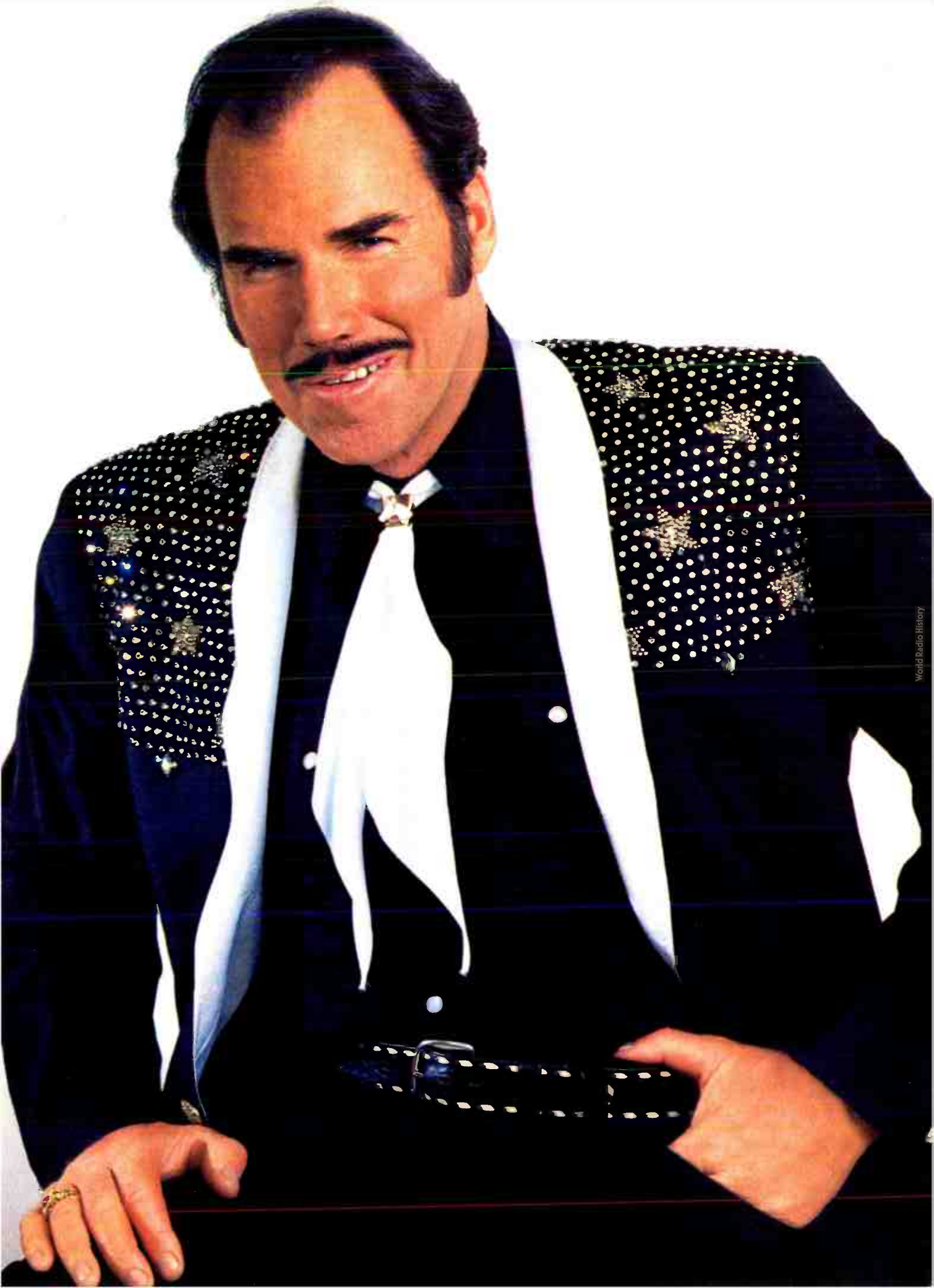
Amanda Armstrong, a Suffolk Marketing executive who is also an Englishwoman, says with some aplomb that the company's choice of Slim Whitman for test-marketing was "an educated hunch." The test-marketing (showing of the commercial in specially selected markets prior to a decision on whether or not it should be run nationally or regionally) was, to say the least, encouraging, and so the Slim Whitman Revival Saga began in all its glory.

The commercial, says Ms. Armstrong, was "a classic." It was "very, very clean, very un-muddled. I think that the atmosphere in the country is somewhat reactionary; I think the pendulum is beginning to swing. I think that Slim is really Mr. Clean, very straightforward. There's a tremendous dignity about the man, and I think it touched something off in people. Here was a man who sang as if he meant it, who started a lyric and finished a lyric, and who came across as *decent*... Really, what else could it be? We'd gone through a whole rash of blatantly sexual lyrics and music that really had no beginning and no end — it seemed like such a mish-mash — and then here came this *gentleman cowboy* singing *love songs*! I think that was it!"

Ms. Armstrong is onto something here. In a market where Willie Nelson, chief outlaw, can become everybody's favorite in-law by recording an album's worth of soft and familiar old public-domain standards, Slim Whitman — the kind of country star who went out with sexy ankles and the family's first TV set and the Ford Edsel — is the logical extension, the obvious next step back.

Before that happened, however, Slim had to be re-marketed. The mail-order record, a





package of previously released material (some of it dating back almost a quarter of century) supported by a total-saturation television campaign, was one thing; the comeback of the man himself, singing new material and competing in the much tougher world of standard-price records, radio airplay and conventional (non-TV) promotion, is something else entirely. Slim has to sight that fastball, lay the meat on it, and run like hell.

He has a good team behind him, and it seems that they're all rooting as hard as they can. It's a three-part operation.

First is Pete Drake, the veteran steel player and producer. Pete, not so much a loner as a genuine "indie," runs a world through which all kinds of square pegs — David Allan Coe, Melba Montgomery, Linda Hargrove, Ernest Tubb — have passed their way to the kind of success which tends, in Nashville, to exist around the fringes of the major labels' cost-accounted juggernauts. Pete seems to take a delight in taking oddball artists under his wing, flying in the face of the conventional wisdom every time, and developing them to the point where the juggernauts just *have* to take notice, fork over the bucks, and incorporate the oddballs. Pete and Slim are old buddies and partners. Pete's produced and/or played on more Slim Whitman records than most of us have had hot dinners, and he and Slim understand each other perfectly. Pete is Slim's producer.

Second is Steve Popovich, the president of Cleveland International Records. Steve, who launched Cleveland International early in 1977 after a long career with CBS Records (when he left, he was head of A&R for Epic Records, in charge of finding and signing acts for the label) is also a maverick; his most successful current act, for instance, is Meatloaf, and you can't get much odder (or more successful) than Mr. Loaf. Steve is also a longtime friend of Pete Drake's. The story (according to Stan Snyder, one of Steve's partners in Cleveland International) is that after being exposed to that TV commercial a few hundred times, Steve was hanging around Pete Drake's place in Nashville one day, when he walked Slim Whitman. Slim had been brought to town by RCA, but nobody at RCA had the time to see him that day, so he moseyed over to see Pete. Things worked out naturally, and Slim was signed to Cleveland International.

The third element of Slim's team is, of course, Epic Records, who have a distribution deal with Cleveland International. Epic is *very* powerful, and its promotional and distribution juggernaut is now 100 percent behind ol' Slim. (Pete Drake has a joke about this. "Before the Cleveland International thing happened, I was trying to get Slim a deal," he says, "and people were laughing at me — especially Billy Sherrill at Epic. He says, 'you're out of your mind! Slim Whitman?'" That was three weeks before the TV record went on the air. After it's been on the air awhile, he calls me and says he's interested in Slim Whitman. I said, "it's gonna cost you now." It cost him."

All these elements came together, and in short order a brand new Pete Drake-produced Slim Whitman album on the Cleveland International/Epic Records label, was in the can and ready to go. It was called **Songs I Love To Sing**. As we journeyed to Nashville to meet ol' Slim, a single from the album (*When*) was zooming up the charts at a fierce and frantic speed, and Pete 'n Slim were already engaged in work on the follow-up album, a collection of Christmas-type inspirational songs. The meat had connected, and the man was running.

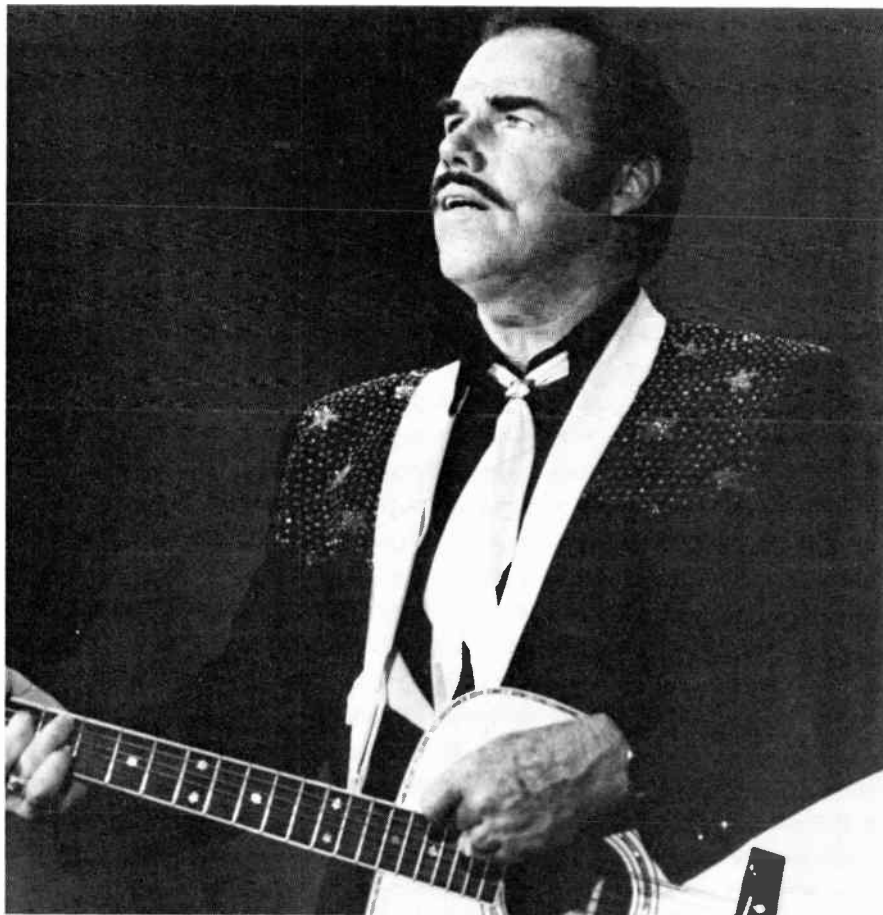
At Pete's place we're listening to **Songs I Love To Sing** and marveling anew at Slim's

says Pete's promo man, a fellow whose profession prevents him from nodding out too far in the company of visiting promo-ees. "Yeah, lovely," we say. "Got any coffee?"

\* \* \*

Suitably revved, we are now at Woodland Studios, where Pete 'n Slim and all the good old tried-and-true studio boys are cutting the Christmas album. There's a Christmas tree in the middle of the studio, which makes up for the fact that it's about 110 degrees in the parking lot.

Slim, a great big healthy barrel-chest of a fellow in gleaming jet-black hair and Lyndon



amazing corn-power. Songs like *The Last Farewell* and *I Remember You* and *Secret Love* and *That Silver-Haired Daddy of Mine* and *Beautiful Dreamer* and (yes!) *Rose Marie* itself flow from the speakers on giddy wafts of yodelled sincerity, easy as apple pie in the morning. The viols trill and sigh, and we feel safe, secure, practically somnambulant. Slim's voice floats like a butterfly, stings like a kiss. We think about warm diapers, Mom's soft hands, eternal melodies, a simple America standing proud, food smells from the kitchen, quiet lonely sunsets, heroes with wide chests and pencil mustaches, wheat-fields waving . . . we're drifting, going deeper and deeper, we'll be there soon . . . let's curl up, stick the ol' thumb in there, nod off all the way . . .

Yes, well, obviously Pete 'n Slim did it right, no flies on *them* boys. "Nice, huh?"

Johnson half-frame spectacles, is in the studio proper, conducting the lads through an instrumental warmup of *We Three Kings*. Pete, on the other hand, is right here in the control room, curled up around a cigarette and looking, as usual, like he's having a real hard time holding back an attack of the giggles.

Some banter is exchanged, thusly:

"How you doing, Pete?"

"Oh, just fine, just fine." One facial twitch.

"What you up to?"

"Oh, just keepin' the old-timers alive, same as usual." Two facial twitches.

"Man, can you imagine," says an engineer, wonder in his voice, "Slim Whitman t-shirts . . ."

Another engineer picks it up. "The Slim Whitman World Tour . . ."

Pete's face twitches once, twice, thrice.

"Whitmania," he says, and the giggles break loose all over the room.

Slim is unaware of all this. Mild-mannered and professional, he gets the boys in line and knocks off *We Three Kings* in two takes before breaking for lunch. The voice, though abraded by two straight days of promotional duties around town, is sweet, true, and flexible; obviously, the man still has it.

There is a moment of indecision when an immediate interview is suggested — talking doesn't help the vocal cords — until Slim figures that if he doesn't do it now, he'll have to do it later. He opts for now, and we go to it.

Slim admits that, yes, much of his present notoriety is the result of kids and rockers "playing with it," but goes on to say that many of the kids who bought his record as a joke turned into fans once the album had been around the house for a while; he knows this, he says, because he's asked kids after concerts to identify their favorite Slim Whitman song, and they've been able to do it. As to whether he feels the kids are important to his career, he hedges politely: it would be very nice, he feels, if the kids really got to like him, and he'd love to be able to sing to them, but he's not expecting any miracles. His old fans and a bunch (*a bunch*) of other new people know about him now, and that's where he's looking to score. From this, we deduce that Slim is a sensible fellow. No Cloud Nine merchant here. The fact, however, is that it *is* now a new ballgame. "Maybe it was a complete turnaround in music that people were hearing, and

**"There's gonna be a lot of yodellers around now ... you watch ... because that's what's selling."**

maybe people were searching for something, and I happened to be there at the right time, I happened to be it," he says.

Slim seems like a nice guy, real easy-going. When he tells the story of one letter received by Suffolk Marketing which contained no record order, just a five dollar bill "to get that guy off the air," he laughs and says it proved how effective the commercial was. As to his period of European exile, he says, "I wasn't really sweating it. A lot of guys were doing better than me here, and I was doing better than them there, so things kinda evened themselves out. It didn't really bother me. But it's a great feeling to see my name back here in the United States."

Referring to that period of non-success in the U.S.A., with its good income and long fishing rests, he notes that "that may be the reason that I have no problems that I know of as far as health and all that. I can still sing the songs in the same key I sung them in in the Fifties; I haven't dropped anything. It could be because I've relaxed through the years. I'd just go off in the boat and forget singing." He adds that he has had the same wife for 39 years, that his 23-year-old son Byron (who is also an entertainer, "coming in real good") looks just like *he* used to, and that he's never

burned out or had any problems with drinking or drugs or anything like that. "I watched some of that when I was starting," he says, "and I figured that if I ever had to do it, I'd get out. The way I see it, the people who buy records and put you where you are, they deserve respect when a guy goes onstage. I think a guy should dress up for them, do a little extra for the people who pay to get in. But that's neither here nor there; to each his own."

The good humor continues, even on the subject of Nashville, a town which failed quite conspicuously to take note of Slim Whitman for many a year. "When this TV record thing started, people would ask me how I knew it was a hit," he says. "I'd make a joke of it. I'd tell them I knew it was a hit when I came to Nashville, and somebody said 'Hello.'" Even when the subject of his disappearance from the American scene is raised again and he concedes that there may have been a "marketing problem" (that is, the U.S. music industry screwed up royally on the Slim Whitman case), he laughs good-naturedly about recent conversations with some of the people responsible.

Now, he figures, things are right back where they started. "I think it's a turnaround, just like it was in the Fifties," he says. "It's like the flu or something — some people get it, and then it spreads to everyone. That's the way the music business is. If a guy yodels and hits with it, then everybody tries to yodel. There's gonna be a lot of yodellers around now, because of the things I'm doing. You watch. There'll be a lot of guys breaking their voices on records, because that's what's selling."

Time is running out for us now — the pickers are filtering back into the studio from their lunch breaks, and recording work must be done — so it's time for the ultimate question: Is Slim Whitman *ready* for this new ballgame? Does he *want* the pressure it's bound to bring?

"Well, I'm just happy they're wanting me to do all this," he says. "Like yesterday, I was tired, but the company wanted me to do in-store promotional films — y'know, 'let's have another take' and all that — and I had to think of myself, 'well, I'm tired, but they're spending the money, and there's a lot of guys who would be glad to be in my place.' It's like tonight, I don't really have the time to do a photo session, but I'm gonna do it. It's either do it tonight, or I'll have to come back into town, make a special trip, do it then."

But the fishing — what about the fishing? "Well, I'm getting a little bit behind on that. The fishing's getting a little rough. But you look at it, and you say 'leave me some time about three weeks down the line.' I know my capacity, and I know about what I can do, and I've already told the record company. They know this, and so does the booking agency, and they all just have to respect that, that I'm only going to run so fast, and they're going to have to back off when I get tired. But heck, I'm sure I can hang onto it for a couple of years." Good old Slim. Slim knows the score. ■

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# Tanya and Glen Rhinestone Romance

By Bill Oakey

*When Dolly left Nashville to go into pop, it seemed like the hoopla never would stop. Since the records kept sellin' for Jim Ed and Helen, it was no surprise when they delayed their split. For George and Tammy, it was a double whammy when they recorded and toured once again. Barbara wasn't satisfied with being number two, and musical freedom propelled Emmylou. But out there on the sidelines, there weren't any clear signs about what would happen to Tanya. Two years ago, the suddenly grown-up millionaire child-star of country plunged boldly into the world of rock. The curious crowds and skeptical critics*

*steered her back to her Nashville producer. Then, as love would have it, a most unexpected, unpredictable musical matchup was born...*

If there was something not quite together about Tanya Tucker's talent, then it would be easy to understand the lack of a firm direction in her career for the last few years. If there was something unpleasant and commonly known about Glen Campbell's personality, it would be easy to see why three of his marriages turned sour. But that's not the case with either of them. Tanya is hot onstage and always has been. Glen's marital woes prob-

ably came about as a result of vulnerability and bum luck, as opposed to an overbearing nature or ill mannered temperament. He was just better at picking songs than picking women.

The public's perspective on the pairing of the two stars varies with the point of view. To the tabloid media, it is another juicy gossip story of the Jackie-Liz-Sonny-and-Cher variety. The 23-year age difference surely gives a few million old ladies something to cluck about. In music circles, there are some puzzling questions yet to be tested. Will Glen Campbell's jet set audiences take to Tanya



better than last year's Aerosmith-Blondie rock set? Will Tanya's country fans give Glen their blessing? As a duo, can these two bridge the gap between Wayne Newton and Conway Twitty, and tap the radio market at the same time?

Neither seemed unwilling to admit that these thoughts have been very much on their own minds since they came together last spring. Their courtship has been combined with a busy pace of recording and TV dates, a couple of extended working vacations, and some get-togethers with each other's families.

"I wanted to talk to Glen as soon as I found out that he and Sarah were separated," Tanya began. "I've known him for a long time and I've always liked him. I didn't want to call, so I had a friend do it. I didn't know whether he would answer or she would answer. And I know that she isn't very fond of me. He said for me to come on over, and we'd sing some songs."

"I found out that I didn't really know him like I thought I did. Here was somebody that I had listened to as a kid, that I was getting to know as a friend, and then getting even closer than that and gradually falling in love. I'm not exactly a homebody; I can get a little crazy at times, but I don't really like skipping around. The closest I ever came to this before was when I dated a bronc rider for three years. I'm what you call a one-man woman."

"Glen and I have always been involved with people who weren't in the music business. It's very difficult for them to understand your problems, your insecurities, and the things you have to overcome. I think it's hard to relate to an entertainer sometimes. They have their little corners they get into."

The "little corners" that she refers to include the mythic public notions about a celebrity, whether true or false, which become fixed in everyone's collective mind. Larry Gatlin will never sign another autograph. Willie Nelson drinks beer for breakfast every morning and spends all day smoking marijuana. Pat Boone always wears white shoes and never talks to anybody except God. If you should ever become friends with Glen

Campbell, don't introduce him to your wife. Keep her as far away from him as possible.

"It takes forever to correct these things," Tanya complained. "Everybody makes it out like Glen screwed around his best friend. It's so stupid. Everybody who knows him and knows him well, knows that he's not that way at all."

Glen's reaction to the Sarah Davis innuendos has been published before. He insists, among other things, that although he and Mac Davis were occasional golfing partners, they were never close friends. He has had to handle the indictable offense like a suspected *Absecon* conspirator. "Yes, I would like the fans to know something about that. I didn't steal Mac Davis' old lady," he asserted during this interview. "They were already separated before we started dating."

The ensuing rift between Glen and Sarah can be tied to the old saying, two is company, and three is a crowd. "The mother-in-law is the reason the whole damned problem existed," Glen explained. "She stayed with us for about five or six months." At the suggestion that he had told Sarah that either her mother was to leave, or else he would leave, Glen responded, "That's exactly the way it was. But I wouldn't want to say anything bad about her. Hell knows no fury like a woman scorned, you know."

**"I have always thought I would find the right person and marry him. I just didn't think it would happen so soon."**

Next question. Does Glen feel like he has been hit harder in love with Tanya than ever before in his life? "I would say so, as far as the person goes, yes, along with the respect for the talent. An artist knows." Does he think that this is it, and he'll be settled down for the rest of his life? "I certainly hope for it, and I certainly pray for it. She's a great gal, man. I think it's time. I'm gettin' tired of being kicked around!"

"It's hard to tell if any of those women were really in love with me. I just don't know. It's hard to believe that they kept doing the same thing, and that I kept doing the same thing, without knowing anything different. I come from a totally honest place with myself and God. When something comes at me different from that, I don't understand it."

Some in the press have already heard wedding bells, but that is news to Tanya. "We don't know of any wedding," she said with a laugh. "We've been too busy to make any kind of plans like that. I think it's going to happen, but I don't know when." Later in the interview, she expanded on the subject. "Glen has asked me to marry him, but I'm the one who's always been leary of that. I have always thought I would find the right person and marry him. I just didn't think it would happen so soon."

"I just run away from the question. He has asked me several times, and I say 'well, maybe, whatever' and change the subject.

That's the way it stands right now. It might be '84 before we get married. Who knows. Glen likes the same things I like. The basic necessities of life. A good home and a good family. I'm getting him into horses, and he's getting me into golf."

"Glen has met my family and they all just love him. I spent several days with his family, fishing and getting together in the evening to do some singing. His brothers and sisters are younger and they were pretty nervous around me at first. But that went away as soon as they saw me clean out their ice box and fix fried okra and polk salad."

When Tanya talks about her music, she seems more confident and determined than ever before about reaching a bigger audience. "Glen's audience is the one I've always wanted. The rock thing was really just an experiment. All I ever asked for in this business was to be able to make good music. Not to be put into a category, but just to be able to get out there and perform."

"I like a lot of dynamics onstage. There is a void there that no other female singer has been able to fill. In country music, the female artists come out and you can watch them, but mostly it's in the music. For me, it's also in the performance." Gone are Tanya's uncertainties about projecting a sexy image. "I'm not worried about that. I think with the right show in the right situation, it can work. I still have to be me onstage, and the motions will always be there."

The current TV season includes at least three musical variety specials with Tanya and Glen. She'll hit the movie theaters in *Hard Country*, which also features Michael Murphey and Charly McClain. *Georgia Peaches*, an action packed drama, is her third made-for-TV movie.

The not yet Mr. and Mrs. have two duets on her *Dream Lovers* album, and each of his or her current album features the other on harmony. "There's going to be a duet album, and we'll probably do a tour together when that comes out," Tanya explained. We would also like to do a European tour next year. The market over there would be good for us, and





The current TV season includes at least three musical variety specials featuring Glen and Tanya. One such show is HBO's *STANDING ROOM ONLY: GLEN AND TANYA*, taped at Harrah's in Reno Nevada.

also it's great to be able to see the world and share it with somebody you really care about. Our personal plans, like short vacations and shopping trips are usually made on the spur of the moment.

"There are always some negative things that will happen, but with our relationship, it's mostly good. Everybody has an ego, and every now and then they do clash. I'll be totally honest. But, basically, ours are pretty well intact."

It's somewhat tougher now to score an across the board hit record than it was in the days of *By the Time I Get to Phoenix* and *Wichita Lineman*. Once having been there in the late sixties, Glen was able to pull it off again several years later with *Rhinestone Cowboy* and *Southern Nights*. Now he says, "I'm ready to get back to basic good music."

What Tanya is waiting for is the one "right record" that the people who recognize her name will be able to identify with. She is focusing this new push on the elusive "mass audience" that so many artists are after. "Everybody knows who I am now," she says. "They're just waiting to see what happens." Glen may be able to help her get where she wants to go, and he may have finally found the woman who will keep him

happy.

They are considering buying some land in Texas and possibly moving to Austin. Neither seems interested in the Nashville social scene, although they regard it as important business



territory. "There are some things about Nashville that I don't agree with," Glen commented. Like block voting for instance. I don't like any kind of hanky panky or dishonesty. If I were nominated and could buy the award with 350 votes, that would be silly. I think the CMA should handle it like the Oscars. Let singers vote for singers and players vote for players. Have everybody chosen by their peers. Then if they want to have another award show, have the public vote, like the American Music Awards."

Tanya admits to not being as much at ease with the fans as Glen. "I like the ones who come up to us in an airport or on the street and shake hands, say hi, and that's about all. I don't like being asked for an autograph when my mouth is full during a good meal. But Glen is so patient. It must come with age (*laughs*)."

People have been talking about Tanya and Glen ever since their names were first linked together in print. They would probably like for everybody to keep right on talking, all the way to their shows and all the way to the record stores. If they are going to get married, there has got to be a wedding. If there is going to be a wedding, there has got to be a wedding cake. I'll bet it will be delicious. ■

# Will the Real Razzy Bailey Please Stand Up?

By Patrick Carr



Razy Bailey seems so amiable. As he waits around RCA's Nashville offices for the interview, watching telephones light up and exchanging humane banter with the staff — Charley Pride's airplane has just been in a midair collision, so today's waning hours find the staff even more preoccupied than usual — he seems like an intimate guest at a tense wedding, someone who is privy to the family secrets but can be relied upon to behave with tact and consideration.

This state of affairs is odd, for even though Razy's behavior is socially appropriate —

these RCA people, after all, are just office workers on a busy day, deserving the courtesy of non-interference — it must be remembered that Razy is a legitimate RCA recording artist, and that to him, these offices and these people represent Showbiz Heaven. Placed in his situation, many artists would demand attention for themselves; Razy doesn't do it, and you get the distinct impression that the thought hasn't even crossed his mind.

The scene continues, winding down until the Pride situation has been defused, and only a couple of weary staffers are left on the spot.

It's time for dinner; hosted by an RCA publicity man, Razy and I are going to eat together, then conduct the official interview.

Razy has no trouble locating the keys to his Toyota Celica — long ago, his wife gave him a belt attachment which ensures their presence at all times — but once in the car, he doesn't know the way to the restaurant. He doesn't live in Nashville, so this is no big item, but on top of the action in the offices, it adds something to an almost irrational but quite strong impression that somehow, through some combination of personal and

professional variables, Razy isn't making it in the record business status wars.

According to rational standards, he should be. He has two reasonably strong-selling albums on RCA, but more than that — much more — he has scored an unbroken series of Top Ten singles, beginning with his second single release, ever since he signed with the label. Also, he was named *New Male Vocalist of the Year* by both *Record World* and *Cashbox*, and was nominated for that honor by the Academy of Country Music. For a while he was Charley Pride's touring partner, opening the show with distinction for that well-loved country stalwart; now he headlines himself, and is pleased to report that everywhere he goes, they want him back with enthusiasm.

Why, then, is there such an air of difficulty, of striving in the wilderness, around him? Why is he such an unknown quantity?

Perhaps a part of the answer is located in his records. Razy's albums are like collages by an earnest, extremely competent second-guesser. His skills — writing, singing, band-leading, the art of balance — are absolutely in place, so although there doesn't seem to be anything missing, there is. He does so many different kinds of music in such appropriate style — country-schmaltz crooned carefully, R&B-cool rolled off the tongue almost as smoothly as the Temps might have done it, pop-intense like the latest lover-idol from



**"I love to entertain. I don't give a flip if it's Green, Green Grass of Home or whatever—if that's what you want to hear, I'm gonna play it for you. I don't have a favorite song. My favorite song is what you want to hear."**

Vegas or points West, rock-muted like an ideal Ricky Nelson or a throttled-back Bob Seger, country-soul about as good as Ronnie Milsap's stuff — that after two or three tracks, you think you're listening to the radio. The fact that this is one man singing simply disappears; the communication of a person existing above and under the material does not happen.

As an industry professional, I have to wonder why this is, and as soon as the thought process begins, it bogs down. In the music business, everybody's thinking about music is twisted; everybody tries to think like non-industry people think, but of course they can't; they're in the music business. Should Razy Bailey go "personal?" What does "personal" mean? Is "personal" Willie & Waylon and Gary Stewart and Delbert McClinton, strong-man-steward firebrands all, or is it Kenny Rogers, lucky and smart enough to tune into somebody else's great songs and mature enough to realize that they might just supply an identity which was non-charismatically lacking before he found them? Would Linda Ronstadt, lost in a bimboistic personal

stew but possessed of a wonderful ability to communicate through song, have ever made it big in the record business if she hadn't been taken in charge by producer/manager Peter Asher? What should Razy Bailey do? Should RCA invent a character for him, or should they go with the shotgun approach, stick the stuff out there and hope that either he or somebody else gets it all together? Should Razy have a new producer, and if so, who? Should Razy record more of his own songs, or not? Is there still validity in the Slow Build approach, as opposed to the ("got a hot one here") Instant Media Blast? Has Razy missed the boat already? What is the boat, anyway?

Both Razy and I know some of the answers to some of these questions, but our combined knowledge is still so patchy that really, it's useless for us even to try to figure out the whole picture. Only the bosses get paid enough to pretend that they know for sure. We can worry about it as much as we like but we still have our job to do: I have to discover as much as I can about Razy so that fans will know who he is, and Razy has to help me.

Razy Bailey is hairier, skinnier, and more restless than the image which adorns his album covers. Unlike the image — a well-fed and rested gentleman securely ensconced amid furniture of the Tiffany-Victorian type so currently admired by Southern bar-owners and Nashville studio photographers — his real-life appearance creates the impression of some sort of stripped-down-experienced, occasional-burger-grabbing musical outlaw under domestic wraps. That is, there's something about him which yells "lunatic!" but

yells it softly; he seems like a socialized madman, a musician but also a family man. He's a good talk; he has his story ready, and he launches into it with nary a pause. His life as a professional musician began around the age of fifteen in Alabama. At the age of eighteen he met his wife-to-be while playing a club, and by the age of twenty he was married. Shortly thereafter, the first child arrived. This meant responsibility, which meant daytime jobs — selling furniture, driving delivery trucks, selling insurance. At a certain point he developed a gambling habit, which led him into debt, a situation which was resolved when he was hired as a dealer in a gambling joint; being paid well and "off the books," he was able to avoid garnishees and pay back his debts, and he was able to kick his gambling addiction. On the other hand, the nature of his life in gambling circles did not agree with his wife; she threatened to leave if he didn't find some more "honest" way to earn a living. This he did, working more daytime jobs and moonlighting in music until 1968, by which time he had developed a powerful headful of frustration. At this point, the Baileys made a crucial decision: It was time for Razy to attempt a full-time career in music. Razy called a booking agent he knew, and within two weeks he and his band had a one-week booking, with an option, in a Florida club.

The gig was, to put it mildly, a success, and the option turned into a six-month tenure ended only because Razy had decided to hit the road on the club circuit. The music was Top 40, soul, some standards — mainly dance music, and no country at all. Country was not allowed. "My heart was in country, but the owner asked us not to do any," says Razy, "but we could get by with Englebert's *Release Me* or Tom Jones' *Green, Green Grass of Home*, anything like that." Razy says that his experience in daytime work had given him an understanding of other peoples' needs and problems in the work situation, so that he'd never be offended when a club-owner told him not to play country or insisted on half-hour sets with fifteen-minute breaks. In this respect, he says, he differs from many musicians.

His club work was successful — sometimes he'd have to back topless dancers and so on, but the money kept coming — but around '72 was when he moved up to the Macon area to work a country nightclub as a country act. It got to where Razy was pulling in \$50,000 a year from his club work alone.

Meanwhile, there was also his recording career. Since '68, Razy had been cutting records in Atlanta, getting some of them released on small labels, but going nowhere commercially with them. Around '73, however, he and his manager decided to push a record called *I Hate Hate* by hand-delivering copies to radio stations, and the record "happened" regionally. This led to interest from major labels, and thus it was that Razy ended up with a contract with MGM Records.

At this point, a great irony interfered. Razy's manager was also the owner of the club where Razy was pulling in that \$50,000,



which translated into a great deal more in club takings. The manager, therefore, was extremely reluctant to push Razy's recording career, since if Razy was off making records and touring to support them, he couldn't be packing people into the club. Naturally, all this led to great friction all around, and eventually, MGM tired of its position as middleman between Razy and his manager, had released Razy from his contract.

Enter yet another irony, by name Phil Walden. Phil, President of the now-defunct Capricorn label, signed Razy when Razy was clear of MGM. Razy figures that this was prompted by two concerns: Firstly, Phil's ego was offended by the fact that there was an extremely popular non-Capricorn act playing right there in Macon, his backyard; secondly, Phil was also in the local club business, and wanted to steal Razy away from the competition so that *his* club would start packing 'em in.

This saga of recording-career misplacement continues. As Razy packed 'em into the club, his recordings went nowhere (Capricorn and country music, he suggests, didn't really go together). Eventually, he did Phil a favor by playing benefits for the first Carter Presidential campaign, and Phil released him from his contract.

On to RCA and, after some eighteen months of expressed interest but no action, Razy finally made it through the front door to his current situation. RCA, he says, is where he always wanted to be; they were the label of Jimmie Rodgers and Jim Reeves, two of his most important idols. After such a silly saga, the tone of amazement in Razy's voice as he talks about finally making it to a recording situation which at least *looks* respectable, is quite understandable.

The recording story is one thing, but the history of Razy's club appeal is something else. It seems like a major key to what makes him tick. Why was he always so successful in clubs?

"Well, I like people," he says. "I'd always find out what everybody's favorite song was, and when they came in the door, I'd say, 'Well, it's about *time* you got here, dammit, an' here's Joe an' Sally comin' in after you!' I always had five or six new songs every week, and I really tried to please people. 'I *love* to entertain. I don't give a flip if it's *Green, Green Grass Of Home* or whatever — if that's what you want to hear, I'm gonna play it for you. I feel like I'm a public servant. If you come in that door, and you're buying drinks and paying my salary, and I know your favorite song, it ain't gonna hurt me to play it for you. A lot of musicians don't look at it that way, but I do. I don't *have* a favorite song. My favorite song is what you want to hear."

Razy has become quite agitated as he's been talking about this attitude and as he goes on to criticize musicians of the opposing school, he becomes more agitated still. Obviously, his commitment to pleasing the crowd is very strong indeed, and it goes a long way towards illuminating both his eclectic recording practices and his generally compli-



ant attitude.

The discussion progresses. Razy says that while he likes the music of the people who used to be called "outlaws," he doesn't admire their stance as individualists wanting to do things *their* way; his heroes are people like Charley Pride, and he figures that his career should follow the pattern set by Kenny Rogers: He should keep on working at his craft until he scores that one big, big "impact record," and once he's scored it, he should follow it up with more of the same. He doesn't

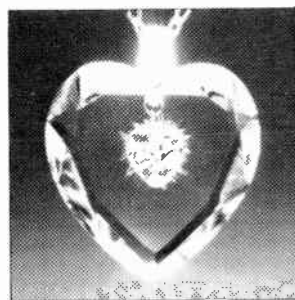
want to say outrageous things to the press, or go to prison, or get divorced, or have a drinking problem, or get busted for cocaine; he just wants to get that impact record and then become a star. The discussion ends with him saying that no, he's not uneasy about his career. At 42, he's been through the mill so many times that now, with things looking so good at the very brink of the really big time, there's no way he's going to panic and blow it all. And if things don't work out this time around, he *knows* he can make a damn good living in the clubs.

Later in the evening, after the interview, we get to meet Mrs. Bailey and the kids, and Mrs. Bailey seems like a strong, canny, and benevolent partner, very much interested in Razy's career. As drinks are consumed and the atmosphere loosens, she and Razy both become very interested in what opinions I might have about Razy's career status and potential. This is natural, of course, but once again, a vague sense of insecurity, of anxiety, is communicated. It raises the awkward and truly impenetrable question of how Razy's seeming lack of star-type forcefulness might be connected to the Razy Who? problem.

Maybe it doesn't really matter in the end. Maybe some big stars *are* nice guys, eager to please. I make the hopeful point that once that impact record hits, there'll be no more need for concern. Then I take my leave, go back to the hotel, and start to worry all over again. ■



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# Christmas Cookin' Nashville Style

By Paula Lovell Hooker

*Christmas just ain't Christmas without Minnie Pearl's Turkey and Dressing, Hank Snow's Marshmallow & Peanut Butter Squares, Jeannie C. Riley's Candy Fruit Cake, Skeeter Davis' Christmas Wreath and Ernest Tubb's Christmas Chili!!! Bon Appetit, Ho! Ho! Ho!*

## ERNEST TUBB

Ernest Tubb's not an extravagant gift-giver at Christmas.

"I do think children ought to get a little present, but people tend to overdo that gift-giving thing," says Tubb. "They need to be taught the true meaning of Christmas and remember the Christ in Christmas."

With seven children and seven grandchildren who all gather at the Tubb home for Christmas Day and Christmas dinner, Tubb considers herself lucky to be home for Christmas.

"In this business, sometimes it's hard just to get back home," he says, recalling the time he drove all night from California just to get home by Christmas morning.

"I think Christmas is a time for compassion. We all do things around Christmas time that we really ought to be doing all year round," says Tubb, who periodically puts on a Christmas benefit for crippled and underprivileged children in Tennessee or Texas.

"Every Christmas I take myself to task for not having been more compassionate. I think of something I could have done for someone, or something I could have said to make someone happier."

"Sometimes I wonder if it's fair to deceive children about Santa Claus, but I guess there really *is* a Santa Claus when you realize who he is — he's a Christ figure, a symbol of Jesus."

Ernest Tubb's famous Texas Chili. He and his father, the late C.R. Tubb Sr., used to fix it back home in Texas and Ernest loved it anytime... even on Christmas Day.



### ERNEST TUBB'S CHRISTMAS CHILI

2 lbs. coarsely ground beef  
½ C. tallow drippings or lard  
½ C. chopped onions  
2 T. minced garlic  
4 T. chili powder  
2 T. paprika  
½ t. red pepper  
1 t. salt or to taste  
juice of one lemon  
3 4-ounce cans tomato sauce  
1 C. water and flour paste cooked brown

Brown meat and all other ingredients. Cook slowly for one hour, adding water as needed. Serve over beans or rice, optional.

## SKEETER DAVIS

"Christmas means 'Santy Claus!' Christmas means dolls! Christmas means toys and candy and oranges!" says Skeeter Davis, with a childlike quiver of excitement and anticipation.

"I still get dolls and toys for Christmas," admits Skeeter, proudly. "Last year I got a new car for my choo choo train and another Madame Alexander doll for my collection. All my friends know I want toys for Christmas. Sometimes my fans even send me toys."

Tucked away in Skeeter's "toy room" at her home near Nashville are shelves and shelves of children's toys. Dolls, stuffed animals, tiny toy cars and train sets line the walls of her special playground.

"It kinda looks like a department store in there," Skeeter giggles girlishly. "I've got some fine toys. You should come see my toys sometime."

"Last year I got a cow that takes pills and actually gives milk, and a little dog that drinks water and lifts his legs," she laughs mischievously.

Skeeter's affection for extravagant toys developed relatively late in life.

"We were poor when I was a kid, but we always got some candy and oranges at Christmas... to this day I hardly ever eat fruit during the year. Just seems like it was only meant for Christmas," she says.

"Of course, Christmas means a lot more than toys," Skeeter hastens to add. "As a Christian, it's the celebration of Christ's birthday. It's a time to express your love to your friends and your family. Giving gifts is just another expression of that love... kind of like the three wise men."

After having not recorded for five years, Skeeter has just released her version of *The Rose* (flip side: *I Love You Bigger Than Texas*), and hopes for a big Christmas hit.



With one eye on the country charts and one eye on the chimney this Christmas Eve, Skeeter Davis anxiously waits her outcome... as visions of sugarplums dance through her head.

Skeeter Davis doesn't really like to cook... even when she has the time. Around Christmas time, though, she plays around in the kitchen and comes up with a few Christmas treats. One of her favorites is a Christmas wreath.

### SKEETER DAVIS' CHRISTMAS WREATH

Combine:

1 C. pitted, minced dates

1 C. chopped nuts

Add those to:

½ C. white or brown sugar

1 T. flour

1 t. double-acting baking powder

2 beaten egg yolks

2 t. vanilla

Pour in a greased ring mold and bake at 350° for 30 minutes. Let cool and remove from mold. Top with mixture of:

1 C. whipped cream, till stiff

2 t. powdered sugar

1 t. vanilla

Garnish with maraschino cherries and holly leaves.

## HANK SNOW

From the Hank Snow was about eight years old until somewhere in his teenage years, Christmas was nothing more than an ever-green tree chopped down and dragged in from the backyard. No candied sweet potatoes, no mincemeat pies, no sugarplums, not even a fat juicy turkey with dressing to adorn a festive holiday table around his house. And the worst part for any little eight-year-old boy was an obvious void under the barren tree on Christmas morning.

"Those were our real poverty days," recalls Hank, who has never forgotten his youthful lean years and who has recently founded an organization to protect and harbor abused or underprivileged children. "My mother and father were separated and it was

real hard times for us back then."

For the past 25 years, Hank has recorded a 30 minute radio special which is broadcast all over the world on short wave radio each Christmas Eve and morning.

"It's meant for all the children who are lying in a hospital bed or confined to their beds at home," explains Hank. "It's meant for the millions of deprived and starving children in Cambodia and China and all around the world. Christmas is just like any other day of the year to them. And it's meant for husbands and wives who are apart on Christmas because one of them is in the service. I want them all to know they're being remembered," says Hank, who always opens or closes the show with his song, *Christmas Roses To You I'm Sending*.

"This year will be about the same as always for me," Hank predicts. "We'll give a lot of presents, remember all our friends and just enjoy being reunited one more time."

Hank's not much behind a stove, but he does get Min, his wife of 45 years, to whip up his favorite Christmas dessert for the holiday season. And she wanted to share it with Hank's fans.

### HANK SNOW'S MARSHMALLOW & PEANUT BUTTER SQUARES

Melt in a double boiler:

½ C. peanut butter

½ C. butter or margarine

1 8-ounce pack butterscotch chips

Cool thoroughly and add:

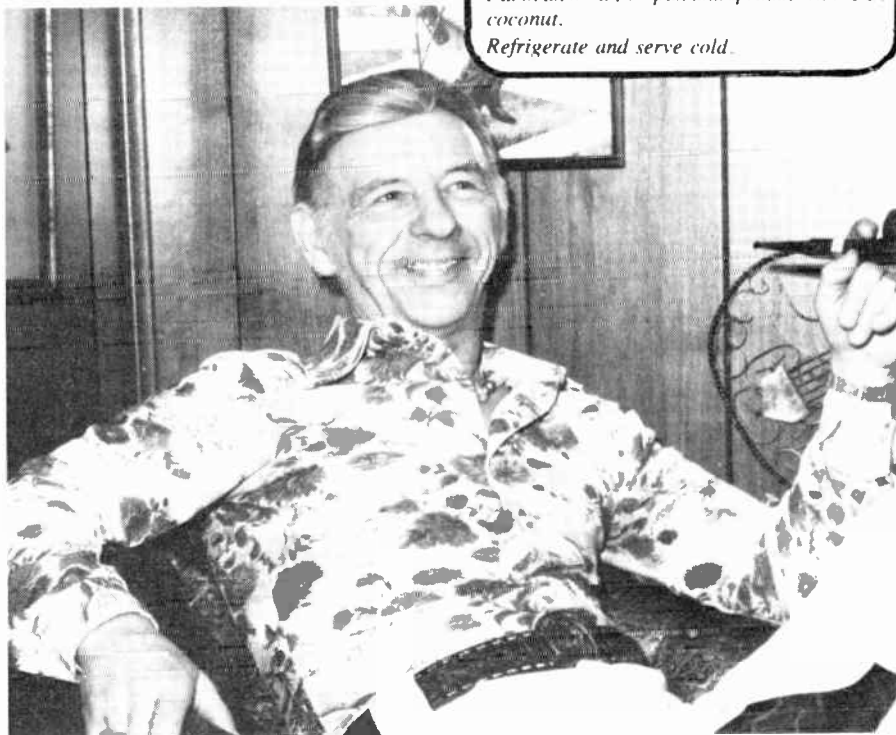
1 large pack colored miniature marshmallows

6 graham wafers crushed or ½ C. graham cracker crumbs

½ C. maraschino cherries, chopped

Put in an 8" x 10" pan and sprinkle with ½ C. coconut.

Refrigerate and serve cold.





## MINNIE PEARL

"We always had a bit time back home in Centerville (Tennessee)," remembers Minnie Pearl. "Mama always served scalloped oysters for breakfast... I don't know why, but we had 'em every Christmas."

With three other sisters who were always being shooed out of the kitchen by their mother who was hurrying to get a hot meal on the table for their lumberjack father, it's a wonder Minnie ever learned to boil water.

"We just go in the way, I guess," laughs Minnie. "You can imagine four little girls all scurrying around, trying to help and just getting in the way."

Somehow the art of good Southern cookin' just rubbed off on Minnie 'cause every Christmas around her house she manages to serve up fruitcakes, scalloped oysters, Lady Baltimore cakes, fresh coconut cake and turkey and dressing and all the trimmings.

This Christmas will be a little different for Minnie. After a five week tour for her new book, released in mid-November by Simon and Schuster entitled, *Minnie Pearl: An Autobiography*, she'll arrive home in Nashville just in time to spend Christmas Day with her family.

"Christmas is a time for being with friends and family," says Minnie. "Seems like we never get enough opportunities to express love. Christmas is a reassuring time... a time for telling my family and friends that I love them."

Christmas is a big time around Minnie Pearl's house, with turkey and dressing and all the fixin's. Minnie's mother always served scalloped oysters at Christmas breakfast and Minnie shares that recipes with us too:

### MINNIE PEARL'S TURKEY & DRESSING

- 1 15-20 lb. turkey
- 2 large chopped onions
- 4 C. celery, chopped
- 2 C. water
- turkey drippings
- 3 T. salt
- 3 T. pepper
- sage to taste
- 2 skillet cornbread, crumbled
- 1 loaf white bread, browned and crumbled

Roast turkey (without stuffing) 20 minutes per pound at 300° (well-buttered and covered with foil). When turkey has one hour left to cook, spoon out about two cups of drippings and set aside to add to dressing.

For dressing: Cook onion and celery in water till tender. Combine all other ingredients and add enough drippings to moisten. Bake dressing in greased dish for one hour at 350°. Serve dressing alongside turkey.

### MINNIE'S FAVORITE SOUTHERN EGG BREAD

(great to add to her turkey stuffing)

- ½C shortening
- 2 C. plain corn meal
- 2 T. all-purpose flour
- 1 T. sugar
- 1 t. salt
- 1 t. baking powder
- 1 egg
- 1½ C. buttermilk

Preheat over to 400°. Put the shortening in the iron skillet and heat in oven.

Combine dry ingredients. Add egg and buttermilk and mix well. Remove skillet from oven and pour shortening into the prepared batter. Stir well. Pour back in greased skillet and bake for 30 minutes.

### SCALLOPED OYSTERS

Serves six

- 1 quart oysters
- salt
- pepper
- 2 T. Worcestershire sauce
- paprika
- dash cayenne pepper
- 1 C. crumbled crackers
- ¼ C. butter or margarine
- ¾ to 1 C. light cream

Preheat over to 375°. Grease casserole, 9" x 11" size. Pour oysters and the liquid in a heavy dutch oven and simmer until edges of oysters start to curl up. Remove oysters. Line the bottom of the casserole with oysters. Season with salt, pepper and Worcestershire sauce. Cover with a layer of cracker crumbs and dots with butter. Add another layer of oysters and top again with seasoning, cracker crumbs and butter. Repeat layers. (This can be prepared early and refrigerated.) When ready for serving pour cream over casserole, add remaining oyster liquid and sprinkle with a dash of paprika and cayenne. Cook at 375° for 30 minutes or until bubbly. Serve hot.

# JEANNIE C. RILEY

Jeannie C. Riley can still remember the time she found out there wasn't really a Santa Claus. She was only in the fourth grade.

"I'd gone shopping with Mama," she recalls quietly. "We'd loaded up the car in both the trunk and the back seat. Just packed with presents. Well, one of the things I'd wanted was a Tom Thumb typewriter or a Tom Thumb cash register. I knew the typewriter was too expensive, even for Santa Claus, so I hoped for the cash register, even though it was my second choice."

"I'd gone in the store and fingered it and played with it lovingly and really longed for it... like kids will do. I knew exactly what it felt like and exactly how it sounded. Well, out in the car I accidentally turned over one of the boxes and heard that sound. All of a sudden, I realized there wasn't any little man up at the North Pole delivering presents to good little girls and boys. Other children had laughed at me for still believing in Santa, but I never paid any attention to them. When I heard that cash register a sick feeling just came all over me. I'll never forget it.

"I never told Mama I knew, but I was always less specific about what I wanted for Christmas after that 'cause Mama and Daddy worked so hard and I knew they were trying to buy me something nice and keep up the Christmas spirit... even when we couldn't afford it. It was sad."

"Christmas wasn't the same that year, but kids pop back, don't they?" Jeannie says. "I must admit, it took a few more years before the Christmas message that my Grandpa always preached finally got from my head into my heart."

"Oh, I still enjoy shopping, the giving and the getting and eating too much. But Christmas has taken on a whole new meaning to me now," says Jeannie, explaining an "inner peace" she says emanates from her re-born Christianity. "And I get such a high from it all. When it's all over, I have to fight to keep from being let down almost to the point of depression. It's an exciting time,"

## JEANNIE C. RILEY'S CANDY FRUIT CAKE

- 2 cans sweetened condensed milk
- 2 small boxes dates
- 2 8-ounce boxes coconut
- ½ lb. candied cherries
- ½ lb. pineapple
- 1¼ C. pecan halves
- 2 small jars maraschino cherries

Combine ingredients in large mixing bowl. Pour into greased tube pan and bake at 250° for 1½ hours with a pan of water underneath. Remove from mold while still warm.



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# Can Gary Stewart The Faded Honky Tonk King Find His Second Wind?

By Bob Allen



In the heat of the early evening, Gary Stewart is awkwardly working his way on crutches, around the circular front drive of the Journey's Inn, a neo-Hollywood type motel—complete with terraced gardens, moats and canals with real live ducks swimming around in them—located somewhere out in the Atlanta exurbs near Marietta, Georgia.

Dressed in his familiar black, broad-brimmed hat and a floppy flannel shirt, Stewart cuts a curious figure to the motel's other admittedly more reserved guests. "Hey man! Where's the limo!? I'm Ready To Go!" he yells.

The long blue limousine which is taking Gary and his band to the evening's show at a nearby club called the Buckboard, finally

pulls up. Gary, with the help of a friend, divests himself of his crutches and crawls into the back seat.

"Take us 'round to the back door of the club when we get there," he orders the driver in a stern voice as the car roars down the highway. "Comin' in the back door, ridin' a big blue . . ." he chuckles softly. "What the hell! It ain't often I get to act like a star, so I might as well play it to the hilt! . . . Hey Buddy!" he shouts at the driver, "Could ya turn that disco shit down!?" He points to the radio. "I can't even hear myself think! . . . Listen to me!" he adds softly and shakes his head in disbelief at his own loud behavior. "Wheww, I get all keyed up before a show!

"I only played Atlanta one other time," he adds as the car pulls into the parking lot of the shopping center where the Buckboard Club is located. "It was on a Monday night—and we bombed!

"Hell," he laughs. "I'm just a regional artist!"

\* \* \*

This evening's show at the Buckboard is not just another whistle stop along the tour circuit. No, this show is a particularly important one. Various press and radio people have been flown in from all over the Southeast, and RCA's top brass, including the company's president from New York, are also on hand. It's the kind of showcase where hit records—or even recording artists' careers, for that matter—can be made or broken.

The purpose of tonight's gathering is to showcase some of the material from Gary's new album, *Cactus And A Rose*, on which he is backed by members of the notorious Southern rock group, the Allman Brothers. But the main attraction of the evening is a group newly signed to RCA called Alabama. Most of the guests have come to see them; and as the opening act, Gary Stewart has a mild uphill fight on his hands.

Earlier in the afternoon, there had been some question as to how Gary's part of the show would go—and just how prepared he would be for such an uphill fight; he had

cancelled out on several similar showcases earlier in the tour before agreeing to do this one.

When I had arrived at Gary's motel room at the pre-scheduled hour for our interview, less than two hours before show time, I had found a "Do Not Disturb" sign on the door. I knocked anyway, and after about five minutes, Gary came to the door. He looked pale, and he was still rubbing the sleep from his eyes as he hobbled back into the room on his crutches. "C'mon in," he yawned. "Nobody told me you were comin'."

The drapes inside the room were pulled, and the air conditioner labored full-blast against the humid 95-plus degree heat outside. Three glasses of orange juice, Gary's hat and some scribbled song lyrics on a piece of hotel stationery lay on the bedside dresser. The darkness was illuminated only by the soap opera on the flickering TV screen, but Gary still wore his prescription sunglasses.

After offering me a chair, he collapsed in a tired heap, back on to the rumpled bed. "I flew in last night," he explains. "I've just been lyin' here all day, watchin' TV and tryin' to get some rest."

Gary appeared to be afflicted by the sort of road weariness that sleep alone can never cure. He appeared even thinner than his usual skinny self; and his once tight Levis now sagged around his stove-pipe legs.

"Wanta see my battle scar," he offered. He pulled up his right pants leg and revealed a long gash with many stitches where a steel rod had been surgically implanted in his thigh after he broke the bone clear through in an auto accident. (Ironically, the woman whose car he hit later turned out to be one of his nurses in the hospital.) He had been on crutches for several months and would be on them for several more months. "I was in the hospital for 13 days," he recalls. Now I'm down to just one X-ray a week. I had just started back on the road after a year and a half off when this happened," he grimaces. "I was supposed to go back and have some physical therapy, but I've been on the road

so much, I haven't had time to go back. "But I gotta be out here," he added. "It's a matter of survival."

After some idle conversation about his broken leg and learning to play the road while on crutches, Gary admitted that he was looking forward to tonight's encounter with several hundred music business people with mixed feelings.

"Sometimes I feel like I just can't do it, man!" he rubbed his eyes as he sat back down on the bed. "All those people . . . shakin' everybody's hand . . . 'Blah-blah-blah . . . how ya doin' . . . thanks for comin' out . . . I just don't feel it sometimes," he sighed. It just seems so *phony*.

"I mean, I told this writer the other day, I was born in Saginaw, Michigan, and I was the son of a Saginaw fisherman," he laughed. "Then I found myself tellin' somebody this mornin' that I started out playin' Irish folk music!" he giggled. "But then, you know I felt real bad after sayin' somethin' like that." He shook his head again and his voice trailed off. "I had to go back and say, 'Hey, listen, I'm sorry . . .'"

\* \* \*

Once the wild country-honker who sang with abandon and set music fans' spines tingling with honky tonk celebrations and laments like *Your Place Or Mine*, *Whiskey Trip*, *She's Actin' Single* (I'm Drinkin' Doubles), and *In Some Room Above The Street*, Gary Stewart, at age 35, is just now starting to struggle back from a year-and-a-half-long slump and some very hard times.

Four or five years ago, Stewart seemed on the brink of superstardom; he toured from coast to coast and received laudatory write-ups from the rock and country reviewers alike. With his long hair, his wreckless, spirited boogie-woogie piano playing and his frenzied vocal style, he was envisioned by many as the new star who would be the natural successor to heros of the past like Jerry Lee Lewis; he seemed destined to be the one to fill that long vacant no-man's land out there where rock meets country.

But, for better or worse, it never happened that way. Instead, Gary Stewart saw superstardom staring him in the face, and he pulled back from the brink. "I just couldn't deal with it," he admits today. "I had seen other people and how it affected their lives, and I just couldn't handle it."

Pulling in his wagons, Stewart instead found a comfortable niche for himself on the Texas honky tonk circuit, which was a relatively easy drive from his home in the Atlantic coastal town of Fort Pierce, Florida ("Thank God there's a Texas," Gary told me several years ago. "Eighty percent of my bookings are there. It keeps me alive.")

"He would tour Texas incessantly," said one RCA representative who worked closely with Gary. "If we tried to get him to play anywhere else, like the West Coast,

for instance, he would just bitch and moan constantly."

But then about a year and a half ago, Gary even stopped playing Texas. "I was carryin' a seven-piece band with me," he explains. "And finally, all the expenses of driving back and forth and carryin' that many people got to where I couldn't afford to do it anymore. See, I only work the road about a hundred days a year. That's all I want to work. But that's not enough shows to pay for a band that big."

During the year and a half that Gary Stewart stayed off the road, he was also noticeably absent from the record charts. Would he be back at all, some wondered? Very little news about him came from Fort Pierce where it was assumed he was leading the quiet life with his wife and two kids.

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**"The Allman Brothers have always been like Hank Williams to me. Any time the Allman's were playing around, I would pay somebody to take my place in the band so I could go see 'em."**

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But then one day back in April, glancing through Nashville's evening paper, *The Banner*, I saw the bad news. It was all in a very short article that was buried on the back pages, among the lingerie ads and the obituaries. It came as a hard, cold reminder that a long-gone friend's life was falling apart:

*"Fort Pierce, Fla. (U.P.I.)—Country music singer Gary Stewart was arrested on charges of cocaine and marijuana possession Tuesday by policemen invited to his home by his wife, who went there to pick up her clothing following a domestic argument.*

*"Stewart, 35, was released from St. Lucie County Jail under \$10,000 bond."*

"I can talk about that after it's over," Gary explains somberly as he sits in his motel room, some three and a half months after this incident, which is still hanging over his head. "I've still gotta go to court over that."

It is also Gary's policy not to discuss his home life. ("Hey, I have problems like everybody else, he shrugs. "But it's not a good idea to talk about my family. I like to keep them out of this.") But he does admit that things did start getting pretty desperate during his eighteen month layoff. At one point, his mailbox got knocked down by a hurricane, and when he didn't put it back up, the mailman warned him that he wasn't going to be able to deliver his mail anymore. "I told him I didn't want no more mail," Gary laughs. "The mailman brings bills, son!"

"Did you ever think of just not going

back into the music business at all?" I ask.

Gary sits cross-legged on the bed, then he leans back, puts his hands behind his head and stares at the ceiling. "Yeh!" he laughs. "Oh yeh, I was about ready to get a day job. I almost did a couple of times. I was down to goin' through the newspaper ads, lookin' for somethin', you know."



Stewart claims that it was the Allman Brothers Band that finally revived him from his apathy. The Allman Brothers are actually the remnants of the original band that several years ago, was one of the most popular groups in America. (One of the original brothers has since died, and the remaining members are actually not closely related. Their hit songs like *Ramblin' Man* and *Midnight Rider*, remain Southern rock classics today.)

But over the years, things had fallen apart for the Allmans too, much as they had for Stewart. Two members of the group—including founding member Duane Allman—were killed in separate motorcycle accidents. Then surviving brother Gregg Allman fell victim to hard times of his own, including a short, stormy marriage to Cher Bono, a reportedly severe drug addiction, and other emotional problems. The group finally disbanded, and only recently re-formed.

During the early 1970s, when Gary Stewart was still playing small clubs in Central Florida, the Allmans, who are from the Gulf Coast town of Sarasota, just across the state from Gary, were already famous. "The Allman Brothers have always been like Hank Williams to me," says Stewart as he jumps up and sits on the edge of the bed. His eyes brighten, and his



enthusiasm is suddenly renewed at the mention of his all-time favorite rock band. "When I first heard them, they changed my life!

"About nine years ago, I was playin' in a band in Oeeshobee, Florida, makin' \$90 a week," he recalls. "And any time the Allmans were playin' around, I would pay somebody to take my place in the band, so I could go see 'em," he smiles. "That's how much I loved 'em."

Stewart's friendship with the Allmans goes back many years. He recalls it all started before he was even a recording artist. He had been living in Nashville, writing songs, and on one of his many trips back home to Florida, he spotted Gregg Allman in the Atlanta airport.

"He was buyin' some sunglasses, and I saw it was him. . . . This has been years ago," Gary laughs with embarrassment. "I didn't wanta disturb him, because I appreciated his privacy. But then it got to where I had to talk to him!" Gary laughs outrageously. "I thought, 'Shit! This is my only chance! This is the greatest singer in the world!' So I did it. I just went over and shook his hand and told him I really enjoyed his singin'. We just started talkin', and he said, 'C'mon, let's go get some breakfast. And we sat down and talked for an hour. He gave me his phone number, and we've kept in touch ever since."

It was Gary's decision to go along with the Allmans on their 1979 national tour that finally pulled him out of his own slump. Out there on the road, just watching the Allmans play night after night, he got his own enthusiasm back. He sat in on their jam sessions that sometimes last all night, and he began writing songs with them. Later that year, when it came time for Stewart to come back to Nashville and record his next album, they invited themselves along to play and sing backup. The result was *Cactus And A Rose*, Stewart's latest LP.

"To me, Gregg Allman's just always been sort of a regular guy . . . Well, it's hard to say *that*," Gary adds. "I don't know. I think he's gotten a little more publicity than he wants . . . When I went down to his house the last time, we ended up goin' out and pickin' green tomatoes, you know. We always seem to end up doin' somethin' like that. We just seem to understand each other."

\* \* \*

Later that night when Gary takes the stage, the Buckboard Club is packed to the steaming point with the several hundred music industry guests who are getting fired up on the free beer and barbecue. Gary is able to stand for most of his set, but there is a folding chair kept on stage behind the microphone for him if he needs it. The sleeves of his flannel shirt are unrolled and dangling as he launches into the first song. His dark hair bushes out from beneath his hat. He looks frail under the glare of the

spotlight, and at times, he seems to grimace in pain as if the emotional force required to sing some of his hit songs is a little more than he has on tap tonight. Heavy beads of perspiration form on his face. His timing on songs like *In Some Room Above The Street* and *Your Place Or Mine* is a little bit off. Somehow, he seems like an out of condition athlete, fighting against his own limitations as he tries to whip himself into shape during the opening rounds of a prize match.

Still, when he clenches his teeth and puts the fury of his quavering voice full-force behind these songs, the emotional power is devastating—like fingernails scraped across a blackboard. No one—with the possible exception of a few immortals like George Jones or Merle Haggard—can deliver all the honky tonk trauma, all the rage, jealousy, impotence, despair, depression and escapism of a hard-hitting barroom song like Gary Stewart can. In a small, crowded club like the Buckboard, the emotional impact—on both Gary and his audience—is frightening.

After the show, there is another party and more free drinks and food in a small, crowded room back at the motel. Gary does a convincing job of shaking hands and smiling for pictures with all the RCA brass from New York. While everyone else sips on beers or mixed drinks, Gary, the contemporary heir-apparent of the honky tonk singers, drinks on orange juice. "I never did drink much," he admits. "I use'ta drink a couple beers now and then, but I don't even do that no more."

Around 1:00 a.m. Gary decides a night, and he heads back to his motel room alone. Now that the show is behind him, and he once again sits in the quiet room with the air conditioner humming, the weariness seems to return to his eyes. "As soon as I get this leg well and get outa court, I'll be alright," he quietly assures a visitor. "You know, I still look forward to playing. I still look forward to the road."

It is obvious that at age 35, Gary Stewart somehow needs to reach inside himself and find his second wind. Somehow, somewhere he needs to find a reason for himself that makes sense, so he can sing those great songs of his with the same energy and abandon with which he once sang them.

Earlier in the evening, someone in the audience was overheard referring to Gary jokingly as "a dying legend," in reference to his general poor health and his earlier reluctance about doing the show. But this friend hopes that it isn't so; hopes that Stewart will somehow find a way to overcome his problems and his own mixed emotions about success. After all, country music doesn't need any more dying legends right now. It needs people with the talent and emotionalism of Gary Stewart out there, moving audiences and making hit records. ■



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# Hardison's Store: Grand New Opry?

By Bob Allen

It was about three years ago when Golden Thompson, a veteran ukelele player from the hilly countryside of Tennessee's Sumner County, retired from his job at the nearby DuPont plant. Finding himself with idle time on his hands, Thompson began dropping by the small roadside market run by his son-in-law Eugene Hardison out on Long Hollow Pike, a 20-minute ride from downtown Nashville. There, Thompson would sometimes sit for hours and play his ukelele.

Well, come to find out, Golden Thompson was giving the folks from the surrounding Middle Tennessee farm communities something they had long hungered for; something more than just the baked beans, soft drinks, bacon, and half gallons of milk they regularly came to Hardison's market to pick up: As it turned out, they also had a craving for some good live, down-home music.

One day a friend of Thompson's dropped by the store with his banjo. He stayed while the two played together, and it was the start of something good. Gradually, word spread to dozens of other musicians who lived in the area, and a few of them—including some with names like Roy Acuff, Bill Monroe, and Merle Travis—began dropping by with their instruments. And naturally, more and more of their friends began coming along to listen, or even dance. "And after that," says Thompson, who is now the leader of a popular local bluegrass band, the Long Hollow Ramblers, which sometimes performs at Opryland and on WSM's *The Noon Show*, "it just got bigger and bigger."

And it has indeed. Nowadays, on a typical Tuesday evening you're liable to see more than 200 cars crowded into the small gravel parking lot at Hardison's and parallel-parked up and down both sides of the narrow, winding Long Hollow Pike. The word has spread and each week more and more folks seem to be gathering to hear some of the best home-grown bluegrass, square-dance, and old-timey

country music you'll find in this neck of the woods.

It's nothing fancy mind you, and there's no admission charge either—although it's always appreciated if you buy a couple of Cokes or candy bars while you're listening. The musicians—who come from the surrounding communities, and in some cases, from as far away as Louisville, Kentucky—all gather in the back of the small market. In front of the soft drink section, next to a stack of 50-pound bags of dog food, they unpack their fiddles, banjos, dobros, and flat-top guitars and take their turns on the stage.

The spectators range from local farmers in bib overalls, elderly ladies and off-duty factory workers, to teen-agers and preschool children. They stand or sit along the narrow aisles of the canned goods section on folding chairs they have brought along with them; or they just lean comfortably against the R.C. Cola cooler and listen. A few others who've just dropped by to pick up the old quart of orange juice or pack of cigars just go about the business of shopping undisturbed.

"A lot of the older folks especially look forward to this," says Eugene Hardison, the owner and proprietor of the store. "They won't do anything on a Tuesday night that will keep them from comin' down here.

"This is a family thing," he adds. "No drinkin' and no rough stuff allowed. You can bring little children in here and they can play and dance if they want to."

The Tuesday night gathering at Hardison's has earned the respect of musicians and genuine music lovers alike. And the popularity of the weekly event isn't all due just to word-of-mouth; it has even drawn respectful mention from the stage of the Grand Ole Opry by appreciative professional pickers who stop by there to bend a string once in a while. In fact, Tennessee tourism officials have been known to steer those visitors looking for good live music who can't get Opry tickets on down to the Tuesday night show at Hardison's. It's one of a few places where

they can still get an ear-full of what country music is all about.

"We have people comin' in here who are from all over the place," says Golden Thompson. "Germany, England, Switzerland, Japan . . . you name it! I see hundreds of people out here from week to week, and I don't know where they're all from!"

The frequent appearances of professional musicians like Roy Acuff, Bill Monroe, Merle Travis, Doc Watson, and Frazier Moss (a national fiddle champion) have certainly done nothing to diminish the appeal of Hardison's. "They come out here because they can let their hair down and just play the way they want to" adds Thompson. "Nobody pays to get in, and there's no pressure."

The most attractive thing about these Tuesday night gatherings is that they remain informal and spontaneous, just as they have been from the beginning. It continues to be a labor of love for everyone involved, from the people on stage, to the old farmers seated on a wooden bench in the front of the store, listening with one ear while they discuss the year's corn crop. There is a genuine enthusiasm in the musicians who gather outside around the gas pumps to tune their instruments and rehearse for their turn on the "grand stand." You can see it—and hear it—when as many as a dozen musicians gather in the front of the store to pick together in the lively tradition of the ol-time jamboree. You can also see it in the smiles of the people who try out their square-dancing and clogging shoes in the small floor space in front of the band. It sort of reminds you of the kind of community affair that music once inspired everywhere before such inventions as the radio and phonograph gradually turned it into a mass-merchandising business.

"Anyone who wants to play here, can," Golden Thompson explains. "You don't have to be real good either and it doesn't matter if you're a beginner or a professional. This is an amateur thing, and it's for people to come and learn." ■

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# Song of the American Trucker

## Rough and Funny and Sentimental

By Laura Eipper

For Michael Morgan, *Song of the American Trucker* is a dream come true, the culmination of an idea born while driving a lonely Tennessee road one rainy night, coupled with a year of hard work.

Trucking songs, of course, are nothing new in country music. They're practically a well-defined music of their own. But Morgan's collection of trucking tunes is different: all the songs on his *Big Wheels* album—his own label—were either written or recorded by folks who have actually driven an 18-wheeler.

"I figured that a lot of truckers are fond of saying they can write songs as good as the ones they hear on the radio," said Morgan, who drove a rig out of Prescott, Ariz., himself before getting into the music business. "I thought I'd find out if they really could."

Last summer, after playing with the idea for several months, Morgan sent out a press release to several trucking magazines, innocently asking for material. He stopped counting when the number of responses reached 550 a few weeks later, and set about wading through homemade tapes, and test pressings.

What he came up with is 20 pieces of pure Americana, as diverse in viewpoint and mood as truckers are themselves. *Song of the American Trucker* is sometimes rough, sometimes a little off-color, sometimes funny and sometimes sentimental. It's also about as close to authentic country music made by authentic people as you're likely to find these days.

The production, too, is varied, ranging from polished cuts by Max Barnes, a trucker who now records professionally for Ovation Records, to bare-bones recitations like *All in a Day's Work*, by John Anspaugh, a 34-year veteran of the road who hauls flammables out of Portland, Ore.

The frequent lack of sophistication in the recording, oddly enough, only adds to the album's appeal. It sounds as if the singers had dropped into a recording



studio stuck behind a truckstop, en route to delivering a load of produce.

Truckers, Morgan feels, may have replaced cowboys as the great American individualist. The trendiness of CB slang and shows like *B.J. and the Bear*, however, trouble him.

"Truckers feel insulted by shows like

that," he says. "It makes trucking out to be a joke—and it's not. My own experience driving a truck gave me a deep appreciation of what those people go through. It's demanding—physically, emotionally, mentally—and cliché that it is, you have to be dedicated to that life to survive."

Given the rigors described in their tunes, Morgan's singing truckers must be dedicated indeed. They unfold a catalogue of day-to-day woes of the road: blown tires, bad coffee, wrecks, loneliness, icy hills, grueling schedules. But often, too, there are laughs, as in Russell Pate's Kenny Rogers take-off that grumbles, "you picked a fine time to leave me, loose wheel."

True to his affinity for truckers, Morgan released *Song of the American Trucker* this spring only in truck stops, foregoing regular retail outlets. It sold an amazing 10,000 copies, he said, in the first few weeks it was out and surprised even himself. Now plans call for the album to undergo an extensive television campaign, although *Song of the American Trucker* can still be purchased for \$9.95 from Big Wheel Records, Box 1382, Prescott, Ariz., 86302.

Encouraged by the album's success, Morgan has a few other projects up his sleeve. Another album of trucking songs is coming up, and a television special based on the first album is in the works. Several major country music stars are being mentioned as possible hosts for the show, which should be ready some time this fall.

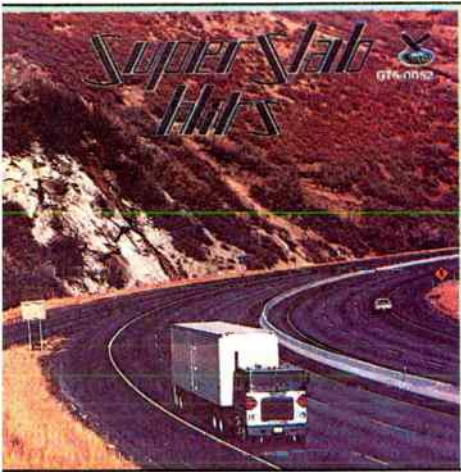
If Morgan has his way, the show won't be any glossed-up romance of the road, or a variation of *B.J.*

"I'm pleased with the album because it succeeded without making too many concessions to commerciality," he says. "The television show I hope will be the same. I'd like to give people a better, more realistic idea of what that life is all about. Not the glamour, but things like driving until you fall asleep hunched over the wheel for a few hours." ■

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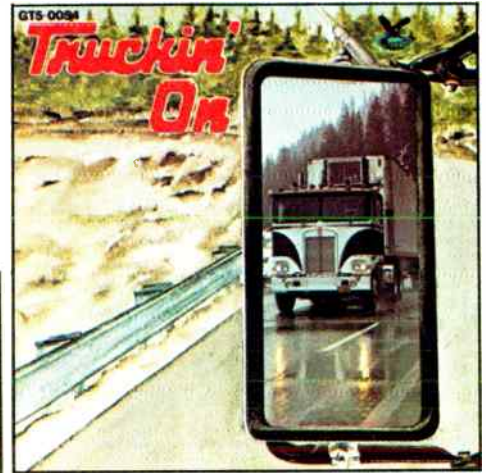
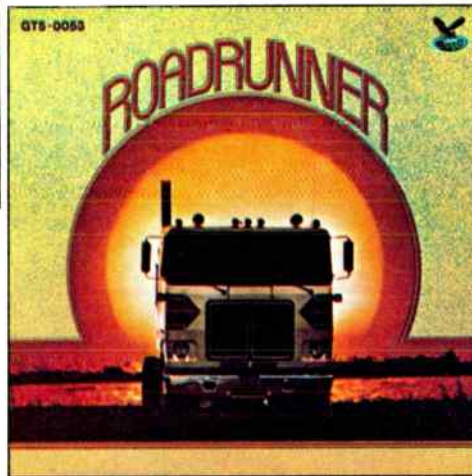
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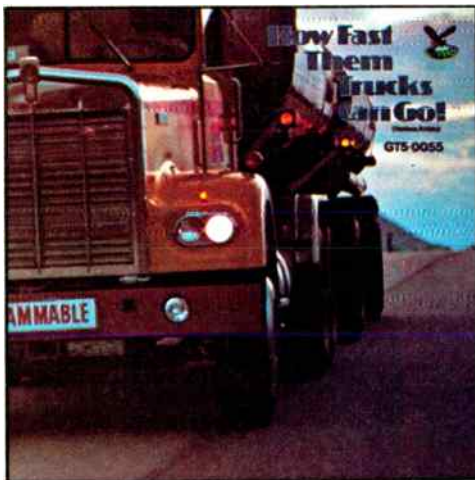


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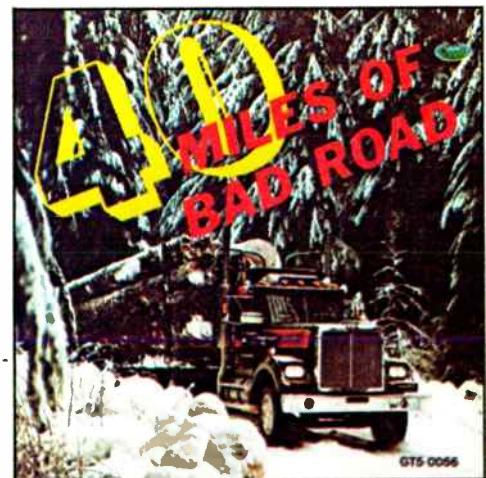
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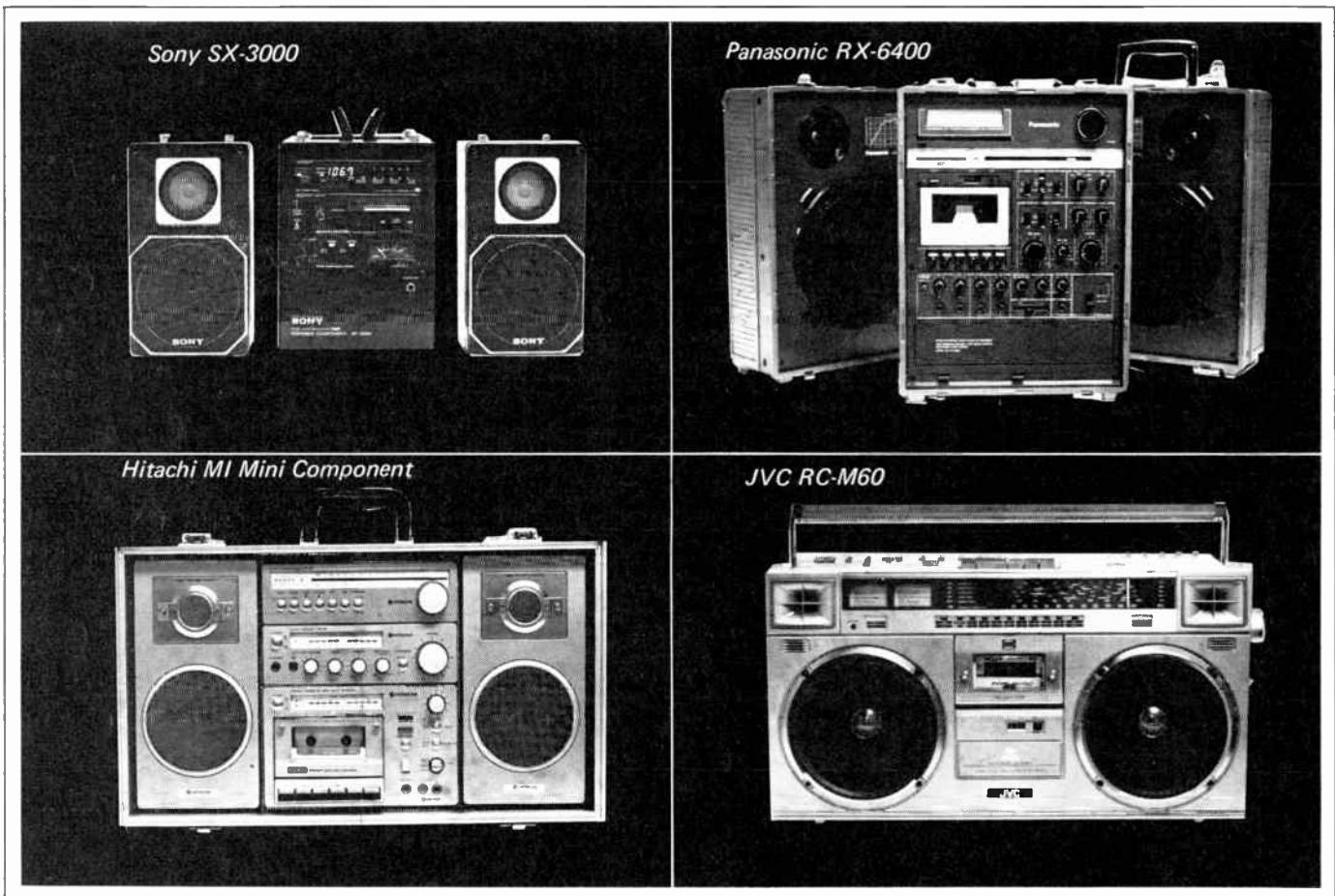




# AUDIO

## Portable Hi-Fi Is Finally Here

By Neil Winestock



There's a whole new generation of sound machines out there. You'll see the front lines out in any city street: kids toting boxes bigger than they are and blasting the ears off every human within a quarter-mile or so. If it's "country" those boxes blare, the country in question sure isn't ours. So much for editorializing. Believe it or not, those "boxes" (that's what they kids in my radius of dangerous decibel-level call them, just "boxes") are an example, of all things, of miniaturization and micro-technology. Even though they may seem to be straight out of a Japanese monster movie with a plot that goes something like: *Radiation Causes Transistor Radio To Devour The United States.*

No, these behemoths are not the result of some new science that makes little radios big, they are part of the continuing trend of big radios getting smaller. Now, even high fidel-

ity stereo can be made small enough to carry with you, though a little bigger than most of the boxes commonly seen. Small enough to carry in a suitcase or in your car. Or at least this is what the manufacturers of the stuff have been telling us.

So we here at *Country Music* decided to have a listen to a few of these new portable hi-fi stereos, to hear how they measure up to all the noise being made about them. Four models that are each unique were selected — because each was particularly interesting to this writer and, I thought, upon seeing them at the latest Consumer Electronics Show in Chicago, particularly interesting to the country music fan.

For one, there's the **Panasonic RX-6400**, which sells for a whopping \$649.95 list price (items of the sort we're dealing with here have historically been heavily discounted; gener-

ally speaking, one can shave a quarter to a third of the "retail price.") The RX-6400 includes: two detachable speakers; a mixer for two microphones, an electric guitar input and two auxiliary inputs; echoplex; Dolby noise reduction for record and playback of standard, CrO<sub>2</sub>, and Metal cassettes, and an AM-FM stereo radio. It works off either AC power or ten size D batteries.

Another is the **Sony "Freedom" SX-3000** (\$795.00 suggested retail price), which is actually composed of some of Sony's top car stereo units — a tape deck with metal capacity and double Dolby (for both record and playback), a digital tuner with eight station memory, and a fairly powerful amplifier, all in a small but heavy black metal case. Two coaxial car speakers are in their own little black aluminum boxes, with handles nicely placed so everything can be carried in one hand, by

the average Muhammed Ali.

The third is **Hitachi's** M1 Mini Compact System (\$719.95), which fits in a packing case smaller than three cubic feet, and con-Manhattan skyscraper. A fine car stereo tuner, built for varying reception conditions, and well shielded and grounded in its heavy casing, it easily got the best reception of all three units.

By contrast, the radio reception of the RX-6400 left a great deal to be desired. Its own very sleek, high-tech packaging proved to be mostly thin plastic — partly accounting for poor reception — and its only antenna is the standard VHF-TV type, which is simply not sufficient for high quality stereo FM. The Mini Compact, with a standard home stereo FM aerial, did as well in the office as the Freedom. It is to be expected that the Freedom would be the reception champ in a moving vehicle.

Everybody at *Country Music* had high hopes for the RX-6400, which looks almost too good to be true. Here's a small and moderately priced unit that seems to do all that a pro wants from a traveling amplifier, as well as play and record cassettes and radio. Of course it's to be expected that the unit would not perform at a professional level, but think of all the folks making their own music who would love something like this! The only question is, just how much does it compromise?

Unfortunately, quite a bit. In every respect that could be compared to the Freedom and the Mini Compact, the RX-6400 came out inferior. The speakers were about as boomy, and the amplifier seemed even muddier than that of the JVC RC-M60. The RX-6400 played louder than any of the other three units tested; but the music that went in, came out as noise. Yes, the unit will amplify a guitar, with echo, and record two voices along with that in stereo, but this is not the machine to use for a demo tape. For a picnic? Maybe.

The **Hitachi** Mini Compact is supposed to be a true home stereo, and indeed it did sound, all around, better than any of the others. But still, it sounded somehow worse than the office's ten-year-old compact stereo! The reason was its painfully small, tinny speakers. When hooked up to another, larger set in the office, the performance was great, from tape or radio, far better than the old office unit, and somewhat better than the Freedom when playing cassettes. And it must be admitted that, bad as the small speakers are, I've not heard many mini speakers that were better. The tape deck and tuner and amp can be purchased separately from the speakers.

Our own personal, subjective lowdown then is: the JVC RC-M60 is a worthy, highly portable bargain special; the Sony Freedom for that mountain hideaway and for the ride there; the **Hitachi** Mini Compact as a good, small, low-powered alternative to a home hi-fi — and one that's easily moved if you are easily moved; and the RX-6400 if the look of a product is very important to you, if you sing and play the guitar and want to record yourself, and if you are half deaf. ■



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# Record Reviews

**Lacy J. Dalton**  
**Hard Times**  
Columbia JC 36763



It's easy to blow it in this business. One of the easiest ways is to get plenty of press, show ample potential and then fritter it away.

That's what happened to Marshall Chapman, whose records never lived up to the hype that surrounded them. Lacy J. Dalton, however, is an exception. She's followed up her debut with an equally impressive effort, one as compelling as anything I've heard this year.

With the pressure of her debut off her shoulders she's now free to explore her material, trying new things with her intense, buzzsaw vibrato voice, giving it subtler color than before. Her original material remains consistent, and there probably should be more of it, though the title track, penned by Bobby Braddock, is a simple, insightful eighties song that filters middle class ennui into a positive attitude. *China Doll*, a Dalton original, rails against the one night stand and the standard male come-on, though rather routinely with no real power. Yet Lacy's understated vocal makes it work. *Old Soldier* is a tribute to an unnamed country legend (my

money's on George Jones) with the ring of truth about it. There is also the pounding rockabilly of *Ain't Nobody Who Could Do It Like My Daddy Could*, possibly about producer Billy Sherrill's dad, a country preacher. There is straight talk and little coyness in *You Can't Fool Love* and likewise, *The Girls From Santa Cruz* is a blunt and surprisingly effective Dalton creation. Yet all of this is only an appetizer for the shattering, searing blues of *Me 'N You*, an apocalyptic vehicle for her voice. Forget those Janis Joplin comparisons you've heard. At her best, Janis couldn't have touched this.

No question about it, Lacy's in a class of her own, no undue fluff or flash. It figures. She grew up, like I did, around Pennsylvania's coal towns, where we pride ourselves on a minimum of bull and like to get to the point fast. **Hard Times** reflects both virtues—in spades.

RICH KIENZLE

## The Amazing Rhythm Aces

**How the Hell Do You Spell Rythum?**

Warner Brothers BSK-3476

The Memphis-based Amazing Rhythm Aces broke out nationally in the mid-'70s with a string of hits like *Third Rate Romance* and *Livin' On The Road*, all of which were earmarked by a throbbing insistent bass/drum backbeat and fluid, yet staccato lead guitar lines that somehow always seemed to dominate the other, more subtle aspects of the group's music.

With the release of **How The Hell Do You Spell Rythum?**,

their debut album for Warner Brothers, the Aces appear to be finally emerging from a several-year-long period of listlessness that involved, for them, two label changes and several rather uninspired albums.

But from the first cut on **How The Hell Do You Spell Rythum?**, *What Kind Of Love Is This?*, it is obvious that the Aces have gotten their magic back again. The group's overall sound is as rhythmically oriented as ever, but there seems to be a new underpinning of versatility and confidence that hasn't been there for quite a while. There is also a soulfulness in Russell Smith's singing and Duncan Cameron's guitar-playing that has been missing from many of the group's

previous studio efforts.

The overall revitalization of the Aces' sound is also enhanced by the generous portions of lively sax



that are furnished on many of the album's cuts by Al Garth and Ronnie Eades. Even the lyrics of the carefully chosen material on

**How The Hell Do You Spell Rythum?** seem to reflect a new degree of depth and maturity.

There are some low points on **How The Hell Do You Spell Rythum?**, unfortunately — like the rather limp version of Van Morrison's *Wild Night*. Yet, for the most part, this LP marks a successful come-back for the Aces, who just a couple of years ago, appeared to be on the ropes.

It's somehow good to know that The Amazing Rhythm Aces haven't faded back into the oblivion of the Memphis music scene after all. With **How The Hell Do You Spell Rythum?**, they've pulled it out of the fire once again.

BOB ALLEN



# Record Reviews

## Carlene Carter Musical Shapes

Warner Brothers BSK 3465

You just don't find much hard country rock. Country rock usually means California-esque soft rock. But not to Carlene Carter.

Carlene is the daughter of June Carter, and Johnny Cash is her stepfather. Nick Lowe, who has produced Elvis Costello, the Pretenders, and Dave Edmunds, is her husband. Lowe and Edmunds have their own groups, but sometimes merge to form a group called Rockpile. Nick produced this record, and plays bass on it. Rockpile does the backup work, along with Bob Andrews of the Rumour, and John McPhee of the Doobie Brothers.

Although I was all set to love the hell out of this record before I heard it, I had a small bit of trouble getting into it. It would have been easier if the second side came first. That side had the two grabbiest cuts, *Too Bad About Sandy*, and *That Very First Kiss*, both Carlene's compositions. That last song has a truly basic arrangement — the one-two-three-four beat is done by the bass and drums together, while the guitar, which is mixed a lot lower, plays onetwo - threefour - fivesix - seveneight over the one two three four. These three instruments break up the rhythms for the chorus to release the tension, then for the break, the guitar rises to the top of the mix and does a classic Creedence Clearwater break. That's one of many memorable moments this record has to offer.

*Too Bad About Sandy* is one of the best cuts here. (A couple of cuts take a few listens to get into, but there are no bad cuts.) Unfortunately, the mix is too muddy, and the words, except the chorus, are very hard to understand. Nick Lowe productions do have that tendency sometimes. If the words were included, it wouldn't matter as much, but they aren't. Haunt-

ed, dramatic guitar breaks abound on this record, and one of the best is on this cut.

*Too Drunk (To Remember)*, also on side two, is more country. It's the sort of song ordinarily done by men, but Carlene is hardly ordinary. Rounding out side two are *Ring Of Fire* which is good, but could have been great, A.P. Carter's *Foggy Mountain Top*, the rockiest version you ever heard, and one of the best, and *Too Proud*, Carlene's own, a fine piece of melodrama, with another super dramatic guitar break.

*Cry* and *Madness*, the first two



cuts on side one, took a little while to get to me, but they did. They're both rockabilly inspired Carter tunes. Best cut on the side is *Baby Ride Easy* (a duet with Edmunds),

which is a cowboyish song with a nice minor change on the chorus. Dave Edmunds sings harmony on this one. His tough, strong voice is a perfect foil for hers.

*Appalachian Eyes* is a pretty soft rocker that closes out side one. It makes a nice contrast; wall to wall ranch can be a little tedious. *Bandit Of Love* and *I'm So Cool*, both Carlene tunes, round out the side. They're not Carlene at her best, but they're certainly good enough. By the way, it's great to have a record with an honest dozen cuts on it.

Hard country rockers! Come and get it! PETER STAMPFEL

## Texas Bound and Flyin'

- Jerry Reed



## Jerry Reed Texas Bound And Flyin' RCA AHL1-3771

You know, the first article I ever wrote for *Country Music* was a short piece on trucker records and how they were taking off. That was back in 1975, and the whole trucker mystique surely did follow. I got sick of the whole thing very shortly after I wrote that story, especially when a lot of

crap started coming out that couldn't come close to the older, raunchier Red Sovine and Dave Dudley records from the sixties. And I wasn't really too sure about this album, either. Trucker movies never appealed to me much, nor do most songs connected with movie soundtracks.

But **Texas Bound And Flyin'** isn't really what I feared. Instead, it's an entertaining, unpretentious collection of trucker

and honkytonk numbers that at its best comes within a hair of equaling some of the best Sovine and Dudley material. No doubt the package was put out mainly to capitalize on the success of **Smokey And The Bandit 2**, but it works so well that you can even forget about the movie and enjoy it strictly on its own merits. The title cut, of course is known to everyone who saw the movie, a typical Reed number in the pounding style he's used for the last ten years or so with some great Reed guitar work and strong harmonica, probably from Charlie McCoy. *Sugarfoot Rag*, a remake of the old Red Foley hit is more elaborate than the original, yet a more elaborate, complete number than before. *Caffeine*, *Nicotine*, *Benzedrine*, a tune Gary Stewart cut years ago (issued on a 1977 Decca album), gets a blasting rockabilly performance nearly as strong as the original. *Detroit City*, a tune done to death, seems fresh and new. Only one tune, the pretentious *Concrete Sailor* smacks of filler. *East Bound And Down* provides good continuity with the original film.

Albums like this are often slapped together and pitched onto the market like burgers on a griddle. This is a fine example of one that wasn't. Nothing profound, just good, pounding Reed.

RICH KIENZLE

# Record Reviews

## Willie Nelson Family Bible MCA-3258

I was really looking forward to this one. Willie Nelson sings gospel songs. Can't miss, I thought. Wrong again.

There's gospel songs and there's gospel songs. They range from glories like *Wondrous Love* to hokey ditties like *Let the Sun Shine In (Face it With a Grin, Smilers Never Lose and Frowners Never Win)*. Then there's the ones in the middle. Which is mostly what you find here, although a few of them lean strongly in the direction of songs for six-year-old Sunday schoolers.

Willie's singing is just fine, like always. The stark and simple arrangements are perfect and lovely. But the songs, besides being mostly bland, are done at only two speeds: slow, and slower.



By *The Waters Of Babylon* is the strongest song here, and this version is only 50 seconds long. The other songs are: *Stand By Me*,

*It Is No Secret (What God Can Do)*, *There Shall Be Showers Of Blessings, Softly And Tenderly, Tell It To Jesus, Family Bible, Revive Us Again, An Evening Prayer*, and two of Willie's weakest songs, *In God's Eve's*, and *Kneel At The Feet Of Jesus*. If you like enough of those songs, ignore this review and buy the record. But I wanted to hear Willie do *Trials and Tribulations!*, *I Found A Hiding Place!*, *He Will Set Your Fields On Fire!*, *Long Journey!* At least one old timer hand clapper on each side! There's no fire here. Nothing that would stop a nonbeliever in his/her tracks. Nothing even to make a believer very excited.

The thought is perhaps strange. But as I listened to this record, I kept thinking over and over, if only there were a bunch of six-year-old Sunday school kids singing along with Willie! It would have been a great record!

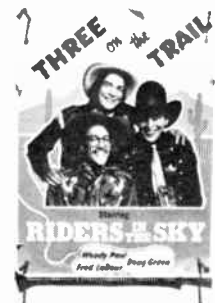
PETER STAMPFEL

## Riders in the Sky Three On The Trail Rounder Records 0102

There is perhaps no more appalling thing for a music critic than for a good friend to announce his intentions of making a record. The totally selfish reaction is always, "My god! Suppose it's a dog and I get stuck reviewing it!" So when Douglas B. Green, as fine a friend as I have, announced his intentions to resurrect the music of the singing cowboys, I was sorely afraid. I didn't even like singing cowboys, having become fixated at an early age on Japanese horror films. I shouldn't have worried, though. *Three On the Trail*, the first album by the Riders In The Sky — Douglas B. Green, Woody Paul, and Fred "Too Slim" LaBour — is nothing short of a minor masterpiece. a record with the power to en-

trance the listener and transport him (or her) to a world of loyal pals and little doggies that don't bark. Most importantly, at least to me, is that the Riders In The Sky have transcended the concept of doing a "tribute" to the music of singing cowboys. Instead, the music is both contemporary and nostalgic, a tribute to the virtuosity of the three Riders (all three do vocals; Doug plays rhythm guitar, Fred string bass, and Woody fiddle, guitar, and banjo). Central to the album is a sly sense of humor, as in Fred's reworking of the traditional *Cielito Lindo*, featuring a minor updating of the lyrics and a vicious savaging of the Spanish language. Four of the album's songs were written by Doug Green, and they are perfect. They are authentic singing cowboy songs, as if, during Doug's tenure at the Country Music Foundation he unearthed a secret cache of Sons of the Pioneers

material. In reality, he is so in tune with the music that his writing seems perfectly natural, perfectly adapted to a cinematic world of long ago. In fact, when you hear *Here Comes The Santa Fe*, you may swear you've heard it before and liked it way back then. That, I think, is the mark of a good record. Woody Paul contributes three excellent compositions, and the remainder of the album is filled with the standards — *When Payday Rolls Around*, *Don't Fence Me In*, and, of course, *Ghost Riders In The Sky*, done the way it should be done. I think what sets *Three On The Trail* apart from many other albums that have tried running against the mainstream is the sense of joy and even lover that this album conveys. You can't help but feel good after hearing the three-part yodels on Doug's *That's How The Yodel Was Born* or the wonderful harmonies on Woody's *Cowboy*



*Song*. Pretension is deadly to good music, and there's not a trace of it on this album. Instead, there's three guys doing something they love to do. Rather than just making records, the Riders In The Sky have given us a gift. Such gifts are few and far between, even in the best of times, and for that reason *Three On The Trail* is a mustn't miss item. Happy trails to you, too.

MICHAEL BANE

# Record Reviews



**Larry Gatlin and the  
Gatlin Brothers Band  
Help Yourself**  
Columbia JC 36582

**U**narguably, Larry Gatlin is one of country music's hottest firecrackers. When he's

good, he's classic, and that's not easy to pull off.

Arguably, he's one of the best-liked. His publicized ego rushes (which may really be nothing more than larger-than-life self-confidence, and what the heck, with talent like his, can you blame him?) have made him something

of a sitting duck for reviewers poised to take potshots at the first sign of slippage.

Well, Gatlin critics better stow their pens because Gatlin's proving to be an artist who just keeps on getting better.

I mean, how can you fault the guy for putting out an album with all ten cuts written by himself, when every tune is one that other songwriters would give half their royalties just to have authored?

**Help Yourself** is proof positive that Gatlin hasn't lost his touch, not even now that he's also wearing a producer's hat in the studio for his recording. Unlike its predecessor, **Straight Ahead**, which did suffer from certain spotty excesses, this album is vintage Gatlin from beginning to end. It's honest, emotion-strung Gatlin, which translates as some pretty fine stuff.

Gatlin has the ability to hurl heart and soul naked into his lyrics, lending his songs a peculiar kind of impassioned urgency and intensity. Love (usually lost) is a favorite topic; he takes his images and arranges them in a musical setting of equal beauty. It's a credit to his sensitivity that Gatlin ballads have a way of sounding like classics the first

time you hear them.

Each cut carries weight on this album, and each one receives its due. There are no throwaways here. *Daytime Hero* is a shrewd, sad analysis of a housewife addicted to *Prince Valium*. *Until She Said Goodbye* is a stunner that evokes the feel of *Broken Lady*. *Straight To My Heart* is a bluesy, piano-ridden heartbreaker, while *Songwriters Trilogy*, the final track of the LP, bears strains of his singularly affecting paean, *The Heart*.

Incidentally, refuting claims of his monumental ego problem: Larry may have won the first round of fame on his own, but he obviously recognizes the importance of brothers Rudy and Steve since all three now share equal billing at Gatlin's insistence, and he is wise not to ignore the creative complements of his sibling clan.

The powerful strength of Gatlin's writing here, propelled by the trio's breathtaking harmonies and mainly-acoustic arrangements, makes for a moving album that should put to rest any worries that Gatlin's "gone commercial." If this is "commercial," I'll have two, please.

KIP KIRBY

**Barbara Mandrell  
Love Is Fair**  
MCA-5136

**T**his LP could have been named, **Barbara Looks At Love**, for the songs look at love feelings from various angles: Love is not selective — it breaks everyone's heart (*Love Is Fair*); I miss you and I'm sorry I gave you a hard time about trivial things (*Crackers*); Let's not do it tonight, fella because I'm still pining for someone — but try me again (*Not Tonight, I've Got A Heartache*); I'm so glad you're back I don't care what you did while you were away (*Long Time*

*No Love*) and so on.

The emphasis is on a pop sound, although here and there you'll catch a guitar riff, a bit of steel guitar, a mandolin or some acoustic-guitar rhythm, just to remind you that Barbara is still a country artist. One cut — *My Bonnie Lies Over and Over* — actually sounds country. Its opening line and title were taken from the old *My Bonnie Lies Over The Ocean*. To me, this is the high point of the album.

The low point is *I'm Afraid He'll Find You (Somewhere In My Heart)*. For some reason, they threw in some weird, pointless electronic sounds that sound as appropriate to Barbara's voice



and country music as a harmonica break in Beethoven's Seventh Symphony. Bad news.

In general, the material on this album is unexciting, though it isn't bad either. The right word, I think, is bland. The production is

tasteful, for the most part, and achieves a variety of instrumental approaches. This variety, however, sounds self-conscious at times, as though each song had to sound different at all costs. With stronger material, I don't think I'd have gotten that impression. When the songs are unexciting, the producer has one helluva job.

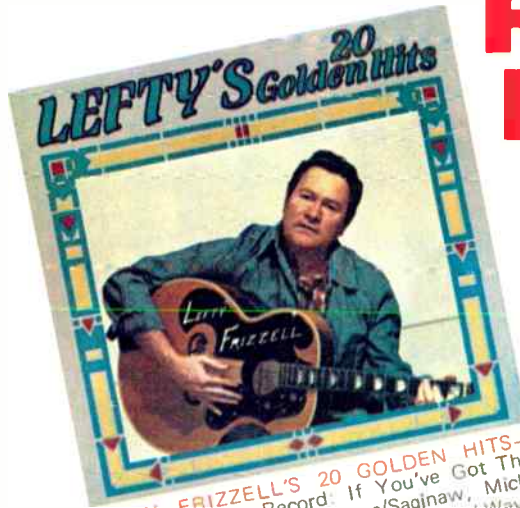
Summing up, I'd call this a professional effort with few flaws, but little that's exciting. It's aimed right at Barbara's middle class, middle-of-the-road audience in both pop and country fields, and will probably be quite pleasing to most of them. In that respect, it's a job well done.

ART MAHER



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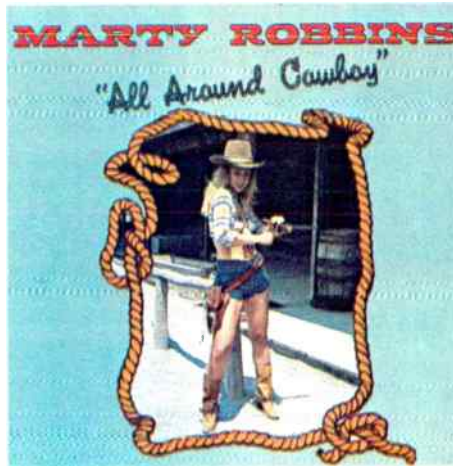


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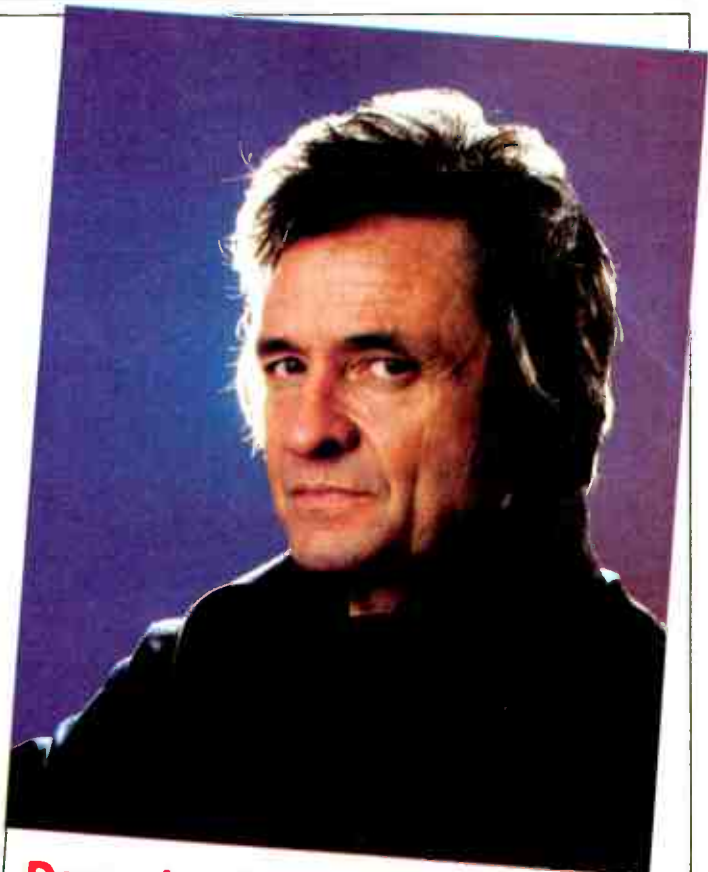
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**December '81**

# Record Reviews

## Crystal Gayle These Days Columbia JC 36512

The title of this album is taken from the lyrics of *Too Many Lovers*, the first song on side one, but it might more aptly have been called *Another Side of Crystal Gayle*.

This is by far the best album Crystal has come up with to date, a sophisticated collection of songs that combines a hint of thirties jazz, pop classics, torchy blues and gentle love songs into a jewel of a record.

If some of Crystal's recent releases have suffered from a certain sameness of tone, **These Days** more than makes up for it. She sings her heart out, backed by some of the tastiest playing on record this year and arrangements that make your mouth water. Produced by her long-time mentor Allen Reynolds, this is an album you can play and play. There's not a turkeycut in the works.

A number of songs stand out. *Lover Man*, an old Kurt Weil/Maxwell Anderson classic, is a heartbreaker. Charles Cochran's piano and Jay Patten's sax transport you immediately to a smoky New York bar, vintage 1940, in the wee hours of the morning. Imagine Crystal in a Helen Morgan-Billie Holliday frame of mind and you've got the picture. Elegant — and the same goes in a more whimsical way for Harry Woods' 1934 bouncer, *What a Little Moonlight Can Do*. Crystal backs herself up with wonderful Andrews Sisters vocals and "ooh ooh oohs" like she's just joined the Dorsey Brothers band.

The blues in a more contemporary vein get the nod in a Delbert McClinton tune, *Take It Easy*. The song is a wailer, both musically and lyrically, but she does it more than justice with a slow, sliding vocal approach and soulful saxophone by Dennis Solee and immaculate keyboard playing by Bobby Woods.



More diversity: a snappy urban blues, *Ain't No Love In the Heart of the City*, and a Joe Sample/Will Jennings jazz tune, *I Just Can't*

*Leave Your Love Alone* that has some nice Leon Russell-ish touches to it.

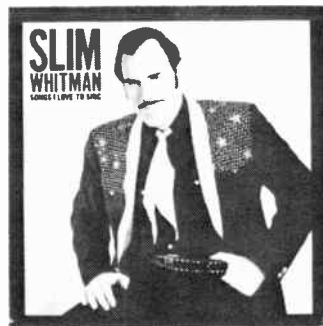
*Help Yourselves to Each Other*,

co-written by producer Reynolds and Bob McDill, is a bit more like what we're used to hearing from Crystal in style. It's sweet, melodic and polished, but it's got meat to it — a beautiful song, produced with feeling and understated in its use of acoustic guitar and quite string section.

There's hardly a country lick in this album, be advised. But even the hardest-core country music fan would be hard-pressed to resist the charms of **These Days**. It's back to basics, full of soul and straight from the heart — which after all is what country is all about, right?

Hopefully the album represents a new direction for a talented singer with a great deal more musical depth than she is sometimes given credit. One complaint: the cover art is lovely, all windy and set against a calm ocean. But what has it got to do with what's inside the album? In this case what you see is decidedly not what you get.

LAURA EIPPER



## Slim Whitman Songs I Love To Sing Epic JE 36768

The romantic lyric tenor, once a staple of Anglo-American popular music and quite a force in country music as well, is a style which has, sad to say, passed from favor; at least on this side of the Atlantic. In Great Britain,

however, Hank Locklin and Slim Whitman have maintained large followings which have sustained them for years.

Slim Whitman's lyric tenor and silvery yodels are back in a big way, however, and the sound is a welcome addition to the generally stodgy and predictable sound of country radio. This latest album is superbly and sensitively produced by Pete Drake, who knows when to build the bombast (*The Last Farewell*) and when to let Slim's plaintive voice speak for itself, which is often.

That voice shines best on his most familiar material — *Rose Marie*, *Secret Love*, *I Remember You* — although some of the newer material seems weaker by comparison. Two exceptions are his single, *When*, and the powerful *Last Farewell*, an interesting

example of choosing songs across the grain. It is hard to disassociate this song from Roger Whittaker's booming, powerful baritone which made the song a hit in the mid-1970s. Yet Slim makes it his own.

Slim Whitman's voice is an acquired taste; it is very mannered and he breaks into yodel glissandos at nearly every turn. On the other hand it is this distinctiveness (typical of the country artists of the generation once removed) which makes him instantly recognizable.

We have missed his distinctive sound and style on this side of the Atlantic for too many years, and the success of his TV album proves his sound is one which a great many people want to hear. It's great to have him back.

DOUGLAS B. GREEN

# Record Reviews

## T.G. Sheppard Smooth Sailin' Warner Brothers BSK-3423 (RE-1)

The first cut, *Do You Wanna Go To Heaven*, gladdened the heart of this lover of real country music. It starts out like a traditional country hymn, with a 10-year-old boy getting baptized in the river. The water tastes pure, and the preacher's words are heard. "Do you wanna go to heaven?" But there's a surprise. He hears the same question again while in high school, but this time, it's an invitation to assorted carnal delights. He doesn't hear the preacher's words this time. The third time the question is asked, it comes from a barroom lovely with equally carnal stuff in mind. Again, the preacher's

words can't be heard. This boy certainly enjoys life. The song is spirited, with excellent use of backup vocals.

The next cut, *If I Never See The Light Of Day*, is lively and good,



with instrumentation that would have been called progressive country a few years ago. I guess you could call it modern or contemporary country.

Then comes the smooth, sac-

charin country/pop stuff. *I Feel Like Loving You Again* is as lush and schmaltzy as you can get, and is perhaps too much of a change from the lively sounds of the first two cuts. *I Could Never Dream The Way You Feel* features a short recitation, behind which T.G. sings the same words he is reciting — all brought to you through the magic of overdubbing and multi-track recording.

In the current Nashville vogue of explicit sexuality concealed behind a thin veil of double entendre, *How Far Love Goes* suggests that two lovers take it slow and do it really right, to see how far love goes. "Love," of course, is a many-splendored word with both physical and emotional meanings.

The title cut, which opens Side Two, is an incredible patchwork of cliches. They're almost all

there: stormy weather, troubled waters, blue skies, rainbows. The lovers have survived the bad times and now have smooth sailing ahead. The cliches flow so freely that you can usually predict the ending of a line after Sheppard sings the first few words. But the sound is good and the beat lively. Also lively — and very country — is *My Mind's Already Home*. It deals with a factory worker so anxious to end the day's work, his imagination has already carried him home to Mama. The instrumentals on this cut are very good, especially the rock-sounding guitar.

The contrasts in this album's material are unusually profound. I personally like the country numbers and dislike the schmaltzy pop numbers. But I suspect many fans will dig the mixture more than I do.

ART MAHER

## Willie Nelson and Family Original Soundtrack Honeysuckle Rose Columbia S2 36752

Believe it or not, there are some folks in Austin who do not count themselves as Willie Nelson fans. Just as there are those in Nashville who snub the Grand Ole Opry. But now that Willie is in the movies, the picnic spoilers are fast on the decline. After all, living in the hill country close to a "real" star can't be that bad, especially if the property values go up.

The **Honeysuckle Rose** soundtrack is a musical scrapbook, a kaleidoscope of happy gatherings spliced together from the film takes. All the fun and craziness kicks off with Willie's *On the Road Again*, a veritable "hard day's night" from the table of contents of his life's journey.

He brought along some notable extras, such as Hank Cochran and Jeannie Seely doing *Making the World Go Away*. Emmylou Harris gets into the act, joining Willie on

*Angel Eyes* and the philosophical solo, *So You Think You're a Cowboy*. A lesser known, but highly spirited guest on the album is Kenneth Threadgill, the Jimmie Rodgers styled Austin yodeler, whose anthem, *Coming Back to Texas* has long been a local beer guzzlers' favorite.

Woven throughout the album is John Gimble's traditional "down home" fiddling. It sounds great in the context of these live gatherings, where no one but Willie was allowed to "fiddle" with the production. Willie's songs range in scope from the rambunctious to the tearful and touching. This double set contains many of his rousing standards (*Whiskey River*, *Bloody Mary Morning*) along with the softer *Blue Eyes Crying in the Rain* and *A Song for You*.

Co-stars Dyan Cannon and Amy Irving appear on the record with the love triangle themes. *If You Want Me to Love You*, *I Will and Two Sides to Every Story*. The record and the movie showcase some of Willie's new original songs, one of the finest being *Angel Flying Too Close to the Ground*. I often wondered why

the *Urban Cowboy* producers left out *Cotton Eyed Joe*. Willie's crew made sure it stayed on this collection. It was a must for at least one of this year's movie soundtracks.

The final cut on the last side is a fitting farewell to this chapter of

Willie's life in song, which he says is "acted out in phases with ten thousand people watching." The closing number is the gospel hand-clapper, *Uncloudy Day*. As another songwriter put it, could be that the Good Lord likes a little pickin' too.

BILL OAKLEY

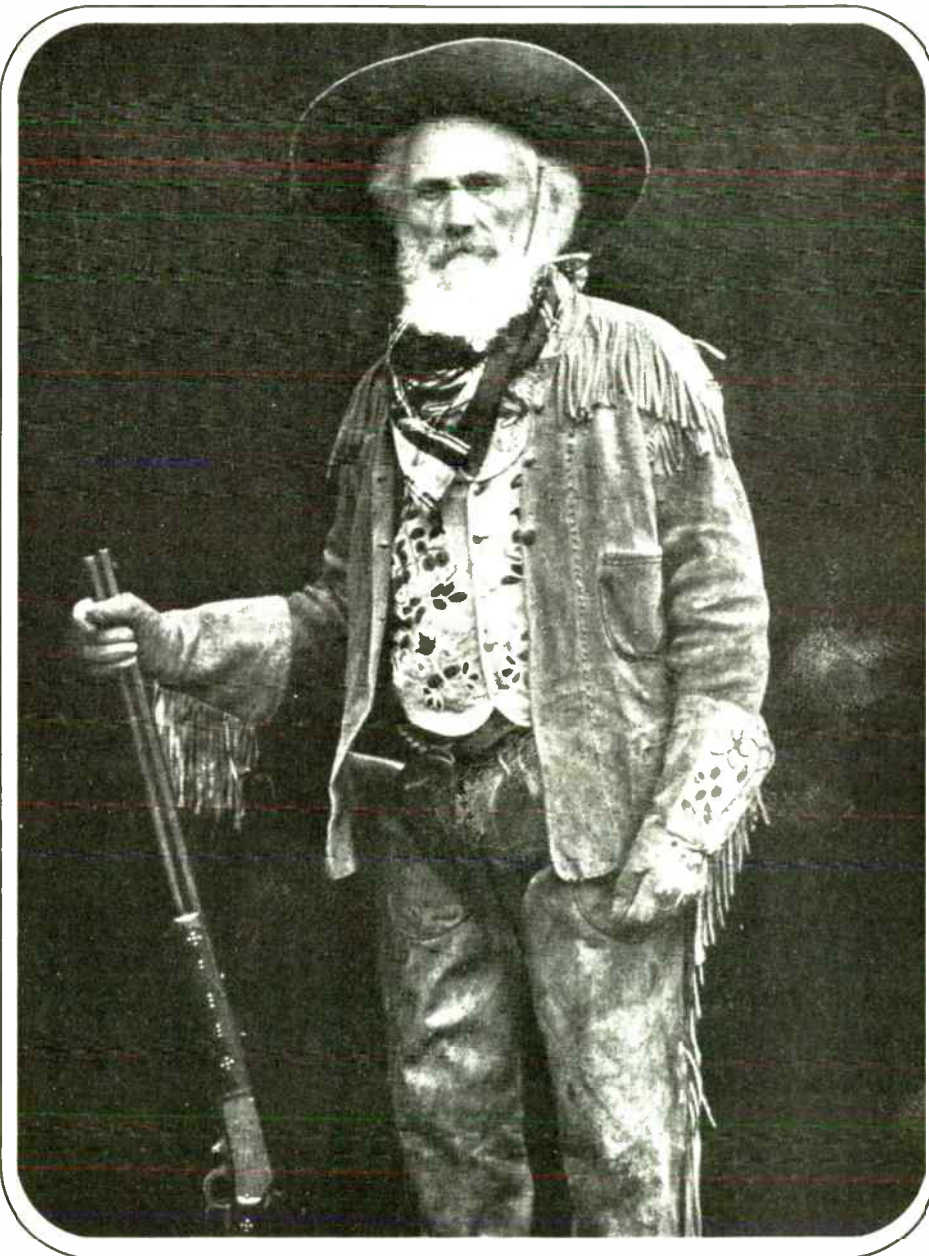
## WILLIE NELSON & FAMILY

# HONEYSUCKLE ROSE



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surveying together for 2 months.  
He never said a word.  
That’s what I call good company.”*

*Pappy McCoy, Railroad Surveyor, Chicago & Ouray Railroad*



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# RALEIGH LIGHTS

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