

Gene Watson/Gail Davies/Carl Smith/Boxcar Willie/Lew DeWitt

MAY/JUNE 1985 \$2.25

COUNTRY MUSIC



**THE
STATLER
BROTHERS**

Hank Williams, Jr.

FIVE-O
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FEATURING THE HIT SINGLE "I'M FOR LOVE"



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COUNTRY MUSIC™

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Letters

Comments on Coe

I appreciate the beautiful farewell to Ernest Tubb. We'll all miss him. However, in the article on David Allan Coe, I wish Michael Bane had trusted us to believe him when he said David has a bad mouth. As a Christian, I don't use profanity and I don't enjoy reading it in my home.

Cathy Crosby
South Daytona, Florida

We appreciate your position. When we interview someone, we print what he or she says, without alteration. We do the same for all you readers right here in this column. By the way, David Allan Coe is a Christian also.—Ed.

I think David Allan Coe is the most misunderstood man in country music, ever. Granted, Coe has his legions of fans. I don't think that is his problem. Look at his record sales. He sells well with every release. Even people like Reba McEntire, Anne Murray and these other "award winners" don't sell as many LPs as consistently; surely they don't please the record reviewers as consistently.

Maybe what David Allan Coe's "problem" is, is the acceptance, or lack of it, that he has received. When you think of Ricky Skaggs, we see a smiling country boy on stage picking, and eating cornbread afterwards. He is one easy person in country music to figure out. He has made approximately four LPs since 1982, not including his Sugar Hill work, and has had approximately a dozen hit records. David Allan Coe has made over fifty LPs and had approximately half a dozen *bona fide* hits.

What I'm saying is, if people don't know what category to put you in, they will shy away from your music or listen to George Jones.

Clifton McPeters
Wurtburg, Tennessee

I am an incarcerated inmate in Ohio and was deeply touched by the interview with Mr. David Allan Coe. The man has suffered and is making up for lost time. Please send me the address to his fan club as well as addresses for Dolly Parton, Jessi Colter, Waylon Jennings, Reba McEntire, Emmylou Harris, Shelly West and Anne Murray. These people have



LEONARD KAVISLER

made my time since 1980 when I was first put in prison.

Mr. Coe and I share the past pleasures of riding our Iron Stallions—Harley Davidsons!

Would appreciate all you can do for me. Money is a hardship since my family turned away from me.

Jack Garland 160-168
P.O. Box 45699
Lucasville, Ohio 45699-0001

We're sending you a copy of the CMSA Answer Book. If an artist's fan club is not listed—David's is—write to his or her record company.—Ed.

E.T. Everlasting

The summer before E.T. "retired" in 1982, I had the opportunity to see and hear him at Round Mountain near Tulsa, Oklahoma. Going up the steps to the stage, he needed help. But, at the very top, his guitar was handed to him. Immediately, there was a transformation. He whirled around and went front and center, receiving a stand-up ovation as he began his first song. I cannot forget what a difference was made when he took that guitar.

He was still on stage when I left. Going to the parking lot, I could hear him singing

"Walking the Floor Over You." He was a sick man then, but his audience could never tell from his performance. Truly one of the greatest!

Billie Jo
Tulsa, Oklahoma

Since I was born in 1936 and have always listened to western music, you can understand why my favorites are Roy Acuff, Hank Snow, Hank Williams, etc. But my favorite singer was Ernest Tubb. So I cried when I read the article about him. I wrote a poem about him, and if possible, I would like his son Justin Tubb to read it. I truly did love that man, as did many other of his fans.

Pauline Malosh
Mira Loma, California

We'll forward your poem.—Ed.

Thank you so much for the great tribute to Ernest Tubb. I'm so proud to have it to add to my E.T. Collection. The photos are so nice. Many of them I've never seen before and I've been an E.T. fan since 1946 and an E.T. Fan Club member for several years.

Martha Welfel
Nashville, Tennessee

Dear Mr. Barnard,
I want to let you know how very much I enjoyed the special tribute to Ernest Tubb. I know that Ernest would have been pleased to read all of the nice words that so many had to say about him. I knew him for many years and can honestly say that he never knew—or even suspected—how much he was admired and respected. He never felt special to anyone, yet he was very special to so many.

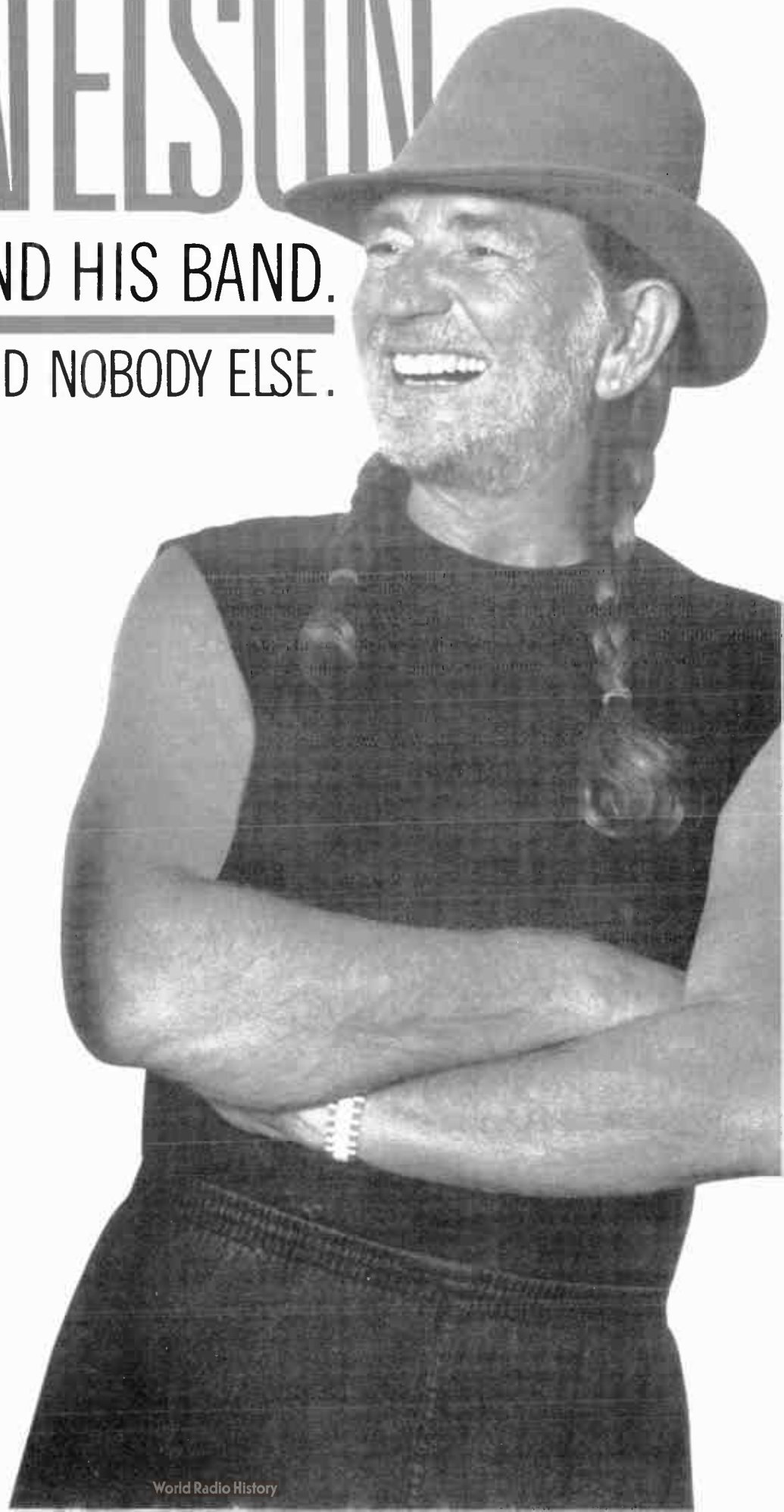
I would like your readers to know that I am continuing with the Ernest Tubb Fan Club, as I have for the past 40 years. However, the club won't be nearly as active as in the past. We will continue to try our best to keep his name and his music before the public, and we won't ever let him be forgotten. We do not ask for a membership fee, and all E.T. fans are welcome.

We have a book about Ernest's life story, especially his early life, which we presented to him in our 40th year with the fan club. He was very pleased with it when he

WILLIE NELSON

AND HIS BAND.

AND NOBODY ELSE.

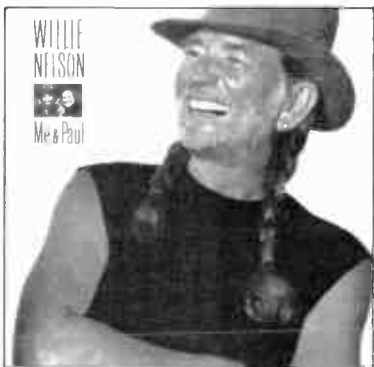


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received it a few weeks before his death. I am sending you a copy as a way of saying "thanks a lot" for being so good to Ernest Tubb.

Norma Barthel, President
Ernest Tubb Fan Club
Roland, Oklahoma

Thanks, Norma, for the book, Ernest Tubb, The Original E.T. Other fans might enjoy it also. It is available, for \$5—includes postage and handling—from Norma Barthel, Route 1 Box 126, Roland, Oklahoma 74954—R.D.B.

A Special Man

Editor's note: Two comments from two special people who knew E.T. came in after our January/February tribute went to press. We print them now.

TOM T. HALL

Ernest Tubb was a man of good foresight and had a sense of continuity in country music. He knew that others would follow him in the field and he seemed to quietly and personally promote those people that he trusted with tradition. I was flattered when he told Bud Wendell, then manager of the Opry, that he should listen to a young man by the name of Tom T. Hall and invite him to guest on the Opry. That was one of the nicest compliments anyone had paid me up to 1968. ■



LORETTA LYNN

As far as I'm concerned, they don't come any better than Ernest Tubb. I loved this man. When I came to the Grand Ole Opry, when I was nobody, he took me under his wing. He was a big, big part of my life and nobody can replace him. I don't know anyone who was better to me and to many others in country music than he was. I don't want to believe he's gone. ■

Ernest Tubb was always a favorite of mine. Enjoyed the special tribute to him. It showed a picture of him and four children. I presumed they were his. Only one mentioned was Justin. I was also wondering about his wife, as the article never mentioned her, not even once.

Eva Christianson
Theodosia, Missouri

The children in the photo were all Ernest's. For more about E.T., buy the book mentioned above or get in touch with the Ernest Tubb Record Shop in Nashville (615-255-7503).

The January/February issue would really have been a very special issue if you had put E.T. on the cover. He deserved to be on the cover, not David Allan Coe.

I loved E.T. He was the greatest.

Carlene Knox
Carrollton, Missouri

All for Alabama

First, I want to congratulate Alabama for winning Entertainer of the Year. I couldn't think of a better group to give it to. Their music is the greatest and really hits home. They have so much meaning in each song they sing. Alabama has really changed my life completely. I only wish I could tell you how much or thank them personally.

Second, I resent people always trying to find fault with them. Of all the bands I have seen, country and rock 'n' roll, Alabama is the most thankful, sensitive and grateful group around. Alabama works very hard at giving people their money's worth and that special something to carry with you always. They never once forget to thank their fans, road crew, writers, people working for and with them. Not to mention the things they do for charity alone. They make their country a much better place to live.

Last, I would like to tell Alabama thanks for everything, instead of them always telling us.

Cheryl Kimminau
Lexington, Nebraska

Cheryl, there are a lot of fans out there who feel as you do. We plan a feature soon called Readers Interview Alabama. To submit questions, write Country Music, Alabama Interview, 450 Park Avenue South, New York, New York 10016. Maximum five questions per letter. We reserve the right to select the best ones.—Ed.

Who's Camera Shy?—Not Merle, Not Don Williams

My husband and I are "folk" singer/songwriters, and we've played music and traveled extensively for the last twelve years.

In regard to complaints about Merle Haggard and Don Williams' *no cameras*

policy, I think the general record-buying and concert-going public is not aware of how distracting flash bulbs can be to a performer.

While my husband and I do not pretend to be in the same league popularity-wise as Merle or Don, we've certainly had enough experience to know that "photographers" often times can get pretty carried away—to the distraction and annoyance of both the person on stage and the rest of the audience who paid to hear and see that performer and not be repeatedly blinded by flashes or have their view blocked by someone standing up in front of them to take pictures.

Mary McCaslin
Santa Monica, California

I just can't help but comment on the two letters of complaint about Merle Haggard not allowing picture taking at some shows. All I can say is A-M-E-N. I wish *all* performers would do likewise, and I know my views are shared by many fans too. I pay *good* money for *good* seats to see a *good* show, and nothing is more distracting than a steady stream of people standing up, walking the aisles and snapping flash bulbs.

Jeanne Cherryholmes
Port St. Lucie, Florida

In the last year, Merle Haggard has been asking people not to use a flash at some concerts so he can video tape the performance. At these shows, a video order blank is on your seat for a copy of the entire show for about the price of two rolls of film and developing. At other shows, cameras are allowed—when he does benefits like Hemet, California, and when he filled in for Barbara Mandrell at the Marlboro Country Music Festival.

In general, the no-camera rule is not a problem with Merle Haggard as much as it is a rule laid down by promoters and city councils. I have been a professional photographer for two years now: two places where I know I can't photograph are the



Clint Bucholz' shot of Merle Haggard in concert.

Universal Amphitheater and the Pacific Amphitheater, both places where big country acts appear. Anaheim Stadium, I'm not sure.

Hope this answers a lot of questions.

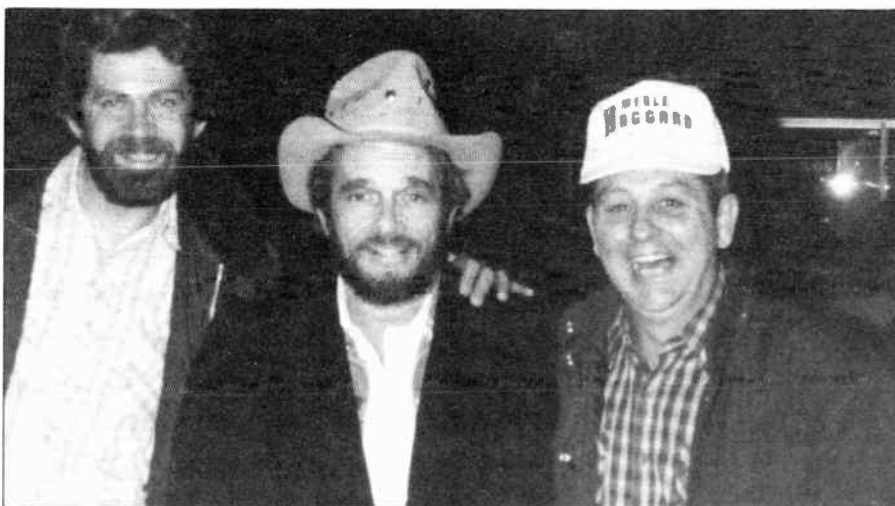
Clint Bucholz
Bell, California

On November 30, 1984, we attended the Marlboro Country Music Tour at the Rosemont Horizon in Rosemont, Illinois. The show consisted of Lee Greenwood, Ricky Skaggs, Merle Haggard and Ronnie Milsap.

After Merle got done singing, we followed him to his hotel and met him and his band in the hotel lobby. Merle took time to stop and talk to us and allowed us to have our picture taken with him.

After Merle left, we stayed at the bar and talked to the guys in the band. Enclosed is the picture just to show that "The Hag Ain't Camera Shy." We were also allowed to go down front and take pictures during the concert.

Steve Creed
Charlie Combs
Marseilles, Illinois



Creed and Combs nabbed Haggard after the show.



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Several years ago I watched Merle and his band play at the Sahara in Lake Tahoe. I'd gotten a seat close to the stage, close enough to mutter things to Merle's front man, Dennis, who's been a fond friend of mine for many years. But, as the show progressed, nobody talked. In fact, you could have heard a pin drop as Merle's magic entranced us right up to and through the end of a highly emotional delivery of "Sing Me Back Home," that he'd saved as his last song. Through the tears that came to my own eyes, I could see that Merle too had been overcome by the song, taking the band members, each and every one, right with him in it.

Even though no pictures had been allowed that evening, my memory has preserved the images and emotional experience of that performance, and I find that it surfaces in a more profound way than my memories of all the dozens of others at which I was preoccupied with my camera during what may well have been high points of those performances as well.

Joy Slocum
Grove City, Pennsylvania

Merle Haggard is my very favorite singer, so I admit I am prejudiced, but do people realize how lucky they are to be able to see him in concert, let alone take his picture? He has not been in the Pittsburgh area for at least six or seven years. So when your reporters are talking to him about his "shyness," could they please tell him to come to Pittsburgh. He has a lot of fans here and I for one will leave my camera home if he wants.

Some fans seem to have great expectations of the performers. I wonder how they themselves would hold up under such public scrutiny.

Mary Lee Supernovich
Elizabeth, Pennsylvania

Hold it!

I have been to all of Don Williams' concerts here in my state. Each time we have been allowed to go camera crazy. This also applies to the Oak Ridge Boys' concerts.

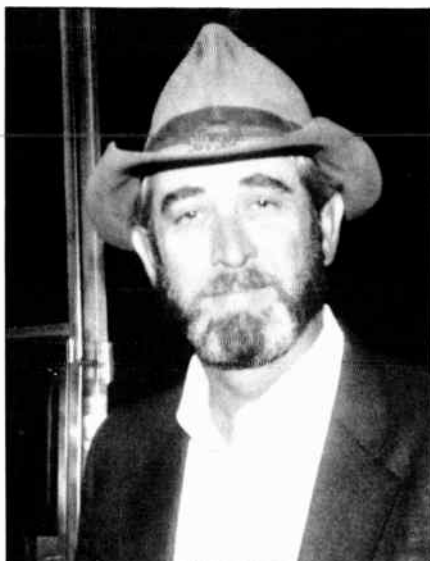
May I suggest that the experience of the Mississippi gal in the January/February issue *may* be the result of a few folks who feel they must leave their seats to obtain their pictures. It only takes a few folks going wrong and you get, "Abuse it, you lose it."

Sad the woman and others have to miss a bonus from the concerts.

LaLa Minnick
West Jordan, Utah

I am enclosing a snapshot I made of "The Greatest," Don Williams. I approached him after a concert in Cincinnati, as he was about to enter his bus. I asked if he would allow me to take his picture. He answered in his typical, sweet, low tone, "All right."

I don't approve of taking pictures while



Ruth Imfeld captured Don Williams outside his bus.

they are performing (even though I did). It does take away from the performer.

Does this prove he is not as camera shy as some would believe?

Ruth Imfeld
Middletown Ohio

A Chance to be Heard

In Hits or Misses in the January/February issue, Mr. Kip Kirby mentioned that "Country record sales are down, and Nashville is getting nervous." You are *so right*, that Nashville isn't making any "new" albums. As the wife of a very talented "unpublished" musician-songwriter, I would like to voice my opinion. What does a person do to get new and fresh ideas heard so that Nashville can have new country music? You have to know someone or get a record producer on a good day or just get lucky.

How about it, Nashville, give some of us outsiders a chance to be heard.

Paulette Cano
Louisville, Kentucky

The Sue Brewer Fund, established by Waylon Jennings last year, helps unknown songwriters get the chance they need. For more information, see People in this issue and contact The Songwriters Guild, United Artist Tower, 50 Music Square West, Nashville, Tennessee 37203.

By the way, why won't anyone believe us? The talented, courageous, outspoken Kip Kirby is a woman.—Ed.

People, People, People

The new *Country Music Magazine* is far better than the old. Its setup is different and it has so much more. It keeps you up-to-date, and includes upcoming events. Keep up the good work, gang.

I have a couple of comments. First, on Barbara Mandrell. I think she deserves

everything. Her special, *Something Special*, on January 9 was one of the best country shows I've ever seen, and I've seen her in person. I hope Kraft sponsors her for many, many more.

Also, let's see more of Gene Watson. He deserves more credit than he gets. He's an old-timer, but he's not dead. It is true that the older, the better, and Gene Watson is hot.

Jarvis E. Jerrell, Jr.
Lawrenceville, Illinois

At least Barbara's not been wasting her time at home—see People. For some smokin' hot pages on Gene Watson, turn to the feature in this issue.—Ed.

Thanks a lot for the updates on Barbara Fairchild and Norma Jean. They are two of my favorite female country singers. Norma Jean was never just ". . . the girl on the Porter Wagoner Show B.D. (before Dolly)" to me. She was beautiful and had a wonderful voice. I miss her and appreciate the fact that *Country Music Magazine* is keeping her fans informed.

Nelson Rasmussen
Ann Arbor, Michigan



Jean Shepard and fan Tim O'Dell.

In my opinion, Connie Smith is the greatest lady country singer that was ever discovered. All of us Connie Smith fans have Bill Anderson to thank for that. Thank you, Bill!

Another great lady of country music is Jean Shepard. She is doing a lot to keep true traditional country music alive.

Singers like Connie Smith and Jean Shepard make one proud to be a country music fan. Love and best wishes to both.

Tim O'Dell
Elkhart, Indiana

Connie Smith was featured in our March/April issue. For an update on Jean Shepard, stay tuned.—Ed.

In *People* in your January/February issue, you mention Louise Mandrell's Country Music Trivia game. We are trivia buffs, and right before I read the issue, I was saying that all we needed was for someone to come out with a country music trivia game. Where can I buy it?

Gertrude Gerhart
Reading, Pennsylvania

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Western Hist. Dept. Denver Public Lib.

Frank (left) and Jesse James invented the daylight bank robbery in America and tested the idea for the first time in Liberty, Missouri, on Valentine's Day, 1866.



Missouri Hist. Soc.

Cole (left) and Jim Younger. Serving with Frank James in a Confederate guerilla unit, Cole was said to have tried out a new Enfield rifle on Yankee prisoners.

By the 1870s, Jesse James (far left) was secure—and vain—enough to pose for a photographer summoned to the gang's cave hideout in Missouri. For 15 years the James gang held sway, imitated, but never equaled, for notoriety and hell-bent originality.



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We were so happy to hear from Hazel Smith again, in *People*, in your January/February issue. Hazel is tops. Please stay, Hazel! Also thanks for the Twenty Questions with Jessi Colter by Michael Bane. We'd love more on Waylon and Jessi.

Gary and Ella Mae Kessell
Gaithersburg, Maryland

Marty Stuart has interviewed Waylon Jennings. Watch for it, in these pages, soon.—Ed.

All About Our Writers

I always enjoy Rich Kienzle's writing, be it in a new record review or in my favorite part of the magazine, Buried Treasures. However, I feel it is only fair to point out a mistake in his review of *Elvis Presley: A Golden Celebration* in your January/February issue. The *Golden Celebration* album is the first issue—not re-issue—of the alternate take of "When It Rains It Really Pours" and the TV performances included. The use of the word "reissue" in relation to these cuts is a simple mistake which should have been caught in proofreading.

I have never been fond of the writing of Hazel Smith and would not look forward to its return in place of the *People* column.

My third point concerns Marty Stuart. I can still clearly recall Marty playing his Fender Jaguar at my parents' home here in Heidelberg. Marty came down with a mutual friend, Bob Barrett, and played a couple of times (and I have the photographs to prove it). Little did any of us know then of the heights that Marty would be reaching just a few years later.

I am now a struggling writer/producer of syndicated radio programs, and one of the world's worst musicians (I have the tapes to prove that). So now who do I see becoming a writer in your magazine (and a damn good one at that!): Yep, it's him again. Marty Stuart. Marty, if you're out there, I'll make you a deal: You keep up the wonderful pickin', I'll do the writin'. And I'll promise not to send those 1971 photos of you to *Country Music*. Deal? I'm kidding, of course; I hope to see more of Marty's writing in the future.

Tom White
Heidelberg, Mississippi

We promise you more writing by Marty Stuart, as we said above, plus we want those photos from 1971. No deals with Marty.

No one's replacing *People*. We have many sources of news and photos, and Rochelle Friedman is in charge. Hazel is

our principal reporter.

As for "re-issue," all the material you mention has been out before in bootleg versions. According to Rich, you're lucky you missed them.—Ed.

Getting Straight About Strait

In reading Bob Allen's review of George Strait's *Does Fort Worth Ever Cross Your Mind* in your January/February issue, I learned to my surprise that George has released five albums through MCA Records. I thought I had the total "George Strait Anthology." Now I find out I'm missing an entire album!

Nancy Breckenridge
Los Angeles, California

Not true! Sorry for the slip-of-the-tongue. George Strait has released four albums on MCA: *Strait Country*, *Strait From the Heart, Right or Wrong*, and *Does Fort Worth Ever Cross Your Mind*.—Ed.

Lew DeWitt—Lost and Found

Guess what? A lady named June Jackson from Lubbock, Texas, contacted me after my letter about Lew DeWitt was published in your November/December issue. June flew from Lubbock to attend one of Lew's concerts in Richmond, Virginia. That was the sole reason for her two-day visit. Enjoyed meeting her and needless to say she thoroughly enjoyed meeting Lew.

At the concert Lew's daughter surprised us and sang two songs.

Lew's sounding even better. Hope you can hear him in person soon!

Barbara Rowzee
Levels, West Virginia

Every time I play The Statlers' records, I call that Lew DeWitt every name I can think of. He wouldn't like one of them.



June Jackson (left) came to visit Barbara Rowzee (right) in order to meet Lew.

There should be five Statlers now. Lew belongs with them. Jimmy Fortune is an excellent singer and would be a great addition to the group, but I'm sure there are others who, like me, can't accept him as a replacement since Lew is able to sing again.

Is there any way I can get Lew's cassette, *Here to Stay*? I have been trying to get a complete collection of Statler records. I have 23 albums so far. They are the greatest.

Lorna Wuyts
Lyman, Wyoming

For information on how to order *Here to Stay*, see the interview with Lew in this issue.—Ed.

A Few Words on George Jones

In response to the review of George Jones' *Ladies Choice* album in your January/February issue: So maybe George Jones should start drinking again and turn his life back into a shambles so that those of us who pay \$8.98 for an album will have a few better tunes to listen to? If you ask me, George has paid his dues a long time ago. If you want some of those total-killer-George-Jones-songs, then just get out one of his older albums. Jones is so good that if he just wanted to "coast" the rest of his career, he'd still be the best stylist around.

Greg Matheny
Liberty Center, Ohio

There's a record review of Jones' first "live" album in this issue. See if you agree.—Ed.

Dear Mr. Allen,
I read your article on George Jones, "The Day George Jones Met Hank Williams," in the November/December issue. Everything is fine but the part on the late Harry Choates. There's a million words that

could have been used instead. I know Harry Choates wouldn't like those words. He certainly deserves better publicity. He started with me and Leo Saileau way back in 1940. So did Link Davis. He learned "Big Mamou" from Leo Saileau.

You may publish this comment, but I know you won't.

Crawford Vincent
Lake Charles, Louisiana

Bob Allen replies: "Coonass" is a slang word for "Cajun," even used by Cajuns themselves, particularly in reference to music. It seemed like a term of affection, like "hillbilly" used by the right people, as, for example, Hazel Smith in People. It was not meant, in my book, to cast any slur on Harry Choates or any of the other musicians mentioned.—B.A.

This letter was started after reading your article, "The Day George Jones Met Hank Williams," and also seeing a feature on The Nashville Network concerning what I thought was George's motivation for building Jones Country (in Texas, but dedicated to all), his million-dollar jukebox in the honky-tonk of life.

My thoughts ended in this song:

*I'm not really guilty
Just a victim of the times
What satisfied my body
Never satisfied my mind
I walked through life not knowing
Just where to draw the line
It's easy making your own hell
But heaven's hard to find.*

*This angel beside me
Put my devils behind me
And heaven finally showed
For Old No-Show this time*

Richard C. Bowman
Glen Alpine, North Carolina

We've printed part of your song in honor of George Jones.—Ed.

I read both of the recent books about George Jones. I liked the one by Bob Allen, *George Jones: The Saga of an American Singer*, best, mainly because of the effort Allen spent tracing Jones' evolution from a rough-around-the-edges honky-tonk wailer to a smooth and very unique song stylist. It hurt to see one of my heroes, G. Jones, on *Wrap Around Nashville*, putting down a book that he hadn't bothered to read, apparently judging it on what his "friends" have told him about it. To Bob Allen and all of your excellent record critics, I say, "Keep up the good work."

Richard C. Young
Dickinson, North Dakota

Bob Allen replies: Thanks for the kind words. I really appreciate it. It means a lot.—B.A.

Editor's note: Wrap Around Nashville is

a news segment that appears weekly on The Nashville Network. Wrap Around's coverage of Bob's book included shots of the Nashville party celebrating the book's publication that we showed you in People in our January/February issue, plus shots from an interview with George Jones in which he said he hadn't read the book and didn't plan to, and that the George Jones in the book was not the real George Jones.

The Value of the Ballot

Maybe those who had so many complaints about the Top 100 Singers on the CMSA Ballot in the September/October issue should be reminded that it was voted on by people just like themselves, who are entitled to their favorites too. I should think they would enjoy seeing what a popular vote produces as opposed to big record companies' block-voting procedures.

Susan Osterhout
Center, Missouri

That's exactly the point—or one of the points—of our ballot. Results coming soon, in the July/August issue. We want all our readers to see how the CMSA voted.—Ed.



How dare you limit our voting in the CMSA monthly Members Poll to a so-called Top 25 albums/singles? Are you and the major labels afraid the fans might just indicate a preference for a lesser-known star or record that *supposedly* isn't a top 25 hit? And since when is Jimmy Buffett country? and Ronnie Milsap sure sounds like a rock music clone-head nowadays. Who says a good record has to be full of orchestras, bands and choruses, like half your top 25? Didn't "Kiss an Angel Good Mornin'" sell 1,000,000 copies with fiddles and steel? Hey, Charley, wake up!

David Sichek
Fullerton, California

The Top 25 is a convenient ballot, although you're right, it does not include everything. As it is, you CMSA members keep turning it upside down. For more, see Members Only page in this issue.—Ed.

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All these go to New York. Sending them to Ohio slows them up. Write to *Country Music Magazine, 450 Park Avenue South, New York, New York 10016*. Mark your letter *Attention: Letters or Newsletter or Back Issues*.

This includes requests for artists' addresses and information of various kinds. First of all, stop and think: is the answer to your question in the *Answer Book*? The CMSA *Answer Book* includes addresses of record companies, fan clubs, radio stations and other important country music organizations, plus facts galore. If the *Answer Book* won't help, direct your inquiry to New York. Mark your letter *Attention: Inquiry*. We can't promise to handle everything.

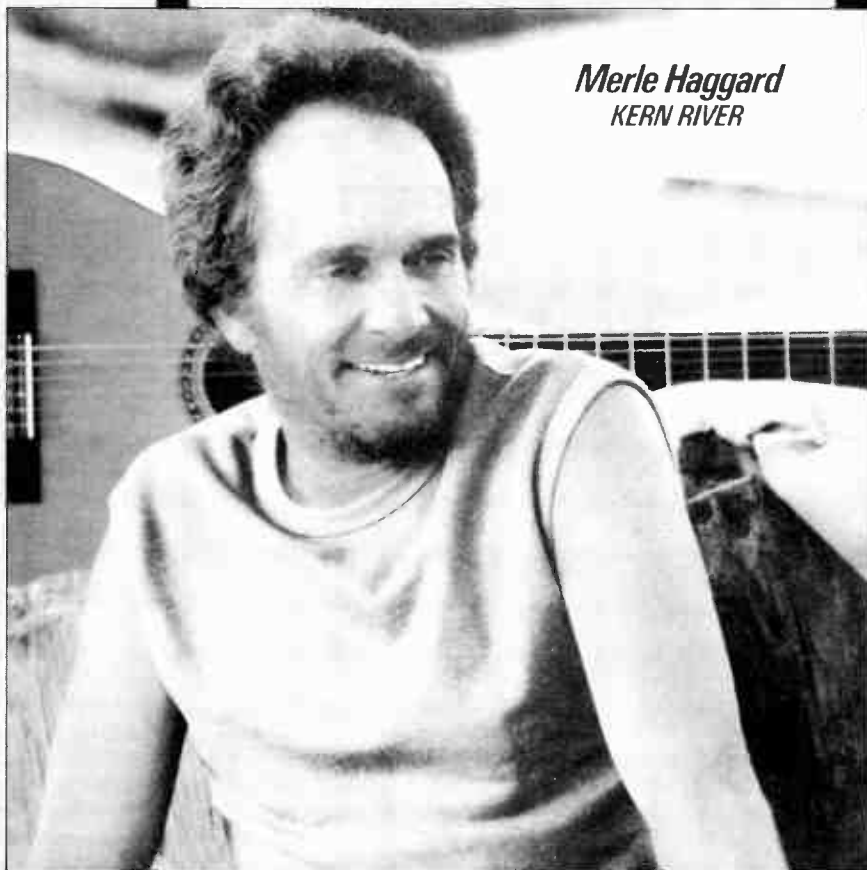
WINNING A GRAMMY AWARD HASN'T CHANGED MERLE.

After winning his first Grammy Award, it's back to business as usual for Merle Haggard.

Merle Haggard's new album, "Kern River" is a winner. Just like Merle! With influences as far ranging as Louis Armstrong and Bob Wills, "Kern River" is a timeless album that only Merle Haggard could have made.

Merle Haggard is a dedicated man. He didn't compromise his music in order to win a Grammy. And he's certainly not about to change anything now!

Merle Haggard, "Kern River". Including "Natural High", "Big Butter And Egg Man", "There's Somebody Else On Your Mind", "There I've Said It Again", "Old Flames Can't Hold A Candle To You", "The Old Windmill" and more.



Merle Haggard
KERN RIVER

MERLE HAGGARD "KERN RIVER"

Produced by Merle Haggard, Grady Martin and Ray Baker.

ON *Epic* RECORDS AND CASSETTES.

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People

NUMBER ONE WITH A SMILE

Mel McDaniel's "Baby's Got Her Blue Jeans On," written by suped-up-Bob McDill, was Mel's first Number One single after seven albums and no telling how many 45s. This is a long overdue happening and couldn't happen to a more gracious and appreciative person. Capitol label-mate Gene Watson is another deserving singer who should come up with some Number One singles/albums real soon. Both gentlemen have a lot of class.

MURRAY GETS FIVE BIG ONES

Another Capitol artist, Anne Murray, recently signed a five year deal renewing her contract to the tune of five million dollars! Anne sings like a bird and sells a bunch of records. Her success has been due partially to the production efforts of Jim Ed Norman. But Jim heads up the country Warner Bros. office now, so I understand Anne is looking for a new person. This musical marriage produced some mighty fine children...there wasn't a stepchild in the lot. However, if Anne gets the right guy, I'm sure everything will work out fine. Some of the people she is negotiating with are very talented.

KIDDIE KORNER

Last year on February 14th Molly Kate Skaggs wasn't born, but this year on that date the young lady (who turned a year old March 8th) could say "Valentine." Parents Sharon White and Ricky Skaggs are just too proud of Miss Molly. No wonder.

QUACK SHOTS

The annual Bud Wendell Duck Hunt brought the New Year in as it has for close to a dozen years, give or take a few, at Reelfoot Lake in Samburg, Tennessee. (Yes, you doubting Thomases, there is a Samburg. For those of you who've never believed that, then look at your Tennessee map for the spot in the upper left hand corner that is closest to Missouri and Kentucky and you will see the spot.) The mighty hunters who braved the wilds in-



The hunters: (from left to right) first row, Jim Ed Brown, Grandpa Jones and Dr. Perry Harris. Back row, Stu Phillips, John Board, Charlie Walker, Johnny Cochran, Julio Pierpaoli and E.W. "Bud" Wendell.

cluded Grandpa Jones; Opryland Park Manager Julio Pierpaoli; Dr. Perry Harris; Opryland Hotel photographer all-around-good-guy, Les Leverett; Jim Ed Brown; Stu Phillips; Charlie Walker; and, of course, the "head hunter" himself, E.W. "Bud" Wendell whose capacity is Chief of Operations for Opryland, Grand Ole Opry, Nashville Network and Opryland Hotel.

Now, the great white hunters lay claim that they brought home eight geese (remember, they went duck hunting), and also saw six eagles.

Through the years I've had the opportunity to tease Mr. Wendell and Les Leverett about their hunting trip. Some years back Mr. Wendell, Les, and the late, great Tex Ritter were discussing the duck hunt and what a great time they had. They were backstage at the Opry along with Mrs. Les "Dot" Leverett, and nosy me was there too. We listened as they told about getting up before sunup, shaking in

the cold as they sat in duck blinds with their guns aimed, how wet they got, how cold they were, etc., and etc... Finally, I winked at Dot Leverett and said, "And I bet there wasn't a man in the bunch that would hang out clothes for his wife in freezing weather!" Not only did they not answer me, they acted like they never heard me. What do you think, girls?

All those wonderful Reelfoot stories and I'll bet there's not one on tape with wonderful Tex Ritter. Don't we need those things taped?

CREAM OF THE CROP GOES SILK CUTTING...

In April Mervyn Conn's *Silk Cut Festival* was held in London's Wembley Arena. Hosted all three days by Ronnie Prophet, the annual event featured the likes of Moe Bandy, the Bellamy Brothers, Rita Coolidge, Gail Davies, Tompall & the Glaser Brothers, Freddy Fender, Narvel Felts, Lloyd Green, Tom Gribbin,

Guest Reporter: Hazel Smith/Editor: Rochelle Friedman

People

David Houston, the Killer—Jerry Lee Lewis—Terry McMillan, Bill Monroe, Jimmy C. Newman, Paul Richey, "Pig" Robbins, Johnny Russell, Joe Stampley, Nat Stuckey, Margo Smith, Mel Tillis, Tammy Wynette, Boxcar Willie, Brenda Lee, Conway Twitty, and Billy Walker. This concert is said to gather the largest group of country talent and fans in all of Europe. I know my friend Stella was as close to the front as she could get. For a dozen or more years Stella has saved her money, counting pounds or whatever the English count...just to come to the States at Fan Fair. And her one wish has always been to see Tompall Glaser sing. God bless her, and all the other loyalists to the country cause. What a lineup. I only wish that I could have been there.

By the way, the offices of Mervyn Conn of America have relocated. Their new address: 9200 Sunset Blvd., Suite 620, Los Angeles, CA (213) 278-5934.

LET'S JAM UP HONEY

And they did! Number XI for Charlie Daniels. 12,000 people. It was way below freezing and the roads were impassable, but people came and came. The deep freeze went unnoticed for nine hours as they listened to Little Richard (who could thaw any ice). Tommy Shaw performed without his band Styx, singing cuts from his first album. Tom Wopat, Kris Kristofferson and Nicolette Larson warmed things up some more. Emmylou Harris, looking like a goddess, sang like the country diva she is; Amy Grant sang gospel and Detroit's Ted Nugent sang until his hair was wringing wet. Why even his electrified guitar was sweating. Eddy Raven sang. Gail Davies performed her very special brand of country and was followed by Bill Medley, the former Righteous Brother. The crowd went berserk when they greeted the man from the Volunteer State, Charlie Daniels, opening to the music of Tennessee Waltz. I swear, it was almost as moving to hear and see Charlie at this point in the show as it always is to hear Roy Acuff sing "The Great Speckled Bird."

Papa John Creech joined his good buddy Charlie onstage for some fine rocking-the-blues fiddling and Lacy J. Dalton—who ain't no flop no how—rocked that building with her country "16th Avenue." Toy Caldwell and Paul Riddle from Marshall Tucker looked right at home a-picking and young LaKonya Smithe really showed off fiddling with Master Daniels. Dobie Gray swore it was Charlie's best jam. . . . And young Danny Cooksey from

THAT BOY CAN WRITE

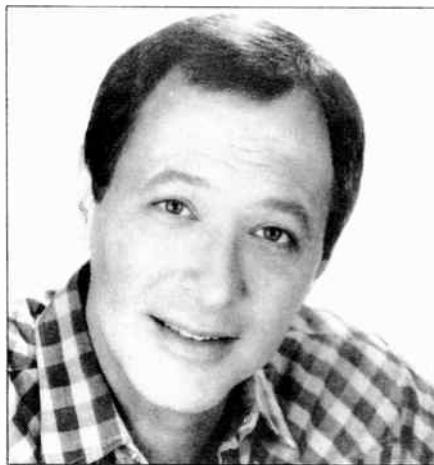


When Mel Tillis throws a party, everyone attends. At his recent reception for the publishing of his book, *Stutterin' Boy*, Mel was joined by old friends Bobby Bare and Webb Pierce. The boys go way back—Mel has written songs for both legendary country singers.

Different Strokes said howdy, revealed he was nine years old. . . . two years younger than the Jam. That makes me and Charlie older, but the Jam's just getting better and so do we!

TONY DESERVES A CHANCE

Nashville is filled with hopefuls, hopelessness, and hope. Some dreams are just nightmares but some deserve to happen. When Tony Chance told me about his



Tony—worth a chance.

show and asked me to attend, I had some reservations; however, they faded once I saw him "live and in living color." Vocal-wise place Tony somewhere among Gary Morris, Kenny Rogers and Lee Greenwood—which is a little better'n average place to be I would say.

What's unique?? His show. It's country with a touch of Vegas. He starts with rollicking uptempo songs, follows with a couple of love songs, gets nostalgic (with "Good Hearted Woman"), and then goes into what he calls his "clown routine." As he sings, the lighting changes to reveal his face covered with clown makeup. It's a moving performance. A bit later Tony does his second routine, "Orville & Martha." Martha has just gone to heaven and Orville is at least a hundred years old. Putting on new makeup, Tony becomes the old man. He speaks with Martha from the attic, where he has found her letters—but not addressed to him! Quite sad in the beginning, quite funny in the end.

Tony's "chance" is coming—all he needs is a hit record. If you get a chance to see him, take it!:

THE OPRY WILL ROMANCE WITH THE TUBE

And ain't it high time that the Grand

Dolly

*This beautiful little girl
Grew up in East Tennessee.
Now she has found . . .*

REAL LOVE



Including

Think About Love

*Tie Our Love
(In A Double Knot)*

We Got Too Much

It's Such A Heartache

Don't Call It Love

*Real Love
(Duet with Kenny Rogers)*

I Can't Be True

*Once In A Way
(Blue Moon)*

Come Back To Me

*I Hope You're Never
Happy*

*Produced by
David Malloy for
David Malloy
Productions, Inc.*

RCA
Records and Cassettes

People

Ole Opry is on the television. My **Great Aunt Annie** (almost 80) came to Nashville and went to the Opry last year with her sister and sisters-in-law. They're all older and all from North Carolina and had never been to the Opry before—of course, they love country music. Now starting in April the world famous show will be televised each and every Saturday night from 7:00 to 7:30 PM central standard time. In other words, **Aunt Annie, Aunt Minnie, Aunt Georgia, Aunt Myrtle, Aunt Mamie, Mama, Aunt Lessie, Aunt Louise and Aunt Mary**, starting soon, on the Nashville Network, from 8:00 to 8:30 PM eastern standard time Saturday you'll be able to see 30 minutes of the Grand Ole Opry live. They plan to feature different artists each week, so the viewers will have a variety of entertainers to see. No, I have no idea who will be on the shows, but trust me, there ain't no bad entertainment from the Grand Ole Opry. You'll see people you've been hearing since the late 1930's. It saddens me a little when I think of all of my uncles and my dad... none of them lived to see this. I can recall when televisions first came to our part of the country and a few people starting getting them. All the above ladies had husbands then, and best I can recall they were all present when my daddy said, "When they get the Grand Ole Opry live on television, I will buy one." Daddy never bought a TV, but I bet they got TV's in heaven.

ONLY A NASHVILLE MEMORY

The Sam Davis was the hotel closest to the Ryman Auditorium, the old Grand Ole Opry. The magnificent sign atop stood proud for 56 years, but it took only eleven seconds to bring it to the ground to make way for a parking garage. They call it progress. I call it a pity. So close to the Opry. I bet if those walls could talk, those hillbillies would have burned it years ago!

BOXCAR WILLIE GETS LOCKED IN JAIL!!

Boxcar Willie has what he describes as a "pretty good role" in the forthcoming Patsy Cline flick *Sweet Dreams*, starring Jessica Lange. The way Boxcar described it was, "This guy that's playing Patsy's husband gets locked up in jail for beating her up." His cell mate is played by Box. Since Boxcar is the only one in jail with cigarettes, he becomes quite the popular con.

Boxcar said they treated him real good, flew him out to California a couple of times—which must have been real nice for a train-riding hobo...

When asked if this was just a cameo role, a once-in-a-lifetime thing, Box answered, "I want to act. After all, Boxcar Willie is an act. So, it ain't nothing new for me." Boxcar Willie is probably the richest hobo in the world. (For more about Box-



SOME SWEET MUSIC

Tammy joins singer/songwriter Mark Gray on their new single "Sometimes When We Touch." You'll find the song on Mark's album *This Ol' Piano* and on an album of Tammy's coming out this spring—and you can see it performed on *Solid Gold* sometime soon. Tammy and Mark have teamed up a lot recently, on TV, records, and the road.

car and the life of a hobo, see the 20 Questions feature in this issue.—Ed.)

SONGWRITER'S STORY



Gary Gray (right) is congratulated by Waylon Jennings and Kathy Hyland, regional director of the Songwriters Guild Foundation. Gary is the first person honored by the Sue Brewer Fund, which Waylon started last year to reward promising unpublished songwriters. Gary will get some free studio time, a master of his songs and a critique by some pros. The fund commemorates Sue Brewer, who over the years helped many struggling, now famous, songwriters.

DAVID LETTERMAN IS SO-A-SMART

Do you watch David Letterman? All of us young, beautiful, hip people watch while our particles rest in the cup... ummmm. I never miss the show—except for the times when I fall asleep in the chair! The man is just almost too clever. I do hope that you wonderful fans of *Country Music Magazine* had the good sense and taste to watch Johnny Cash early in February, who had the good taste to bring along Waylon Jennings and Master Marty Stuart. Not only did Johnny give David Letterman a copy of *Country Music Mag* on the air, and sing with Waylon, the two good-timing buddies took time to talk about the good old days. Another highlight was Marty, with two of the finest hands around. He played, sang with J.R.C. and W"GD"J and was invited by bandleader Paul Shaffer to pick along for the rest of the evening. According to my sources, this is the first hillbilly picker to

MUSIC

THE WAY IT SHOULD BE.

FOUR ALBUMS OF GREATEST HITS BY SUPERSTAR ARTISTS...



GEOURGE STRAIT
INSTANT GOLD!



LEE GREENWOOD
INCLUDES "DIXIE ROAD"



BARBARA MANDRELL
INCLUDES "THERE'S NO LOVE IN TENNESSEE"



MERLE HAGGARD
INCLUDES "MAKE-UP AND FADED BLUE JEANS"

FOUR NEW RELEASES WHICH ARE SURE TO BE HITS ...



OAK RIDGE BOYS
INCLUDES "LITTLE THINGS"



JOHNSCHNEIDER
INCLUDES "IT'S A SHORT WALK FROM HEAVEN TO HELL"



ATLANTA
INCLUDES "MY SWEET-EYED GEORGIA GIRL"



THE WHITES
INCLUDES "IF IT AIN'T LOVE (LET'S LEAVE IT ALONE)"

EIGHT REASONS WHY WE SAY... MUSIC ON MCA IS MUSIC THE WAY IT SHOULD BE.

MCA RECORDS

People



Loretta gives a big hug to Huey Lewis after she won the prestigious Award of Merit at the recently televised American Music Awards' ceremony. Loretta was cited for making "Country music, music for the whole country." Lewis won Best Pop Video. Congratulations to them both.

be so honored. And it is an honor. I love Marty Stuart. He is one talented picker and I know that Paul and the boys were just honored to have him. Well, give credit where it is due... The Paul Shaffer Band is the best on TV.

PREDICTION BY THE SOOTHSAYING MIND OF MINE

Come November don't be surprised if we run out of hospital rooms in Nashville. I am expecting a baby boom. It's been the worst winter in history—temperature down to 19 below, snow every other day, banks closed, schools closed and daddy's home with mama staying warm. By November we'll know whether someone got out of the snow! We do know that **Barbara Mandrell** is expecting a baby soon.

SMITH'S TRIVIA

Did you know that a "blue moon" is the *second* full moon coming in a single month? Isn't that a romantic thought? If you look at the sky each night from now through July, you'll see only one of these. There's a full moon on the night of July 2 and another on July 31. In fact, this is the *only* Blue Moon for 1985, and don't you

dare miss it!! I say Blue Moon of Kentucky keep on shining!!

KEITH, FIND AN OAK

I've known **Keith Whitley** as long as I've known **Ricky Skaggs**. The two cut their teeth on Martin guitars, doctored acene and learned to shave while working with **Ralph Stanley's** Clinch Mountain Clan. Spoon-fed bluegrass music, they let those beautiful high lonesome harmonies pass their lips before those lips ever touched a girl's. Ricky went down one Kentucky mountain and Keith went down the other. Now the twain have met in Music City. Skaggs, he's hotter'n an outlaw pistol with his Epic phonograph records selling gold and platinum. And Keith is coming along. He's signed a songwriting deal with Tree Publishing, who say he's writing good, and he's been recording for RCA Records. I got Keith's album. It's good. But—I'm looking back to '72, maybe '73—Keith had a friend here in Nashville he was down visiting. I heard him pick up his Martin and just sing his heart out. The boy left goose bumps from one end to the other of my body! That unique, crystal clear country voice—as beautiful as George Jones', but unlike any vocal I've ever heard before or since.

Like I said, the album's good. Keith,

let's find an oak tree and sit down and talk. 'Cause I want to hear greatness and you can give the world GREATNESS. Rear back and sing, honey. I know you can.

BETCHA DIDN'T KNOW!!!

Opryland Park has exceeded two million in attendance for the past four years. Not bad for a bunch of hillbillies. I remember when the construction crews started with the new Grand Ole Opry House and Opryland out in that swamp on Briley Parkway. I figured they were biting off more than they could chew. Right by the Cumberland River, why the place would flood every year. (It's only flooded twice.) And I was sure that swamp had Tennessee alligators. Course, it looks real tame now, that is, if you ain't scared of the Grizzly River Rampage ride they got out there. **Mr. Gaylord**, who owns the entire conglomerate—Opryland, Grand Ole Opry, Opryland Hotel and the Nashville Network—ain't got enough cash to get me on that ride and a couple others out there. My eight year old niece, **Lisa**, says it's fun, however. I'll take her word....

SOS FROM ETHIOPIA AND NASHVILLE PITCHED IN...

The great **Sam Bush** along with his cohorts **John Cowan**, **Bela Fleck** and **Pat**

WOMEN'S WEAR



The women with **Janie Fricke** are not backup singers, but models from the **A.I.M. Modeling Agency** in Nashville. They appeared with **Janie** on the **Channel Four Magazine TV Show** to help **Janie** launch her new clothing line. The **Janie Fricke Collection** is the first clothing line designed by a country artist for purchase by department store buyers.

People



Bela Fleck, Vince Gill, Sam Bush, Ricky Skaggs, John Cowan and Pat Flynn were some of the artists who performed at the show benefiting Ethiopian children.

Flynn a/k/a The New Grass Revival invited a bunch of their buddies to Vanderbilt University for an old-time picking and singing good time—all for the cause of the starving children in Ethiopia. The filled-to-capacity crowd was well-entertained.

Opening the five hour show was the Nashville Bluegrass Band. They blazed the way impressively. There were vocals by Alan O'Bryant (banjo), Pat Enright (guitar), along with Mike Compton (mandolin) and Mark Hembree (upright bass). Next was Pat McLaughlin, who performed her folk act. Russell Smith (former lead singer with the Amazing Rhythm Aces) was amazing. His first-rate performance on "Third-rate Romance" was especially fine. The New Grass Revival joined Russell for some hot picking and singing to close out his portion of the show. John Prine has been a favorite of mine for so long that it's hard for me to be objective. John's songs are such masterpieces... "Sam Stone," "Dear Abby," "Hello In There," "Paradise" (he sang these last two), "Grandpa Was A Carpenter." John and his three-piece band were brought back for an encore. Naturally, RCA's Vince Gill was another crowd pleaser. He played a couple of tunes, then was joined by Kenny Loggins for a couple more. The "Revival" and world champion fiddler, Mark O'Connor joined in for a rip-snorting version of the old Bill Monroe classic "My Rose Of Old Kentucky." The New Grass Revival took the stage. They are the pickinest boys I ever saw... as talented as anybody on the pike today. Mark O'Connor joined the group, adding some classy fiddle. They were also joined by Jason Richenberger of the EMI/America group Jason & The Scorchers, who did a very different version of "Lost Highway." When Ricky Skaggs hit the stage, the

crowd roared. Ricky performed three or four songs, including "Waiting For The Sun To Shine." The Revival and Vince Gill joined Skaggs for some foot-stomping-high-g geared picking and singing, including a spectacular version of "Uncle Pen" with Gill hitting tenor like Monroe had wrote it just for his Kentucky vocals. The crowd went crazy.

Following the last intermission, the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band took front and center stage for a goodtime-was-had-by-all party. Their performance of their hit song (and one of the best songs of 1984) "Long Hard Road" was spellbinding—as good or better than the recording. The Dirt Band has flirted with country for close to a dozen years, and finally country has come to them... in other words, the scope of country music has broadened itself to include them.

It was a great night for a good cause. God's gonna bless y'all, Sam!!

A COUNTRY QUOTE TO REMEMBER

I overheard a discussion of the charts late one night, and someone said, "It ain't okay, 'cause it ain't country." It got me thinking of a line my crazy heartfelt brother, the Texan, Kinky Friedman, said a few years back, after having too little sleep and too much Eagles. "The Eagles live on the charts, but George Jones, Lefty Frizzell and Hank Williams live in the heart," he said. These days, what is country, ain't country, and what ain't country is country. Check the country charts. If I'm lying, I'm dying. Think about it.

COUNTRY MUSIC BRIDGES THE GAP

Andre Gromyko got himself two copies of Dolly's albums to take back to Russia.

I'd bet some things that ain't even mine, that old Andre is a much better lover and husband, and human being after hearing our Miss Dolly sing.

WE'LL NEVER FORGET THE KING

Country music has produced several winners, some greats, a few legends and a couple or three kings. Every January 8, since that fatal August 1977 day, King Elvis' birthday has become a day for remembering in the hearts and minds of all of us.

To commemorate what would have been Elvis' 50th birthday this year, Chevy's on Murfreesboro Road in Nashville played all his recordings all night long. Radio stations across the country also played his songs all day, and one here in Nashville played his top 50 all-time hits. I was quite surprised that "Suspicious Minds" was rated Number 49. This was Top Ten in my mind. My God, anything Elvis sang was Top Ten or better to me. This January 8, some company in Oklahoma was hawking, via mail, a limited supply of 17-inch teddy bears with a windup

COUNTRY BOYS GO CITY



Don't worry, Ricky and Bill haven't just been mugged. They were caught on the streets of New York filming a scene for Ricky's new video, "Country Boy." Ricky plays a Manhattan executive who is visited by his country uncle. Bill Monroe guested as "Uncle Pen."

People

music box that played "Let Me Be Your Teddy Bear." Only a few hundred were made and they were numbered to ensure the buyer that they were, in fact, collector's items. Cost? \$250 big ones. On January 8, 1985, I shed a tear, my tears shed tears, and my tears cried. Thank God for Elvis Presley and for his songs. Thank God that Elvis chose our town to record in, our state to reside in, and left our hearts full of memories and the world a better place for us all. ■



DOLLY AND THE BOYS

Dolly recently joined up with Sawyer Brown on a three month tour, which marked her first stage appearance in some two years. The lucky guys: (left to right) Jim Scholten, Gregg Hubbard, Mark Miller, Joe Smyth, and Bobby Randall. Kenny Rogers was also part of the tour, which started in San Diego earlier this year.

GMM Update *Faron Young*

As I watched Faron Young performing "It's Four in the Morning" on Ralph Emery's topnotch TV show, *Nashville Now*, shown on The Nashville Network, I wondered how it could be that this man does not have a recording deal with a major label. At least there is the CBS album that Willie Nelson recorded with him. It was in the talking stages for a couple of years, and should be available now.

Included on the album will be "Hello Walls," the major hit that Willie wrote for Faron. "It's Four in the Morning," "Sweet Dreams," "Touch Me" and "Three Days" are also included. All these songs are so familiar. I recall seeing Faron in concert when "Hello Walls" was a big hit. I remember how he spoofed the song by singing, "Hello bathroom, hello commode." He had the friends and neighbors well entertained with his special brand of humor.

February 25, the night that Faron appeared on *Nashville Now*, he turned 53. Jeanne Pruett sent her

friend a telegram wishing him a Happy 29th Birthday. Faron allowed as how he was 29 around his ankles. Unlike so many entertainers, Faron doesn't mind having passed the 50 mark. He has no regrets. The man has had 31 Number One recordings and 79 Top Ten singles, and he still sings a honky-tonk song better than most. His voice is strong, his notes are clear and his smile is just as pure and country as ever.

Faron says he was an overnight success, and truly he was. His first hit record, "Going Steady," was recorded on Capitol Records when he was all of 19 years old! He was made a member of the Grand Ole Opry shortly thereafter. **Hugh Cherry**, a Nashville disk jockey, was playing the daylights out of "Going Steady" and brought it to the attention of **Jim Denny** and **Jack Stapp**, the heads of the Opry at that time. Before he could pack his clothes down home in Shreveport, Faron was picking and singing in Nashville for the fans.

Faron loved it and so did the fans.

There used to be a Music Row story about Willie Nelson owing Faron \$500 from way back when Willie was a struggling songwriter. Willie recently presented his friend with a \$50,000 bull to repay the owed debt and to let a friend know what friends are for. Through the years the two have remained close. Faron has played on several Picnics with Willie, and they see each other often.

For all of us fans who want to know, Faron Young is doing pretty much what he wants to these days. He resides on Old Hickory Lake, in a beautiful house with over 6,000 square feet, indoor pool and all the extras he has worked for.

And he's still actively touring. He does about 125 dates a year across the country, carrying a full band. He still enjoys going to Canada every year and to Europe about every other year. Faron sold The Faron Young Building on Division Street in downtown Nashville in 1984, which relieved him of the extra property burden and gave him more free time. He does still maintain an office in the same building, however, and he comes by when he "feels like it."

The Singing Sheriff, as Faron is known, has come a long way. From a family so poor that he didn't have a birthday cake until he was five years old to what he is today... a legend. I get the feeling that Faron is pretty satisfied with the way his life is today. He jokes that Willie's gonna make him famous again and he'll have to go to work. If given a mike and a chance, he'll still sing "Hello commode," instead of "Hello Walls." But, Faron has mellowed—and it looks real good on him—just as good as the gray showing just a bit at the temples.

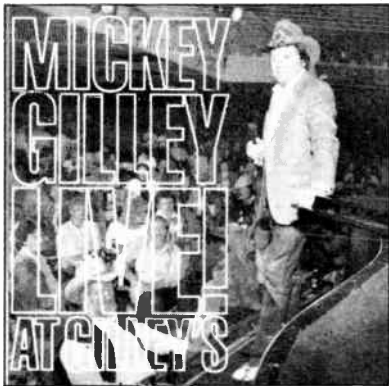
—HAZEL SMITH



Faron and his gift from Willie Nelson.

THREE REASONS TO LIVE!

HERE ARE THREE VERY SPECIAL LIVE ALBUMS!



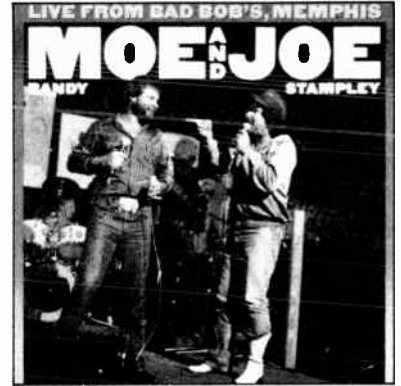
MICKEY GILLEY

"Live at Gilley's" is a triumphant concert of your favorite Gilley songs ...performed live in the house that Gilley built.



GEORGE JONES

"First Time Live" is the best and only live album ever recorded by the legendary George Jones! It's making country music history!



MOE BANDY & JOE STAMPLEY

"Live From Bad Bob's, Memphis" is one Boy's Night Out the world will never forget...with Moe & Joe cuttin' up, and cuttin' all their hits, Live!

On  Columbia and  Epic Records and Cassettes.

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20 Questic with

Years ago a journeyman country music singer named Cecil "Marty" Martin happened to be sitting in his car next to a railroad track in Lincoln, Nebraska, when a freight came rolling by. Through the open door of a boxcar, he saw a hobo, and that particular hobo reminded Marty of another country music singer, Willie Nelson. So Marty Martin wrote a song about it, called it "Boxcar Willie," even recorded a single on it, but nobody was listening.

They're listening now. Marty Martin now is Boxcar Willie, a character reminiscent of his own time riding the rails. Despite the fact that none of Boxcar's songs have ever climbed into the Top Ten, he's one of the most successful artists in the history of country music. His *King of the Road* album, heavily marketed on television, has gone triple platinum—three million copies sold worldwide.

We caught up with Boxcar Willie in Texas, where we found him working on his farm. He dusted off his hands and sat down to answer twenty questions.

1

It must have been a great feeling when *King of the Road* took off the way it did. You couldn't have expected it to be that big.

It *was* exciting, but by the same token, I knew that it would do good. I *knew* that. Matter of fact, I told my wife that this would be the biggest thing to happen to us career-wise.

2

You're going to be in the *Patsy Cline* movie playing a drunk. Is that typecasting?

I don't know. I don't drink. So it'll be interesting. I've been in a couple of little movie things, and I have really wanted to get into it. I did a thing in *Country*



by Michael Bane

Gold with Loni Anderson and Earl Holliman; of course, I just played myself. Then I was in a Canadian movie called *Cross-over*, where, again, I played myself.

3

What's the continuing allure of the hobo?

Well, the hobo is a character. You almost never hear anything bad about hobos. Look at Charlie Chaplin. Look at the character of Emmett Kelly. Look at Red Skelton. Now if I stood on the stage and growled and frowned and scowled, it might be different. But when they see Boxcar Willie, what do they see? They see the smile. I've come to realize that that smile is the most important thing in the world probably. People have always told me that they enjoy my smile. I think happiness is contagious.

4

Forgive us for asking, but what's the difference between a hobo, and a *ahem*, bum?

You know, people get hobos and bums mixed up. It's hard to distinguish the two. But a good ole genuine hobo, now he don't just get in a boxcar and ride around the country just for the hell of it. Unless he's gonna go sightseeing or something. But just to say I'm gonna ask for a handout in Chicago, and I'm gonna ask for a handout in Kansas City, then I'll go down and stand around on the corner in Corpus Christi in the winter time—those are bums. They don't amount to a damn hill of beans. If you give 'em a dollar, most of them will run to the nearest liquor store and drink.

5

Can you run down that story again about where the word "hobo" came from?

After the Civil War, you know, tools were in very short supply, especially in the South. Cause they had took every piece of scrap iron and metal that they could to make swords and knives and guns and ammunition. If you had a hoe, you

could work. And these people just traveled around. They'd get in a gondola car, maybe 50 or 60 to a hundred of 'em. If they had a hoe, they'd guard this hoe at night. Somebody'd steal your hoe, you were out of work. It doesn't seem possible, but that's the way it was. They'd get off these dawgone cars, and they were called *hoe-boys*. In the last few years, we've come up with a way to eradicate weeds. Twenty years ago, we eradicated them with a hoe. We still hoe cotton in Texas. Man, for a hundred and something years, there were a lot of hoeboys around the country. Of course, in the South, you know, whatever your name is, it's going to get shortened. So they just called 'em *hobos*.

6

Do you think there are still real hobos?

Oh yeah, but we just don't recognize them.

7

They're better camouflaged?

Yes. During the last recession we had hundreds of hobos come to Texas from the steel mills up north and factories that closed down. You could go to Houston and their cars were parked under the overpasses. We called them migrant workers or transients. When they were laid off at the steel mill in Youngstown, Ohio, they had six months redundancy, six months unemployment and then they could go on welfare for a while. So they could live for a year and never turn a hand. Well, let's turn the clock back to 1930. A guy gets laid off, he had no benefits, no unemployment, no Social Security. He couldn't load his family up and go to Houston and look for a job. And he didn't have any money, so the only way he could get to Houston was to catch a freight train. They'd bum a ride on a freight train.

Boxcar Willie

8

Your father rode the rails?

Right.

9

When was the first time you hopped a freight?

Me and my dad was talking about this the other night. If we wanted to go to town, we didn't think any more about getting in a boxcar and riding to town, about ten or twelve miles away, then we would think about going out there and getting in the car and going to town. It was just, "We got to go to town to get some flour...let's see, we'll catch the 3:30, and we'll catch the Number Four back out."

10

Kind of like Depression era mass transit.

Right. We didn't have the fifteen cents it took to ride the bus or the Interurban, an old electric trolley that ran about 200 miles across Texas. But it cost you fifteen cents. At that time my dad was making \$20 a month. Hell, that fifteen cents would be like having \$50 dollars today. It'd buy a sack of flour and probably something else, and I mean a 50-pound sack of flour! That makes a lot of damn biscuits and gravy.

11

How was Boxcar Willie born?

I had the idea for years to do what I'm doing. Always in the back of my mind, when I'd be standing on stage in a rhinestone suit, I'd say, "If I was dressed up like a hobo, singing these same songs that I'm singing now, they'd have more authenticity. People would probably remember me better than they'll remember me in this cowboy hat and this beaded jacket."

12

It proved to be true, didn't it?

It did, but it took me years just to get up the guts enough to do it. I was afraid people would laugh—well, they probably still laugh at me! But I was thinking, hey, I used to ride the rails. I wouldn't be a phony. I come from a hobo family.... But it took a long time to just finally say by God, I'm gonna do it.

13

What did it finally take to get you to say, by God, you were finally going to do it?

A combination of things. I was working as a disk jockey in Corpus Christi, didn't really like my job...I was a free-spirited disk jockey when I was disk jockeying. I didn't do anything illegal or anything immoral, but, Herman, I turned the radio upside-down...I played the kind of music I thought people would enjoy. I didn't let some music director tell me what records I was going to play. If I thought a certain record was a piece of crap, I didn't play the damn thing!

14

All that was working toward Boxcar Willie?

Yeah. I was dissatisfied with all that stuff. People saying, "Aw, you shouldn't of said that! We don't play that record there, because that's got drinkin' in it!" So I said hey, I don't like this. It's time to start Boxcar Willie.

15

You also saw the 1975 CMA Awards show and were, shall we say, less than thrilled?

When I seen the CMA Awards that October, and they gave Oliver Newton-John the Female Vocalist and John Denver the Entertainer of the Year—you know, they are great artists. Don't ever think that I'm knocking these folks. Boy, I think they're great talents. But they're pop singers. They ain't country singers. When I

watched the CMA Awards last year and I saw Lionel Richie... Hey, I'm serious man, these folks don't have no business on a country music awards show anymore than Boxcar Willie would have any business being on the damn Oscar's show.

16

Do you think that Nashville...

Idiots. They're idiots. That's exactly what they are. I don't care. You can print that, as far as I'm concerned. They're insulting the intelligence of the people who love and work for country music.

17

If you could put it succinctly, what do you think is wrong with country music right now?

Nothing wrong with country music. What's wrong is that they're playing a lot of music and calling it country. You're taping this conversation with a tape recorder, right? Well, why don't we call that tape recorder a sofa? It's a piece of electronic equipment, why not call it a TV? Same thing in music, Michael. We can hear a song on the radio and it sounds like rock and roll. Then we hear another song and it sounds like country. Well, why don't we call it what it is? My ears are good enough to distinguish between the two. There is a difference.

18

One of the interesting things about Boxcar Willie is that you have become a huge star without the radio airplay that the industry says is necessary for someone to become a big star.

I sell thousands of dollars—and I mean, literally hundreds of thousands of dollars—of records right out of my office and at my concerts each year. I pay taxes on it, and I sure as hell

wouldn't pay taxes on it if I didn't really make it.

19

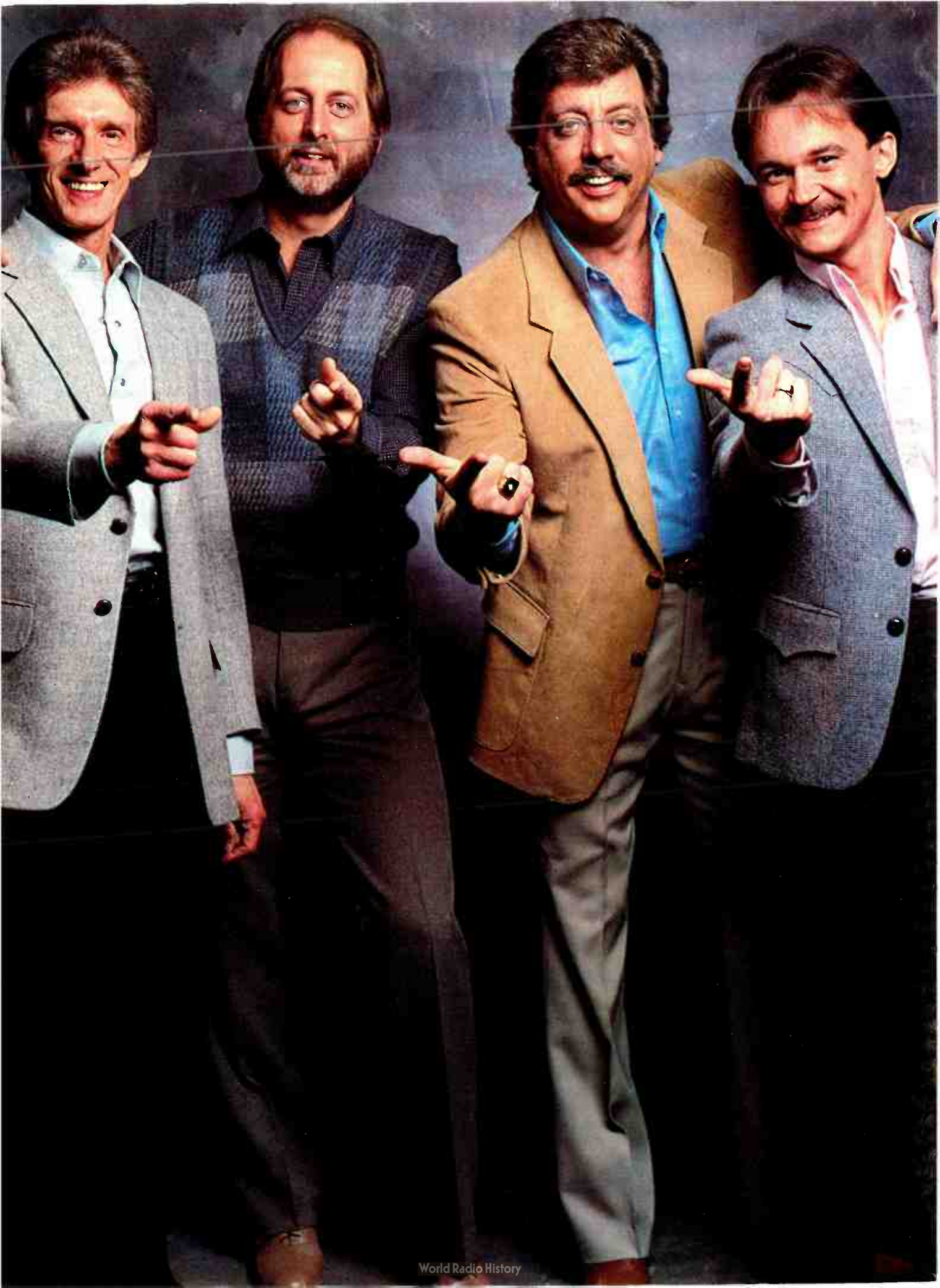
As one of the most popular country music stars in Europe, you'd be a good one to ask. Do you think Europeans have a keener sense of what is country music than Americans?

I know they do.... The BBC allocates two whole hours to country music, on Thursday nights. Probably the most listened-to program in Great Britain. Now then, they program pop, rock, talk and classical the other twenty-two hours a day. So when they come up on Thursday night and say, hey, here's our country program, they play *country*. They play Boxcar Willie; they play Gene Watson; they play George Jones; they play Hank Williams; they play Jim Reeves. Now, once a year we here in the U.S.A. have a country awards program, only this year we didn't have a *country* awards program.

20

Do you remember what it was like the first time you played the Opry?

Well, I guess you could take all the adjectives there are, and you *still* wouldn't have the correct feeling. I'm talking about all the *positive* adjectives. And then you would feel like in describing it, you would still be short. There's just no way to describe it. I don't think anybody ever realized how bad I wanted it. I don't think anybody knew. I don't think even I knew how bad I wanted it. I had made my mother a promise that I would be a member of the Opry one day, and I guess that was just a driving thing way down deep inside me. I don't think anybody could even guess what burned inside to be there. I felt like I belonged there, that this was where I was supposed to be. ■



THE STATLERS

PARDNERS IN RHYME

Riding in their bus, listening to their talk, taking in their show, Patrick Carr is impressed over and over by one thing: this is a group that can be relied on. Their strong sense of purpose informs all they do with a Statler quality and a Statler style.

Riding the Statlers' bus down the pitted highways of West Virginia, watching the poor-dirt woods of this hard-country heartland flip past the windows as my tape recorder bounces around the lounge table between Harold and Don and Phil and Jimmy and me, I experience a strong sense of having been somewhere like this before.

This is quite understandable, of course—there's a special cocoon-like atmosphere to travel on a star bus which I haven't felt since my last excursion in one of these privileged, workmanlike, and self-contained vehicles, and moreover I have been down these particular roads with this particular singing group on this particular bus before—but it seems to me that there is another layer to the feeling.

More important than the familiarity of the setting, perhaps, is the sense of continuity behind it: continuity in the traditions of the land rolling past the windows, in the limits it places on its people and in the culture through which they respond, and continuity at the center of the characters inside the bus. Yes: thinking about

the Statlers, who after fifteen years in the big time of the entertainment business are still living where they were born in the fertile and gracious farmland of the Shenandoah Valley across the Virginia state line, it becomes obvious that steadiness and continuity are both their way of life—the guiding lights in the way they do the things they do—and ideals in themselves. There is a link-in-the-chain approach to life, the opposite of the blazing-comet ideology of many show business people; in their joint career, they are most interested in maintaining and servicing what they have already gained, and in their personal interests they look almost exclusively to the past, ruminating on the art and entertainment of the American Era and tinkering with its artifacts. Their scheme of things does involve the future; their answer to its uncertainties is to fill it with as much of the worthy past as is possible.

Today's agenda, for instance, is not unusual. They are on their way to Wheeling, West Virginia, to play yet another Friday night WWVA Jamboree at the venerable and memory-rich Capitol Music Hall (these days just about the old-style-country triest country concert hall in the nation and a favorite Statlers' date therefore).

They have come from two days in Washington, D.C., where, as an investment in the future, they have been meeting with a show business task force, headed by Vice President Bush, on the subject of how best to convey information about the destructive potential of drugs and alcohol (on that score, they have been lucky personally, and are anxious to help others get a chance at the straight and steady life). In between these two jobs, as their bus vibrates its way up and down the truck-choked roads from one to the other, their choice of relaxation is also typical, and they take to it thankfully, like food or sleep or any other element vital to life: as Harold Reid, their senior member, sinks into videotapes of *Lowell Thomas Remembers* TV shows (this batch documenting the 1920s year by year), new-kid Jimmy Fortune sits up front with Dale the driver, spotting older Mercedes on the road and getting into detail about Dale's brace of 1950s T-Birds. Dale has one convertible and one hard-top, his summer and winter transportation, and that's the kind of thing the Statlers like a lot. Jimmy is certainly impressed.

Which brings up a point. There is such an atmosphere of steadiness about the

by Patrick Carr

Statlers that you almost forget about the major news item; somehow you just don't connect these men with the concept of change. The news item, of course, is that Jimmy Fortuno, who replaced original Statler Lew DeWitt as the tenor singer in the quartet almost two years ago, fits right in.

Perhaps Jimmy Fortune (yup—that's his real name) fits right in because, as Harold Reid has said, "You could almost lay a blueprint of Jimmy's life on top of ours, and they'd match."

A Virginian, Jimmy was born and raised barely forty miles from Staunton, where Harold and Don and Phil (and Lew DeWitt) have spent their lives, and like them he is a hard worker and teetotaler. When he signed up for an audition to temporarily replace the ailing Lew DeWitt, Jimmy was working full-time for an auto dealership, singing in a local band six nights a week, and rehearsing a new band of his own.

"My voice was shot," he recalls. "I was talking on the phone all day, and whenever I wasn't doing that, I was singing. I was just worn out; I didn't have it. I could sing all right, but that real high tenor just wasn't there."

Despite that condition, the Statlers liked Jimmy—he possessed all the attributes of character they considered just as important as pure musical talent—and as they auditioned "literally dozens" of other candidates, they kept him in mind. Towards the end of the process, when they had interviewed and listened to just about all the eligible "unknowns" (and some "knowns") they could find, they sent him a plane ticket to Nashville for a second audition. That's when Jimmy, who had more or less resigned himself to \$200 or \$300 a week and a long hard road with his music, got to take his first airplane ride.

The Statlers were well pleased with that second audition—Don still seems amazed by how well Jimmy knew their material and how naturally his high harmonies fit—and he was hired until Lew DeWitt's health permitted him to rejoin the group. Jimmy worked out: as Harold says, he had so much in common with the older Statlers that "we were bored with him by the second day." When Lew decided to quit the Statlers permanently, the decision was obvious. Jimmy became a permanent Statler.

Naturally, Jimmy was pleased with the decision. He had always liked the music of these local heroes, he had grown to like them personally, and he didn't mind the money and fame one little bit. Achieving such instant status was to him a minor miracle; thinking about all the ways to make it (and not make it) in the music business, he says, used to give him headaches. These days, all he really has to wor-

ry about is the not-quite-life-threatening tedium of all that time on the road. "Sure, he complains about it," notes Harold, slipping into his Ole Roadhog identity, as he does from time to time, "and that's an unattractive part of his character. Yes, he's definitely got the big head, just like the rest of us."

But really, that business about the trip to Nashville being Jimmy's first ride in an airplane, that's . . . well, sweet. And while we're talking "sweet," we might as well talk "cute," "young," and "wholesome." It is well worth mentioning that Jimmy is a small, well-formed, handsome, and energetic lad, and that these qualities do add something to the Statlers' appeal. They have done perfectly well without them—Don and Phil are certainly presentable enough to the female eye, but neither of them is exactly *Playgirl* material, and Harold ("the funny one") looks something like an averagely attractive beagle after an argument with a Mack truck—so it's a safe bet that with Jimmy in their midst, they might just do even better. And if looks alone don't do it, Jimmy's smiling high spirits should. His energy comes across very well indeed onstage, and one assumes that it also makes itself felt within the group. Actually, one doesn't just assume: one asks Harold. "That's true," Harold rumbles disgustedly, "it does."

Functionally, Jimmy's inclusion has not changed things. Each member of the quartet has certain assigned tasks, and Jimmy has simply replaced Lew DeWitt as keeper of the Statlers' audio and video vaults in addition to taking the high harmonies and playing rhythm guitar onstage. He has also contributed to the organization's heavy-hitter songwriting core: "Elizabeth," one of their 1984 chart-toppers, was his song. It was, moreover, the first song he had actually finished writing in its entirety. He credits Don with the encouragement necessary to accomplish such a feat, and that too bodes well for both his personal future and the strength of the quartet as a unit.

Altogether, then, it seems that after two years, Jimmy's adoption is working to everybody's benefit. The fans seem to like him a great deal, and the original members of the group (who, incidentally, have dropped the "Brothers" part of their collective name) profess complete satisfaction with their choice. They don't just profess it, either: the easy to-and-fro between them is tangible evidence of a genuine harmony.

As the bus rattles onwards towards Wheeling, all four Statlers gather in the lounge area to fill me in on their progress in the last three years or so, a tale which could be characterized as how things have changed and yet remained the same.

They have, of course, continued to reap

all sorts of CMA Awards, Grammys, Number One records and the like—ever since they became the first vocal quartet to really make it big, back in the Sixties, their expansion seems to have been limited only by their own conservative approach to their business—and no, they do not feel threatened by the encroachment of groups like the Oaks and Alabama on what was for years their almost exclusive turf. They do not say this, but perhaps they feel above such threats. They are, after all, radically different in both image and reality from either outfit, and theirs is not an audience which is likely to abandon them at the first sign of some trendy alternative. There is simply too much time, too many memories and too much mutual respect between them and their fans for that to happen. In fact, you get the distinct impression that should the hit records ever fade away (an unlikely possibility, given that they are the source of their own highly varied, uniquely non-trendy material), the Statlers could probably continue to make as much money as just about anybody in country music simply by staying on the road.

At this stage of their career, however, the road work has been streamlined somewhat. The Statlers try not to play more than a hundred or so dates a year, they take July and December off, and they try to avoid the rigors of those three-week tours of yesteryear. They book their own shows, thereby ensuring control over where, when, and how they work, and their road life has been further improved by the addition of Marshall Grant to their organization. Marshall, who played bass for Johnny Cash for more than twenty years, is an old friend from the years when the Statlers apprenticed in the trade as Cash's opening act, and his presence as their road manager eases the load considerably. They have also hired an independent publicity outfit, Susan Hackney Associates of Nashville, to perform the function previously handled by the literary-minded Don Reid.

Another change in their routine is that they no longer stay onstage after their shows to sign all the autographs the audience wants them to. This used to be a major element of their show, something they were proud of and felt bound to do. But, according to one crew member, the process of tearing down the lighting and sound equipment they now carry with them had begun to pose a serious threat to the fans milling around the stage after the show; sooner or later, somebody was going to get hurt. Faced with a choice between the reliable, self-controlled provision of a well-lit, clearly amplified and sound-balanced show for their fans' money on the one hand and the intimacy which resulted from those post-show autograph sessions on the other, they chose the former and hoped that nobody would get too bent out of

“Luckily for us, the Roadhog’s not working right now. That’s the reason our crowds are up.”



BETH GWINN

shape about it.

Even with these changes—basically the results of their slow but nevertheless relentless movement up the economics of scale—the Statlers keep control of their various activities very close to home; in no way are they one of those music business units whose members do their thing on stage and in the studio but otherwise have little idea of what is happening to their own careers.

The aim of all their arrangements is the efficient servicing of Statler fans coast to coast: those fans should see the Statlers often enough to maintain the ties that bind, but not often enough to provoke indifference. When I ask him, Harold figures that the ideal interval between shows in any given area is about one year. He also figures that the question of what’s a good interval between shows is a good one; it’s central to the Statlers’ whole career philosophy, and the answer to it is the product of an awful lot of experience. You build slowly, and you make damn sure that whatever it takes, you keep what you’ve built; no potential payoff is big enough to warrant the erosion of your core constituency. That’s why the Statlers are very, very cautious about TV appearances. They’ve seen the falling gate receipts of acts who are constantly available free of charge in the fans’ living rooms, and they want no part of that syndrome.

The same is true of “crossover” records: if they happen, they happen, but you don’t go alienating your longtime fans with some out-of-character overture to a whole new audience which may or may not sell in the gadfly market. This is the kind of savvy for which the Statlers are rightly renowned in the country music business; it fills halls and state fair dates and auditoriums wherever they play, year in and year out, and in all probability will continue to do so for as long as they care to keep working.

Things at home base, meanwhile, continue to cook along at a steady clip. The Statlers’ Fourth of July celebration, a fifteen-year tradition at this point, drew a total of 74,000 people in 1984, and as usual was distinguished by a lack of problems that is the envy of festival promoters far and wide: nobody got killed, raped, robbed, trampled upon, overdosed, or otherwise victimized by the factors traditionally associated with the gathering of large masses of people in pursuit of fun and music, and the considerable profits from the event went, as usual, to benefit a variety of charities and local service institutions. People in Staunton are very happy to have the Statlers around, and this year’s bash no doubt deepened the impression.

The Statlers, in fact, are a significant

item in the local economy. Their former grade school, an otherwise undistinguished, previously abandoned edifice bought and renovated by the Statlers four years ago and now used as their headquarters, attracts tourists and the dollars they spend locally (in addition to contributing to the town’s tax base). The tourists, moreover, pose no problem to the local authorities; being typical Statler fans, they are conservative people indistinguishable from Staunton’s own solid citizens, and they behave themselves with true country decorum. Available to them in Staunton is a revived downtown area benefiting from the upturn in the national economy and their own attentions, a large town park kept inviolate to the advances of lustful real estate developers, and of course the beautiful Shenandoah Valley countryside.

Staunton itself, a community hemmed in by hills and therefore unable to grow physically, currently faces a decision about whether or not it should grow legally to incorporate the surrounding countryside and smaller communities; the Statlers, who are actively involved in community affairs and therefore have some say in the matter, are uncertain as to which way they should swing. It’s one of those nostalgia/progress decisions which face them all the time—or as Harold puts it, “It’s one of those things where your heart’s kinda fighting with your head.”

Ironically, it is an affair in which their own success has figured significantly in the creation of the issue. This is the burden they have to bear—but as burdens go, it's far from being the worst three middle-aged men could face.

Being middle-aged men, the original Statlers do of course come equipped with families (when I ask Harold, in relation to the drug-prevention issue, if he has teenage children, he answers, "Of course I do. I thought everybody did."), and it seems that Statler family life is also satisfactory. There is news in this department, and it too is of the logical-progression type: Harold's two teenage daughters, Kim and Karmen, have now followed their father into the music business with a deal with Compleat Records. Harold co-wrote one of their songs, and Statler producer Jerry Kennedy produced the record. "Yup, we're keeping it in the family," says Dad. "That way we get to keep more of the money." None of the Statler children are involved with drugs, say their fathers, attributing this fortunate state of affairs at least partly to the stability of Staunton society and the aggressive anti-drug initiatives of the local police department. It might also have something to do with the example set by their parents—though again, this is not something they voice.

We move on to the subject of the Statlers' work, and in that area there are no surprises. Nothing radical is planned, just a regular output of albums and singles (some supported by videos) and a lot of road work. The Statlers get together once a month to monitor and make decisions about their investments—mostly dull affairs involving real estate with little risk attached—and to say a loud "No!" one more time to Don's obsessive hankering to own a baseball club. Personally, I think they should say "Yes." A baseball club run by a man with such respect for American traditions could end up losing money (who knows?), but it might just get run with enough soul to make it a fan's delight.

The Statlers really don't have much more to add to this survey of their activities, and their stances on issues like the "keeping it country" theme are by now too familiar to warrant repetition, so there remains only one burning issue—the Roadhog.

The Roadhog, for those readers fortunate enough to have missed his brief and spectacular career, is a product of Harold Reid's imagination and a genuine threat to country music's embrace of all things bright, modern, and beautiful. Those wishing to become acquainted with his dim, archaic, and ugly philosophy are welcome to obtain a copy of the May/June 1984 issue of this magazine, in which he offers advice to young musicians trying to be country stars like himself and his Cadillac Cowboys, but they must also note that the article was actually written and first published way back in the mists of *Country*



Music time, 1975 to be exact. These days, the Roadhog has faded from the bright lights of the mega-stardom he so richly didn't deserve; Harold retired him long ago on account of how he required too many costume changes and didn't show enough respect to the Stafford Brothers, who have the big head like you wouldn't believe. Between working swing-shift down at the plant and playing regular dates at the Johnny Mack Brown High School, the Roadhog would do things like publish the real home phone numbers of real country stars in real magazines like this one, and those stuck-up Stafford

Brothers just couldn't take the heat, I guess.

"So Harold, where's the Roadhog?" I demand.

"The Roadhog is in the hospital, recovering from an autopsy," says Harold. "Luckily for us, he's not working right now. That's the reason our crowds are up. If he gets back on the road, we'll see a big decrease—but then so will a lot of other acts that are on the road, 'cause people won't come out of their houses."

Just as I thought. Lies and evasions. But Harold can crack jokes and make fun of the Roadhog all he likes; it doesn't



outside of West Virginia has ever heard of—and when the Statlers' big silver tour bus pulls in across the street from the theater, it almost looks out of place: where's the bass fiddle strapped to the roof, where's the "Stars of the Grand Ole Opry" logo that should blaze from its flanks?

They aren't there, of course—this is 1984, appearances notwithstanding—but the Statlers are, and the show they put on at the Capitol, with concessions in the areas of dress and sound technology, could easily be taking place in the Forties. It's corny, and it's fun. At times, particularly when Jimmy Fortune renders "Elizabeth" and when the group kicks into its gospel segment, it's even moving in the old ways. Don acts the front man throughout, Mr. Respectable, providing the setups for Harold's idiot-troll humor routines, while Phil plays himself-as-bemused-spectator and Jimmy resists most temptations to titillate the ladies. When one lady shouts "Why doesn't the cute one say something?" Jimmy just grins shyly while Harold rumbles "What do you want me to say, honey?" and Phil rolls his eyes towards Heaven.

It's nice, it's comfortable, and it plays very well indeed. The people packing the hall, middle-aged and older working people dressed smartly for this Friday night out, relax into its rhythm without reservations. This kind of entertainment just doesn't come their way that often—it's hard enough to find with cash in your hand, and impossible through the sex-and-violence-and-moneylust medium of television—and you get the impression that they *really* appreciate it.

I hang around in the wings backstage, watching all this, and the central point about the Statlers just keeps being driven home. I'm taking notes between shows, for instance, when I feel a tap on my shoulder, and turn around to be greeted by Jerry Hensley, who used to play guitar for Johnny Cash and now, through the Marshall Grant connection, acts as the Statlers' emcee and opening act. He sports a gray-flecked beard now, and since I didn't hear his introduction during the first show, I didn't recognize him. We get to chatting, and I ask him how he likes working for the Statlers.

"Well, it's real nice," he says. "It's *sane*, y'know? You know what's going on, and you do your job, and they're great to work for. I mean, working for Cash . . . Well, let's say it's nice to roar, but you can only do so much of that. You just can't take it all the time, you know? I was real happy to sign on with these guys."

I realize that Hensley, like Marshall Grant and a lot of other people, is very happy that the Statlers and their steadiness are available in the often rather frazzled world of professional entertainment. With the Statlers, you really *do* know what to expect. ■

change a thing. On behalf of all the Roadhog fans out here in this too-slick, saxophone-filled and big-headed world, I hereby demand that Harold surrender the key to that bathroom he keeps the Hog in down at the Johnny Mack Brown High School. We know that's why Harold made the Statlers buy the place—that fancy goody-goody publicity operation his little brother put together about "offices" and suchlike didn't fool *us*—and *we'll* let him out. Then we'll see. If Harold Reid is afraid of the Roadhog, he should be.

Wheeling, West Virginia, is an absolutely classic country music town, which

is to say that both the town and its people look and sound almost exactly as they did in 1941, before World War II and the industrial/social revolutions it spawned began ploughing up and paving over just about everything, ideas included. Wheeling's main street, where the Capitol Music Hall has been presenting country music ever since the late Ernest Tubb first got the idea to take to the road, features not one single national-franchise store—no Radio Shacks, no Burger Kings, no "The Gap" designer-jeans emporiums for the computer generation, not a single name anybody

JIM MACGUIRE

Lew DeWitt

The Statlers' Other Brother

Lew DeWitt wrote "Flowers on the Wall." And that alone assures him of country music immortality. Best-selling novelist Kurt Vonnegut calls it a "great contemporary poem... about the end of a man's usefulness." Lew DeWitt thought *he* had reached the end of his usefulness when, in 1982, he was forced to retire after twenty-two years as one-fourth of the Statlers' living legend. He was losing his life-long battle with Crohn's disease.

"No one thought I would ever get better. I certainly didn't. In fact, just the opposite, everyone expected me to get worse and more than likely die from it. That's what I expected. So it's been a real surprise to get better and be well."

So, miracles *do* happen. Following surgery about a year ago, Lew says he's feeling so good that "sometimes I don't know how to act... I had pain every day... for most of my life. Sometimes it was bearable and sometimes it wasn't... so to go

this long without any, it's a miracle..."

For the past year Lew, who lives in Waynesboro, Virginia, has been performing locally, getting back into shape musically without overdoing it. "The Kiwanis asked me to sing and it was fun. I felt good. So I just started doing more and more requests... for churches, dances, anyone who asked." Lew connected with a local group, The Star City Band, which backs him up now: Bart Reardon on guitar, Robby Meadows on bass, Jerry Jackson on steel and Rodger Beaver on drums. "I'm going to give it another six months," says Lew, "and, then, if I'm feeling as good as I do now, I'll go to Nashville and get serious." In the meantime, "to keep the fans from pestering me about making a record," Lew has recorded a cassette representative of what he currently does on stage—a mixture of country, 1950's rock 'n' roll, pop and gospel. Included are such diverse titles as "Lovesick Blues," "Save the Last Dance for Me," "Cry,"

"Smoke Gets in Your Eyes," "Memories Are Made of This," "I Don't Want to Set the World on Fire," "I Guess It Never Hurt (to Hurt Sometimes)," "I've Been Everywhere," "It Turns Me Inside Out," and "There's Something About That Name." The cassette isn't being distributed commercially, but it's good to hear Lew's smooth, pretty tenor again.

Many *Country Music* readers have written asking about Lew. In fact, it was through one of them that we first reached him. When he heard that, about all the mail, he said, "Tell them I sure do appreciate their interest. It comes at a good time because it's not easy to start over again at my age. When the time comes, I'll try not to disappoint them."

Another of Lew's fans, Margaret Vailancourt, a newspaper reporter from Lexington, Kentucky, was lucky enough to see Lew's show and get him to speak about his life with and without The Statler Bros. —RUSS BARNARD

The Statler Brothers. How old were you when it all began?

The first time... 18 or 19. It was just a part-time thing. I'd been entering talent contests and envisioned myself as a single artist. I was in a country band at the same time the quartet was organized. I left the quartet and went on the road professionally—with a rock 'n' roll band, a country band. Ended up in Baltimore playing bars and dives. When I came back, we got back together again. To me, it wasn't anything serious—just something we were doing on weekends. And the thing I cared for the least is what eventually made us successful. All three of them were gung ho for it, but it was just something I could do.

What year was it you all got together?

In 1955. I organized them in 1955 and left them a couple years later. We worked churches and other places for a couple of years before I left to go on the road.

What did they do without you?

They replaced me. But it wasn't suiting the new guy too well—he was farming. So I was glad to have the chance to rejoin them when I came back in 1959. That boy's a mechanic today, we're still close. The other original member left the same time I did, and he never did come back. Don wasn't one of the original four, he was



just a kid at the time. He was several years younger than the rest of us. When he came of age, when his voice changed, we took him.

What was the big break that got you in show business? The point at which you knew you were going to become famous?

When I came back we started taking it more seriously—the other three more seriously than me. I didn't think we had much of a chance, but Harold really had a dream about it. He felt like we could do it. So we started approaching it from that angle, trying to make the right contacts and not having any luck.

Then Johnny Cash came to this area in 1962 with his road show, and he put us to work in 1963, I believe it was.

Where did he hear you?

He heard us in Roanoke, Virginia. We went to Roanoke to audition for him. We knocked the audience dead. At one point Cash even came onto the edge of the stage and watched us. He liked us. He took us as part of his touring road show—the first of its kind in country music. He also took us to Columbia Records and literally shoved us down their throats. There was no precedent for vocal quartets in country music. There had been in pop music—like all the black groups—but never in our field. So they didn't know what to do with us. And they didn't like us. So Cash said either record them or else. His contract was up for renewal soon, so they were going to do everything they could to keep him happy.

We recorded two bad records, and they gave us one more shot. That was about the

time I wrote "Flowers on the Wall," and as luck would have it, that's what did the trick for us. It was the first big record we had. Sold over a million copies, broke in both fields, country and pop—a crossover.

Then we went back into obscurity for several years.

Because you couldn't write any more songs?

None of us could. We all tried.

Why didn't Columbia give you some songs?

They did... none of them worked. They scouted for us, they brought us various pieces of trash, we wrote various pieces of trash—none of it worked, we couldn't find the right song.

They could hardly define what kind of a song "Flowers on the Wall" was. So what do you follow it with? When you don't even know what it is in the first place.

Our contract finally expired at Columbia, and we went to Mercury. There, for the first time, we were allowed 100% say-so. They let us have full say of what we wanted to do. If Columbia had done that, we would probably have been all right over there, but they didn't have any faith in us. They nixed several ideas we had over there that worked for us at Mercury.

What ideas were those?

"Bed of Roses," for one thing. Which was our next hit, and the first thing we released on Mercury.

You tried that song with Columbia, and they didn't like it?

They wouldn't let us record it. They didn't like it. It is a song about a whore, but we treated it from a sympathetic point of view. It's about a good-hearted professional prostitute who winds up dying for the sake of a young boy. A couple of preachers used it in their sermons.

Who wrote "Bed of Roses"?

Harold. Mercury let us do it, and it sold a quarter of a million so we were back in business. After that we never had a flop record.

All your songs made it?

They weren't always Top Ten—yeah, I guess they were mostly—but they weren't always Number One.

Do you think that was because you were good consistently or just because you had become a habit?

No, I think we were good. We picked up a following. When we finally decided to part ways with Cash, in 1974 or 1975, we were kind of scared. We didn't know if we'd be turning ourselves out into the cold. Those were his big crowds we'd been playing to those ten years, so we were scared to death the first night we played. But we had the same amount of people we were used to playing with him, and it never changed after that. We never had a flop record after that, never had a bad house

after that. The Statler Brothers became the number one drawing card in country music at that time. We broke records everywhere we played just about.

Who was writing at that time?

Donny at that point became the most prolific writer, and he was responsible for the biggest output, responsible for keeping us solvent in that period. I pretty much lost interest in writing.

Why?

I just couldn't do it as easily as I could at one time. I was out of ideas.

What songs had you written?

"The Strand," "The Movies," "A Little Further Down the Road" . . . Those are the three charted records that come to mind.

Who was giving you advice then?

At that time our ideas that were nixed over at Columbia were working at Mercury, so we pretty much formed the opinion in our own mind that our ideas were all right. We didn't need any help from the so-called experts in Nashville, and it turned out to be the truth. We had become the experts, at least as far as we were concerned. So we did everything after that according to what we wanted, what we felt. It worked 90 percent of the time.

Didn't you have any arguments about what to do or were you really the collective mind you say you were?

We had disagreements. But they never got heated. If ever we made each other mad, we tried not to show it. We were gentlemen, so consequently, we got along. We were childhood buddies, we grew up together. Rarely did we have a dispute, which is another reason why we were so successful. Other than the Mills Brothers and the Jordanares, we probably have the longest history of any group. If I hadn't gotten sick, we'd still be the same.

You got so sick in 1980 that you had to quit playing, didn't you?

I took a six months' leave of absence on my doctor's suggestion. After that I wasn't any better. I went out and did two engagements with The Statler Brothers—a *Hee-Haw* and an awards show. After that I decided it was just futile. So I quit and turned the whole thing over to Jimmy Fortune.

I had recommended Jimmy Fortune to them in the first place. I told them they wouldn't have to look any further than Jimmy, but they went to Nashville and auditioned many other tenor singers but wound up settling on my original suggestion.

Then I went and had the necessary surgery—I had to be talked into that. I had had surgery before and it didn't work but this time it did. I get healthier and healthier every day. You just have to know how sick I was to know what a turnaround that really is.

Could you get Crohn's disease again?

You have about a 70 percent chance of recurrence. You're not supposed to get over it. It's like alcoholism or TB, it's there. It's always there. As long as you avoid certain things, the symptoms don't show up.

What kind of things do you have to avoid besides stress? Things in your diet?

The only thing that gets me is milk and grease. I stay away from those two things. And I don't allow myself to get frustrated, mad or stressed.

What do you do to avoid stress?

I just go groundhog hunting. That's another trick I've learned.

Groundhog hunting does it for you, huh?

There's several things, but that's the best trick. That and these old films I collect.

How'd you get so interested in old movies?

Grew up loving them—loving Gene Autry and Roy Rogers. When I got kind of wealthy, I found out I could buy them, have them at my disposal. As you know The Statler Brothers capitalized on them—"The Movies," "Things Ain't the Way They Used To Be," "What Ever Happened to Randolph Scott," "The Strand," "Pictures" . . .

Who wrote most of them?

Don did but all of us were into old movies.

The collective mind again?

Yeah. We went to the movies together when we were kids.

So do you still socialize with The Statler Brothers?

No.

That's kind of sad, isn't it?

Yeah, it's sad.

Is it mostly of your choosing?

For one thing, they're going their way and I'm going mine. And we don't have all that much time for each other. I like their new record *Atlanta Blues*. And "Elizabeth." The new boy, Jimmy, wrote that for them. First time they had a Number One hit in many many years. He's been a shot in the arm for them. He wrote "Elizabeth" and it went to Number One for them, won them the Song of the Year award. We'd not been able to do that for ourselves for a long time.

It must make you feel good that you picked out your replacement, that even though you're not still with them, you've indirectly helped them stay on top.

I feel good for Jimmy. I love that little guy.

—MARGARET VAILLANCOURT

While you are waiting for Lew to get back in the record business, if you would like to have a copy of his cassette, called *Here to Stay*, send a check for \$8.98 to Reader Service Dept., Country Music, 450 Park Avenue South, New York, New York 10016. Or, if you just want to write to Lew, we'll forward your letter.

FOR CMSA MEMBERS ONLY

Member Album Specials

This month CMSA has arranged exclusive, special-price offers on four unusual albums. These will be available for members only, first-come-first-served, for 60 days before being offered to the public.

The Statlers: These boys are hot, and CMSA members are nuts for them. So it's a good thing we are able to present **The Very Best of The Statlers** (HL 1016 Regular \$9.98, Members \$7.98. Records, cassettes or 8-tracks.) This 18-song, double-length album is not available in stores, but it's a best-seller on TV already, and it should be. Listen to the line-up of songs: *Elizabeth, Atlanta Blue, Flowers on the Wall, Do You Know You Are My Sunshine, Guilty, One Takes the*

Blame, Hollywood, Do You Remember These, I'll Go to My Grave Loving You, Charlotte's Web, You'll Be Back, The Official Historian of Shirley Jean Berell, Who Am I to Say, Oh Baby Mine, I'll Even Love You Better Than I Did, Don't Wait on Me, My Only Love and, last but not least, the song best-selling novelist Kurt Vonnegut says



should be our National Anthem, *Class of '57*. If you like The Statlers, you have to love this album.

Loretta Lynn: We have been able to import a limited quantity of **The Loretta Lynn Story** (MCF 3068 Regular \$9.98, Members \$4.98. Records only, no tapes.) This 16-song album is loaded with Loretta's classic hits, so it would be a bargain at \$9.98, but CMSA members have 60 days to buy it at \$4.98. Songs included: *Coal Miner's Daughter, Don't Come Home A-Drinkin' (with Lovin' on Your Mind), You Ain't Woman Enough (to Take My Man), The Pill, I'm a Honky Tonk Girl, It Wasn't God Who Made Honky Tonk Angels, One's on the Way, Your Squaw is on the Warpath, Walking After Midnight, Crazy, I Fall to Pieces, Success, Back in Baby's Arms, Sweet Dreams, Fist City and You're Lookin' at Country.*

Conway and Loretta: Another British import, **Loretta Lynn & Conway Twitty: Dynamic Duo** (MFP-55 Regular \$8.98, Members \$1.98. Records only, no tapes.) The album features this great team on some of their best songs: *I Can't Love You Enough, We're Much Too Close, Soulshake, The Bed I'm Dreaming On, Hey Good Lookin', Get It On, Where Old Love Gathers Dust, We Can Try It One More Time, Hide and Seek, and You Could Know As*



Much About a Stranger. (If anyone orders both of these Loretta albums at the same time, there is a special combination price of \$8.98, and they will count as one album for postage and handling.)

Don Williams: Here's another 18-song, double-length, not-available-in-stores album, **The Very Best of Don Williams** (HL 1011 Regular \$9.98, Members \$7.98. Records, cassettes or 8-track.) As CMSA members indicate in answers to our polls, Don Williams' best is top-notch. This one includes: *Amanda, Tulsa Time, Some Broken Hearts Never Mend, Till the Rivers All Run Dry, It Must Be Love, I Believe in You, If Hollywood Don't Need You, You're My Best Friend, Say It Again, Lay Down Beside Me, Good Ole Boys Like Me, Lord I Hope This Day is Good, Love Me Over Again, Rake and Ramblin' Man, I Wouldn't Want to Live If You Didn't Love Me, (Turn the Lights Out and) Love Me Tonight, Falling Again and Love is on a Roll.*

MEMBERS POLL/MAY 1985

WANTED: YOUR OPINION

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

Bought Any Good Records Lately?

1. Did you buy any albums (records or tapes) in the last month?

Yes No

How many records? _____ How many cassettes? _____

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

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

d. _____

e. _____

Your Choice for Album and Single of the Month

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

Albums (list 5 numbers)

Singles (list 5 numbers)

Who Can Vote

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

If you are not a member, but want to join and vote immediately, fill out the poll, enclose your check for \$12 for one-year CMSA Membership (you get an extra year of *Country Music Magazine*, too.)

Fill out poll and mail to: May Poll, *Country Music*, 450 Park Avenue South, New York, New York 10016.

HOW TO ORDER

CMSA members only may order albums mentioned at these special member's prices. Add \$1.98 postage and handling for one album, \$0.95 for each additional album. Send your check payable to Country Music Society of America to For Members Only, Country Music Society of America, 450 Park Avenue South, New York, New York 10016. List the albums you want, specify Lp records, cassettes or 8-track tapes if these are available. (If tapes are unavailable, records will be sent.) Write your Membership Number on your check.

If You Are Not a Member: You may join and order from this page at the same time at member's prices. Just include a separate check for \$12 (one-year's dues, includes an additional year's subscription to *Country Music*) payable to Country Music Society of America and follow member's ordering procedure above.

CMSA NEWSLETTER OF THE COUNTRY MUSIC SOCIETY OF AMERICA MAY/JUNE 1985—EDITOR, HELEN BARNARD

Newsletter

TRAVEL

Fan Fair—Here's How It's Organized

A visit to Fan Fair means a visit to a variety of locations in and around Nashville. First and foremost is the Tennessee State Fairgrounds, about five miles south of the center of town. Concerts take place outdoors in the partially-covered grandstand, the exhibition booths are housed indoors behind the stands. Almost anybody having anything to do with country music—publications, record companies, fan clubs, mail order businesses, some makers of musical instruments—have booths at Fan Fair. Some stars have their own booths, others appear at record company or fan club booths to meet their fans.

Other places you are entitled to visit as part of your Fan Fair ticket are the historic Ryman Auditorium, located on Broadway, downtown; the Country Music Hall of Fame, just west of downtown, on Music Row; Vanderbilt Stadium, also on the west side, site of the All-American Games to benefit the Special Olympics; and Opryland, northeast of town, on the Cumberland River. Grand Ole Opry performances, open to Fan Fair registrants only on June 15 and 16, take place at the Grand Ole Opry House in Opryland Park. So be prepared to do some driving. Check Mona Bennett's Helpful Hints for how to plan your time.

If you haven't ordered tickets yet, act fast. Write for the Fan Fair brochure: Fan Fair, 2804 Opryland Drive, Nashville, Tennessee 37214. Fan Fair costs \$60, the Opry costs \$10. Opry tickets must be ordered separately. Order blank is in the Fan Fair brochure.

Memories of Fan Fair '84—Mona's Helpful Hints

Mona Bennett, a great Loretta Lynn fan, now also a great Vern Gosdin fan, and most of all just a great country music fan, has allowed us to use notes, reflections and photos from her collection to illustrate how to have fun at that great country music festival, Fan Fair. She and her husband, Tom Bennett, have been twice, once in 1982, once in 1984. We are grateful to Mona for all her material. Other photos of Fan Fair '84 on these pages are courtesy of the CMA.

Lots of you country music fans are rushing to get final arrangements made for your trip to the 14th International Fan Fair in Nashville, Tennessee. My husband Tom and I will miss this one, but would like to share some photos and thoughts from the 13th Fan Fair that we enjoyed so very, very much.

Let's begin at the beginning, when you arrive in Nashville.

- Hopefully, you wrote checks for all tickets ordered in advance. Bring your cancelled checks with you just in case some error is made—you will have your proof with you.
- You will not receive your Fan Fair ticket book in the mail—only a piece of paper with a map, telling you where to pick it up.

In This Issue

- Fan Fair: Helpful Hints
- Things to Do, Places to Go
- Father's Day Special
- Jim Reeves' Legend Lives On
- Collections



Mona and Tom Bennett both think Connie Smith is beautiful, and they would like to say so. Here is Connie at her Fan Fair booth with Tom.

- When you reach Nashville, pick up your Fan Fair tickets before resting or unpacking. You will get your ticket book plus quite a few useful items. One important thing will be the *badge*. This you will need at all times. The tickets are no good without the badge.
- When you pick up the tickets, be sure and purchase an official program. It was \$2 last year, but is, I feel, a must.
- If you have ordered Opry tickets, *do not wait* until it is time for the show to pick them up.
- After getting your program and tickets, check the local Monday papers. You will find some money-saving coupons that you can use during the week.

Now's the time to decide just where you want to be.

Fan Fair Tour Package

The CMSA Fan Fair Tour can help you save money and avoid waiting in lines. At this late date, we can't guarantee that there will be room reservations available, but it's worth writing or calling today to find out because of the substantial price breaks, the convenience and the extras involved. See the CMSA ad on page 33 of the March/April *Country Music*. Call us at 212-889-4600 or write *Country Music*, 450 Park Avenue South, New York, New York 10016, but do it today.



Up until the 13th Fan Fair, Mona was a member of only one fan club—Loretta Lynn's. Now she's added a second one to her list, "The One and Only Vern Gosdin." Mona thinks Vern's long overdue to be recognized. Here they are together at Vern's booth. Mona waited quite a while to be first to meet Vern.

in advance from these organizations.

Now here are a few general hints that I hope will be useful.

- Wear good walking shoes—that's a must—and have a nice big tote bag, as you will find there will be lots and lots of free photos, pens, albums, records, etc.

- We all have our favorite artist, and we all love wearing the t-shirts with our favorites on them, but at Fan Fair I think it's much nicer to wear some other top or t-shirt with "I Love Country Music" on it or things like that. Having a Loretta Lynn shirt on, for example, and going to other artists and having photos made with them—well, seems kinda poor taste. Of course, that's just the way I feel, but think about it for a moment and I think you will agree.

- On our first visit to Fan Fair, in 1982, we stayed at the Sheraton Inn on Harding Place. This was very convenient to the Fairgrounds, and we could ask for no better service.

- On our second visit, in 1984, we took our camper and stayed at the Loretta Lynn Dude Ranch, and we enjoyed that also. But remember, you will have a 70-mile drive each way to get back and forth to Nashville.

Hopefully, you will be able to use some of the hints I've listed, and your visit to Fan Fair '85 will be one of the best vacations—if not *the* best one—you've had. As they say, you will

- Your ticket book includes so many events that I believe it is impossible for anyone to see them all. Just to name a few: unlimited time at the exhibition booths and continuous concerts for over 30 hours at the Tennessee State Fairgrounds, admission to the Country Music Hall of Fame, admission to the old Ryman Auditorium, three meals at the Fairgrounds, admission to Opryland (does not include tickets to the Grand Ole Opry), admission to the All-American Games, and much, much more.

- The program gives all info regarding booths—each star's booth has a number and the book has the booths mapped. The program also has a complete list of times and performers at the concert area.

- The stars cannot be at their booths the entire time, so if the time is not posted, go to the booth and ask the reps when they *will* be there.

- The lines can get long sometimes, when the stars are at their booths, but most have someone directing the lines so they move faster. Also, most have someone who will snap your photo for you with your camera.

- If you plan on having photos made, be sure and get all the film you need before leaving home or you will pay more for it. Also, a good idea is to take your film to one of the one-hour developing places—we used Barbara Mandrell's One-Hour Photo. Then if you mess up, you can take them over, but if you wait until you go back home—well, it's too late then.

- If you find out the exact time one of your favorite stars is going to be at his or her booth, a good idea would be just to wait for them. This way you will be first and miss the long line. I did this to meet Vern Gosdin and it was well worth it. My husband was ready with the camera—we got really nice photos and talked with Vern. So if there's anyone you for sure want to meet, this to me is much better than waiting in line. Gives you some time to get your thoughts together and watch the people and rest a little while.

- If you are going to spend a day at Opryland, the best time would be on Saturday, as the booths run from Monday-Friday.

- Lots of *extra events* go on during Fan Fair week, so check to see if there are some you want to attend. Many are done by the artists for their fan club members. If your favorite has something planned, go to his or her booth and see about getting tickets. For example, Loretta had her Pow-Wow on Wednesday night at the Opryland Hotel. The Oak Ridge Boys had their get-together before the IFCO (International Fan Club Organization) dinner and show on Friday. We found out Ronnie Milsap's get-together was at the Sheraton we were staying at in 1982. The *Music City News* Award show was on Monday night. We had great seats and really enjoyed the show. Both *IFCO* and *Music City News* tickets are separate from Fan Fair and must be ordered



Here's Kitty Wells, the "Queen of Country Music," at her Fan Fair booth with Tom. Kitty is Mona's kind of lady, in style and in song.

be in "Hillbilly Heaven," and that's no joke. Until you go to Fan Fair, there's no way it can be described.

So have a great, fun-filled, safe, healthy stay, and take your time so that you can enjoy every minute. Remember, take lots of film with you. Photos can tell your friends more than any other way—except being there.

Mona Bennett
Clermont, Florida
but a native Tennessean



PHOTOGRAPH BY DON PUTNAM/COURTESY CMA

13th Fan Fair: (clockwise from left) Ed Bruce in concert, Conway fan and others, Crystal Gayle and All-American Games medal-winners with member of Special Olympics waving to the crowd.



Jimmie Rodgers Festival

May 18-25

A week-long festival in Meridian, Mississippi, site of the Jimmie Rodgers Museum, featuring parade, picnic, dance, barbecue, cook-off, talent show, wreath-laying, crafts, collections and concerts galore. Artists confirmed so far include: Wendy Bagwell and the Sunlighters, Boxcar Wille, Justin Tubbs, Ed Bruce, Dan Seals, Louise Mandrell, Al Downing, Con Hunley, Charlie McCoy, Brenda Lee and former governor and Hall-of-Famer Jimmie Davis.

Concert tickets, \$9 for reserved seats, \$5 general admission. Membership in the Jimmie Rodgers Museum, \$5. For tickets or information: Jimmie Rodgers Memorial Festival, P.O. Box 1928, Meridian, Mississippi 39302 or call 601-693-2688 (day), 601-482-3024 (evening).

Bill Monroe's Bean Blossom Bluegrass Festival

June 7-16

The Master's 19th annual festival, featuring crafts, contests, concession stands and concerts: two shows daily, in Bean Blossom, Indiana, south of Indianapolis. Tickets \$6-\$7 during the week, \$10-\$12 on the weekend. No advance sales. For information: Monroe Festival, 3819 Dickerson Rd., Nashville, Tennessee 37207 or call 615-868-3333 or 812-988-6422.

Things to Do, Places to Go

Alabama's June Jam

June 15

Exhibition sky-diving, fireworks and a gala evening concert featuring Alabama, Bill Medley, The Judds, Charlie Daniels and others—all takes place at the base of Lookout Mountain in Ft. Payne, Alabama. Tickets \$15, proceeds benefit various nonprofit organizations. For information: Alabama June Jam, P.O. Box 529, Fort Payne, Alabama 35967 or call 205-845-1646.

Gilley's Fourth of July Celebration and Fan Festival

July 4-7

Carnival, concession stands, booths of the stars... and concerts featuring Mickey Gilley's favorites, in Gilley's rodeo arena, indoors. No tickets needed. For information: Gilley's, 4500 Spencer Highway, Pasadena, Texas 77504 or call 713-941-7990.

Willie Nelson Picnic

July 4

Due to be held once again at the South Park Meadows in Austin, Texas, the Picnic's second annual appearance in its new home. Details not available at press time. For information: Pace Concerts, 1124 Lovett, Houston, Texas 77006, attention Vicki Krone.

The Statlers' Happy Birthday USA Celebration

July 2-4

The foursome's 16th annual celebration to benefit local charities and civic organizations in Staunton, Virginia. Tours of the Statler offices, concerts by local artists, vespers service, gospel sing, parade, concession stands, games and the big Fourth of July evening finale: The Statlers and friends' free concert, topped off with fireworks and flag ceremony. No tickets needed. *You must bring your own folding chair.* For information: The Statlers, P.O. Box 2703, Staunton, Virginia 24401.

Jamboree in the Hills

July 20-21

WWVA's weekend bash, held at Brush Run Park, St. Clairsville, Ohio, just west of Wheeling, West Virginia. Concerts run from 11 to 11 on Saturday, 11 to 6 or 7 on Sunday. Tickets, \$40 for two days, \$25 single day, \$30 for on-site camping, self-contained vehicles only. For tickets and information: Debbie Price, WWVA Jamboree, 1015 Main Street, Wheeling, West Virginia 26003 or call 1-800-624-5456.

When you go, don't forget your camera. Send us copies of your best shots. Help us make more features like Mona's.

REVIEWS & FEATURES

Me, My Daughter . . . and Kris

Country music fan, sometime songwriter and father—that's John Taylor. He sent us this story of a special afternoon and evening he spent with his daughter, Laurie. We're grateful for the chance to run it.

Kris Kristofferson, Billy Swan, and my daughter were responsible for the best Father's Day I've ever had.

On a Thursday afternoon, a few days before the Sunday traditionally set aside for Dear Old Dad, I was sitting in my living room having a few beers, playing my guitar, and singing whiskey songs and weepers. My wife was in Atlanta on a business trip and wouldn't be home until the following Tuesday, and my daughter was much too involved with another new boyfriend to be expected to pay much attention to Ol' Weird John. Suddenly . . .

"OK, Dad. Put on your dress-up boots and trim your beard. You've got a Father's Day date with your daughter and this year Daddy's Day for you is on Thursday."

"What's up?"

"Just do what I said and let's go."

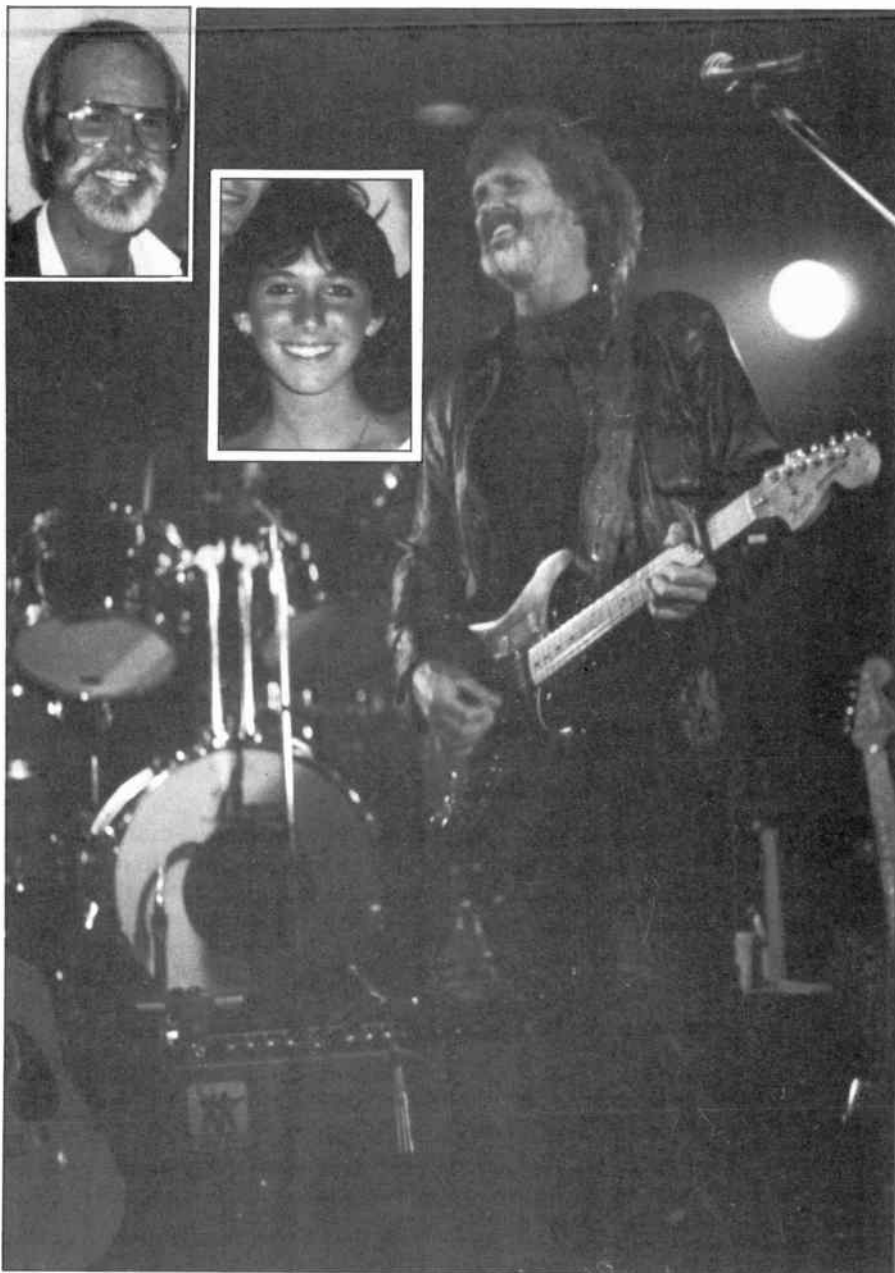
Now, my one-and-only offspring is exactly like me, God help her, so I knew that whatever it was she had in mind would not only be a lot of fun, it would be different. And different was what I needed. I decided to follow this nineteen-year-old beauty and place my fate in her hands—at least for the next several hours. So I put on my snakeskin boots, trimmed my beard, and we were off.

My curiosity was really up. But every time I started to ask the logical question—"Where the hell are we and where the hell are we going?"—I was told, "We'll be there soon—our first stop, anyway." So I turned my attention back to the country station that was going full blast. Her car sure did have a great stereo system. I ought to know. I paid for it.

The seafood restaurant, which I astutely determined hadn't just accidentally turned out to be the first of our two destinations—since we had reservations in her name—was really good. Plenty of lobster and beer and all the grease that goes with the kind of meal that turns you into a finger-eating savage because it's so good. If we had had to quit right there, it would have been one of the most special times my one-and-only and I had ever had together. Our talk was as honest as the way we were eating, that late afternoon in the restaurant there by the water. We learned a little

Events in Your Area

The *Newsletter* would like to know about country music events in your area that are worthy of note: local contests, annual events, featuring local or national stars. Give dates and where to write for more information.



John Taylor, daughter Laurie and Kris Kristofferson at Sundance.

something about each other that we hadn't known before, and from that day to now—and I hope for the rest of our lives—it's only taken a little hurt or a little happiness to get us to sit and talk some more.

"The best part is yet to come, Dad," she said, as we got back in the car, and she knew what she was talking about. As we pulled into a parking space in a small shopping center, my daughter looked at my not-so-blank face and laughed.

"Well? What do you think? It's going to be great, isn't it?"

"Yeah. It's been at least a month-and-a-half since I've whiled away untold hours of browsing pleasure in an Army-Navy Store," I said,

looking at the one in front of us. "I might even buy something this time. It'll be on you, I guess. Right?"

"No, cowboy. *That's* what's going to be on me." She was pointing towards the far end of the shopping center.

I looked. Then I stared. Then I sort of laugh-yelled. The sign above the place said "Sundance" in bright orange, yellow and red letters. But it was the poster nailed to the door that got my attention: *One Night Only! Kris Kristofferson! with special guest Billy Swan.*

I had heard that Kris was hitting the smaller places again, getting back to the people he wrote for when he was first starting out. I had

seen him a couple of times several years back when most of the audience weren't the only ones who weren't very tightly wrapped as normal individuals go, and he was getting too much paunch and singing too few of the words to the songs. I had come away a little depressed.

Now I was going to get the chance to see Klean Kris—and as an added bonus, the “I Can Help” man, too. Up close. Real close. By some miracle there were two places in the front row, right in front of the center mike. Why none of the other three hundred or so people in the place hadn't taken them, I don't know. It almost seemed as if they had been saved special, just for us.

Billy Swan was great. My daughter didn't know who he was, so I told her about “I Can Help,” and how long he had been with Kristofferson, and that, for my taste, he does the best “Don't Be Cruel” I've ever heard, slowing it down and pushing it out through his heart. I also told her that sometimes he gives the impression that he's really living in another world out there someplace that only he knows about. Billy's set was going along real good when all of a sudden at the end of a song, he casually stated, “Ladies and gentlemen, singer/songwriter Kris Kristofferson.”

The man was at center stage before anyone realized who the figure in black jeans and T-shirt who had stalked out from stage right, head down and looking a little embarrassed, really was. He grabbed a Fender Stratocaster from its stand, ducked under the strap, and turned around with a great big smile on his face. He looked happy and very, very healthy.

He opened with “Bobby McGee,” turning it into a rocker now, and his point was made.

Lew DeWitt is Back

Arletta Reith, a strong Lew DeWitt supporter, sent us this review.

Yes, the man with that beautiful tenor voice has returned to the stage with his own band, Star City, and is leaving concert-goers on their feet, screaming for more.

At a recent concert, Star City opened the show. Then enter a healthy, happy-looking Lew DeWitt. The crowd gave him a standing ovation! Lew set toes a-tappin' and hands a-clappin' with “Jambalaya” and “Lovesick Blues,” then slowed the tempo down with a heart-tugging rendition of “I Guess It Never Hurt (to Hurt Sometimes).” From that point on the audience was treated to a mixture of traditional music, contemporary country, pop, even a couple of Ink Spots songs thrown in.

Lew closed with a song written under his maiden name—Lew Statler—the million-seller, “Flowers on the Wall,” which brought the crowd to its feet.

Thank God he is back!

Arletta Reith
Kokomo, Indiana

Poll Moves to Magazine

The Members Poll is an absolute gold mine—of interest, information, feedback, from you. It's now located in *Country Music*, on page 34 in the May/June issue, so that all the readers can see what you and you alone get to fill out. Many new members joined when they saw the Top 100 and Top 200 All-Time Best Ballot in the September/October 1984 issue. We think this move will help the Society grow, and it gives the *Newsletter* room to grow in, too.

Things change. If you can accept that, then you have a shot at moving into something that can be at least as good as what you left—and sometimes a lot better—because it fits you as you are today. He wrote a song about that, early on, “Yesterday's gone, sweet Jesus/and tomorrow may never be mine.” Then, for the next two-and-a-half hours, he did them all. It was one “and-then-I-wrote” after another, with Donnie Fritts holding the reins of the music, pushing it out and jerking it back, and then driving it out again. This was a tight band, and they were having a good time there at Sundance.

And Billy—well, Billy was sort of playing rhythm guitar, wandering around off to the right, mostly looking out somewhere at something on various parts of the ceiling and walls. You just knew he wasn't paying attention when all of a sudden he would snap up to his mike and sing a back-up that was strong and true.

As I remember, there were two songs that seemed to mean the most to Kris Kristofferson.

son. One was “Living Legend.” When he sang, “Was it bitter then, with our backs against the wall/Were we better men than we'd ever been before,” the words came out in a defiant way, as if he was challenging himself about some of the things that had come down between his janitor days in Nashville and now.

I don't have to speculate about the other song. He talked about his little daughter and what a great kid she is, and then said he had written a song about her. He said it wasn't the kind of song he should sing in a room full of fairly noisy people, but if we'd keep the noise level down for a few minutes he'd try to sing “Daddy's Song.” You could hear a tear drop, it got so quiet. “I wish that we lived together again/It gets so lonesome apart/I'm missing somebody all of the time/Daddy, it's breaking my heart.”

When the stage was empty, no one left for a while. We all just stood around letting the magic of the night sink in, talking to each other and sharing our good feelings.

The drive back home was really nice, too. My daughter finally saw what it was that I had been getting excited about and pouring my heart into for all these years. It's even gotten to the point where she'll listen to a little Merle Haggard or George Jones now and again. And I've been caught in the act of listening to one of her Boy George albums on more than one occasion. Now that's progress. No—that's growing up.

That was my Father's Day. Thanks, Kris and Billy, for the best one I've ever had. And thanks, daughter. I love you. And I know you love me, too.

John Taylor
Great Neck, New York



Arletta Reith, Lew DeWitt and Lew's mom Rose—glad to see Lew back in action, singing his songs.

Album and Single of the Month

The Statlers *Atlanta Blue*
George Strait “Does Ft. Worth Ever Cross Your Mind?”

The Statlers bring home the bacon this month, with a strong win in the album category in the January Members Poll. Congratulations to the big foursome. George Strait and Ricky Skaggs were second and third in albums with *Does Ft. Worth Ever Cross Your Mind* and *Country Boy*.

George Strait takes the top spot in singles with the title song from his album, “Does Ft. Worth Ever Cross Your Mind?” Oh, those “city” songs! What's next? The Judds' “Why Not Me” is in second place with John Schneider's top song from the January Poll, “I've Been Around Enough to Know,” running third.

Don't forget this month's Poll.

Jim Reeves

A country singer with a uniquely smooth sound, Reeves made it from the minor league ballparks to the major league stages of the world—and his voice was not stilled when he died.

Jim Reeves pulled a nerve in his left leg on a Henderson, Texas ballfield in July of 1947. It was, despite the pain, the best thing that could have happened to him. There he was, in the minor leagues, hoping against reality for a crack at the majors. The injury put an end to it, and music became his second career choice, just as it was with aspiring-ballplayers-turned-country-music-stars Roy Acuff and Bob Luman.

"I don't think he cared that much," his widow Mary Reeves said years later. "I think that really all along he wanted to be a singer and just didn't want to recognize it."

Reeves exemplified the best of the Nashville Sound. His was crossover in the finest sense of the word. The recordings he did for RCA from 1957 to 1964 remain some of the finest music of that era. The fiddles and steel guitar were gone; voices and quiet, reflective piano hovered in the background. The honesty and sincerity remained, with Reeves' voice reflecting a warmth and timelessness that few other crossover artists have been able to match, including those of today.

Purists who complain that Reeves "abandoned" country music are kidding themselves. Throughout his career, he never quit recording *country* country songs. One of his last hits during his lifetime was the Werly Fairburn number, "I Guess I'm Crazy," a tune that was as down-home as anything recorded by Hank or Lefty. Actually, with the dozens of Jim Reeves re-packages of RCA material (which included a fair



Jim Reeves, two years old and blond, in front, with sister and brothers, left to right, Alton, Virgie and O.D.

amount of Tin Pan Alley pop at times), it is easy to forget that Reeves was a contemporary of both men and began his career singing music not that different from their own.

James Travis Reeves was born in Gallogay, Texas on August 20, in either 1923 or 1924. His father died before a year passed, and he was raised, along with five other children, by his mother Beulah. Jimmie Rodgers, not surprisingly, was an early hero, but baseball became his obsession. A baseball scholarship took him to the University of Texas at Austin in 1942, but he quit to work the shipyards of Houston, then took to the minor leagues, where he stayed until he was injured. In 1947 he married Mary White, who would play an important role in his career.

He moved into music as a disc jockey at KGRI in Henderson, Texas. Guessing that his own voice equalled or surpassed that of Ernest Tubb or Lefty Frizzell, he decided to take a serious stab at performing. In 1949 he did his first recording, for a tiny local label in Houston but the records died.

His big break came in April 1953, when "Mexican Joe," a song he'd recorded with Abbott Records, became his first Number One record. He was working as an announcer on Shreveport's *Louisiana Hayride* at the time. Fearing to lose him in that role, the Hayride management insisted that Billy Walker—not Reeves—sing the song on the show. One night Reeves had to fill in as a singer, and the rule went by the boards. He wound up with six encores, at which point Hayride staffer Horace Logan forbade any more, lest Jim beat Hank Williams' record. That was the end of announcing and the beginning of a two-year stint as a Hayride star for Reeves, who followed up "Mexican Joe" with another unvarnished country hit, which hit Number Two, "Bimbo."

In 1955 Reeves bought back his Abbott contract and moved on to RCA Victor. Without a hit for two years, he soon came up with three in a row—"Yonder Comes a Sucker," "My Lips Are Sealed" and "According To My Heart," all Top Ten, all in one year and all straight country. However, in the wake of Elvis' success, it looked like audiences were beginning to tire, at least for the moment, of the fiddle/steel background that had held sway for over a decade. Desperate to counteract declining record sales, RCA's Chet Atkins, Decca's

Owen Bradley and Columbia's Don Law began trying new ideas in the studio. One particularly popular idea was to strip off the fiddle and steel, introduce a neutral rhythm section and use voices to sing the fiddle/steel fill-ins. Reeves tried this and also lowered the volume of his voice, singing close to the microphone.

Then, early in 1957, Reeves, much to Chet Atkins' surprise, selected a ballad called "Four Walls" for his next session. Atkins had thought of the song as a woman's number, but trusting Jim's intuition, he went with it. RCA released it in March; it hit Number Two on *Billboard's* country charts in April and Number Eleven on their pop charts in May. Suddenly Reeves was doing *American Bandstand*. When "Blue Boy" hit Number Four in 1958, he renamed his band the Blue Boys and dropped his fiddler and steel player for good. In December of 1959, it happened again: "He'll Have to Go," cut as the B-side of a single, crossed over—Number One country, Number Two pop.

Jim Reeves was a perfectionist in his work, a trait which landed him in a few minor but telling scrapes. Once, while doing a tour of record shops on his own, he insisted on singing alone with his guitar instead of using the mediocre backup group provided. During a tour of Ireland he cancelled two shows when the pianos provided for Blue Boys' pianist Dean Manuel were too worn out, in his opinion, to play. He quit the Opry in the early 1960's, as did others, in a dispute over the number of appearances he was required to make on the show. "If he was home on the weekend," said Mary Reeves, "he wanted to be home."

His "Gentleman Jim" character was something he wanted audiences to live up to

as well. In April, 1964 he went to Europe with an RCA all-star tour that included Chet Atkins, Anita Kerr and Bobby Bare. The show drew huge crowds. In a U.S. military enlisted men's club in Germany, Reeves

via private plane (he was a trained pilot) to Batesville, Arkansas on July 30, 1964 with pianist Dean Manuel. On July 31, while approaching Nashville, the plane ran into a rainstorm and disappeared from radar. Out-



Available Albums

Fortunately, RCA in England has just re-issued *The Abbott Recordings, Volume I* (NL 89052) and *Volume II* (NL 89311) after being unavailable for a year. These are the earliest, most "country" of Reeves' recordings, including his first big hit, "Mexican Joe."

A double-length, 20-song album, *The Very Best of Jim Reeves* (NL 89017), loaded with Reeves' best-known songs, such as "He'll Have to Go," "Distant Drums," "When Two Worlds Collide" and "Welcome to My World" is also available, as are two other hit albums, *Moonlight and Roses* (NL 89016) and *Distant Drums* (NL 89314). (Six of the songs on *Distant Drums* also appear on *Very Best*.)

All these are \$9.98 imports, but CMSA members' price is \$7.98 each (*The Abbott Recordings Volume I* and *Volume II* are separate albums, \$7.98 each). To order, send check or money order to Country Music Society of America, 450 Park Avenue South, New York, New York 10016, attention: Reeves Records. Add \$1.95 postage and handling for one album, \$.95 for each additional. Specify records or cassettes.

walked off the stage when the boisterous audience got to him. A minor furor ensued, which he did nothing to calm, allowing a GI paper to quote him as saying, "I don't play for animals." Mary Reeves defended him. "He did not intend to try and entertain a bunch of drunks who were that wild," she explained.

But other than that, things were going well. He was planning to study acting and was trying to reduce his touring in order to work on investments. A land deal took him

side his Brentwood home, Marty Robbins heard something crash. It took two days to locate the wreckage and the bodies. On August 4, after funeral services in Nashville, Reeves' body was returned to Carthage, Texas.

His records still sell; he remains a legend. But he never saw himself that way when he was alive. "He didn't really discredit himself," said Mary Reeves, "but I think he didn't realize how big he actually was."

—Rich Kienzle

COLLECTIONS

Collecting the Magazine

Members are still looking to complete their collections. Contact them directly.

- Help! Anybody out there have these issues—October 1972 (Loretta Lynn cover) and January 1973 (Jerry Lee Lewis cover)—for sale? I need them for a full set of *Country Music*. **Doug Halliday, 15 Loring Place, Rochester, New York 14624.**
- Anyone have a copy of the issue of *Country Music* that appeared between the September 1981 Anniversary Issue and the January/February 1982 issue (Stella Parton cover)? I believe it has no date on it. Hank Williams, Jr. is on the cover. I need it to complete my collection. **Nancy Eslick, 4506 Cathlow Circle, Richmond, Virginia 23234. We'd be interested in hearing from people who have copies of that issue for sale, too.—Ed.**
- I am looking for the following back issues: May 1974, May 1980, July/August 1980. **Debbie Patterson, RR 3, Box 33A, Buffalo, Missouri 65622.**

Information, Please

Contact these members directly if you have the information or item they need.

- Could any of you readers tell me whether Dusty Owens ever released any records? He was on the WWVA Jamboree around 1954 and left to become a preacher, I believe. **Nancy Eslick**, see address above.
- Am looking for the following Statler Brothers records: *Do You Love Me Tonight and Other Favorites* (Harmony KH-32256), "Wreck of the Old 97"/"Hammers and Nails" (Columbia 43069), and "I Still Miss Someone"/"Your Foolish Game" (Columbia 43146). Any help would be appreciated. **Debbie Patterson**, see address above.
- Am looking for an album of Howard Vokes for my dad: *Tragic Songs of Death and Sorrow*, No. SLP-168. If used, please state condition. **Bonnie Meacham for Leigh Meacham, R-2 Hicks Road, Franklinville, New York 14737.**
- I've been trying to find an album and/or cassette of *America, Why I Love Her* for my father. It's by John Wayne on RCA. It came out in 1973. I would appreciate any help. **Lynda Henry, 219 Adams St., Taft, California 93268.**
- "Little" Roy Wiggins released a steel guitar album, *18 All-Time Hits* (Starday S-392), sometime in the 1960's. Anyone have it or know anything about its availability? **Marie Sturkie, 13607 Aveyburg Dr. #24, Laurel, Maryland 20708.**
- Wanted: Helen Cornelius records (45's) on Capitol, Columbia and RCA labels. Especially need "Tweedle Dee Dee," on Columbia, to complete my collection. I am also the

president of Helen's fan club, and receive requests all the time from members trying to locate the older singles! **Virginia Walker, 724 State St., Hannibal, Missouri 63401.**

- I'm looking for a copy of George Jones' 1976 album *Alone Again*. My old copy was on 8-track and it became destroyed before I ever had a chance to run it off onto a cassette. Any help would be greatly appreciated. **Barry Johnson, Route 3, Box 16, Batesburg, South Carolina 29006.**
- I'm trying to locate a video copy (either VHS or Beta, preferably VHS) of Anita Carter's appearance on *Nashville Now*, June 1, 1984. I'd even be happy with an audio copy. **Vicki Langdon, 2907 Odell, Denison, Texas 75020.**
- I've tried for years to locate two records: Eddy Arnold, "Each Minute Seems a Million Years," out about 1944-46, and Margaret Whiting, "A Tree in the Meadow" or "Tree in the Meadow," 1947-48. I will appreciate any help. **Shirley Roberson, 301 Arora Blvd., Orange Park, Florida 32073.**
- Does anyone know where I might get *We Thank Thee* by Jim Reeves? It's LSP-2552 in Living Stereo. **Audrey Hines, 400 23rd St., Golden, Colorado 80401.**
- Can anyone tell me where I might find a copy of "Jealous Heart" by Bill Lawrence (RCA Victor 20-3539-A/47-3029-A)? The one I have has been broken in some way or other. There was another singer that recorded the song about the time that Bill Lawrence did. I do not remember that singer's name. If anyone knows, please let me know. **Clarence Chief Parker, 500 King Ave., #3, Yuba City, California 95991.**
- For years I have been looking for Tracy Nelson's *Country Tracy* album. Record store owners in my area have not been able to locate it. If anyone has it, I'd love to either purchase it or have it taped for me. **Karen Clayton, RR 1, Box 168, Percy, Illinois 62272.**
- Over the last five years, I have heard the song, "Hello, Love," over the radio about five or six times. The first time I heard it, the man I was going with came back from a trip to his daughter's place in Nevada. We found out we were more than friends. We are together forever now. When he heard "Hello Love," he said that was our song. I agreed. But I cannot find a record of it anywhere around here. As far as I know, Hank Snow recorded it. It seems I heard someone else sing it also. I want the record or records, if more than one person has recorded it, very much. Can anyone help? **Patricia Harris, 5621 5400 Road, Olathe, Colorado 81425.**
- My friend Jill lives in England and loves country music. I need help locating cassettes or albums of her favorite country art-

ists, such as: Roy Drusky, Warner Mack and Hank Locklin. Please write soon. **Cindy Cressman, RD 3, Box 767, Slatington, Pennsylvania 18080.**

- I have been looking for two of Barbara Mandrell's early albums for several years now: *Treat Him Right* (Columbia C-30967) and *This Time I Almost Made It* (Columbia KC-32959). These are the only two I am missing in my collection and would appreciate any help in locating a copy of each. **Tammy Neu, 5727 S. Magnolia Ave. #303, Whittier, California 90601.**

Marie Osborn and Thomas Norton thank those who responded to the inquiries they placed in this column. The response, they said, was overwhelming.

For Sale

My entire collection of fan club material, things I have saved for 20 years, up for sale. Back issues of *Country Song Round-up*, *Country Music Magazine*, *Country & Western Hit Parade*, 8×10 hardcover books of Johnny Cash, Eddy Arnold, Junior Samples *Storybook*, Jim Reeves Souvenir Photo Album, various items on Loretta Lynn, Del Reeves, Stonewall Jackson, Howard Vokes, Jack Reno, the Wilburn Bros., Buck Owens and more. Best offer between \$1,000 and \$300. **Glenda Urbaniak, Rt. 1 Box 69B, Deming, New Mexico 88030.**

Pen Pal, Please

- Locked up for one year. Like to hear from the ladies, 28 to 48. Will answer all letters. I'm white, male, 34, 5'6" blue-eyed Charlie Daniels-type man. If I'm your kind, write soon. Country women, please. **Paul E. Huff 28820, W.C.C. Box 473 B-1, Westville, Indiana 46391.**
- Paul Magee thanks all those who have written him in response to his song about E.T. printed in the January/February *Newsletter*, and would like other members to have his full address: **Magee, 481 24th St., Marathon, Florida 33050.** *Paul received a rough mix of his tape from Blackwood Brothers in Memphis, but he doesn't know when, if ever, they are going to release his 45 and cassette.*

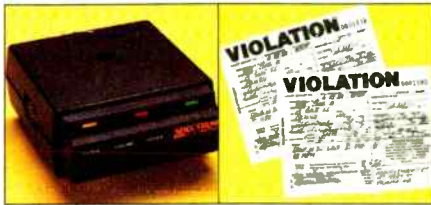
How to Write to the Stars

Check the *CMSA Answer Book* for a fan club address. If there is none listed, write to the star's record company—addresses of almost all labels are listed.

For older artists without record labels, we will help if we can. We don't always know either. Or you can run an inquiry in *Information, Please*.

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World Radio History

PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY CBS

CARL SMITH

Not one to dwell on yesterday, Carl Smith isn't looking to the past to find happiness. While he's proud of his accomplishments as a top country star, today he's content with his quarter horses and his life on his farm.

You Can't Roll Back Time

The truth of the matter is that I just got tired of it. I didn't enjoy it, I didn't like it, and I'd been on the road so long. I was just burnt out with it, to be honest. I'd been talkin' about it. So I finally decided one day, and I just kind of took off and I never did go back to work. It's been six or seven years.

Carl Smith lives south of Nashville on a 285-acre horse farm near Franklin, Tennessee that he's owned for years. And today that farm, not the stage, is where he can most often be found. Secure in his new lifestyle, he has no problem explaining why he all but retired from the music business after years on top.

Certainly his name no longer stirs up the excitement that it once did. After all, Carl Smith hasn't had a song on the charts since 1978, and that one only got to Number 81. You may know him as Carlene Carter's father and June Carter's former husband, but that doesn't begin to cover it: for two decades, from 1951 to 1971, Carl Smith was *hot*. Joel Whitburn's book *Top Country & Western Records: 1949-1971* points out that Smith had a total of 79 songs on the charts during that period, surpassed only by Eddy Arnold and Webb Pierce and far ahead of Marty Robbins,

Elvis, Ray Price or even Jim Reeves. Four hit Number One and 24 made the Top Ten from 1951 to 1959.

Nobody could question his authenticity. He was the real thing. Not only an exuberant stylist, Smith's raw, Acuff-influenced phrasing and supple voice drove a lyric for all it was worth. Voice, lyric and the tight, high-powered musicianship of his band, the Tunesmiths, gave his records a power comparable to those of Hank, Lefty, Webb or Ray Price. Yet times changed. Today, he's proud of his past achievements, but prefers to live in the present.

I don't really miss the business. I'm one of those people that don't live in the past. I have friends who do and I almost feel sorry for them at times. The past is past and I had a lot of good times and very successful times, but you can't just say 'Hey, I was a big star in the fifties,' and keep hangin' on and hangin' on. Because it's a different generation. You can't roll back time.

Success took Carl Smith far beyond his roots. Born in Roy Acuff's hometown of Maynardville in East Tennessee on March 15, 1927, he knew early on that he wanted to sing. He devoured the latest Acuff, Tubb and Bill Monroe records as

they came out and copied what he heard on them. He played bass and sang while in high school, spending a summer at WROL in Knoxville in 1944. After a brief Navy hitch he returned to East Tennessee in 1946 and worked around North Carolina, Georgia and his home state before joining the staff at WNOX, the Knoxville station that nurtured Chet Atkins and Archie Campbell.

By 1949 his singing style was impressing his WNOX colleagues, one of whom mailed a demo recording of Carl to a friend in Nashville, who was interested enough to approach the Opry with it. Surprisingly, Carl himself was anything but anxious, even when the Opry took its time deciding.

I guess I was on the edge. I almost didn't even come to Nashville. I was happy doin' what I was doin'. I was a 21-year-old kid, and as long as I had enough to get along with, I was happy.

When WSM accepted him in the spring of 1950, they had him doing a variety of radio shows and almost no touring.

Three mornings a week there was nobody on but me and my guitar. The announcer would introduce me and leave for 15 minutes, and I was there with an

by Rich Kienzle



Carl Smith has many awards to look back on, but today he's content with his horses.

open microphone. If I had to cough, I had to cough. I done that for a long time, I guess—a year and a half or two years. It was very good training.

Carl was among the last of the stars the Opry created. From then on a hit record was required for membership, and only Stonewall Jackson ever managed to break in without one. But by May 1950, he was a Columbia Recording artist, and though his first few sessions produced nothing substantial, by June of 1951 he had a Number 3 hit with "Let's Live a Little." The followups came quickly. "If Teardrops Were Pennies" hit Number 9; "Mr. Moon" hit Number 8; "Let Old Mother Nature Have Her Way" became his first Number One hit that November. Only Lefty Frizzell was burning up the charts that way. For nearly three years, every one of his records, it seemed, hit the Top Ten. He formed an outstanding touring band, the Tunesmiths, and he married June Carter, then working the Opry as a singer/comedienne. Success was, in his memory, something he had no problems coping with.

I think I handled it pretty good. I didn't go wild and buy a lot of airplanes and all this stuff. [Opry manager] Jim Denny was a very good friend, and he helped keep my feet on the ground. He'd talk to me like I was his son, and if I done something he didn't think was right, he'd tell me.

By 1954 Smith decided upon a musical innovation that seems minor now, but was radical then. Despite the Opry's ban on drums onstage, he hired drummer Buddy Harman, who later became the top studio drummer in Nashville, as a member of the Tunesmiths.

It caused a lot of controversy (laughs), a lot of it. Ernest told me I'd go broke, and Acuff wanted to get me fired off the Opry. It caused a lot of confusion, and I never did get 'em on the Opry, but I used 'em on the station before the Opry start-

ed. They all thought I was crazy, and two or three years after that, I looked around, and they got a full set there, bangin' away on 'em.

And if that wasn't enough, Carl Smith, in addition to his hard-core honky-tonk numbers, was performing some wilder music onstage. His 1954 song "Go, Boy, Go" was a huge hit, and it rocked as hard as Bill Haley. At the time, Elvis Presley was barely known.

It was between rock 'n' roll and western swing, really. We knew what we were doin'. I done all kinds of things during that period. I used to do 'Shake, Rattle and Roll' on the stage and songs like that before Elvis started really clickin'. The audiences got a kick out of it. On the road we used the tenor banjo and drums for a rhythm section, and bass, and it was pretty rockin'. This was from '53, '54 on."

The advent of rock didn't bother him much at first. He did an 18-month tour as part of the Phillip Morris touring country music show. And initially his record sales weren't hurt either. In 1956 he had two Top Ten hits. However, that gradually changed. In both 1957 and 1958 only two of his songs reached the charts. Don Law, head of CBS Records in Nashville at that time, refused to let Carl cut any rockabilly, although in 1959 he did record Nashville Sound material like "Ten Thousand Drums," which hit Number Five. Carl's onetime iron grip on the Top Ten was weakening.

By the middle 1960's, Carl was still making hits. However, most were only Top 20, a far cry from the headier successes of the previous decade. Nevertheless, he himself was comfortable with his records, many of them performed in the western swing style he loved, on record dates that were a lot like jam sessions. But as the 1970's rolled around, his records weren't selling much at all. A stab at crossover did nothing for his spirits or his career. In 1974 he left Columbia.

By 1975 Smith had a new home at Hickory Records, the tradition-oriented label run by Acuff-Rose. Was he satisfied with Hickory?

No. Unh, unh. I never was. They're the finest people in the world, but they're in the publishing business. They wanted to do the sound of the 1950's, and the past is past. And it was nobody's fault, it was one of them things. They were a small label. They couldn't compete with the market.

He began spending more time at the Franklin farm with his second wife, singer Goldie Hill, herself a star of the 1950's, concentrating on his other love: raising horses.

I show horses just about every weekend. I probably do 50 or 60 horse shows a year, and I ride every day and try to stay healthy. It's a lot more strenuous than show business. We got 285 acres out here. We raise quarter horses, cuttin' horse bloodlines. I show cuttin' horses. I work at it full-time. I'm healthier and happier than I've been in a long time.

He readily admits that he doesn't keep up with current trends much. Still, he has strong opinions of what he's heard, particularly when it comes to the dreaded crossover material.

I'm a country music fan, but I'm not a fan of what's being called country today. I'm not puttin' it down—don't misunderstand me. It just happens to be that I don't like opera music because I don't understand it. And I don't like a lot of things they do now and call country.

I'm sure Kenny Rogers is a fine man and a great artist, but I don't like his music. I like Willie and Waylon, but it's just a matter of personal taste. I'm talkin' as a fan. I'm sure they [the crossover artists] are nice people, but I don't like the songs that they do. The majority of the songs I hear now I just don't care for.

The ultimate question is, is Carl really through? Has he truly made a break that few of his old colleagues, most of whom still tour, would even consider? Has he truly closed the door on returning to full-time performing?

I think it's probably closed. I don't know. I do a TV show once in awhile. I did Ralph Emery's network show two or three weeks ago, I enjoyed it. As far as in the last year, I done a couple of shows out on the road. I just did the same thing that I'd always done, and the audience seemed to like it. But I don't think I would ever go back full-time.

I don't like to talk about myself because it sounds conceited, but I had a long run of sellin' records, an exceptional long run, and I'm proud of the fact that I did. If they could buy the products I could turn out, I could do it again, but I don't have the real interest. ■



GENE WATSON

Body Work for the Soul

Gut feelings, solid country songs, and time off are Gene Watson's formula for success. With hit record after hit record, he has found the right combination to keep him on the top of the charts.

The story about Gene Watson is that he still has his autobody repair and mechanic's tools from those hard days in Houston—the cars by day, the bars by night. The story is always presented as some cute quirk, sort of like cutting out paper doilies. Gene Watson, certified country star, out there hammering a dent out of the front fender of a '78 Chevy.

Of course, the people who present Gene Watson's life that way have never known the feeling that comes when the five o'clock whistle finally blows. Never looked at the backs of their hands and seen the inevitable scratches, already black with the oil, from working in the confined space of an engine compartment. Never known the satisfaction of looking at a job finally *done*, well done.

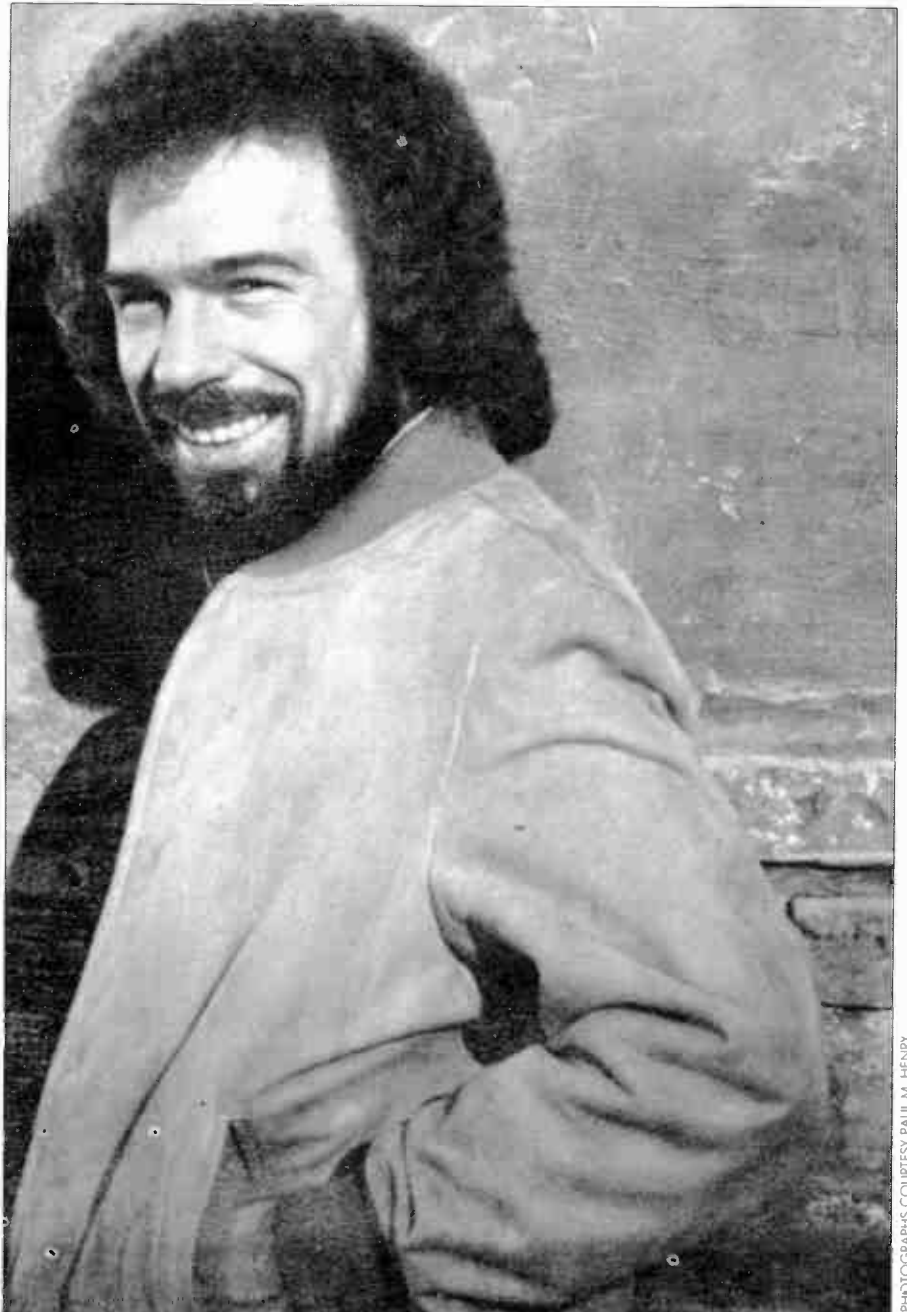
Yeah, he's got the tools. Gene Watson says, a bit bashfully.

"Aw, man," he says in that distinctive drawl, "I work on cars every day when I'm not on the road. No certain kind or nothing... I don't collect or work on any particular type. I'll go buy a car with the fender knocked off it or something like that and fix it up and paint it or tinker with it and then sell it. It's a hobby that I love."

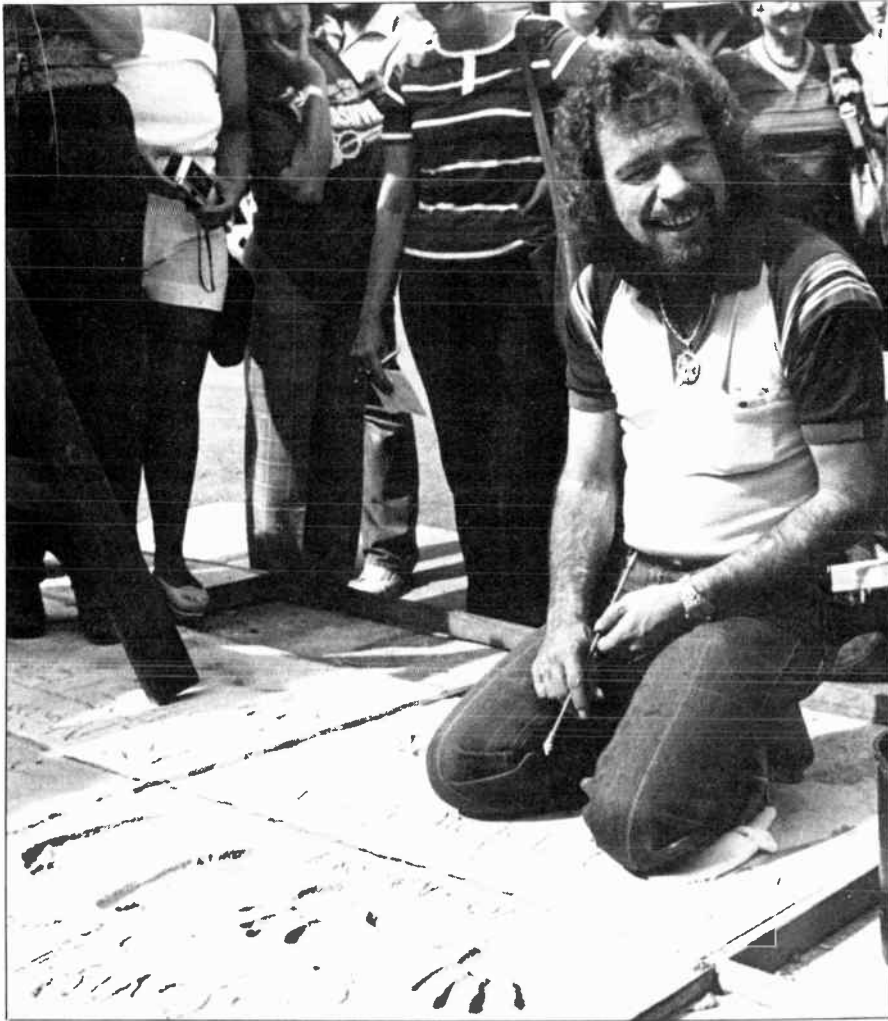
Gene Watson is a craftsman in an industry filled with used car salesmen. Since the overwhelming success of "Love in the Hot Afternoon" over ten years ago, Gene Watson has consistently placed his soulful interpretations of hard country music into the Top Ten, regardless of whatever prairie-fire trend was burning through Music City at the moment.

"I've been real content with staying in the Top Ten. Thank the Big Man upstairs and all my fans out there that I have been," he says. "I've had only seven or maybe eight songs in the ten years that I have been out there that have missed the Top Ten. And it's been going through the

by Michael Bane



PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY PAUL M. HENRY



Fans are an important part of Gene's life. Here he casts his hand and footprints in concrete for all his fans to admire on The Walkway of the Stars in Nashville.

cycle—the Outlaw syndrome, the Rhinestone Cowboy bit, the Urban Cowboy stuff and everything. Well, I still retain the same credentials I started out with, and I don't think it's hurt me that much. Maybe I could have changed a little bit and gained on one or two songs, but as far as the consistency goes, that's what I thrive on."

That consistency is built on the solid rock of good country songs. Songs like "Where Love Begins," "Paper Rosie," "Farewell Party," "Fourteen Carat Mind," and "You're Out Doing What I'm Here Doing Without" represent a body of hard country music matched only by soulmate Moe Bandy. No crossover. No pop stylings. Nothing fancy.

"I look for realistic stories," he says. "Something that people have lived or could live. Something that really pertains to everyday life, to the working man."

Gene Watson was born in Palestine, Texas, but grew up in a little old northeast Texas town called Paris. His father worked sawmills and farms, and the family, including seven brothers and sisters, moved regularly while their father followed the work, packing up and traveling

in an old remodeled school bus.

He made it as far as the ninth grade before the family's need for additional income outstripped his own need for more education. He already knew his true calling, and quickly got a job in an automotive salvage yard, pulling parts off cars and getting them ready to be mashed.

There was, of course, always the music.

"I'll tell you, I grew up listening to Carl Perkins and Elvis and Sonny James and Hank Williams, Webb Pierce and Ernest Tubb," Gene Watson says. Hard rocking music, whether you called it country or rock and roll. But that music was tempered by another kind of music, the black blues of the other sawmill workers and field hands.

"I love the blues," he says wistfully. "The old black guy workingman's blues. I've had a lot of people tell me that they can still detect that flavor in my style. I appreciate that, because I feel like you can change the complete meaning of a line by the way you *phrase* it. I use a lot of slurs and all that, but I have to do that to get the feeling that I want. Before I can record a song, I have to feel what I'm doing."

By day he was working in Houston doing autobody repair and making a good living at it. By night, he was on his way to becoming a star, at least, a star locally.

"I was hitting some good charts down here, Oklahoma, Louisiana, New Mexico, all around Texas," Watson says. "I didn't really realize the achievement I was on top of. . . . What I'm trying to say is that being an entertainer was never a goal of mine. I never even *dreamed* of making my living as an entertainer. I was going to be singing no matter what—as a pastime, for the fun of it, for a few beers, but always with an eight-to-five job."

What changed that all was a song called "Love in the Hot Afternoon," written by veteran Nashville songwriters Vince Matthews and Ken Westberry, which Watson recorded for a small, independent label in 1974. The song had been knocking around Nashville for quite some time, and there had been at least two unsuccessful recordings of it. The problem was that although everyone agreed it was a powerful, evocative song, there was also a general feeling that the song was too . . . well, *dirty* for country radio.

"Man, I carried the song a year before I recorded it," says Watson, laughing. "I thought man, this song is *spicy*; I don't know if we'll *ever* be able to get any airplay. Finally, I said all it can do is miss. We recorded it just like it was written. Capitol Records picked it up, and it became the Number Four song for the whole year."

Given the present climate of country music, it's hard to imagine "Love in the Hot Afternoon" as too racy for airplay. But ten years ago, country music was just on the verge of its big changes. Waylon and Willie were on the horizon; the established stars of the 1960's and 1970's still ruled. Charlie Rich topped the charts in 1974 with "There Won't Be Any More." Merle Haggard, Tammy Wynette, Dolly Parton and George Jones also were hot. Just the year before, Conway Twitty had rocked the country music world with "You've Never Been This Far Before." Was country music ready for an overtly sexual interlude on a hot New Orleans afternoon?

"'Damp tangled sheets' and 'getting high in the park' and 'making love in the hot afternoon'—those were pretty strong for ten years ago," Gene says, "so we just took our chances. I decided I wanted to record it the way it was written to at least give the song a chance. Which had never happened before. Every time it had been recorded, they had changed the words around so, I guess, they could get airplay. But to me it killed the effect of the song."

His first album, *Love in the Hot Afternoon*, released later in 1975, still stands as a monument to good taste in a country music recording. Even after ten years, the al-

bum sounds fresh and new, unforced and uncontrived. In addition to "Love..." it included another Vince Matthews composition, "This is My Year for Mexico," later a hit for Crystal Gayle, Nadine Bryant's "You Could Know as Much About a Stranger," Jessi Colter's "For the First Time" and Ray Griff's "Where Love Begins," among others. The album's spare production, with its emphasis on Watson's soulful voice, set the tone for the rest of his career.

"A lot of people call my voice a twang nowadays," he says. "I'm known as a country artist, but what people call a twang is the soul I get from the old blues. Now that's one thing that Moe Bandy does not use. He's more or less a straight ahead, hit-the-note type singer. I'm not thataway. I'll slide into a phrase, you know, and use a lot of slurs and everything. But I have to do that to get the smooth effect I want, to get my point across. It's just a different way of styling."

One other effect the song had on Watson was to convince him that everybody saying something was so didn't make it so, especially in Nashville, where everybody knew the true secret of how to make a hit record.

"And I'll tell you, Michael," he says, "I've kind of gone on gut feelings ever since then. I never let anybody sell me anything I thought might be a bill of goods. If I don't have a gut feeling about it, 90 percent of the time I won't go with it."

In fact, gut feeling is the basic reason Gene Watson has elected to stay in Houston instead of making the trek to Music City to live. In Houston, he has perspective, a sense of what people are really listening to, really want to hear.

"I don't want to be around all the vul-

tures and everything on Music Row," Watson says. "I don't mean that disrespectfully, but you know what I mean... a lot of entertainers talk to the pros; they talk to the people in the business. On the other hand, I'm just the opposite. I talk to the people out there running around. I know what they like. I know what they go through. When a guy leaves for work at 8 A.M., I know what he feels like when he gets in that evening. That's what I like to play."

The thing about the music business, says Gene Watson, is that a person can't live, eat, sleep and breathe the music business 24 hours a day and expect to stay sane, much less successful. It's easy for a singer, especially a successful singer, to wall himself or herself away from the very influences that shaped them and gave them their success. For Gene Watson, that success has been measured in Top Ten records (though not Number One records—"Fourteen Carat Mind" remains his only song to hit the top of the charts), and his position there has allowed him to see far too many artists go sailing past him only to go sailing down just as fast.

"You've got to have something that isn't the music business to think about," he says. "That's one of the reasons I love living in Houston. I live at the end of a dead-end street. I don't have much traffic back and forth. I can watch TV. I can go out and tinker with my cars and everything. I love to get away from my music on my time off, because it'll drive you crazy if you stay with it 100 percent of the time."

It's all a question, he agrees, best addressed by Dirty Harry in *Magnum Force*, where Harry, having blasted his past criminals, crooked cops and all manner of bad guys, wraps it up with a

single, simple statement: "A man's got to know his limitations."

"I think when a person doesn't know his limitations," says Watson, "or their capabilities or their qualifications, they're kidding themselves 90 percent of the time. You might get lucky and outdo yourself once in a while, but I more or less set guidelines within my capabilities. If I can prevail through all that, I feel like I have succeeded in my own life."

And that's why he's backing it down, just a little. Taking a little more time off from the road to catch his breath. When you *live* it, he says, push it hard, and maybe don't have those little pills or a bottle of booze to help you along, the road takes its toll.

"I used to drink when I first started," he says, "and I finally just said, hey, business and drinkin' just don't mix. Five years ago I quit. I laid down drunk one night and got up the next day and have been sober ever since. You'd be surprised how much I've achieved since then that would have ordinarily gone over my head. Plus I wake up in the morning and remember what I did yesterday. I feel good. I'm 41 years old and feel better than I did when I was 31. I feel like I've taken control of things."

So Gene Watson stays in the Top Ten, and when he's not on the road he's in Houston, tinkering with his cars or just spending time with his wife of 24 years, Mattie, whom he married when he was 17 and she was 15. He's got a drag car, a '73 Vega with a big block 468 that'll do the quarter mile in ten seconds, and while he likes to work on it, it's just not his speed to drive it.

He'd rather set back, he says, and look at it and plan it and see where he wants it to go.

Like a good mechanic. ■



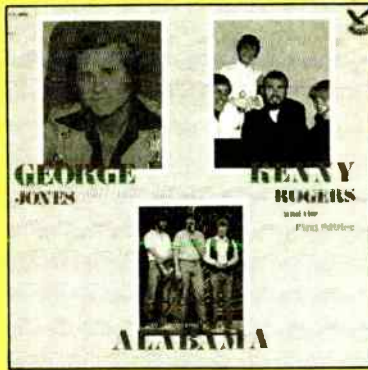
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HYLO BROWN MEETS THE LONESOME PINE FIDDLERS

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
SLP-220 SLPT-1220 GT5-220
LITTLE FOOTPRINTS IN THE SNOW • LITTLE GEORGIA ROSE • T FOR TEXAS • SEASONS OF MY HEART • DADDY'S PLACE • PAINTED LIPS • THEY CRUCIFIED MY LORD • THE BALLAD OF JED CLAMPETT • WALK SLOWLY DARLING • HARD LUCK BLUES • WHEN THE BRIGHT LIGHTS GROW DIM • THE NEEDLE • SILENT PARTNER • AND MORE!

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SD-3017 SDT-13017 GT5-3017
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DORSEY BURNETTE— GOLDEN HITS

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
GT-0050 GT8-0050 GT5-0050
BIG ROCK CANDY MOUNTAIN • YOU'RE SIXTEEN • GOD, COUNTRY AND MY BABY • MAGNIFICENT SANCTUARY BAND • BIG, BIG WORLD • TALL OAK TREE • LITTLE BOY BLUE • DREAMIN' • HEY LITTLE ONE • THE GREATEST LOVE

MARTHA CARSON— GOSPEL HITS

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
SLP-997 SLPT-1997 GT5-997
SATISFIED • OLD BLIND BARNABUS • GOD'S UNCHANGING HAND • DIP YOUR FINGERS IN SOME WATER • I'M GONNA WALK AND TALK WITH MY LORD • JESUS SAID • ON TOP OF THE MOUNTAIN • THE PATIENCE OF JOB • TWO WHITE WINGS • SINGING ON THE OTHER SIDE • AND MORE!

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WILF CARTER— MONTANA SLIM

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
SLP-300 SLPT-1300 GT5-300
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LEW CHILDRE— OLD TIME GET TOGETHER

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
SLP-153 SLPT-1153 GT5-153
ALABAMA BOUND • THIS TRAIN • EVERYBODY'S FISHER • STRAWBERRY ROAN • SISTER LUCY LEE • ALABAMA HOME • WRECK OF THE OLD 97 • HOG CALLIN BLUES • ROCK MY LITTLE BABY TO SLEEP • AND MORE!

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BEN COLDER— GOLDEN HITS

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
GT-0051 GT8-0051 GT5-0051
ALMOST PERSUADED No. 2 • EASY LOVIN' No. 2 • DETROIT CITY No. 2 • LITTLE GREEN APPLES • ROLLIN' IN MY SWEET BABY'S ARMS • DON'T GO NEAR THE ESKIMOS • SUNDAY MORNING FALLIN' DOWN • GAMES PEOPLE PLAY • 10 LITTLE BOTTLES • ODE TO THE LITTLE BROWN SHACK OUT BACK • AND MORE!

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GT-0048 GT8-0048 GT5-0048

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SKEETER DAVIS—THE BEST OF THE BEST OF SKEETER DAVIS

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
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WITH YOU • WHAT DOES IT TAKE (TO KEEP A MAN LIKE YOU SATISFIED) • SET HIM FREE • GONNA GET ALONG WITHOUT YOU NOW • BUS FARE TO KENTUCKY

THE BEST OF THE DELMORE BROTHERS

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THE BEST OF THE BEST OF LITTLE JIMMY DICKENS

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GT-0041 GT8-0041 GT5-0041

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LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
KLP-109 KLP-1209 GT5-209

TWIN FIDDLE POLKA (Buddy Spicher & Shorly Lavender) • TALKING FIDDLE BLUES (Scotty Stoneman) • THREE FIDDLE SWING (Buddy Spicher & Shorly Lavender) • WHISTLIN' RUFUS (Chubby Wise & The Rainbar Ranch Boys) • BILL CHEATHAM (Jerry Rivers) • BEAUMONT RAG (Arthur 'Guitar Boogie' Smith) • JOLE BLON (Tommy Hill String Band) • FIDDLER JOE (Ramona Jones) • JOYS OF QUEBEC (Ward Allen) • PRETTY GIRL (Benny Martin) • LOST INDIAN (Crook Brothers) • AND MORE!

REDD FOX—IN A NUTSHELL

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
KLP-1074 KLP-11074 GT5-1074

RECORDED LIVE AT THE REDD FOX CLUB HOLLYWOOD, CALIF.

Suggested For Mature Audiences Only!

REDD FOX—MATINEE IDOL

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
KLP-1135 KLP-11135 GT5-1135

THE SAINT BERNARD DOG • THE HANDICAPPED • THROW UP IN A CAB • CHINESE FOOD • THE FLORIST AND THE VASE • IF YOU WANT TO GO TO HEAVEN (Die) • HELL IS AN UGLY BROAD • I LOVE LEPERS • YOUR HANDS HEAL UP • BLACK BELT • DIRTY WORDS • 800 MILLION CHINESE • RISE ON EASTER • HEE HAW SHOW • YOU AINT IN YET • HOLE IN THE MATTRESS • IN THE PEN • LAS VEGAS • LITTLE BOY SPELLING • TWO VETERANS • FRIEND FROM TEXAS • TWO GUY HUNTING • BIG HEAD • CANNIBALS

REDD FOX—PASS THE APPLE, EVE

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
KLP-1073 KLP-11073 GT5-1073

RECORDED LIVE AT THE REDD FOX CLUB HOLLYWOOD, CALIF.
Suggested For Mature Audiences Only!

REDD FOX—BARE FACTS

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
KLP-1072 KLP-11072 GT5-1072

RECORDED LIVE AT THE REDD FOX CLUB HOLLYWOOD, CALIF.
Suggested For Mature Audiences Only!

THE GRASS ROOTS—14 GREATS

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
GT-0044 GT8-0044 GT5-0044

SOONER OR LATER • HEAVEN KNOWS • WALKING THROUGH THE COUNTRY • LOVIN' THINGS • THE RIVER IS WIDE • WHERE WERE YOU WHEN I NEEDED YOU • WAIT A MILLION YEARS • LET'S LIVE FOR TODAY • TWO DIVIDED BY LOVE • THINGS I SHOULD HAVE SAID • TEMPTATION EYES • GLORY BOUND • AND MORE!

JACK GREENE & JEANNIE SEELY—GREATEST HITS

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
GT-0092 GT8-0092 GT5-0092

THERE GOES MY EVERYTHING (Jack Greene) • DON'T TOUCH ME (Jeannie Seely) • YOU ARE MY

TREASURE (Jack Greene) • ALL THE TIME (Jack Greene) • CAN I SLEEP IN YOUR ARMS (Jeannie Seely) • I NEED SOMEBODY BAD (Jack Greene) • WE DON'T WANT THE WORLD (Jack Greene & Jeannie Seely) • IT'S ONLY LOVE (Jeannie Seely) • WISH I DIDN'T HAVE TO MISS YOU (Jack Greene & Jeannie Seely) • BEAUTIFUL LADY (Jack Greene)

GONE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
SLP-346 SLPT-1346 GT5-346

LOVESICK BLUES (Patsy Cline) • I SUPPOSE (Hawkshaw Hawkins) • LIFE STORY OF HANK WILLIAMS (Hawkshaw Hawkins) • WINGS OF A DOVE (Cowboy Copas) • JUST A CLOSER WALK WITH THEE (Patsy Cline) • SUNNY SIDE OF THE MOUNTAIN (Hawkshaw Hawkins) • STOP THE WORLD (Patsy Cline) • BEYOND THE SUNSET (Cowboy Copas) • THERE HE GOES (Patsy Cline) • HE STANDS REAL TALL (Cowboy Copas) • LITTLE WHITE WASHED CHIMNEY (Hawkshaw Hawkins) • DECK OF CARDS (Cowboy Copas)

HAWKSHAW HAWKINS—16 GREATEST HITS

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
SD-3013 SDT-13013 GT5-3013

LONESOME 7-7203 • I SUPPOSE • LITTLE WHITE WASHED CHIMNEY • I LOVE YOU A THOUSAND WAYS • SUNNY SIDE OF THE MOUNTAIN • I'M WAITING JUST FOR YOU • TEARDROPS ON YOUR LETTER • DOG HOUSE BOOGIE • SLOW POKE • I WASTED A NICKEL • BE MY LIFE'S COMPANION • SILVER THREADS AND GOLDEN NEEDLES • PAN AMERICAN • BARBARA ALLEN • I'M SLOWLY DYING OF A BROKEN HEART • AND MORE!

THE BEST OF DAVID HOUSTON

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
GT-0012 GT8-0012 GT5-0012

IT STARTED ALL OVER AGAIN • SO MANY WAYS • IT'S ALL OVER (With Sherri Jerrico) • SHE'S ALL WOMAN • WHERE COULD I GO? (But To Her) • I'LL TAKE YOU HOME AGAIN KATHLEEN • NO TELL MOTEL • GOOD THINGS • CHICKASHAY • WE'VE GOT EVERYTHING BUT LOVE (With Sherri Jerrico) •

FAVORITES OF FERLIN HUSKY

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
SD-3018 SDT-13018 GT5-3018

GONE • MONEY GREASES THE WHEEL • COUNTRY MUSIC IS HERE TO STAY • FALLEN STAR • WALKIN' AND HUMMIN' • JUST FOR YOU • THE WINGS OF A DOVE • TIMBER • LITTLE TOM • DEAR JOHN • HOMESICK • I FEEL BETTER ALL OVER

WANDA JACKSON—GREATEST HITS

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
GT-0057 GT8-0057 GT5-0057

RIGHT OR WRONG • IF I CIRED EVERY TIME YOU HURT ME • A WOMAN LIVES FOR LOVE • IN THE MIDDLE OF A HEARTACHE • A GIRL DON'T HAVE TO DRINK TO HAVE FUN • FANCY SATIN PILLOWS • ONE DAY AT A TIME • TEARS WILL BE A CHASER FOR YOUR WINE • I CAN'T STOP NOW • I STILL BELIEVE IN YOU

GEORGE JONES, ALABAMA, KENNY ROGERS AND THE FIRST EDITION

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
GT-0094 GT8-0094 GT5-0094

THINGS HAVE GONE TO PIECES (George Jones) • I WANNA BE WITH YOU TONIGHT (Alabama) • BUT YOU KNOW I LOVE YOU (Kenny Rogers and the First Edition) • PATCHES (Alabama) • RUBY, DON'T TAKE YOUR LOVE TO TOWN (Kenny Rogers and the First Edition) • I'LL SHARE MY WORLD WITH YOU (George Jones) • LOVIN' YOU IS KILLIN' ME (Alabama) • REUBEN JAMES (Kenny Rogers and the First Edition) • DEVELOPING MY PICTURES (George Jones)

GEORGE JONES—GOLDEN HITS

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
GT-0080 GT8-0080 GT5-0080

THE RACE IS ON • SHE THINKS I STILL CARE • A GOOD YEAR FOR THE ROSES • TAKE ME • I'LL FOLLOW YOU UP TO OUR CLOUD • WHITE LIGHTNIN' • WALK THROUGH THIS WORLD WITH ME • WHEN THE GRASS GROWS OVER ME • TENDER YEARS • THINGS HAVE GONE TO PIECES



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GEORGE JONES— GOOD OLD BIBLE

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
GT-0043 GT8-0043 GT5-0043

THE GOOD OLD BIBLE • WILL THE CIRCLE BE UNBROKEN • WE'LL UNDERSTAND IT • MY LORD HAS CALLED ME • IF YOU WANT TO WEAR A CROWN • JESUS WANTS ME • TAKE THE DEVIL OUT OF ME • BOAT OF LIFE • A CUP OF LONELINESS • WANDERING SOUL

GEORGE JONES— 16 GREATEST HITS

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
SD-3021 SDT-13021 GT5-3021

WHY BABY WHY • YOUR HEART • NOTHING CAN STOP MY LOVE • ESKIMO PIE • COLOR OF THE BLUES • DON'T DO THIS TO ME • YOU GOTTA BE MY BABY • NO MONEY IN THIS DEAL • ONE IS A LONELY NUMBER • JUST ONE MORE • UH, UH, NO • LONG TIME TO FORGET • SEASONS OF MY HEART • IF I DON'T LOVE YOU • WHAT AM I WORTH • I'M RAGGED, BUT I'M RIGHT

THE OTHER SIDE OF GRANDPA JONES

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
KLP-B88 KLPT-1888 GT5-888

MY DARLING'S NOT MY DARLING ANYMORE • DARLING, WON'T YOU LOVE ME NOW • TROUBLE, TROUBLE, TROUBLE • TRAGIC ROMANCE • YOU'LL BE LONESOME TOO • SHE'S GONE AND LEFT ANOTHER BROKEN HEART • ARE THERE TEARS BEHIND YOUR SMILE • I'M TYING THE LEAVES • MAYBE YOU'LL MISS ME WHEN I'M GONE • OUR WORLDS ARE NOT THE SAME • CALL ME DARLING ONCE AGAIN • YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO LEAVE ME • WHAT CAN I DO WITHOUT MY LITTLE DARLING • YOU CAN NEVER BE MINE

GRANDPA JONES— 16 GREATEST HITS

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
SD-3008 SDT-13008 GT5-3008

MOUNTAIN DEW • 15 CENTS IS ALL I GOT • EIGHT MORE MILES TO LOUISVILLE • UNCLE EFF'S GOT THE COON • EAST BOUND FREIGHT TRAIN • SHE'S THE STEPPING OUT KIND • I'M MY OWN GRANDPA • OLD RATTLER'S

TREED AGAIN • OLD RATTLER • ARE YOU FROM DIXIE • THERE'S A HOLE IN THE GROUND • GRANDPA BOOGIE • MY OLD RED RIVER HOME • IT'S RAINING HERE THIS MORNING • HERE RATTLER HERE • JONAH AND THE WHALE

CLAUDE KING'S BEST INCLUDES "WOLVERTON MOUNTAIN"

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
GT-0066 GT8-0066 GT5-0066

WOLVERTON MOUNTAIN • THE COMANCHEROS • BIG RIVER, BIG MAN • SAM HILL • TIMES AND THINGS KEEP CHANGING • THE LAST DAYS OF LOVE • I SAT DOWN ON A BEAR TRAP (Just This Morning) • IT STARTS OFF GOOD (And Keeps Gettin Better) • TIGER WOMAN • I WONDER WHO SHE MISSED ME WITH TODAY

THE BEST OF PEE WEE KING & REDD STEWART

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
SLP-965 SLPT-1965 GT5-965

BONAPARTES RETREAT • RAG MOP • JANIE • SLOWPOKE • WAITIN' • WESTERN • TENNESSEE WALTZ • YOU BELONG TO ME • I GOT A WIFE • SUBDUED MOON • DECK OF CARDS • SEVEN LONELY DAYS

THE KENDALLS— BEST COUNTRY DUO '78

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
GT-0001 GT8-0001 GT5-0001

LEAVING ON A JET PLANE • WE'LL BE GONE • LOVE, LOVE, LOVE • THAT LOVING FEELING • PROUD MARY • I KNOW HE'LL NEVER COME BACK • BEHIND THAT LOCKED DOOR • THINK OF ME GENTLY • HILLS OF KENTUCKY • YOU THINK I STILL CARE • PLEASE TELL ME WHY • BOBBY

LEWIS FAMILY— 16 GREATEST HITS

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
SD-3019 SDT-13019 GT5-3019

TIME IS MOVING ON • I'VE FOUND A HIDING PLACE • WHERE HE LEADS I WILL FOLLOW • GO TELL IT ON THE MOUNTAIN • WILL THE CIRCLE BE UNBROKEN • THE OLD RUGGED CROSS • THE MAN OF GALILEE • IN THE GARDEN • MY LORD IS TAKING ME AWAY •

LONESOME PINE FIDDLERS— 14 MOUNTAIN SONGS

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
SLP-155 SLPT-1155 GT5-155

LONESOME PINE • EATIN' OUT OF YOUR HAND • HE SHOWED ME THE WAY • KENTUCKY HILL SPECIAL • WINDY MOUNTAIN • TWO KINDS OF BLUES • LONESOME PINE RAMBLE • TWO TIMIN' BABY • I'M ALL ALONE • LOST IN THIS WORLD • WHAT CAN I TELL MY HEART • PRETTY LITTLE INDIAN • WHY DO YOU TREAT ME THE WAY YOU DO • HE WON'T ACCEPT EXCUSES

LULU BELLE & SCOTTY— SWEETHEARTS OF COUNTRY MUSIC

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
SLP-206 SLPT-1206 GT5-206

HOMECOMING IN THE HAPPY VALLEY SUNDAY SCHOOL • REMEMBER ME • DOES THE SPEARMINT LOSE ITS FLAVOR • WHEN MY BLUE MOON TURNS TO GOLD • SWEET LIPS (Battle of King Mountain) • THE EMPTY CHRISTMAS STOCKING • I'M IN THE DOG HOUSE NOW • HAVE I TOLD YOU LATELY THAT I LOVE YOU • MOUNTAIN DEW • EACH TIME YOU LEAVE • WHAT YOU DON'T KNOW, WON'T HURT YOU • BROWN MOUNTAIN LIGHT • SHORTNIN' BREAD

LULU BELLE & SCOTTY— SWEETHEARTS STILL

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
SLP-351 SLPT-1351 GT5-351

I TOLD THEM ALL ABOUT YOU • I'LL BE ALL SMILES TONIGHT • SWEET EVALENA • BETWEEN YOU AND ME • TRY TO LIVE SOME • MOLLY DARLING • FIRST SHIPBORWILL CALL • BLUE EYES CRYING IN THE RAIN • SUNSET YEARS OF LIFE • BONNIE BLUE EYES • ROCKING ALONE (IN AN OLD ROCKING CHAIR) • WHEN YOU YOO HOO IN THE VALLEY

THE BEST OF THE BEST OF WARNER MACK

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
GT-0042 GT8-0042 GT5-0042

IS IT WRONG • SITTING IN AN ALL NIGHT CAFE • TALKIN' TO THE WALL • SITTING ON A ROCK • HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE • AND MORE!

STRINGBEAN—SALUTE TO UNCLE DAVE MACON

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
SLP-215 SLPT-1215 GT5-215

TENNESSEE FARMER • JOHN HENRY • TAKE MY HAND PRECIOUS LORD • PRETTY LITTLE WIDOW • HOW MANY BISCUITS CAN YOU EAT • BULLY OF THE TOWN • CRIPPLE CREEK • THERE'LL BE MOONSHINE IN THE OLD KENTUCKY HILLS • I'M THE MAN WHO RODE THE MULE AROUND THE WORLD • YOU CAN'T DO WRONG AND GET BY • HESITATION BLUES • OVER THE MOUNTAIN • FREE LITTLE BIRD

JIMMY MARTIN'S GREATEST BLUEGRASS HITS

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
GT-0003 GT8-0003 GT5-0003

WIDOW MAKER • SUNNY SIDE OF THE MOUNTAIN • ROLLIN' IN MY SWEET BABY'S ARMS • TAYLOR MADE SALLY GOOD • HONEY, YOU DON'T KNOW MY MIND • BI-C COUNTRY • FREEBORN MAN • BLUE MOON OF KENTUCKY • GOODBYE OLD PAL • UNCLE PEN • WHITE DOVE •

JIMMY MARTIN— ME 'N OLE PETE

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
GT-0067 GT8-0067 GT5-0067

RUN PETE RUN • MOONLIGHT LOVE • WHO'S CALLING YOU SWEETHEART TONIGHT • BLUEGRASS SINGING MAN • BEAUTIFUL BROWN EYES (Lisa & Jimmy Martin) • PLAY ME SOME GEORGE JONES SONGS • PETE, THE BEST COON DOG IN THE STATE OF TENNESSEE • KNOXVILLE GIRL • EAGLE EYE TOM (Instrumental) • LOVER'S LANE • SWEET LITTLE MAGGIE • DON'T LET YOUR SWEET LOVE DIE

JIMMY MARTIN—ONE WOMAN MAN

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
GT-0095 GT8-0095 GT5-0095

ONE WOMAN MAN • I CAN'T GIVE MY HEART AGAIN • OCEAN OF DIAMONDS • PLEASE PLAY THE JUKEBOX • 20/20 VISION • WATER THE FLOWERS • I KNOW YOU'RE MARRIED BUT I LOVE YOU STILL • WILL YOU BE LOVIN' ANOTHER MAN • DOWN THE ROAD • WHAT A WAY TO GO

JIMMY MARTIN & RALPH STANLEY FIRST TIME TOGETHER

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
GT-0077 GT8-0077 GT5-0077

I'M GOING DOWN THE ROAD • IN THE PINES • STONE WALLS & STEEL BARS • RABBIT IN THE LOG • FOOTPRINTS IN THE SNOW • ROLL ON BUDDY, ROLL ON • DARLING BROWN EYES • GOD GAVE YOU TO ME • DON'T LET YOUR SWEET LOVE DIE • I ONLY EXIST

THE BEST OF MOORE & NAPIER

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
SLP-963 SLPT-1963 GT5-963

I'M JUST YOUR STEPPIN' STONE • GOODBYE AND SO LONG TO YOU • CHAIN GANG • NO ONE AS SWEET AS YOU • I'M GIVING YOU YOUR FREEDOM • I'VE GOT OVER YOU • JOHNNY ON THE SPOT • DOWN THE ROAD • WHITROCK • DOWN SOUTH

MOORE & NAPIER— LONESOME TRUCK DRIVERS

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
KLP-936 KLPT-1936 GT5-936

LONG WHITE LINE • A TRUCK DRIVER'S ROMANCE • BLUEGRASS TRUCK DRIVER • TRUCK DRIVER'S WOMAN • HOT ROD KIDS AND WOMEN DRIVERS • LONG OLD ROAD • THIS TRUCK AND ME • TRUCK DRIVER'S QUEEN • BALLAD OF BIG FRED • AND MORE!

THE BEST OF GEORGE MORGAN

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
SLP-957 SLPT-1957 GT5-957

ROOM FULL OF ROSES • LIVE AND LET LIVE AND BE HAPPY • LIVING • CANDY KISSES • YOU'RE THE ONLY GOOD THING • STEAL AWAY • SOUNDS OF GOODBYE • BARBARA • ALMOST •

MAINER'S MOUNTAINEERS— GOOD OLE MOUNTAIN MUSIC

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
KLP-666 KLPT-1666 GT5-666

WHAT'LL I DO WITH THE BABY • O • THE LONELY TRAIN • PALE MOONLIGHT • THE FORKS OF THE ROAD • WORKIN' ON A BUILDIN' • GATHERING FLOWERS (From The



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MOON MULLICAN—GREATEST HITS

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
SLP-398 SLPT-1398 GT5-398

I'LL SAIL MY SHIP ALONE • LOUISIAN • MONA LISA • MAKE FRIENDS • FAREWELL • BOTTOM OF THE GLASS • RAGGED BUT RIGHT • JOLE BLON • WABASH CANON BALL • SWEETER THAN THE FLOWERS • AND MORE!

NEW GRASS REVIVAL

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
SLP-482 SLPT-1482 GT5-482

PENNIES IN MY POCKET • COLD SAILOR • I WISH I SAID (I Love You One More Time) • PRINCE OF PEACE • GINSENG SULLIVAN • WHISPER MY NAME • GREAT BALLS OF FIRE • LONESOME FIDDLE BLUES • BODY AND SOUL • WITH CARE FROM SOMEONE

BASHFUL BROTHER OSWALD

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
SLP-192 SLPT-1192 GT5-192

SOUTHERN MOON • WEARY, WEARY BLUES • RABBIT IN THE LOG • SUNDAY IN THE MOUNTAINS • OSWALD'S DOBRO CHIMES • LONESOME VALLEY • ISLAND MARCH • MOUNTAIN DEW • I LIKE MOUNTAIN MUSIC • WHY NOT CONFESS • COLUMBUS STOCKADE BLUES • BENEATH THE WILLOW • BLACK SMOKE • LATE LAST NIGHT

OAK RIDGE BOYS

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
GT-0101 GTB-0101 GT5-0101

SOMEBODY LOVES ME • GOLDEN HILLS AHEAD • THERE'S A HIGHER POWER • THERE'S A LIGHT GUIDING ME • HIDE THOU ME • LIFE'S RAILWAY TO HEAVEN • I WOULDN'T TAKE NOTHING FOR MY JOURNEY NOW • I WANT TO DO THY WILL OH LORD • JUST A CLOSER WALK WITH THEE • SHINE, SHINE, DOWN ON ME.

SENSATIONAL OAK RIDGE BOYS

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
SLP-356 SLPT-1356 GT5-356

I AM A PILGRIM • SHINE SHINE DOWN ON ME • GOLDEN HILLS AHEAD • THERE'S A LIGHT GUIDING ME • I FEEL MIGHTY CLOSE TO HEAVEN (ON MY

KNEES) • ANGEL BAND • LAND OF BEULAH • THERE'S A HIGHER POWER • I WANT TO DO THY WILL, OH LORD • LIFE'S RAILWAY TO HEAVEN • JUST A CLOSER WALK WITH THEE • SOMEBODY LOVES ME

OPRY TIME IN TENNESSEE

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
SLP-177 SLPT-1177 GT5-177

BARN DANCE JUBILEE (Benny Martin & Boys) • FLAT TOP (Cowboy Copas) • YOUR SIDE OF THE STORY (Justin Tubbs) • CACKLIN' MEN (Chubby Wise) • MOLLY DARLIN' (Old Hickory Singers) • GOOD TIMES GONNA ROLL AGAIN (Moon Mullicon) • SISTER LUCY LEE (Low Childre) • ONE IS A LONELY NUMBER (George Jones) • KENTUCKY & TENNESSEE (Stringbean) • FIDDLIN' HOME (Benny Martin) • STRIKE UP THE BOW (Benny Martin & Boys) • BLACK EYED SUSAN BROWN (Cowboy Copas) • FOR PETE'S SAKE (Pete Droke) • THAT'S GOOD, THAT'S BAD (Archie Campbell) • EVERLOVIN' DIXIELAND (Willis Bros.) • SALTY DOG BLUES (Flatt & Scruggs) • AND MORE!

RADAR BLUES

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
KLP-1050 KLP-11050 GT5-1050

RADAR BLUES (Coleman Wilson) • 8 MORE MILES TO LOUISVILLE (Grandpa Jones) • TRUCKER'S RAG (Moon Mullicon) • TRUCK DRIVER'S QUEEN (Moore & Nopier) • INTERSTATE 81 (Reno & Smiley) • GUITAR PICKIN' TRUCK DRIVER (Moore & Nopier) • ROLLIN' ON RUBBER WHEELS (Stanley Bros.) • TRUCK DRIVIN' MAN (Hyla Brown) • THE GEAR JAMMER & THE HOBO (Johnny Bond & Red Sovine) • WRECK ON THE HIGHWAY (Cowboy Copas) • SUNNY SIDE OF THE MOUNTAIN (Hawkshaw Hawkins) • TRUCK STOP CUTIE (Willis Bros.)

DEL REEVES—GREATEST HITS

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
SLP-998 SLPT-1998 GT5-998

GIRL ON THE BILLBOARD • BELLES OF SOUTHERN BELL • THERE WOULDN'T BE A LONELY HEART IN TOWN • GOOD TIME CHARLIE • LOVER'S QUESTION • BE GLAD • AND MORE!

DON RENO—FASTEST FIVE STRINGS ALIVE

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
KLP-1065 KLP-11065 GT5-1065

REMINGTON RIDE • DOUBLE BANJO BLUES • INTERSTATE 81 • THE WORLD IS WAITING (For The Sunrise) • DOUBLE EAGLE • WHEN YOU AND I WERE YOUNG • MAGGIE • WASHINGTON & LEE SWING • TENNESSEE CUT-UP • BREAK DOWN • ROAD RUNNER • MY OLD KENTUCKY HOME • CHOKING THE STRINGS • BANJO RIFF

THE BEST OF RENO & SMILEY

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
SLP-961 SLPT-1961 GT5-961

I'M THE TALK OF THE TOWN • 8 MORE MILES TO LOUISVILLE • EMOTIONS • FREIGHT TRAIN BOOGIE • I WOULDN'T CHANGE YOU IF I COULD • EXCUSE ME I THINK I GOT A HEARTACHE • JIMMY CAUGHT THE DICKENS (For Putting Ernest In The Tub) • THE EVERGLADES • I KNOW YOU'RE MARRIED (But I Love You Still) • MONEY, MARBLES & CHALK

RENO & SMILEY—COUNTRY SINGING AND INSTRUMENTALS

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
KLP-776 KLP-1776 GT5-776

ANOTHER DAY • I'M JUST A USED TO BE TO YOU • SOCKEYE • FOLLOW THE LEADER • I WOULDN'T CHANGE YOU IF I COULD • BANJO SPECIAL • JIMMY CAUGHT THE DICKENS • WALL AROUND YOUR HEART • BETTER LUCK NEXT TIME • SPEEDIN' • UNWANTED LOVE • FLOP EARED MULE • HO-DANCIN' (Bully Of The Town) • COUNTRY LATIN SPECIAL • PRETENDING • AND MORE!

RENO & SMILEY—COUNTY SONGS

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
KLP-701 KLP-1701 GT5-701

FREIGHT TRAIN BOOGIE • CHARLIE BROOKS & NELLIE ADAIR • BLUE AND LONESOME • DARK AS A DUNGEON • DON'T LET YOUR SWEET LOVE DIE • MOUNTAIN ROSA LEE • MONEY, MARBLES & CHALK • EAST BOUND FREIGHT TRAIN • GATHERING FLOWERS FROM THE HILLSIDE • SHE HAS FORGOTTEN • AND MORE!

RENO & SMILEY—INSTRUMENTALS

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
GT-0068 GTB-0068 GT5-0068

DILL PICKLE RAG • BLACK AND WHITE RAG • MACK'S HODOWN PICK AND HOLD • SANDY ROAD • RICHMOND RUCKUS • LEE'S MARCH • JACKKNIFE-IN' • HEN SCRATCHIN' STOMP • BANJO RIFF

RENO & SMILEY—16 GREATEST HITS

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
SD-3001 SDT-13001 GT5-3001

I KNOW YOU'RE MARRIED • CHARLOTTE BREAKDOWN • EXCUSE ME (I Think I've Got A Heartache) • RENO RIDE • ALL I HAVE IS JUST A MEMORY • I WOULDN'T CHANGE YOU IF I COULD • I'M THE TALK OF THE TOWN • DRIFTING WITH THE TIDE • LET'S LIVE FOR TONIGHT • CHOKING THE STRINGS • DON'T LET YOUR SWEET LOVE DIE • BAND RIFF • BORN TO LOSE • EMOTIONS • TRAIL OF SORROW • MAYBE YOU WILL CHANGE YOUR MIND

RENO & SMILEY—20 BLUEGRASS SPECIALS

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
GD-5025X GDB-5025X GDS-5025X

I KNOW YOU'RE MARRIED BUT I LOVE YOU STILL • PRETENDING • BANJO SIGNAL • TRAIL OF SORROW • SIGNED SEALED AND DELIVERED • TALLY HO • I WOULDN'T CHANGE YOU IF I COULD • TENNESSEE CUT UP • PLEASE REMEMBER THAT I LOVE YOU • BANJO SPECIAL • LET'S LIVE FOR TONIGHT • MONEY, MARBLES & CHALK • BRINGING IN THE GEORGIA MAIL • EMOTIONS • DON'T LET YOUR SWEET LOVE DIE • AND MORE!

RENO & SMILEY—"WORLD'S BEST FIVE STRING BANJO"

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
KLP-861 KLP-1861 GT5-861

MY OLD KENTUCKY HOME • GREEN MOUNTAIN HOP • WEEPING WILLOW TREE • MISSIE RIDE • PRETTY POLLY • SFEING NELLIE HOME • BILL BAILEY • KEEP YOUR SKILLET GOOD AND GREASY • NINE POUND HAMMER • AND MORE!

ROADRUNNER—VARIOUS ARTISTS

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
GT-0053 GTB-0053 GT5-0053

TRUCK DRIVIN' SON OF A GUN (Dove Dudley) • TIE A YELLOW RIBBON 'ROUND THE OLD OAK TREE (Johnny Corver) • THE BRIDGE WASHED OUT (Worner Moc) • KING OF THE OPEN ROAD (Red Sovine) • KANSAS CITY (Wilbert Harrison) • HOW FAR TO LITTLE ROCK (Stanley Brothers) • WHITE KNIGHT (Tommy Hill's Music Festival) • ENDLESS BLACK RIBBON (Tiny Harris) • AWAY OUT ON THE MOUNTAIN (Billy Walker) • GIDDYUP-GO ANSWER (Minnie Pearl)

KENNY ROBERTS—INDIAN LOVE CALL

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
SLP-336 SLPT-1336 GT5-336

INDIAN LOVE CALL • MAYBE I'LL CRY OVER YOU • JUST LOOK, DON'T TOUCH • TYING THE LEAVES • GUITAR RINGING • LISTEN TO THE MOCKINGBIRD • TAVERN TOWN • CHIME BELLS • PELASE DON'T TURN AROUND • I NEVER SEE MAGGIE ALONE • IF I'M BLUE • SHE TAUGHT ME HOW TO YODEL

JIMMY SKINNER—NO. 1 BLUEGRASS

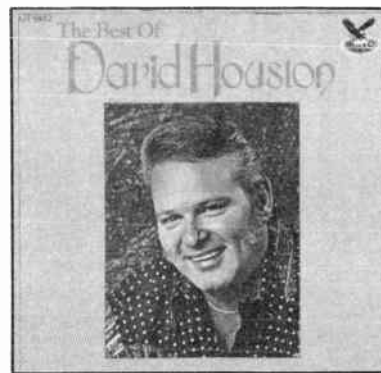
LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
SLP-988 SLPT-1988 GT5-988

BLUEGRASS LOVIN' MAN • IT'S BLOWIN' AWAY • THE OLD ROAD • EVERYBODY OUGHT TO HAVE A SONG • THERE'S A LOVE LIGHT SHININ' • WHOOPIE LIZA • HE'LL HAVE TO MOVE THE FLOWERS • FALLEN LEAVES • DON'T DO IT AND IT WON'T BE ON YOUR MIND • THE MYSTERY OF LITTLE KATHY • SUNNY CAROLINE • TIME WON'T EASE MY WORRIED MIND

ARTHUR 'GUITAR BOOGIE' SMITH—MISTER GUITAR

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
SLP-173 SLPT-1173 GT5-173

GUITAR BOOGIE • THE DOUBLE EAGLE • HEARTACHES • BLUE BOOGIE • LITTLE WIDOW • CRACKERJACK • SOUTH • NAPOLEON'S RETREAT • PCKIN' & PLYIN' (RAGGED BUT RIGHT) • PICKIN' THE BLUES • FINGER ON FIRE • RUBBER DOLL RAG



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CARL SMITH—GREATEST HITS VOL. 1

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
GT-0058 GT8-0058 GT5-0058

ARE YOU TEASING ME • MR. MOON • HEY JOE • DEEP WATER • I JUST LOVED HER FOR THE LAST TIME AGAIN • YOU ARE THE ONE • DON'T JUST STAND THERE • IF TEARDROPS WERE PENNIES • TAKE MY RING OFF YOUR FINGER • KISSES DON'T LIE

THE BEST OF RED SOVINE

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
SLP-952 SLPT-1952 GT5-952

PHANTOM 309 • GIDDYUP GO • I KNOW YOU'RE MARRIED (But I Love You Still) • I'M THE MAN • WHY, BABY WHY • AND MORE!

RED SOVINE—CLASSIC NARRATIONS

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
SLP-436 SLPT-1436 GT5-436
GIDDYUP GO • LITTLE ROSA • A DEAR JOHN LETTER • I THINK I CAN SLEEP TONIGHT • CLASS OF '49 • DREAM HOUSE FOR SALE • IF JESUS CAME TO YOUR HOUSE • VIETNAM DECK OF CARDS • PHANTOM 309 • TWENTY ONE

RED SOVINE—GIDDY-UP-GO

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
GT-0073 GT8-0073 GT5-0073
GIDDY-UP-GO • HITCH HIKING GIRL • BRINGING MARY HOME • I'D LOVE TO MAKE LOVE TO YOU • FLESH AND BLOOD • WILDCAT RUN • I'LL SAIL MY SHIP ALONE • DADDY • LONELY ARMS OF MINE

RED SOVINE—PHANTOM 309

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
GT-0072 GT8-0072 GT5-0072
PHANTOM 309 • HONKY TONK TOYS • OLD PIPELINER • PAY LOAD DADDY • MR. F.C.C. • SAD VIOLINS • DOES STEPPIN' OUT MEAN DADDY TOOK A WALK • 1460 ELDER STREET • BIG BEN DORSEY THE THIRD • TEN DAYS OUT, TWO DAYS IN

RED SOVINE—16 ALL TIME FAVORITES

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
SD-3010 SDT-13010 GT5-3010
GIDDYUP GO • HE'S GOT THE WHOLE WORLD IN HIS HANDS •

WHAT'S HE DOING IN MY WORLD • THE GEARJAMMER AND THE HOBO (With Johnny Bond) • GIRL ON THE BILLBOARD • BRINGING MARY HOME • WALK THROUGH THIS WORLD WITH ME • SITTING AND THINKING • KING OF THE OPEN ROAD • SIX WHITE HORSES • I'M GONNA MOVE • I'M ONLY SEVENTEEN • SATISFIED MIND • FROM THE WINDOW UP ABOVE • NO ONE'S TOO BIG TO CRY • TRUCK DRIVER'S PRAYER

RED SOVINE—16 NEW GOSPEL SONGS

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
GT-0013 GT8-0013 GT5-0013
CHEYENNE • THERE'LL COME A PAYDAY • I'M ANOTHER WORLD MILLIONAIRE • I'M SINGING HALLELUJAH • EXCEPT THE LORD • IF YOU SHOULD VISIT HEAVEN • OH, NO, NO • HAPPY HAPPY GOODBYE • THE TREASURE I LOST • LAY YOUR HANDS ON ME • CAST THY BREAD UPON THE WATER • HE'S STANDING BY • YOUR ROBE WON'T FIT • SING WITH ALL YOUR HEART • NO ONE'S TOO BIG TO CRY • THE CHURCH AROUND THE CORNER

RED SOVINE—16 GREATEST HITS

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
SDT-991X SDT-1991X GT5-991X
TEDDY BEAR • PHANTOM 309 • CLASS OF '49 • IN YOUR HEART • GIDDYUP GO • I DIDN'T JUMP THE FENCE • NORMALLY, NORMA LOVES ME • LITTLE ROSA • IT'LL COME BACK • DREAM HOUSE FOR SALE • TELL MAUDE I SLIPPED • LITTLE JOE • DADDY'S GIRL • DADDY • FREIGHTLINER FEVER • I KNOW YOU'RE MARRIED (But I Love You Still)

RED SOVINE—SUNDAY WITH SOVINE

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
SLP-427 SLPT-1427 GT5-427
BRIGHTEN THE CORNER • IF JESUS CAME TO YOUR HOUSE • BRINGING IN THE SHEAVES • JUST A CLOSER WALK WITH THEE • HE'LL UNDERSTAND • THE LORD'S PRAYER • A BEAUTIFUL LIFE • CRYING IN THE CHAPEL • WINGS OF A DOVE • HE'S GOT THE WHOLE WORLD (In His Hands)

RED SOVIE—TEDDY BEAR

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
GT-0071 GT8-0071 GT5-0071

TEDDY BEAR • WOMAN BEHIND THE MAN BEHIND THE WHEEL • WHERE COULD I GO BUT TO HER • THE PRETTIEST DRESS • MONEY, MARBLES AND CHALK • LITTLE JOE • EIGHTEEN WHEEL SHUMMIN' HOME SWEET HOME • LAST MILE OF THE WAY • LOVE IS • LONG NIGHT

STANLEY BROTHERS—BANJO IN THE HILLS

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
KLP-872 KLPT-1872 GT5-872

TRAIN 45 • RANG TANG • SHOUT LITTLE LULIE • SHAMROCK • RED RIVER VALLEY • SNOW DEER • LONESOME TRAVELER • SOURWOOD MOUNTAIN • BIG BOOGER • WHEN YOU AND I WERE YOUNG, MAGGIE & RED WING • STONEY CREEK • FIVE STRING DRAG

THE BEST OF THE STANLEY BROTHERS

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
SLP-953 SLPT-1953 GT5-953

RANK STRANGERS • HOW FAR TO LITTLE ROCK • LITTLE MAGGIE • IT'S RAINING HERE THIS MORNING • THE MASTER'S BOUQUET • SWEETER THAN THE FLOWERS • SHACKLES AND CHAINS • A FEW MORE SEASONS • WILDWOOD FLOWER • SUNNY SIDE OF THE MOUNTAIN

SUPER SLAB HITS—VARIOUS ARTISTS

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
GT-0052 GT8-0052 GT5-0052

TEDDY BEAR (Red Sovine) • A DIME AT A TIME (Del Reeves) • GIVE ME FORTY ACRES (Willis Brothers) • WOLVERTON MOUNTAIN (Claude King) • SIX DAYS ON THE ROAD (Dave Dudley) • CONVOY (Tommy Hill Music Festival) • COUNTRY ROADS (Nashville Harmonica) • SITTING IN AN ALL NIGHT CAFE (Warner Mask) • PINBALL MACHINE (Lionie Irving) • HONKY TONK: PART 2 (Bill Doggett)

STANLEY BROTHERS AND THE CLINCH MOUNTAIN BOYS—SONGS THEY LIKE BEST

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
KLP-772 KLPT-1772 GT5-772

WILD SIDE OF LIFE • THE WINDOW UP ABOVE • SHE'S MORE TO BE PITIED • THE STORY OF THE LAWSON FAMILY • LITTLE WILLIE • HEY, HEY, HEY • LOVER'S QUARREL • I'D WORSHIP YOU • JENNY LYNN • MOUNTAIN DEW • I'LL TAKE THE BLAME • WILD BILL JONES

STANLEY BROTHERS & THE CLINCH MOUNTAIN BOYS

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
KLP-615 KLPT-1615 GT5-615

HOW MOUNTAIN GIRLS CAN LOVE • TRAIN 45 • THE MEMORY OF YOUR SMILE • HEAVEN SEEMED SO NEAR • CLINCH MOUNTAIN BACKSTEP • MASTERTONE MARCH • SHE'S MORE TO BE PITIED • YOUR SELFISH HEART • LOVE ME DARLING, JUST TONIGHT • KEEP A MEMORY • THINK OF WHAT YOU'VE DONE • MIDNIGHT RAMBLE

STANLEY BROTHERS—16 GREATEST HITS

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
SD-3003 SDT-13003 GT5-3003

HOW MOUNTAIN GIRLS CAN LOVE • I DON'T WANT YOUR RAMBLING LETTERS • TRAIN 45 • THERE IS A TRAP • MOUNTAIN DEW • I'M A MAN OF CONSTANT SORROW • HOW FAR TO LITTLE ROCK • LOVE ME DARLING JUST TONIGHT • SUNNY SIDE OF THE MOUNTAIN • STONE WALLS AND STEEL BARS • LITTLE MAGGIE • OLD LOVE LETTERS • LITTLE BIRDIE • SHOUT LITTLE LULIE • NEXT SUNDAY DARLING IS MY BIRTHDAY • HILLS OF ROAN COUNTY

RALPH STANLEY—HILLS OF HOME

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
KLP-1069 KLPT-11069 GT5-1069

COOSY • DARK HOLLOW • MIDNIGHT STORM • DARLING BROWN EYES • MY LONG SKINNY LANKY SARAH JANE • CALIFORNIA • I ONLY EXIST • LET'S GO TO THE FAIR • DOG-GONE SHAME • THE KITTEN AND THE CAT • HILLS OF HOME

CARL STORY—GOSPEL REVIVAL

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
SLP-127 SLPT-1127 GT5-127

LIGHT AT THE RIVER • I HEARD MY NAME ON THE RADIO • BE KIND TO MOTHER • SHIP THAT'S SAILING DOWN • IF I COULD HEAR MY MOTHER PRAY AGAIN • FAMILY REUNION • SWEETER THAN THE FLOWERS • WHEN JESUS SPOKE TO ME • ANGEL BAND • SOMEBODY TOUCHED ME • LIFE'S EVENING SUN • FOR MY LORD • I DIDN'T HEAR NOBODY PRAY • SOMEONE'S LAST DAY

CARL STORY SACRED SONGS OF LIFE

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
SLP-315 SLPT-1315 GT5-315
GLORY HALLELUJAH, NOW I'M SATISFIED • HE'LL SET YOUR FIELDS ON FIRE • SHAKE MY MOTHER'S HAND FOR ME • WHITE DOVE • THE OLD COUNTRY PREACHER • WHEN I TAKE MY VACATION IN HEAVEN • DIDN'T THEY CRUCIFY MY LORD • WHY DO YOU WEEP DEAR WILLOW • DISTANT LAND TO ROAM • CHURCH IN THE VALLEY • SOMEONE'S PRAYING FOR ME • LISTEN TO YOUR RADIO

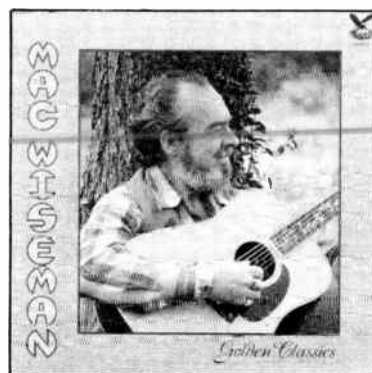
CARL STORY "16 GREATEST HITS"

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
SD-3004 SDT-13004 GT5-3004
DADDY SING BASS • HEAR JERUSALEM MOAN • MIGHTY CLOSE TO HEAVEN • FAMILY REUNION • MY LORD KEEPS A RECORD • WORKING ON A BUILDING • I HEARD MY MOTHER WEEPING • LIGHT AT THE RIVER • AND MORE!

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THE GREAT MEL TILLIS

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
GT-0047 GT8-0047 GT5-0047

STATESIDE • NOT IN FRONT OF THE KIDS • WINE • HOME IS WHERE THE HURT IS • ABOVE SUSPICION • BURIED ALIVE • ODE TO THE LITTLE BROWN SHACK OUT BACK • GUIDE ME HOME, MY GEORGIA MOON • MR. DROPOUT

THE BEST OF B.J. THOMAS

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
SLP-992 SLPT-1992 GT5-992

RAINDROPS KEEP FALLIN' ON MY HEAD • MOST OF ALL • MIGHTY CLOUDS OF JOY • I JUST CAN'T HELP BELIEVIN' • ROCK AND ROLL LULLABY • NO LOVE AT ALL • EYES OF A NEW YORK WOMAN • MAMA • AND MORE!

THE BEST OF THE BEST OF HANK THOMPSON

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
GT-0060 GT8-0060 GT5-0060
WILD SIDE OF LIFE • YESTERDAY'S GIRL • HUMPTY DUMPTY HEART • A SIX PACK TO GO • WHOA SAILOR • WAKE UP IRENE • THE OLDER THE VIOLIN THE SWEETER THE MUSIC • WHO LEFT THE DOOR TO HEAVEN OPEN • SMOKEY THE BAR • HONKY TONK GIRL

BEST OF THE TRUCK DRIVER SONGS

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
SLP-454 SLPT-1454 GT5-454
PHANTOM 309 (Red Sovine) • PINBALL MACHINE (Lonnie Irving) • GIVE ME FORTY ACRES (Willis Bros.) • GIDDYUP GO (Red Sovine) • GIDDYUP GO ANSWER (Minnie Pearl) • TRUCK DRIVIN' SON OF A GUN (Red Sovine) • TRUCK DRIVER'S QUEEN (Moore & Napier) • SIX DAYS ON THE ROAD (Dave Dudley) • RADAR BLUES (Coleman Wilson) • TRUCK DRIVIN' MAN (Hylo Brown)

COWBOYS & TRUCKS—RIDING HARD

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
GT-0082 GT8-0082 GT5-0082
HIGH NOON (Tex Ritter) • GHOLST RIDERS IN THE SKY (Jimmy Wakely) • EAST BOUND AND DOWN (Dave

Dudley) • EL PASO (Billy Walker) • GREEN GROW THE LILACS (Tex Ritter) • SLIPPING AROUND (Jimmy Wakely) • ROLL, TRUCK ROLL (Red Simpson) • ROLAIDS, DOAN'S PILLS AND PREPARATION H (Dave Dudley) • MATAMOROS (Billy Walker) • HELLO, I'M A TRUCK (Red Simpson)

DIESEL SMOKE, DANGEROUS CURVES

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
SLP-250 SLPT-1250 GT5-250

SIX DAYS ON THE ROAD (Red Sovine) • TRUCK DRIVING JOE (Ken Clark) • PINBALL MACHINE (Marie Merle Kilgore) • TRUCK DRIVIN' MAN (Hylo Brown) • KING OF THE OPEN ROAD (Red Sovine) • SLEEPER CAB BLUES (Tom O'Neal) • BIG FOOTED DAN (Benny Martin) • RADAR BLUES (Benny Martin) • BLUE ENDLESS HIGHWAY (Tom O'Neal) • DIESEL SMOKE, DANGEROUS CURVES (Bobby Sykes) • GOOSEBALL BROWN (Lannie Irving) • LOOK AT THAT RAIN (Hylo Brown) • TRUCK DRIVER'S QUEEN (Willis Brothers) • LONG LONESOME ROAD (Bobby Sykes)

40 MILES OF BAD ROAD—VARIOUS ARTISTS

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
GT-0056 GT8-0056 GT5-0056
40 MILES OF BAD ROAD (Duane Eddy) • WIDOW MAKER (Jimmy Martin) • TRUCK DRIVER'S PRAYER (Red Sovine) • CROSS THE BRAZOS AT WACO (Billy Walker) • TRUCK DRIVER'S QUEEN (Willis Brothers) • PASSING ZONE BLUES (Coleman Wilson) • PHANTOM 309 (Red Sovine) • WHEELS A' TURNING (Willis Brothers) • BURNING BRIDGES (Jack Scott) • OVERLOADED DIESEL (Jimmy Griggs) • FREIGHTLINER FEVER (Red Sovine) • DIESEL SMOKE ON DANGER ROAD (Willis Brothers)

HOW FAST THEM TRUCKS CAN GO!—VARIOUS ARTISTS

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
GT-0055 GT8-0055 GT5-0055
HOW FAST THEM TRUCKS CAN GO (Claude Gray) • 18 WHEELS HUMMIN' HOME SWEET HOME (Mac Wiseman) • TRUCK DRIVIN' SON OF A GUN (Red Sovine) • MOVIN' ON (Mike Lunsford) • A TOMBSTONE EVERY MILE (Charlie

Moore) • SIX DAYS ON THE ROAD (Red Sovine) • ALABAM' (Cowboy Copas) • TRUCK DRIVIN' BUDDY (Frankie Miller) • LITTLE JOE (Red Sovine) • SNEAKIN' ACROSS THE BORDER (Hardin Trio)

MAN BEHIND THE WHEEL

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
SLP-404 SLPT-1404 GT5-404
PHANTOM 309 (Red Sovine) • THE MAN BEHIND THE WHEEL (George Morgan) • THE GEAR JAMMER & THE HOBO (Red Sovine & Johnny Bond) • WHAT IS AN AMERICAN (Minnie Pearl) • GEAR SHIFTIN' (Tammy Hill & Pete Drake) • THE END OF THE ROAD (Willis Bros.) • THE HI-JACKER (Johnny Bond) • DRIVIN' IN MY BLOOD (Willis Bros.) • SIX DAYS ON THE ROAD (Dave Dudley) • SHINY RED AUTOMOBILE (George Morgan) • GEARS (Johnny Bond) • PAYLOAD DADDY (Red Sovine)

TRUCK DRIVER SONGS

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
KLP-866 KLPT-1866 GT5-866

BIG CASEY (Tommy Downs) • HAULIN' FREIGHT (Bob Newman) • TRUCK DRIVER'S QUEEN (Moore & Napier) • SIX DAYS ON THE ROAD (Swanee Caldwell) • GEAR JAMMER (Jimmy Logsdon) • TRUCK DRIVIN' DADDY (Jimmy Logsdon) • A GREEN TRUCK DRIVER'S FIRST (Experience With Radar) (Coleman Wilson) • WILD CATTER (Tommy Downs) • PASSING ZONE BLUES (Coleman Wilson) • TRUCK DRIVIN' MAN (Cowboy Jack Derrick) • LONESOME TRUCK DRIVER'S BLUES (Bob Newman) • RADAR BLUES (Swanee Caldwell)

TRUCKIN' ON—VARIOUS ARTISTS

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
GT-0054 GT8-0054 GT5-0054
GIRL ON THE BILLBOARD (Del Reeves) • THE GEAR JAMMER AND THE HOBO (Red Sovine & Johnny Bond) • TRUCK DRIVER'S QUEEN (Moore & Napier) • ONE IS A LONELY NUMBER (George Jones) • LOOKING AT THE WORLD THROUGH A WINDSHIELD (Del Reeves) • GIDDY-UP-GO (Red Sovine) • EIGHT MORE MILES TO LOUISVILLE (Grandpa Jones) • TRUCK DRIVIN' MAN (Jimmy Martin) • I'LL HAVE ANOTHER CUP OF

COFFEE (Then I'll Go) (Claude Gray) • WOMAN BEHIND THE MAN BEHIND THE WHEEL (Red Sovine)

TRUCKS, TRAINS AND AIRPLANES

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
GT-0081 GT8-0081 GT5-0081
LEAVING ON A JET PLANE (The Kendalls) • ENDLESS BLACK RIBBON (Red Simpson) • TRAIN OF LOVE (Johnny Cash) • ALABAM (Red Sovine & Minnie Pearl) • MOVIN' ON (Dave Dudley) • CALIFORNIA TURN—AROUNDS (Jack Greene) • EBONY EYES (Orion) • HEY PORTER (Johnny Cash) • ALL AROUND THE WATER TANK (Jerry Lee Lewis) • SILVER WINGS (Nashville Harmonica)

THE BEST OF THE BEST OF BILLY WALKER

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
GT-0040 GT8-0040 GT5-0040
CROSS THE BRAZOS AT WACO • SHE GOES WALKING THROUGH MY MIND • I'M GONNA KEEP ON, KEEP ON LOVING YOU • WHEN A MAN LOVES A WOMAN • ANYTHING YOUR HEART DESIRES • FUNNY HOW TIME SLIPS AWAY • EL PASO • MOTHER, QUEEN OF MY HEART • MATAMOROS • SMOKY PLACES • AGE OF WORRY

JERRY WALLACE—GREATEST HITS

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
GT-0093 GT8-0093 GT5-0093

TO GET TO YOU • PRIMROSE LANE • DON'T GIVE UP ON ME • SWEET CHILD OF SUNSHINE • THE MORNING AFTER • IN THE MISTY MOONLIGHT • SHUTTERS AND BOARDS • DO YOU KNOW WHAT IT'S LIKE TO BE LONESOME • LIFE'S GONE AND SLIPPED AWAY • IF YOU LEAVE ME TONIGHT I'LL CRY

DOTTIE WEST

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
GT-0085 GT8-0085 GT5-0085

I FALL TO PIECES • CRAZY • I'D BE LYING • THE HAND THAT YOU'RE HOLDING • WALKING IN THE DARK • HEARTBREAK U.S.A. • SHE'S GOT YOU • ANGEL ON PAPER • I SHOULD START RUNNING • MEN WITH EVIL HEARTS

THE BEST OF THE WILLIS BROTHERS

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
SLP-960 SLPT-1960 GT5-960

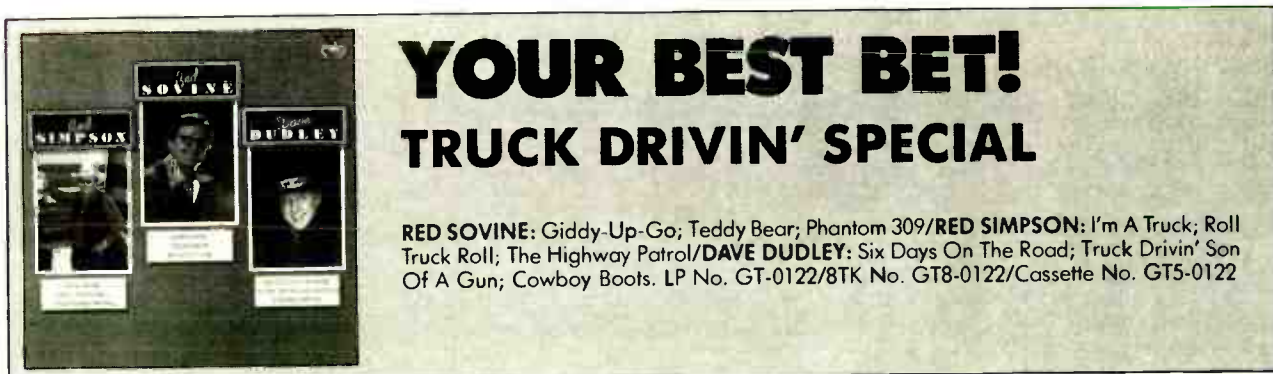
GIVE ME FORTY ACRES (To Turn This Rig Around) • BUYING POPCORN • BLUES STAY AWAY FROM ME • PRIVATE LEE • THERE GOES THE FARM • SOMEBODY KNOWS MY DOG • RING OF FIRE • NASHVILLE'S ACE IN THE HOLE • GONNA BUY ME A JUKEBOX • SIX FOOT TWO BY FOUR

MAC WISEMAN—GOLDEN CLASSICS

LP 8-TRACK CASSETTE
GT-0049 GT8-0049 GT5-0049

JIMMY BROWN THE NEWS BOY • GOING LIKE WILDFIRE • I SAW YOUR FACE IN THE MOON • I STILL WRITE YOUR NAME IN THE SAND • BARBARA ALLEN • THE PRISONER'S SONG • JOHNNY'S CASH AND CHARLEY'S PRIDE • SWEETER THAN THE FLOWERS • 18 WHEELS A HUMMING • DON'T MAKE ME GO TO BED

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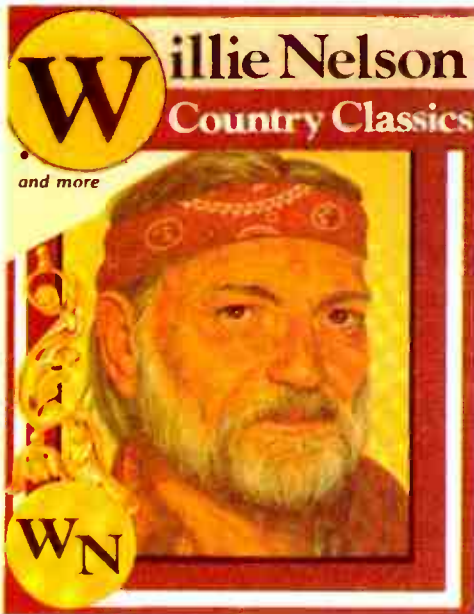
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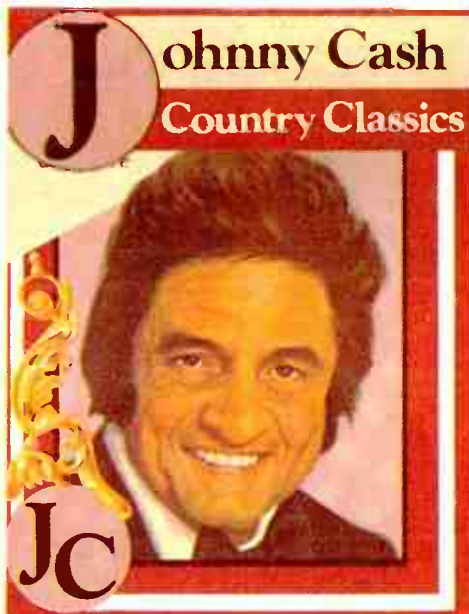
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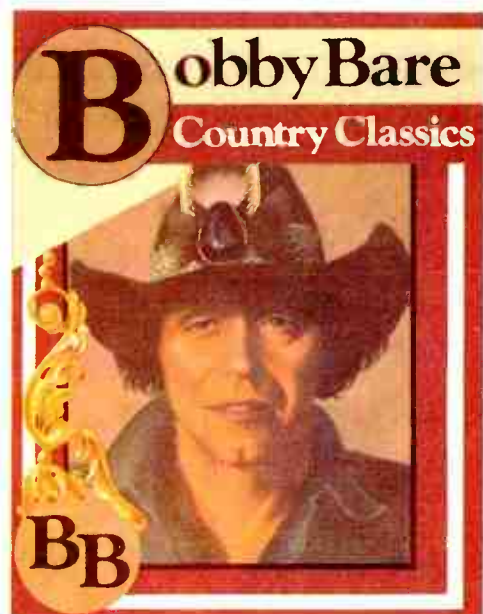
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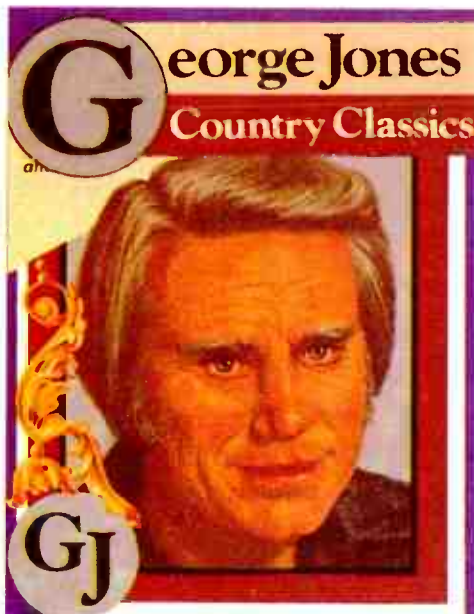
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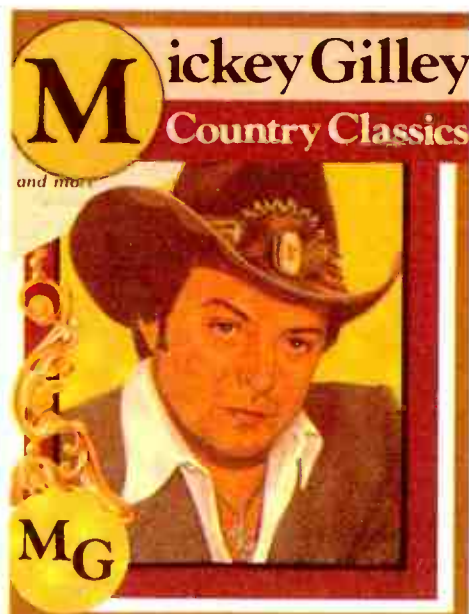
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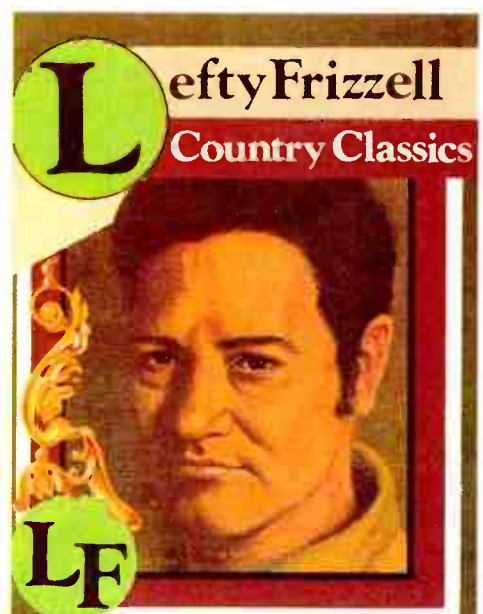
Cassette (BT-16917) LP (P-16917)
 Goin' Up s Easy, Comin Down's Hard • Willie Jones • Some Days Are Diamonds (Some Days Are Stone) • Down To My Last Come And Get Me • Tequila, Sheila • Sleep Tight, Good Night Man • The Gambler • Too Many Nights Alone • I'll Feel A Whole Lot Better • Healin'



Cassette (BT-16918) LP (P-16918)
 A Picture Of Me (Without You) • Once You've Had The Best • Her Name Is • The Battle • She Thinks I Still Care • The Race Is On • Things Have Gone To Pieces • White Lightning • Walk Through This World With Me • He Stopped Lovin' Her Today



Cassette (BT-16913) LP (P-16913)
 I Overlooked An Orchid • Tender Years • How's My Ex Treating You • It's Just A Matter Of Making Up My Mind • Room Full Of Roses • There Ain't No Queen (In My King-Size Bed) • Someday • Five Foot Two, Eyes Of Blue (Has Anybody Seen My Girl) • She Called Me Baby • Overnight Sensation



Cassette (BT-16919) LP (P-16919)
 She's Gone, Gone, Gone • Woman, Let Me Sing You A Song • I Just Couldn't See The Forest (For The Trees) • Stranger • Mom And Dad Waltz • You Gotta Be Puttin' Me On • How Far Down Can I Go • Little Old Wine Drinker • Anything You Can Spare • Saginaw, Michigan

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Country Roads • Stay There Till I Get There • Isn't It Always Love

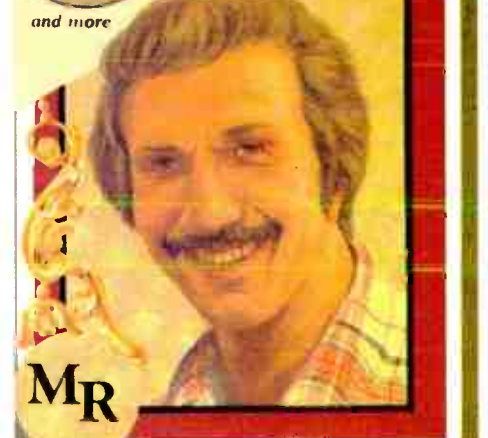
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TW

Cassette (BT-16912) LP (P-16912)
Don't Come Home A Drinkin' (With Lovin' On Your Mind) • Little
Things • Till I Get It Right • Stand By Your Man • Womanhood • Apart-
ment # 9 • Cry, Cry Again • I Don't Wanna Play House • I Still Believe
In Fairytales • Take Me To Your World


Marty Robbins
Country Classics
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MR

Cassette (BT-16914) LP (P-16914)
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Gail Davies' Declaration of Independence

Where is a woman to go? Wherever her own strong character, talent and determination lead her: at least if the woman is Gail Davies. Singer, songwriter, mother, using her freedom to make her own way.

For years, it seems, "Stand By Your Man" has been the anthem and shining symbol of the role of women in country music.

More often than not, the female country prototype and protagonist of song was the everyday housewife and nine-to-five lady in waiting to her man, a man who worked hard when he worked, but who also sometimes drank too much, stayed out late, came crawling home with lipstick on his collar, and found an array of other ways to bruise her nobler emotions for him. Still, it seemed, most often the great solution to all this was for her to kiss and make up, to grit her teeth and bear it, and reaffirm the old lapdog allegiance to the stronger sex.

With *Where is a Woman to Go*, her sixth and quite possibly her best album ever, Gail Davies is both consciously and unconsciously bucking this trend. Many of the songs on the album, as well as the bitter-sweet sense of hardfought freedom conveyed by the music itself, land us in relatively new territory: that of the woman who does not go running back home to her man, but who, instead, works through the pain and loss to find a new identity of apartness and independence all her own.

"I'm very conscious of my role as an independent woman," says the 36-year-old Davies, who is twice-married, and who has now assumed the sole responsibility for raising her two-year-old son Christopher, who was born out of wedlock. "Christopher's father [a prominent Nashville producer/musician] and I were within five days of getting married at one point," explains the often outspoken and head-

by Bob Allen

strong singer/songwriter, who appears quiet and almost serene with her soft, straight hair and her large, wire-framed glasses. "We'd had our blood tests and everything. But he'd just been through a painful divorce, and so had I. And at the last minute, I just realized that it was not the right thing for either of us to do. I just wasn't ready to give up my own independence again, because I liked being responsible for myself and making my own decisions.

"I haven't dated anyone since, either," she adds quietly, as if to reaffirm her decision to go it alone. "Not since I dated Christopher's father, and that's been two and a half years ago. I'm really enjoying my independence. I'm spending all my energy now on either my career or my son. I take him everywhere with me: on the road, in the studio. In fact, we've never spent a night apart since he was born."

Even so, the last few years have not been particularly easy ones for the tall, willowy, full-voiced singer. Her career began gloriously enough back in the late 1970's, recording songs she wrote like "Bucket to the South," "Grandma's Song," and "Someone is Looking for Someone Like You." (This last song was a hit not only for her, but for several other artists as well.) But in recent years, things have cooled off considerably. She did manage to record four

albums for Warner Brothers, in addition to her 1979 debut album on Lifesong/CBS Records. And now and then her singles even cracked the Top Ten. But anything more than modest commercial success failed to come her way. In the meantime, she also had to endure a lengthy, emotionally draining court fight to legally establish the fatherhood of her son.

Gail's lack of commercial impact is particularly curious considering the fact that she possesses an unusual, full-throated sound that is a distinctive and confident blend of urban, rural, country, folk and pop influences—a sound which seems to be tailor-made for the country music mainstream of the 1980's. In concert, she has a vivacious presence; and either on stage or on record, she can deliver a pop song as lyrically and melodically complex as Joni Mitchell's "You Turn Me On, I'm a Radio" as convincingly as she can a more determinedly down-home song like her own "Bucket to the South," now a standard on the Grand Ole Opry.

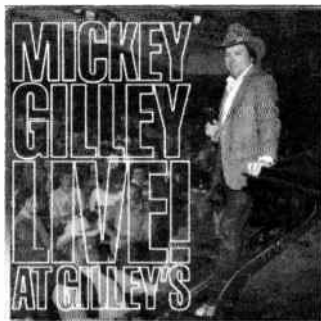
The smooth amalgam of influences heard in Gail's voice is, in fact, a reflection of her surprisingly varied personal background. She was born in the rural setting of Broken Bow, Oklahoma, in 1948. Some of her earliest musical memories are, in fact, beautifully chronicled in "Grandma's Song," one of her most memorable original compositions.

Her father was a country singer who fronted his own band, and whom she knew for most of her life merely as "Tex." "He was a pretty good singer," she recalls. "He kind of sounded like Johnny Cash. But he

Record Reviews

Dolly Parton's music under a different set of rules. She is an exuberant singer and a brilliant, thoughtful songwriter. I agree that sometimes she is not the best vehicle for her own songs. But when she writes lightheartedly, as she did on Side B, it's a hard combination to beat. I also realize that she has to touch two audiences—her old fans like me and the whole slew of new ones she's picked up since "Here You Come Again" and the Great Crossover. Judged under those rules, *Real Love* is a successful album. Producer David Malloy has touched all the bases: There's pop here, to be sure, but there's also a healthy dose of country. There's just nothing here that sets me on fire, nothing that just stands up and screams, "Here's Dolly, dammit, and the Devil take the hindquarters!" *Real Love* feels like a holding action until the next record.

—MICHAEL BANE



Mickey Gilley
Live! At Gilley's
Epic FE 39900

George Jones
First Time Live
Epic FE 39899

In the recording studio, you keep doing it until you get it perfect, or at least as good as you can get it; sometimes the result may be a little sterile, but that's the risk you run. In concert, you sacrifice perfection and put your guts on the line: you get only one chance. In live performance there may be mistakes, but the best artists get across a mood and a

feeling anyhow. By these standards, George Jones has made a live album (can it really be his first?) that is not as special as one might hope, but that is certainly nothing to be ashamed of. Mickey Gilley has made a live album that causes one to wonder why he bothered in the first place.



Sure, *Mickey Gilley Live!* *At Gilley's* sounds like a natural. But this album captures neither the precision of the studio performance nor the sweaty good spirits of a concert; it falls instead into some nether-region that fails to put Gilley across at all. For one thing, his band is augmented—as if the intention was to try to capture the studio sound live. Why not just stick to the studio? I mean, those female choruses tend to get in the way of him and the band in this setting. And I could swear these tapes have been messed with—probably overdubbed in the studio afterwards—which helps to dissipate momentum. And tell me that the audience hasn't been well rehearsed for its part in "Great Balls of Fire." The result sounds strictly hokey. "Hold On to the Feeling," meanwhile, sounds like a contrived attempt to "get down": Gilley may be a boogie woogie country boy but he hasn't got the funk—while such ballads as "I Wasn't Born a Dreamer" sound unbearably schmaltzy for a honky tonk.

At least George's album *sounds* like a live set all the way through (though I wouldn't be surprised to hear his engineer had taken a few liberties, too). For that matter, listen to the steel-and-guitar interplay on the opening "No Show Jones" or to the vocal interplay of on "Fox on the Run"

and you'll quickly agree that it sounds like a country set all the way through as well. George makes his share of mistakes here, and some of his new versions don't measure up to the originals (whatever possessed him to put down "The Race Is On," for example?), but on cuts like "Tennessee Whiskey," "I'm Not Ready Yet," and his own hits medley (especially the "Grand Tour" section), there's no doubt that this is indeed the greatest country singer alive—at least he's the boldest—and that his warts help keep him honest. What can you say about a singer who turns "Fox on the Run" over to his band members, then has his own voice rising out of the arrangement so dramatically that he steals the song anyway?

George sounds nervous through much of the album, but then he's an artist first, someone who has to engage in showmanship because that's his job; Gilley, by contrast, is primarily a showman who does some singing and playing. I know which one I want to listen to on the record player.

—JOHN MORTHLAND



David Allan Coe
Darlin' Darlin'
Columbia FC 39617

Word reached us recently that Mr. David Allan Coe wants to become a star in circles wider than the *Country Music Song Trader* subscription list, the minds of bikers and IRS agents everywhere, the funny pages, and his own mind. Now, in *Darlin' Darlin'*, we have tangible proof of his intentions captured on vinyl.

There are many things that

could be said about David and his highly entertaining career, but an especially relevant observation is that when he goes for something, he *goes* for it. When he wants to draw attention to himself in Nashville, he covers what would otherwise be just another new face with a rhinestone mask, and claims to have killed a man in prison; when he wants credit for inventing the "outlaw" movement, he writes "Willie and Waylon and Me"; when he decides to make a real star-vehicle album following his tenth anniversary with CBS Records, he's not satisfied with a mere Cadillac: he wants a damn Rolls-Royce.

Well, he's got it. *Darlin' Darlin'* is beaut: mechanically perfect, it's custom-finished to a T and loaded with extras. It is also very much a classic—none of those cheap, flashy, made-any-old-where pop-country components in *this* machine, boy, just Hank & Hag & Lefty-type root-strong stuff, with the odd stylish curve from other great traditions here and there—and David approaches it reverently, employing that amazingly flexible voice of his to illuminate the familiar grace of the material's structure. When he takes the lead on Dean Dillon's magnificently comy "Don't Cry, Darlin'" (with none other than George Jones himself handling—what else?—the recitation), it is, in fact, as if another Lefty Frizzell had suddenly sprung forth, with just as much technique and feeling as the original, to give ol' Merle a hard run for his money. Really, David's performance is that good. And it's even better on Curly Putnam and Billy Sherrill's "My Elusive Dream," a song so true-to-life and emotionally evocative that Lefty would have been proud to claim it as his own.

Perhaps we are saying too much about Lefty here, though; this is not a Lefty-tribute album, but a "Many Faces of David Allan Coe" product in which our boy is just as comfortable sounding very like Waylon, George, and even Smokey Robinson (Smokey's

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Record Reviews

"My Girl" is a subtle r&b gem, styled vocally by David and overall by producer Billy Sherrill to an elegant sheen). A couple of David's own faces appear in "Mary Go Round (About the Birth of Jesus)" and "For Lovers Only (Part IV)," but otherwise he has an interpretive role: the album's other songs are not his. This, and the lack of any material even *hinting* at David's more lurid aspects, is probably a wise move. The object of *Darlin' Darlin'*, remember, is to convince people that David is really a conventional big-time country singer, not just the visible tip of country music's substantial lunatic-songwriter iceberg.

Frankly, I think this is a wonderful album. It kicks off on the wrong song and features a couple of questionable choices (you don't, for instance, retempo a song, like J.J. Cale's "Call Me the Breeze," whose whole appeal depends on the tempo in which it was written), but overall David and Billy Sherrill have produced a work well worth a place in anybody's "classic country feeling" collection alongside all those George and Hag and Lefty albums.

David, then, really is a great conventional country singer. Those of us who find joy in the more bizarre goodies he has to offer need not fear, though. Maybe this kind of record will get the boy on TV, for instance, and that won't be dull . . . Can't you just picture . . .

"Well, David, how are your wives? Are they here tonight?"

"No, they're not, Johnny. They're all back home at the cave counting the money and tie-dying my tuxedo, but Jesus is with them. Have you ever seen my tattoos?"

—PATRICK CARR

Sylvia

One Step Closer

RCA AHL1-5413

As *Country Music Magazine's* Official Sylvia Watcher, it's once again time for my regular report. First, the album cover. It's pretty



good. Sylvia gets more photogenic with each one. If I hadn't just accidentally de-alphabetized my entire record collection, I'd pull out all my Sylvia albums and compare the covers. Anyway, on *One Step Closer* Sylvia is sitting on a strange, multicolored substance, kind of like the technicolor version of clouds in *Hillbilly Heaven*. She is wearing a real funky white cotton shift dress over a big pink shirt. Her hair is tied back with a pale blue lace bow, and she is not wearing too much makeup. On the back cover, she is wearing the same outfit, but with a pair of lace gloves. Personally, I prefer the front cover because she has very nice fingernails. She has an excellent tan and two earrings, small silver studs, in each ear. The overall impression is of a nice girl, a girl you wouldn't mind taking to either the local tractor pull or a Twisted Sister concert. All things to all people, a quick good night kiss and a door shut slowly—but firmly—in your face.

That's how she sings, too. Which causes me pain, because I love her voice. It has a real grown-up woman quality, nothing cutsey, nothing false. It's a voice that works well with uptempo rockers like "Read All About It," and still

has the ability to express some pretty sophisticated emotions. I confess to a weakness for uptempo songs, mostly because the present run of ballads is so very bland. (I wonder if Kris Kristofferson envisioned the ocean of boring love ballads that would follow when he wrote "Help Me Make It Through The Night"?)

Golly, I wish Sylvia would just once lay back and *sing* the way I know she can. I think she's going in the right direction, though. After all, she did put a saxophone break on "True Blue," and I think that saxophones are sexy. I think Sylvia is sexy, but I think she's hiding it. I think Sylvia could sing the blues if she wanted to, and I think I'd like to hear Sylvia sing the blues. In the meantime, I'd settle for some catchy pop.

Anyway, rest assured that your Official Sylvia Watcher is on the case. Signing off for now, but Ever Vigilant. . . .

—MICHAEL BANE

Nicolette Larson

Say When

MCA 5556

Trivia time: What diminutive pop singer had a Top

40 hit in 1980 with a groove song called "Lotta Love"?

Nicolette Larson.

The same Nicolette Larson now climbing the country charts with a wonderful Bob McDill heartbreaker called "Only Love Will Make It Right"? The same Nicolette Larson who's just released a new Nashville debut album, *Say When*?

Jackpot. And while she doesn't have the roots to be doing cover versions of "I Was Country When Country Wasn't Cool," Larson is a welcome addition.

Say When was produced by Tony Brown and Emory Gordy, Jr. They go back with Larson to days when they all hung out together with Emmylou Harris and Hank DeVito. When Larson used to roller-skate with Linda Ronstadt. They were part of the late, lamented Malibu Mafia at a time when some of country's most original music was being made on the West Coast.

Anyway, Larson ended up coming through Nashville a year or so ago in a road production of *Pump Boys & Dinettes*, in a cast that included Jonathan ("Sunshine") Edwards and Henry ("Shannon") Gross. About this time, she picked up her record deal and turned her thoughts toward country.

Say When is the result. It will turn heads for her, if only because of its unusualness. The album is reminiscent of early Ronstadt, or maybe, at times, of Karla Bonoff. It's an unpredictable, eclectic array. It's full of Larson's dynamic personality and features the kind of support musicians other artists would kill for. *Say When* isn't formula: it's fresh.

Larson's husky, expressive voice is perfect for longplay turntable action: She's as good on ballads as she is on high-energy numbers. There's a lot of country/rock in her performances, but she can also lower the flame to a slow blue burn or torch up a track effortlessly.

Side one seems to be the one loaded with possible singles: "Say When," "When You Get A Little Lonely" (she cowrote

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Record Reviews

this with Wendy Waldman and Josh Leo), and—"Building Bridges," a song cowritten and released last year by Rodney Crowell's cousin, Larry Wiloughby. Side one also contains Bob McDill's "Only Love Will Make It Right," a country song so good it ought to do for Larson what McDill's "I've Been Around Enough to Know" did for John Schneider.

But there's another side entirely to Larson's personality. She's a troubadour with the poetic soul of an English folk singer. You don't hear many albums produced these days in Nashville with songs like "Blow On Chilly Wind," "Dan-

cin' 'Round And 'Round," and "You Were The One." Do they work? Probably not as commercial cuts; but as creative experiments, they're unexpected and gratifying.

The album is full of recognizable names, including Ricky Skaggs, Vince Gill, Sharon White, Emmylou Harris, Jonathan Edwards and Jerry Douglas. She brings a fresh, much-needed ingenuity and clarity into today's country. This album ought to win her a whole new set of fans who wouldn't recognize "Lotta Love" if they heard it on the radio.

—KIP KIRBY

The New Grass Revival *On The Boulevard*

Sugar Hill SH-3745

The John Herald Band *The Real Thing*

Rooster Records 126

Tom Russell *Heart On A Sleeve*

End Of The Trail Records 7415

Johnny Western *20 Great Classics & Legends*

Americana Records AR-0001

Often overlooked in the shuffle of monthly record releases is the fine music that is continually being produced on small, regional labels, some of which are one-man operations.

Quite often, such labels have been the conduits feeding talent to the more familiar major labels; Ricky Skaggs is only one of today's superstars who actually began his recording career with one of these small regional, independent, or specialty labels.

Though the following four albums certainly don't constitute even a majority of the fine music turned out by the independents in a given month, they

Hits or Misses?



Shelly West
Don't Make Me Wait on the Moon
Vica 25189-1

Razzy Bailey
Cut From a Different Stone
MCA 5544

Sawyer Brown
Sawyer Brown
Capitol/Curb ST 12391

John McEuen
John McEuen
Warner Bros. 125266

Transition: it's the name of the game. Be flexible. If one thing doesn't work—try another. Switch producers if the numbers slump. Keep an eye on the competition. Try to remember that you're only as

viable as your last hit song.

Sound rough? Competitive? Welcome to the music business. Of course, not all of this holds true in country music: there are still nervous superstars coasting along on shopworn oldies and old fans. But these days, artists are naive to expect they'll survive by unloading yawn-inducing platters.

What's boring? Formula records. Overblown arrangements. Unimaginative productions.

This month's column pretty well defines the state of Nashville's transition at the moment. We have Shelly West, an artist with a new set of producers; Razzy Bailey, an artist with new producers and a different label; Sawyer Brown, TV talent-search winners who found fame, fortune and success overnight; and John McEuen, Nitty Gritty Dirt Band member temporarily turned solo performer.

Shelly West and Razzy Bailey both began their careers with home runs. West hit the scoreboard on her first try with partner David Frizzell when they sang "You're The Reason God Made Oklahoma." Since then, she has been the victim of banal songs and saccharine productions. Bailey was a priority act at RCA when he had one Number One hit after another. But Razzy eventually fell from favor, vic-

tim of his own label's publicity overkill and of a string of contrived songs.

Don't Make Me Wait On The Moon, West's latest, is worth the wait: finally this talented singer has made an album, instead of two singles and eight fillers. Working for the first time with producers Barry Beckett and Jim Ed Norman, West gets great arrangements, not to mention great songs. Norman and Beckett (the latter a Muscle Shoals fixture from countless hit records who recently emigrated to Nashville) have removed the blanket of blandness that threatened to suffocate her career, and this time, West has ample space to show us what she can do.

There are some wonderful moments: the Jim McBride title cut, Peter McCann's poignant ballad, "Do I Have To Say Goodbye," John Beland's "Why Must The Ending Be So Sad," the Becky Hobbs/Don Goodman-penned "How It All Went Wrong," and West's fine first single, "Now There's You," with its silvery harmonies and straightforward country approach.

Now that she's not wasting her time on songs about cowgirls and beer, tequila or Texas two-steps, West takes full advantage of her vocal free-

dom. She has one of country music's most interesting female voices; it's about time somebody let her use it.

Razzy Bailey's MCA debut is called *Cut From A Different Stone*. Whatever the stone may be—it's not a diamond—the fire and flash are a step in the right direction.

Bailey's voice is his biggest



asset. It's the kind that sounds just right on the radio or at home on living room speakers, and one that is comfortingly familiar every time you hear it. But why is Bailey so eager to give us a smorgasbord? Is it a case of the old something-for-everyone trick, where nothing gets left out? His impulse to experiment may be admirable but is quite possibly foolhardy. The musical bridge mix leaves us confused as to who he wants to be. What is he trying to tell

Record Reviews

are at least a sampler of the rewards out there.

The New Grass Revival has often been the cutting edge of experimentation and innovation in the so-called "newgrass" or "new acoustic" field in recent years. In top form, they carry their efforts forward on their new *On The Boulevard* album.

The four-man ensemble (Sam Bush, mandolin; Bela Fleck, banjo; Pat Flynn, guitar; and John Cowan, bass) play largely on electrified acoustic bluegrass instruments. Their music is marked by soaring, jazz-like improvisations and intriguing fusions of

musical styles. Their remarkable instrumental and vocal dexterity enables them to move gracefully within the scope of this single album through a spectrum of such seemingly irreconcilable styles as white gospel, Celtic and reggae. (Their moving medley of Bob Marley's "One Love" and Curtis Mayfield's "People Get Ready" is one of the album's real high points.)

This is one of the most imaginative and exciting albums I've heard so far this year.

John Herald, once a figure on the folk scene, has been operating on the fringes of the bluegrass field for years. On



The Real Thing, he exhibits a winning and highly energetic bluegrass-based style, showing a flair for both quirkish melodies and quirkish humor.

Like Chris Hillman, whose fine *Desert Rose* album was re-

viewed in these pages a while back, Herald is something of a musical archeologist. He has revived obscure songs like Don Gibson's "One Day At A Time" and the heated Tut Taylor instrumental "Ruff 'N' Ready." He also turns in fine renditions of such country and bluegrass classics as Stonewall Jackson's "Don't Be Angry" and the traditional "Foggy River." On "Gimmee Some Heat," a Herald original, the band uses acoustic instruments to generate some highly manic rockabilly.

Tom Russell is a gifted songwriter/poet/music journalist who, for years, has been

Notes on Review by Kip Kirby

us? That he's got a great r&b voice and can do soul covers? ("Knock On Wood" with Steve Cropper) That he can sing 1960s-styled jitterbop? ("Dr. Love") That his roots are really in Bourbon Street? ("New Orleans When It Rains")

Bailey has gained confidence as a performer—he's not afraid of topical issues, as in "Touchy Situation" or "Modern Day Marriages." ("Touchy Situation," incidentally, failed as a single, perhaps because of its content but possibly because programmers remember more meaningful songs on the same subject, like Big Al Downing's "The Story Behind The Story" or the Amazing Rhythm Aces' "Third Rate Romance.")

Here's the thing: the man can write and sing more than frivolous froth. On a serious ballad like his own "If Loving You Is Against The Rules," he gives warning that he's not so far from achieving the gut-wrenching depth of a Vern Gosdin. He's not there yet; but who knows . . . maybe next time . . .

Sawyer Brown is an interesting story. Here's an unknown band from Nashville that no one ever heard of who go on Ed McMahon's *Star Search* and wind up with overnight fame and a recording

contract. The debut album is *Sawyer Brown*, produced by Randy Scruggs.

The good news is that the album showcases Sawyer Brown's primary strength: performing. Few acts seem to enjoy playing together on stage more visibly; they've managed to retain a sense of exuberance and cheerfulness that will no doubt endear all five members to the world at large. The bad news is, this isn't the album it could have—or should have—been.

Sawyer Brown certainly could have come up with better songs. It's disappointing to contemplate what great stuff the band must have turned down to make room for this mediocre material. Sorry, guys, but this is average, predictable fare. "Leona," "Smokin' In The Rockies," and "Going Back To Indiana" may be show-stoppers in concert; but they aren't going to push Sawyer Brown into the Oak Ridge Boys' league. And the studio is not the stage.

"Used To Blue" by Fred Knoblock and Bill LaBounty gets best-cut honors, with second place going to Mark Miller's "Broken Candy."

Like champagne and Christmas bubble lights, Sawyer Brown has a natural effervescence (not to mention impressive instrumental

skills). With more serious song selection—along the lines of "Used To Blue"—this group merits close watching.

John McEuen's solo debut apart from the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band is entitled *John McEuen*. It's hard to figure this album: It's erratic, whimsical and self-indulgent. It's as if McEuen scratched his head one day and decided to make an album full of whatever he felt like at the time.



There's a musical recitation of a Stephen Vincent Benet poem, "The Mountain Whippoorwill," on which McEuen plays banjo, lap steel, mandolin, pump organ, fiddle, acoustic and electric guitars, and a piano. There's a swing-styled version of an old Hank Williams grinner about pesky flies; a new version of "Sleepwalk"; a Guy Clark-Rodney Crowell song called "She's Crazy For Leavin'" that

sounds like it was written about the time that Kristofferson did "The Pilgrim"; a rockabilly cut—"Blue Days, Black Nights"; and a road song of sorts, "Reno And Me."

McEuen unfortunately doesn't have the kind of vocal texture or intonation that would have helped an album like this. He doesn't carry off humor pieces like a Ray Stevens; and without the benefit of a stage to let him show his comedy visually, parts of the album fall flat. The package was obviously meant to convey a warm, folksy, down-home flavor through its old-fashionedness. Indeed it does succeed in creating the atmosphere of a session 30 years ago; but McEuen's long suit is instrumental proficiency, not vocals.

The album works best as a curiosity piece. Close readers of liner notes will observe the presence of such guests as Jose Feliciano, David Allan Coe, Lacy J. Dalton, the Oak Ridge Boys, Vassar Clement, Tony Rice, Mark O'Connor and David Grisman. It must have been great fun for McEuen to make. Maybe it shouldn't be looked at in a conventional way, but rather as a bit of Americana as seen through the eyes of the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band's most exotic member.

Buried Treasures

Re-issues, Rarities and the Hard-to-Find

The Western Swing revival is over. Ten years after the revival started, the music of Bob Wills has become a permanent institution. Wills' music is known worldwide, far beyond the Southwest where he made his reputation. And his sustained popularity still sells records.

Though I don't apologize for past comments about the musical quality of Delta Records and their treatment of the Original Texas Playboys, I'm glad to report that Delta's 5-LP box set, *A Tribute to Bob Wills: 50th Anniversary Texas Playboy Reunion* (DLP-1161), is a complete turnaround. These live 1984 concert recordings rate with the best ever done of Wills alumni.

For one thing, though some of the old-timers simply can't cut it any more musically, plenty of ex-Playboys still can. This time we have 48 of them, including rarely seen veterans

like steel guitarist Billy Bowman (whose performance of "B. Bowman Hop" is both energetic and enjoyable); vocalist June Whalin, guitarist in Bob's original 1933 Playboy band; Danny Alguire, the trumpeter who sang on Wills' original 1942 recording of "Home In San Antonio," and Jimmy Widener, a little-known but wonderfully expressive vocalist; steel player Herb Remington; pianist Moe Billington; clarinetist Woody Wood; drummer Johnny Cuiello and 40 others. And this time everyone—including Leon McAuliffe and his band of "Original" Texas Playboys—did it right.

The high points are many. The version of Bob's 1940's theme "Let's Ride With Bob," shows Wood—an old-timer—in top form; Jimmy Widener tears up "Milk Cow Blues," and Whalin's vocal on "I Get The Blues When It Rains" is touching and engaging. Veteran vo-

calists Laura Lee McBride and Ramona Reed shine on "Betcha My Heart I Love You" and "Texas Plains," respectively. Even Leon McAuliffe & Co., amid such heady company, play better than they have in years. What I don't understand is why Delta added an album of interviews in this set—for the music makes them irrelevant.

Delta has also wisely gotten into the Wills reissue market with two albums of 1940's and 1950's material. *For Collectors Volume 1* (DLP-1005) is taken from the Presto Transcriptions, a set of radio recordings he did in 1948-49, after he fired Tommy Duncan. (It has become fashionable to reissue the Prestos these days—two more volumes of them from Germany are reviewed next.) The Playboys were excellent during this period, with Herb Remington, Eldon Shamblin, Alex Brashear and Tiny Moore all on hand, combining the best of Wills' 1945 sound with his more sophisticated late 1940's band.

Beginning with an early 1960's interview with disc jock-

ey Buck Wayne (considering the period, the 1949 interview with Hank Penny would have been a better choice), the album features a stunning, sophisticated version of "Corrine Corrina." Their rendition of the tired old jazz standard "Sugar Blues" has a fire about it—with Bob's tongue-in-cheek vocal and Tiny Moore's pungent mandolin—that blows out the cobwebs. Even "Beaumont Rag," the Texas fiddle tune he must have played 5,000 times by then, gets new life from the superb playing of Remington, Shamblin, fiddler Jesse Ashlock and Alex Brashear.

Rare 1953 *California Radio Broadcasts Volume One* (DLP-1117) comes from the band's 12:30 broadcasts over KXLA in Pasadena in 1953. Tapes of this stuff have circulated among collectors for years, and the texture of the band is somewhat different here and more energetic. The group is also smaller, with twin fiddles, steel, piano, guitar and a rhythm section. Indeed, the music is as energetic as anything they did earlier, and leav-

The Essential Collector

The Bear Family Files on Waylon, the Maddox Brothers and Rose, and Marty

Bear Family Records in Germany and its director Richard Weize apparently want to re-issue all the good stuff that American record companies can't sell any more.

Bear Family recently brought the fabulous 14-record set, *Lefty Frizzell: His Life—His Music* and the re-issue of Johnny Cash's *Bitter Tears*. All Bear Family albums sell for \$11.98, which sounds like a lot. But when you consider that they are shipped by air from Germany, it's understandable. But, even at \$11.98, they are bargains because they all include at least 16 songs (about \$.75 per song) compared to the average American album with only 10 songs for \$8.98 (\$.90 per song.)

Back when Waylon didn't have a beard and wore his hair like James Dean, he had his first

chart record, "That's the Chance I'll Have to Take." It hit the chart in August 1965, stayed two weeks and peaked at Number 49. A year later ("That's What You Get) For Loving Me," his first Top Ten hit, landed on the chart, stayed eighteen weeks and reached Number Nine. In between, Waylon recorded at least 48 songs, all under the direction of Chet Atkins and all available on three new reissues from Bear Family Records: *The Waylon Jennings Files, Volume 1, Volume 2 and Volume 3*.

That's news, because these early recordings haven't been available for years, but the real news is that these are just the beginning. The tip of the Waylon iceberg! By the end of this year, Bear Family intends to release *Volume 4* through *Volume 15!* That's right folks. Fif-

teen Waylon Jennings albums, with sixteen songs each, covering Waylon's career only up to the end of 1972.

Some have asked, "Why?" If Waylon's career had ended in 1972, most of us wouldn't know who he was. He still hadn't had a Number One hit, no one was an Outlaw yet and this magazine had just been born.

Well, of course, the reason Richard Weize of Bear Family wants to put out these records now, is that Waylon's career didn't end in 1972. The Legend of Waylon we all know and love today was just starting in 1972 and, like The Legend of Willie, it was built on years of struggle. Now, Richard Weize figures that all those familiar with the legend should have a chance to hear the beginnings. And, they are worth hearing.

Your first reaction is, "Well, that's good, but it sure doesn't sound like Waylon." What doesn't "sound like Waylon" is not the voice, it's the band. You don't hear the raucous guitar and the galloping rhythms that identify Waylon's Outlaw



Sound. Oh, there are glimmers of things to come, like "Look into My Teardrops," written by Harlan Howard and Don Bowman, on *Volume 1*. It stands up today.

You can tell that Waylon hadn't let his hair down yet, in more ways than one. But, a lot of the Waylon we know now is there to be seen: the songwriter, the guitar picker, the singer and, probably most important, the spotter of good songs by other writers—Harlan Howard, Don Bowman, Mel Tillis, Cindy Walker and Bobby Bare are writers represented on these albums. Harlan Howard, of course, was

ing in the commercials and between-song patter makes for an interesting piece of Americana. (There are even better sets of shows than this if Delta wants to continue with the KXLA period.)

Cattle Records in Germany, who began the Presto reissue series, have just released two more volumes of Presto material. The *Rare Presto Transcriptions Volumes 4 & 5* (LP 70 and 71) is generously programmed with 20 tracks per side. The sound quality is passable, and the material runs the gamut from "Ida (Sweet As Apple Cider)," to country standards like "The Last Letter" to swing favorites ("Talking 'Bout You" and "Tuxedo Junction") and the usual run of traditional fiddle tunes. The band is not always even on these tracks, and occasionally instruments and vocals are out of tune. But overall, as with the Delta releases, the band is excellent. Bill Choate, the vocalist who replaced Tommy Duncan, is not particularly distinctive (Wills, try as he might, never found any singer as gifted as

Duncan). Sometimes the arrangements surprise you. "Spanish Fandango," which they did a poor recording of for MGM, gets a supercharged arrangement here. Herb Remington's solo on "Dream Train," a big favorite among West Coast Western Swing steel players is delicate and expressive. I wouldn't be issuing every single track of the Prestos, but there is more than enough good material here—some of it never commercially recorded by the band—to make both volumes worthwhile.

Bob Wills' biographer Charles Townsend says of the series of transcriptions Wills recorded for Tiffany Music of Oakland, California from 1946 through 1947 that "No single list reveals the incredible breadth of Wills' music and versatility of his band better than the Tiffany discography." I don't buy that. Through much of it is fine, a lot of it is under-rehearsed and sloppy, in part because they did songs not in their regular onstage repertoire and, as owner of several hours of the stuff on tape, I can

testify to its uneven content.

Nonetheless, Kaleidoscope Records, the tiny El Cerrito, California folk music label, has acquired the legal rights to issue Tiffany material from its owners, the Sundin family. The three volume *The Tiffany Transcriptions, Volumes 1, 2 and 3* (Kaleidoscope F-16, 19 and 90) do include some memorable music, along with complete recording information. Tommy Duncan's versions of "Cotton Patch Blues," "Black-out Blues," "Right or Wrong," and the original, bluesy version of Duncan's "Frankie Jean" (which he later recorded as a solo artist) are all fine.

Some of the most impressive numbers are instrumentals featuring the airtight ensemble work of guitarist Eldon Shamblin, mandolinist Tiny Moore and steel player Herb Remington, who tackle everything from Benny Goodman's sophisticated 1943 hit "Mission to Moscow" to the classic "Crazy Rhythm." The legendary Junior Barnard, whose wildly distorted, bluesy guitar work shines on the extempo-

rizied "Barnard Blues," is shown to good advantage on this unissued 1947 track.

This series has a number of flaws, however. First, Kaleidoscope plans on reissuing all the material—good and bad—and the lesser material will dim the luster of the great performances. Secondly, the Kaleidoscope folks aren't exactly Western Swing authorities, as their packaging proves. The covers are beautiful, but the liner notes tell us nothing, and such a package cries out for extensive information on both Tiffany music and the sessions. All we get are brief, generalized blurbs from Merle Haggard and other ex-Playboys. Good notes are a must on such albums.

An interesting spinoff to the Tiffany set is Rhino Records' *The Greatest Hits of Texas* (RNDF 284). This a colorful, Texas-shaped record with two Tiffany songs per side ("San Antonio Rose," "You're From Texas," "Across The Alley From The Alamo" and "Home In San Antone").

—RICH KIENZLE

already successful, famous and probably rich by this time, having written classics like "Heartaches By the Number" as early as 1959. If nothing else, these three albums are a showcase for Harlan's versatile and prolific songwriting talent. Out of 48 songs, 23 are his.

There are some interesting musicians on these sessions, top players like Hargus "Pig" Robbins and Floyd Cramer on piano, Henry Stryzelecki on bass, Richie Albright on drums and Charles McCoy on harmonica. Plus, a Jerry R. Hubbard on electric guitar and a Harold R. Ragsdale on, of all things, vibraphone. Gee whiz! Later on we got to know this pair as Jerry Reed and Ray Stevens. It has always been obvious that Waylon's patented Outlaw Guitar Licks owed a lot to Jerry Reed, and here's proof.

In *The History of Country Music According to Country Music Magazine* we have learned, over and over, that Waylon (and Willie, too) was held back by Rapacious Record

Executives in the early years. Then in the early 1970's he grabbed control of his own production, and the rest is history. Listening to these records makes me think a lot of it may be as much myth as history. Many of these cuts sound like hits, so it is easy to say they weren't because RCA didn't believe in them, or promote them, or whatever. But another way to look at them is that Waylon was experimenting, trying to get it together. When you remember that between 1963 and 1969 Buck Owens had 19 Number One singles with a fairly mainstream country style, you realize that even these early Waylon recordings were pretty far out. So, maybe country just wasn't ready for Waylon and maybe Waylon wasn't ready either. Anyway, you definitely do not get the feeling that Chet Atkins, who supervised all these sessions, was holding Waylon back, or forcing him into the conventional mold. For their time, these recordings were pretty far out for Nashville.

Remember, very few people were buying funny little foreign cars then, either.

Serious Waylon nuts . . . you know who you are . . . will want these records. And, you are probably going to want *Volume 4* through *Volume 15*, too. So, you might as well start putting the money aside.

Because *Country Music* readers continue to demon-

strate a passion for Marty Robbins records, and because lots of readers write in looking for records by the Maddox Brothers and Rose, we thought we would just call your attention to the albums from Bear Family's extensive catalog. The complete list of thirteen Marty Robbins and two Maddox Brothers & Rose albums is shown on page 34.

How To Order These Treasures

The following are available from Nashville Warehouse: *A Tribute to Bob Wills, 50th Anniversary Texas Playboy Reunion* (DLP-1161) five-album set \$24.95; *For Collectors, Volume 1* (DLP-1005) \$8.98; *Rare 1953 California Radio Broadcasts* (DLP-1117) \$8.98; *The Waylon Jennings Files, Volume 1* (BFX 15151) \$11.98; *Volume 2* (BFX 15152) \$11.98; *Volume 3* (BFX 15153) \$11.98; all Marty Robbins and Maddox Brothers & Rose albums listed on page 34 are \$11.98. The three DLP albums are available on LP records or cassettes. The others are on records only. Send check to Nashville Warehouse, Box 236, Hendersonville Tennessee 37075.

The following are available from Down Home Music, 10341 San Pablo Avenue, El Cerrito, California 94530: *Rare Presto Transcriptions Volumes 4&5* (LP 70 and 73) \$8.98 each volume; *The Tiffany Transcriptions Volumes 1,2 and 3* (Kaleidoscope F-16, F-19, F-90) \$8.98 each volume; *The Greatest Hits of Texas* (FNDF 284) \$8.98.

Whichever source you order from, add \$1.95 postage and handling for one album, \$.95 for each additional. CMSA Members see page 34 for members' prices and ordering instructions.

TOP 25

Singles

1. Ray Charles with Willie Nelson *Seven Spanish Angels*
2. Kenny Rogers *Crazy*
3. Steve Wariner *What I Didn't Do*
4. Don Williams *Walking a Broken Heart*
5. John Schneider *Country Girls*
6. Earl Thomas Conley *Honor Bound*
7. Nitty Gritty Dirt Band *High Horse*
8. Janie Fricke *The First Word in Memory is Me*
9. The Bellamy Brothers *I Need More of You*
10. Johnny Lee *Rollin' Lonely*
11. Anne Murray *Time Don't Run Out on Me*
12. Waylon Jennings *Waltz Me to Heaven*
13. The Judds *Girls Night Out*
14. Exile *Crazy for Your Love*
15. Alabama *There's No Way*
16. Hank Williams, Jr. *Major Moves*
17. Dolly Parton *Don't Call it Love*
18. George Strait *The Cowboy Rides Away*
19. Mickey Gilley *I'm the One Mama Warned You About*
20. Lee Greenwood *You've Got a Good Love Comin'*
21. Barbara Mandrell & Lee Greenwood *It Should Have Been Love by Now*
22. Shelly West *Now There's You*
23. Reba McEntire *Somebody Should Leave*
24. Sawyer Brown *Step That Step*
25. Restless Heart *Let the Heartache Ride*

Albums

1. Ray Charles *Friendship*
2. Earl Thomas Conley *Treadin' Water*
3. George Strait *Does Fort Worth Ever Cross Your Mind*
4. Alabama *40 Hour Week*
5. Ricky Skaggs *Country Boy*
6. The Judds *Why Not Me*
7. Lee Greenwood *You've Got a Good Love Comin'*
8. Ray Stevens *He Thinks He's Ray Stevens*
9. John Schneider *Too Good to Stop Now*
10. Nitty Gritty Dirt Band *Plain Dirt Fashion*
11. Hank Williams, Jr. *Major Moves*
12. Anne Murray *Heart Over Mind*
13. Exile *Kentucky Hearts*
14. Kenny Rogers *What About Me*
15. The Statler Brothers *Atlanta Blue*
16. Emmylou Harris *The Ballad of Sally Rose*
17. Reba McEntire *My Kind of Country*
18. John Fogerty *Centerfield*
19. Sawyer Brown *Sawyer Brown*
20. The Oak Ridge Boys *Greatest Hits 2*
21. Michael Martin Murphey *The Best of Michael Martin Murphey*
22. John Conlee *Blue Highway*
23. Steve Wariner *One Good Night Deserves Another*
24. Willie Nelson *City of New Orleans*
25. Janie Fricke *Workin' For a Livin'*

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