

COUNTRY MUSIC™

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Why He Shot Dolly Parton
And Barbara Mandrell



KRIS KRISTOFFERSON
Rebel With A Cause



HOLLY DUNN
Award Winning Style



HANK SNOW
Answers 20 Questions



JUICE NEWTON
Wildcat Mama Has
A New Baby

and much more



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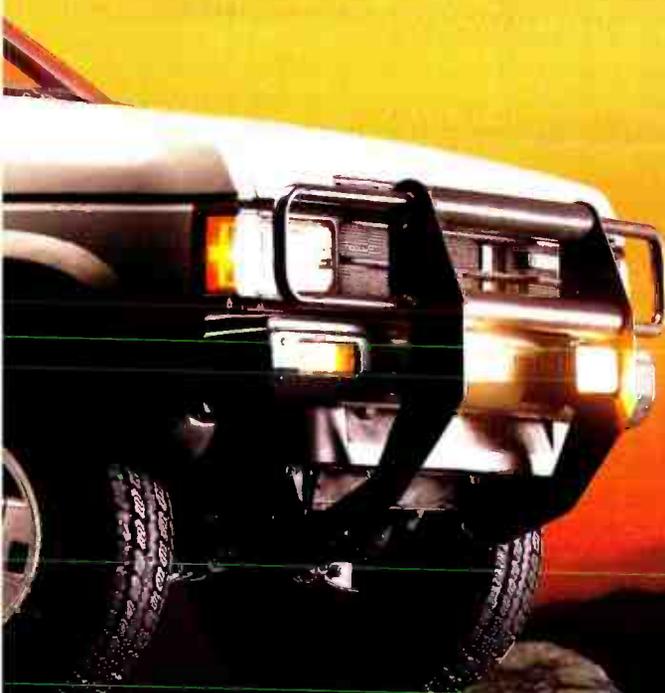
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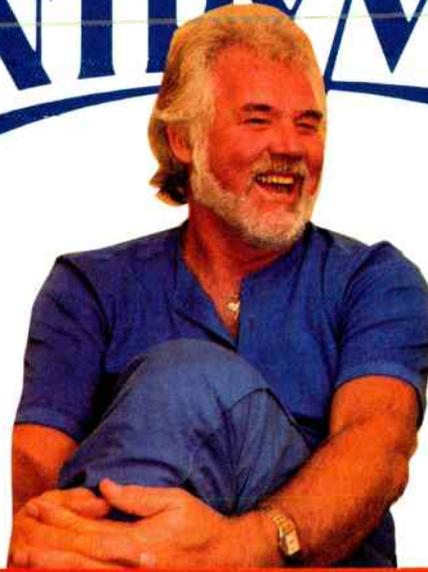
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COUNTRY MUSIC™



6 Letters

Your Anniversary letters and suggestions, your responses to the 15th Anniversary Issue, and outrage about Record Reviews, reminiscences, fans on the trail of stars and more.

20 20 Questions with Hank Snow

by Michael Bane

Hank Snow has a unique definition of country, and after a long career, he's philosophical. He knows how times have changed.

23 People

by Hazel Smith

Folks take time out for Roy Rogers, Willie Nelson, Ricky Skaggs, Her Royal Highness Princess Anne, George Strait and David Allan Coe. The Stork is hovering, and O.B. McClinton passes on. Update on Melba Montgomery.

35 Juice Newton: Real Singer in the Real World

by Patrick Carr

Juice Newton is very much in charge of her life, balancing career and motherhood. Planning is the key. She knows how to wait for what she wants.

38 Kenny Rogers: Better Than His Best

by Patrick Carr

Kenny keeps himself busy with many projects, not all music-related. But when he's on stage, he's the consummate performer, giving his all to his fans.

44 Kris Kristofferson: The Rebel Lives On

by Patrick Carr

Kristofferson's as politically minded as ever, but personally he's simmered down. These days, when he's not on the road, he stays home.

52 Holly Dunn: Keeping Up With the Changes

by Bob Allen

She's gone from songwriter to CMA Award-winning showperson in not much more than a year. It takes a lot to keep up.

55 Record Reviews

Everything from soup to nuts: McEntire's, Mellencamp's, Mandrell's latest, Alabama and Oaks, Don Williams, Dave Alvin blasting away, Billy Joe Shaver, New Grass Revival and more.

72 Buried Treasures

by Rich Kienzle

Rich Kienzle's been busy finding "finds" for our readers. Stock up now on Louvin Brothers, Rose Lee and Joe Maphis, Jean Shepard with one of country's first concept albums, steel guitar great Speedy West and memorable performers dear to you readers' hearts.

Cover Photo: *Bernard Boudreau*

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1962 *Duke of Earl*/Gene Chandler • *Palisades Park*/Freddie Cannon • *The Loco-Motion*/Little Eva • *Soldier Boy*/The Shirelles • *The Wanderer*/Dion • *Twistin' the Night Away*/Sam Cooke • *Up on the Roof*/The Drifters • *Twist and Shout*/The Isley Brothers • plus 14 more!

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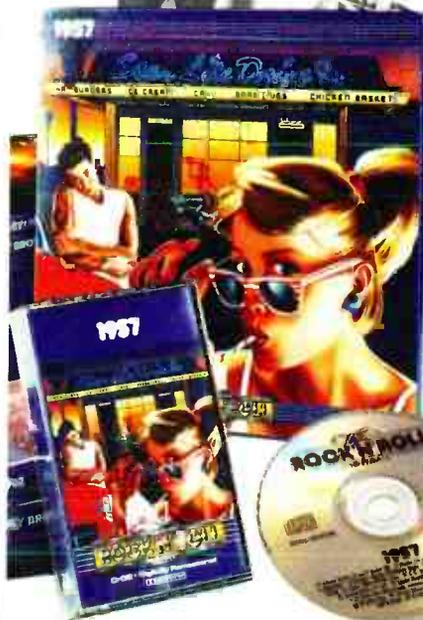
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Letters



Getting to Know You...

Upon receiving the 15th Anniversary issue I must admit that I was more than a little disappointed to find there were no interviews. As a matter of fact, I was downright disgusted! But I thought I'd go ahead and read the essays and maybe learn something.

I did! I learned about all of you people. Your essays gave a lot of insight to your articles and reviews, as far as individuals, that is. I feel like I understand more why you like/dislike a particular artist or album; I "know" you a little better.

As a relatively young (26) country fan, I really can agree with most everything that was printed. I grew up listening to Ray Price, Webb Pierce, Faron Young, Johnny Cash, Hank Williams, Ferlin Husky, etc., and as I grew older, I kept listening and enjoying country music. Unti the 1970's when country changed... then I started listening to more rock.

Finally I couldn't stand it any longer and switched back to country—for keeps this time! And now I find that the new artists have the same kind of "soul" that the greats from an earlier era did. It's a feel they have for the music, and it weaves a magic for all listeners.

Anyway, I wrote to tell you how much I really enjoyed your 15th Anniversary issue, and you have a cracker-jack staff! I enjoy all your articles, especially People, 'cuz readin' Hazel's like sittin' around talkin' with a friend, and she knows so much!

I could go on down the list, but I won't (I'll save them for future letters). You all do a terrific job, this magazine is so informative, and you writers are all so different that you don't seem biased or prejudiced 'cuz it all balances out. Best of luck to you and keep up the good work!

Pam Smith

St. George, Kansas

This is a long letter, but we couldn't cut a word of it. Thanks. By the way, Hazel's stuff really was disgusting.—R.D.B.

Staff Tops and Raven Current

I take a back seat to no one in my continuing admiration and respect for your editorial staff. They just don't come any better. I especially enjoy Bob Allen's

work...although I must take exception to something he says in his otherwise perceptive essay in your 15th Anniversary issue.

At one point, Bob refers to a number of "already forgotten newcomers" and then names some of the acts he has in mind...including Eddy Raven. Well now, as I'm writing this, Eddy has the Number One song on *Billboard's* country chart with "Shine, Shine, Shine." We should *all* be so "forgotten."

Happy anniversaries to one and all!

Pat Shields

Los Angeles, California

Bob always did have trouble counting to one.—R.D.B.

Hazel Smith Gets Rave Review

I am writing to you to tell you how much I enjoy *Country Music Magazine*. I must like it because I am one of those people that Helen Barnard spoke of in her article on the first 15 years as having every single copy of your magazine stashed away in my building out back.

I really wrote to say that I love Hazel Smith's articles. She is "some kind-a-good reporter." She writes (I imagine) as she talks. I always read her stuff first. Hazel, you are a true blue country gal who knows her country. I'm 52 years old, and I've loved country music as long as I can remember. I saw Hank Williams Sr. in person in Greensboro, North Carolina. He was with the Hadaacol Caravan, so you know I go way back.

Hazel, I'd love to invite you to my home. Keep up your wonderful writing—I subscribe to *Country Music Magazine* because of you. And if you ever write a biography on anyone, I'll buy it. I believe you are a good person and I feel I know you through your writing. Don't ever stop, you're too good at it.

Naomi Eagle

Greenville, South Carolina

I'd be careful about inviting Hazel to your home. She'll show up! And, if she wrote like she talks, it would fill up the whole magazine.—R.D.B.

Mickey Gilley Fan Chimes In About "Bocephus"

When are you going to do an article on Mickey Gilley? He really has one of the most diverse audiences of any country performer. I remember seeing him at the Pontiac Silverdome back in 1982, and he put on quite an energetic show. A few years later my uncle (who took me to the show) met up with a couple of, of all people, punk rockers who were Gilley fans and who attended the same concert.

One of the things I've always wished for is a meeting with this guy so that he could autograph all my stuff I've got of him. Considering how many items I've got, it would have to be on a day when he had nothing to do! But it would be one heck of a collection, wouldn't it?

Elizabeth Miller

Pontiac, Michigan

P.S. In response to the editor's note after Fred Prendergast Jr.'s letter in the September/October issue, I've asked someone I know if Bocephus means "Balls of Iron" in Latin, and it does indeed mean that. She also said that the "e" has a short sound, not a long sound as I've heard many people pronounce it. *Our Latin expert says the word is made up. It has Greek elements. For Mickey Gilley, stay tuned.*—Ed.

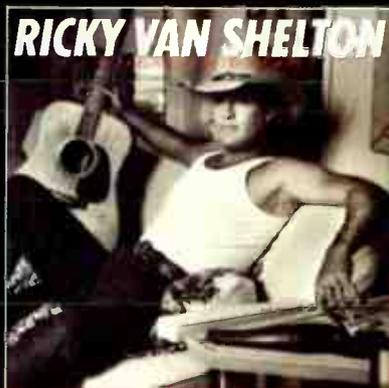
Christmas Comes to Willow Creek

In the People section in your September/October issue, you mentioned that John Schneider and Tom Wopat made a movie together called *Christmas Time at Copper Creek*. The true title is *Christmas*

HERE'S THE TRUTH, THE WHOLE TRUTH, AND
NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH.

RICKY VAN SHELTON

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Comes to Willow Creek. I was fortunate to interview John when he was at our county fair in Goshen, Indiana, so you have the information straight from John.

He also filmed a movie in Rome, Italy, this past November called *The Farm*, an adaptation of H.B. Lovecraft's story called *The Color Out of Space*. T Graham Brown is in *The Farm* with John. It's a science fiction thriller!

Brenda Carson
Elkhart, Indiana

Thanks for the correction.—Ed.

Dwight's Rep, Bad Rap

I've heard Dwight Yoakam has a reputation for making a lot of people mad. I don't see how that's possible.

I attended one of his concerts recently, and it was great. He blew the crowd away. Afterwards, he talked with most of the audience, signed autographs and posed for pictures. Dwight Yoakam is one of the nicest people you could ever meet, which is a lot more than I can say for most country entertainers.

His rep for making everyone mad

probably came from Nashville, where he made fools out of the hot shots there who thought and said he had no talent and would never make it. He proved Nashville's not the only place you can make it in country music. And if the hot shots in Nashville are waiting for him to fall, they're in for a very, very long wait. Dwight Yoakam's the best. Please do a story on him.

Jonny Merritt
Cincinnati, Ohio

We covered Dwight Yoakam in the May!

OUR FIRST 15 YEARS

15th Anniversary Letters

In the July/August 1987 issue, we asked you readers for your thoughts and suggestions about the 15th Anniversary of Country Music Magazine. Many of you responded, both longterm and new subscribers. Here is a first installment on what you had to say. I could not resist throwing in a few from stars who are also readers.

We will continue to print 15th Anniversary letters throughout the year. It's not too late to write. Mark your envelope, Attention: 15th Anniversary.

Thanks to all we've heard from so far. More letters in upcoming issues.

Magazine the Best

I've been subscribing since about 1977, and have enjoyed every issue.

I think country music is stronger than ever before. George Strait, Randy Travis, Reba McEntire, John Anderson, Merle Haggard, Waylon Jennings, Ricky Skaggs, George Jones (my personal favorites) have kept it strong.

I want them to know I'm proud of what they're doing, and I'm proud of this magazine. Don't ever change.

Kim L. Rhoades
Leonard, Missouri

I love your *Country Music Magazine*. I have been getting it since it started in 1972. As I am a handicapped person, I do all my things by phone and mail.

I love Roy Acuff, Kitty Wells, Hank Sr. I loved Ernest Tubb, Jim Reeves. I watch Ralph Emery on *Nashville Now*. I hope some day I can go visit the Grand Ole Opry and would love to see Roy Acuff. I have seen George Jones a few times and Kitty Wells, and I saw Sneazy Waters trying to act like Hank Williams. I did not like it. I've seen Johnny Cash a couple of times.

I have been dreaming to go to Nashville all my life. I have so many books, life stories, music magazines and records, so keep up the good work. *Country Music Magazine* is the best magazine in the world.

Bernadine Furlotte
Toronto, Ontario



We almost used this shot of Cash and our own Norma Segarra on the cover.

Cover Talk

I have subscribed to *Country Music Magazine* since it began. Since Johnny Cash was on the very first issue, it would be nice to have him on the cover of the 15th Anniversary Issue.

Lynda L. Buffalo
Longwood, Florida
Great minds think alike. Another reader suggested Emmylou. I liked that idea, too. And so would Johnny Cash—R.D.B.

Suggestion Box

...a very generous amount of color pictures. Actually, I think your magazine is fine as it is. How can you improve on perfection?

—Keith Rivers

...in Letters, street and zip code of individual who is writing. Other people with same interests may want to correspond.

—Jerome Abraham

We can't. In CMSA Newsletter, members have an opportunity to correspond.

—R.D.B.

...list fan club addresses or the location and date of upcoming concerts.

—Linda Scheffer

Fan club addresses, yes...see Letters or Answer Book. Of course they change a

lot. Concert dates, no...some fan clubs send them out. Maybe you could help your favorite star set up this service for people in outlying areas.—R.D.B.

...publish a monthly magazine.

—Ronald Young II

Maybe. Or we might start a new one.

—R.D.B.

And Now...a Word From a Former Staff Member

The 15th Anniversary Issue looks great! I am so proud to have shared in some of the magazine's history. Those were great years for me, tough...but great.

I'm so pleased to see all my friends doing so well. These folks deserved this for their dedication and staying power.

We're 16 miles from Disneyworld—10 miles from baseball and boardwalk. I've just been elected to a seat on the City Commission. Can you believe it? Come see us!

Jim Chapman

Haines City, Florida

Jim was associated with this magazine in various capacities for four years, from September 1977 through September 1981. During most of that time, he served as Associate Publisher and ran our office in Nashville. Jim, on you Central Florida looks good.—R.D.B.



Jim Chapman in his glory days as Nashville-based Associate Publisher for this magazine, with Dorothy Ritter.

June 1986 issue. For more news, watch upcoming issues.—Ed.

Elvis 10th Anniversary Tribute

You asked to hear from those who went to Elvis' 10th Anniversary and International week.

We worked hard ever since the 1st Anniversary to get the city of Memphis or Graceland Enterprises to provide more activities for Elvis fans. It was beautiful. Sometimes we didn't think we'd get from one event to another. We

had George Klein, Elvis' Senior Class President at Humes High School and life-long friend give a talk, we had a dinner, a sock hop featuring Elvis' music, and of course the candlelight ceremony—where we all sang "Love Me Tender" until the Graceland gates finally opened. It was beautiful, solemn, reverent and dignified.

Elvis would've been proud and touched, and would shake his head in disbelief that after ten long years he is still thought of so fondly.

There was also an Elvis Trivia contest and an Elvis Impersonator Contest—so much activity going on.

God bless you—but where is Elvis' 10th Anniversary Edition?

Gloria and John Hebert
New Orleans, Louisiana

Thanks for your report. Elvis will have to wait. We're anniversaried out.—Ed.

Country Music Found at Last

I grew up on country music, so I've been a fan for many years. Considering this

Old-Timers and Has-Beens

As a beginning original subscriber, I have enjoyed all the wonderful articles and pictures and now very much enjoy the members' part, the *Newsletter*, where members can tell about concerts they have seen.

But I really miss the old-timers and has-beens, too. Couldn't you do a split page across the middle and do a write-up on two "has-beens"? We still like their music and wonder what they're doing today. We want to know about them, too. Here are some suggestions:

| | |
|----------------------|------------------|
| Terri Gibbs | Mel Tillis |
| Cal Smith | Jim Ed Brown |
| Stompin' Tom Connors | Roy Orbison |
| Bobby Borchers | Mac Davis |
| Johnny Rodriguez | Gary Stewart |
| Skeeter Davis | Stella Parton |
| John Hartford | Tommy Overstreet |
| Jim and Jesse | La Costa |
| Wanda Jackson | Charlie Rich |
| Connie Smith | Margo Smith |
| Lynn Anderson | Hank Snow |
| Faron Young | and many more |

We would like to know where they are living, about their albums and are they still available? Are they still touring and recording—or retired? If deceased, list albums, tell how, and about families. There's so much we fans want to know that is public knowledge—but not invading privacy. I know you'd be pleasing a lot of readers who like the old-timers as well as new ones.

Some are not old-timers—just not heard from in a long time.

Mrs. David Richardson
Buckfield, Maine

This is when we wish we were a monthly, and this is the most frequent suggestion we receive. CMM Update in People is one way we try to keep up with these old favorites, "Whatever Happened to..." in Letters is another, the Newsletter is another. Their albums often come up in Buried Treasures or Essential Collector. We can never do enough in this area. We'll keep trying.—R.D.B.

Stars Chime In

Congratulations, *Country Music Magazine*, on 15 years of great country

entertainment. From a fellow East Coast kid who loves country music, I wish you a Happy 15th Anniversary and many more to come. Keep up the good work.

Eddie Rabbitt

Just a note of thanks to you and your staff for remembering my recordings in the 15th Anniversary issue of *Country Music Magazine*. I am grateful and appreciative to all of you. Believe you me, it looked good seeing my name among the lineup on the cover. But, brother, don't you feel like it's about time me and you got us another picture took together??

Ricky Skaggs



Ricky Skaggs and I agreed it was time for a new photo. Here we are in New York recently after a good lunch.

Congratulations on your 15th anniversary to you and your crew. I appreciate the votes of the writers...that means a lot to me. I wish you continued success and hope you all are around a long, long time.

Waylon Jennings

Congratulations to you all on your 15th anniversary of the great *Country Music Magazine*.

You know, the magazine means a lot to me because I was the "Boogie King" in

the very first issue. Now, with Hank's *Born to Boogie*, we can truly say, "The boogie goes on!"

Merle Kilgore



Merle Kilgore in his "boogie suit"—cost him \$1,000 from House of Kershaw in 1972—in the September 1972 issue.

A Collector's Dream

I have an idea for an issue of the *Country Music Magazine*. If you could have one magazine dedicated to the country stars not just in the present but also in the past...sort of a memory-lane type thing.

You could maybe have one page a picture of the person without any writing on it except maybe their autograph, and one page of just writing (biographical data). Such stars include: the late, great Patsy Cline (one of my favorites), Hank Williams Sr., Lefty Frizzell, Ernest Tubb and some of today's stars such as: The Judds (my favorite, the greatest), Dwight Yoakam (he's good, too!), the Forester Sisters, Reba McEntire, George Strait, Johnny Cash, Hank Jr., Dolly Parton, Emmylou Harris. It would be a collector's dream.

Shannon King
Martinsville, Virginia

I like this idea. It reminds me of what we did in the 10th Anniversary Issue, only more so.—R.D.B.

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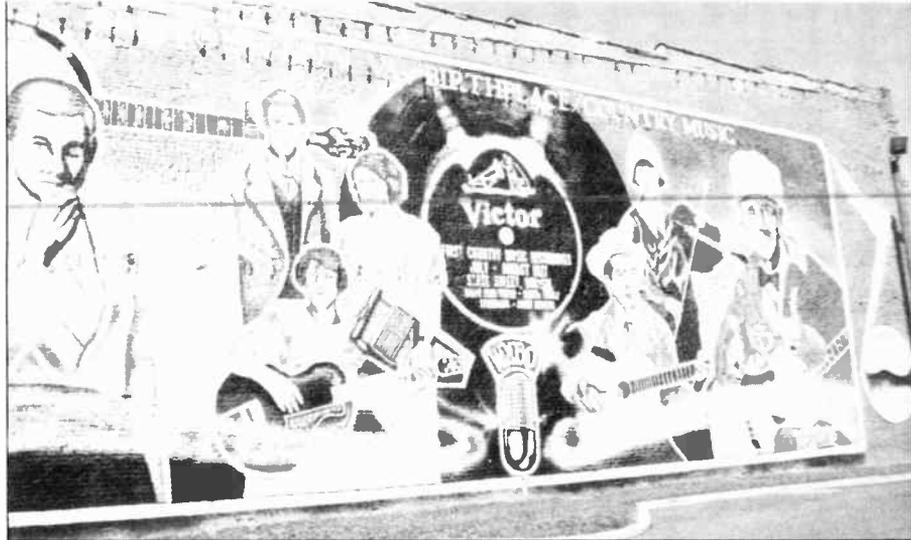
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Tennessee mural celebrates the birth of country music on records.

fact, what I'm about to tell you is proba-
bly going to be hard for you to believe.
It's hard for me to believe, too, but until
about three months ago I was unaware
of the existence of *Country Music
Magazine*. Pretty sad, huh? But now
that I've discovered it, I feel as though a
void in my life has been filled that I
hadn't even realized existed.

I love your magazine. You can rest
assured that my newly acquired
subscription will be a long-lasting one. I
only regret that I was deprived of the
pleasures of reading your publication
for the past 15 years. Keep 'em coming,
boys (and ladies)!

Thomas Plummer
Littleton, Colorado

P.S. I'd like to know if there's any way to
order any back issues from you.

*Back issues are on sale in this office.
Mark your envelope, Attention: Back
Issues.—Ed.*

Did Sanders Sing Gospel?

How about some info on Steve Sanders?
I have an album, some years old now,
that a Steve Sanders sang. The album is
This Is My Valley. It is a gospel album,
put out by Canaan Records.

When I received my September/
October *Country Music Special 15th
Anniversary Issue*, who should be on
page 22 but my favorite country group,
The Oak Ridge Boys, with their newest
member, Steve Sanders. I got my album
out to see if there were some resem-
blance between your picture of Steve
with The Oaks and the young man on the
album cover. As I told Joe Hoppell of
WCMS Radio, Norfolk, Virginia, I don't
know if what I see is real or because I
want it to be.

So, why don't you fill me in on who's
who.

Etta Mintz
Portsmouth, Virginia
*Good sleuthing! Steve was a child gospel
star—made his first album at age seven
under the name Little Sterie Sanders.
We're checking on the record.—Ed.*

Mural Honors Early Country Performers

This may not be news to you, but I had
not heard of it previously. While return-
ing from a vacation in the Blue Ridge
and Smoky Mountains, I drove through
Bristol, Tennessee. Adjoining a public
parking lot on the wall of a large
building was a painted mural. As the
enclosed photo shows, it honors Ralph
Peer, The Carter Family, The Stone-
mans and Jimmie Rodgers recording on
the Victor label at Bristol. It was my
impression that Ralph Peer first
recorded the Stonemans on Okeh label
in 1924 ("Sinking of the Titanic"), while
Rodgers and The Carters were not
recorded until 1927.

This has to be one of the largest
monuments to country music.

Burrell Adams

Tuckerton, New Jersey
*You're right, but the Stonemans were
also recorded in 1927. Hear it all on the
CMF's new double-album, The Bristol
Sessions, \$14.98 from the Country
Music Foundation.—Ed.*



Bill Monroe with T.J. and Billy Pasley
at the Ozark Empire Fair.

Never Too Old or Too Young for Bill Monroe

I have been a fan of Bill Monroe for most
of my life. I heard him for the first time

on the Opry when I was about seven years old. I am so happy that his music hasn't changed down through the years. He is a musical genius and a real gentleman who always has time for his fans.

We saw him in July at the Ozark Empire Fair in Springfield, Missouri. My nephews were thrilled to have their picture taken with him. I hope you feature him in your magazine soon!

Virginia Long
Mountain Grove, Missouri



Waylon Jennings as he was in 1969.

A Peek Into Waylon's Past

I enjoy your magazine a lot! I thought the old photos of Kenny Rogers and Hank Williams Jr. without their beards in the July/August Letters section were great. It is really amazing to me how much Kenny has changed, but I'd know that was a photo of Hank Jr. There's no denying the looks of Hank Jr. Anyway, I remembered I had this photo of Waylon Jennings taken in July of 1969. I forget where it was though!

It may have been Texas, but I can't recall. I went to one very unforgettable concert of Waylon's in Albuquerque, New Mexico. He played in the rain for us. He said if we thought enough of him to sit there in the rain, he thought enough of us to play. And play he did! Some held umbrellas over the instruments and the players so they could continue.

Sharon Foutes
La Plata, Missouri

Editor's Note:

November/December 1987 cover photo and photo on page 35 of Waylon Jennings by Wayne Williams.

In Defense of K.T. Oslin

I assume and hope that all women readers were as offended as I—an ardent male feminist—was by the sexist, insensitive review of K.T. Oslin in Record Reviews in the September/October issue. An artist of her stature, depth, warmth, humor and probable lasting qualities deserves more intelligent treatment—even if not necessarily

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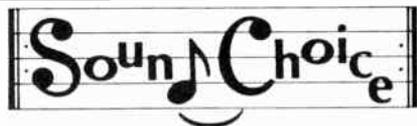
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approving. The writer's admitted lack of sympathy for "women's songs" disqualifies him from writing on this particular subject.

This reader was annoyed at the disrespect for women and for K.T., a fine singer-writer.

Dudley Brown
 Cumberland, Maryland

Oh, that Michael Bane! For another view, see People in this issue.-Ed.



Ricky Skaggs discusses teddy bears with young fan Shannon Black.

Ricky Skaggs, Teddy Bears and Shannon

We had the recent pleasure of taking our six-year-old daughter to see her all-time favorite person perform—Ricky Skaggs. Shannon has been a fan of his since she was two years old. She knows his songs by heart and owns all of his albums. She has had a picture of him from a calendar hanging in her room since 1984.

After the concert, it was announced that Ricky Skaggs would be signing autographs. Shannon had a tour jersey and a publicity photo which we purchased before the show. She also had a long-standing question to ask him. Ever since she heard that Molly Kate was born, Shannon has been concerned that she might not have a teddy bear.

When it was Shannon's turn to speak to Ricky and ask for his autograph, he was gracious beyond the call of duty. He signed the photo and the jersey and at that point could have sent her on her way. After all, she was just a six-year-old kid sent up by her parents, right? Far from it. Shannon got her autographs and finally, after years of waiting, she asked her idol if Molly Kate had any teddy bears. He not only took the time to answer yes, but went on to explain all about her favorite one. They concluded their chat with a hug.

Our family thanks Ricky Skaggs for giving a young fan pleasant memories that will last a lifetime!

Janel Black
 San Jose, California

OK, Ricky!-Ed.

Kyle Petty, Recording Star?

Last year at the end of NASCAR racing season, I heard that Kyle Petty was going to Nashville to record some songs. What happened to them? It was announced right after the last race last year. I'd like to know if they got published or what.

Carol Mathews
 Cincinnati, Ohio

Hazel has her ear to the ground on this one for us.-Ed.

The Seals Boys at Home

I just received my new copy of *Country Music*, and you just keep getting better and better with each issue. I don't have a favorite part of your magazine, unless it would be the articles and pictures of each of the stars with their fans. I think it is so great that in country music no one feels they are better than anyone else.

I am sending you a picture of Dan and Jimmy Seals with two of my boys, Brett and Jimmy. This was taken when Dan and Jimmy were in Rankin back in June visiting with their father and grandmother. They certainly are nice folks, and they haven't forgotten where they came from. When they are home, everyone is so proud of what they have accomplished. I went to school with Jimmy, and he certainly hasn't changed.

It is so nice to see the relationship of almost all of the country music singers with their families and the back-home and down-to-earth raising they all want to stick to.

Patty Raby
 Rankin, Texas



Home folks Dan and Jimmy Seals with Jimmy and Brett Raby in Rankin.

Disappointed by Dirt Band Review

I just received my *Country Music Magazine*. I'm a new subscriber and was disappointed to read your review of the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band's album *Hold On* in the September/October issue. I beg to differ with you. I think the album has a great reason for being. I especially like the song "Fishin' in the Dark." The beat is great, and if you listen to the words,

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Catherine Gordon



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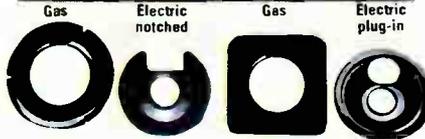
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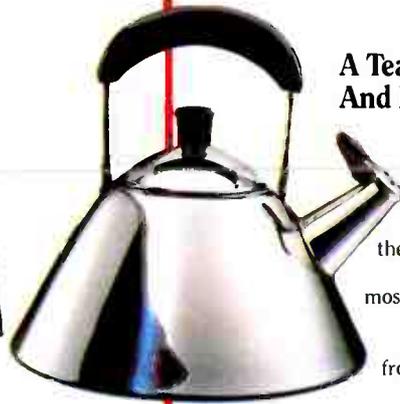
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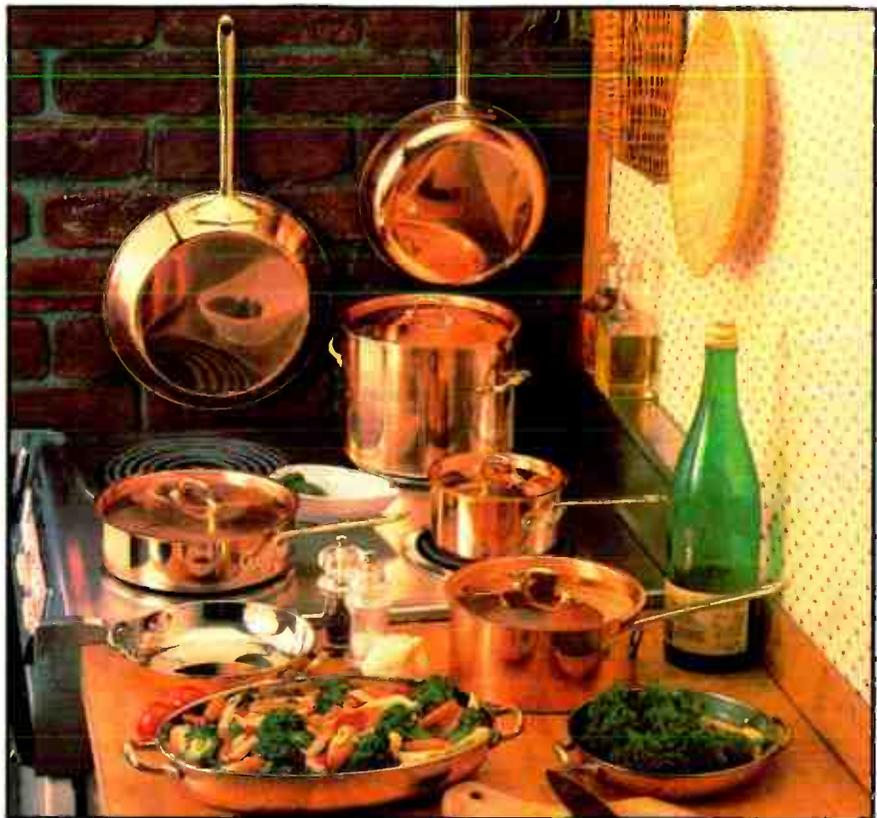
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**HEARTACHES BY THE NUMBER
PHONE CALLS BY THE SCORE...**

Our pesky readers keep demanding Ray Price. "Ray Price," they say. We've made a score of phone calls to Ray and hope to hear from him any minute. In the meantime, here's a legendary picture of a legend.

People



Larry, Steve and Rudy Gatlin found a fan in Roy Rogers.

HOW THE WEST WAS WON

Rumored "hard to be humble," Larry Gatlin got the humbling of his career when Roy Rogers showed up at The Gatlin Brothers show and invited Larry for a private tour of his museum. According to my sources, Larry's private tour, hosted by Cowboy Rogers and his son Dusty, made him feel like a kid again. The museum is located in Victorville, California, where one can see a stuffed version of Roy's famed horse Trigger. Let me say here that I have never been snobbed, snooted or snubbed by Larry Gatlin. He has always treated me like the royalty I am. Course, it takes royalty to know royalty.

A THANKS TO GOOD FOLKS WITH GOOD TASTE!

I just want to recognize some great folks who commented on my "Well, Shut My Mouth" piece in the September/October 15th Anniversary Issue of *Country Music*. As usual, I always hang out with the stars. Folks with the good taste to comment were Waylon Jennings and his delovely Jessi Colter, Bobby Bare and his delovely Jeanie Bare, John Hartford and his delovely Marie Barrett-Hartford, Sharon White, Jack Greene and others. It took a little sense and a lot of guts on my part. Honest confession is good for the soul, so I've always heard. If this be the case then my soul is Number One with a bullet.

IRLENE ANTICIPATING

The youngest Mandrell sister, Irlene Mandrell, is expecting her second child soon.

LIVING PROOF ON FOUR LEGS?

Leave it to Hank Williams Jr. Sings his butt off. Writes like Stephen Foster. Now he's bought a horse and named it Living Proof. Is Living the first name and Proof the last? Would a body say, "Git up there, Living" or "Gee, Living Proof"? Course it ain't a plow horse by no means. It's a Tennessee Walker but is stabled in Ala-

bama. The state of Alabama, not to be confused with the group of self-same name.

By the way, 12,000 showed up at Nashville's Starwood to see Alabama recently.



A GIVEAWAY
When she wore this dress on the CMA Awards show in 1986, Reba McEntire had no idea she'd be giving it away someday. But she was happy to donate it to the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum. Said Reba, "It looks better on the mannequin than it did on me!"

FRICKE HOSTS

Indiana's-own, Texas-adopted Janie Fricke hosted the Canadian Country Music Awards. Hoosier, Lone Star and Eh!! You can't have one without the other.

BITS AND PIECES

Hoyt Axton's European tour included Petersborough, England; Rotterdam, Holland; Nuremburg, Germany; and Berne, Switzerland. How do I know? Hoyt's mama, Mae Boren Axton, told me, that's how!

New photos of Jesse Whitley show him to be a real good looker like his mama Lorrie Morgan and his daddy Keith Whitley.

50,000 strong turned out in memoriam of Elvis Presley in Memphis on the 10th anniversary of his death this past August. Can you believe Elvis has been gone 10 years? In my mind I know he's gone, but his music will be forever young and never will die. So in my heart Elvis lives forever.

Hank Williams Jr., who needs more Gold records like a hog needs a holiday, sold 300,000 copies of *Born to Boogie* in two weeks. This may not be a record, but it is above average in anybody's music. But I always say Hank Jr. and his music are way above average. Won't this be the 14th in the Gold for the boogie-ing Bocephus?

Friends and fans, you haven't lived until you board a hillbilly bus and take to the road. The Whites invited me to

Reporter: Hazel Smith

Editor: Rochelle Friedman

People



K.T. Oslin is surrounded by some '80's men at a recent party. From left to right, Alabama's Randy Owen, Alabama manager Dale Morris, K.T., RCA's Joe Galante and Stan Moress, Oslin's manager.

accompany them to West Grove, Pennsylvania, where they performed at Sunset Park. Here in Nashville and the surrounding area, when I go out to see stars perform I usually go out to the Opry. Let me tell you, there is nothing like going out on the road and seeing those fans meet the stars heart to heart. Buck and those daughters of his look like they just walked out of the pages of some magazine. The band just naturally cooks. It was pure delight.

If you're traveling through southeast Pennsylvania and notice some Nashville star is appearing at Sunset Park, you should attend. I listened as the old folks talked about seeing **Hank Williams Sr.** performing live and drunk. So drunk the band had to help him on and off stage. Yet he sang his heart out. The park's biggest crowd since opening was a co-headliner with **Roy Acuff** and **Ernest Tubb** back in the 1940's. This record stood until the great **Conway Twitty** brought his show to town. "Son, they was parked plumb out past the outhouse in the pasture." I overheard the old man tell the kid. The boy nodded. He'd heard the story before. And me, well, I knew the old man was repeating the story for me. I wish I had the gentleman's name. Claimed he'd been to every show they'd ever had at Sunset Park.

West Grove, Pennsylvania, loved The Whites and The Whites loved West Grove. Loyal Whites fan **Press Jamison** traveled from Carney's Point, New Jersey, that Sunday to see his favorite group.

Thank God and the doctors, the legendary **Webb Pierce** is recuperating nicely at home following open-heart surgery.

Ladies of the 80's, let's talk about **K.T. Oslin**. Girls, K.T. is one of us. She is our sister, our friend and the one we tell our secrets. Girls, she is our Music Superior. She is what we are. Talk about telling it like it is and admitting it. The girl

ain't got a prayer of a chance at lying via song. Women, if you don't have her album, you owe it to yourselves to go out and buy it. If she comes to your neighborhood, you owe it to yourselves to go out and hear her sing. She will kill you in concert. Soul and heart. Honest as Ruth (from the Old Testament).

Men, this female is 45 years old and proud of it. When you see how she looks and realize that your woman represents the same things K.T. sings, why it's bound to make you proud to love females. Children, be proud there is a female as honest as this woman. Read her lyrics and learn to love poetry and rhyme. Hopefully children not too far down the line will be able to read this lady's lyrics in their literature books. Yep, I believe in her this much and more.

Ladies, let's congratulate the following men for presenting K.T. Oslin to the world: producer **Harold Shedd**, associate producers **Jim Cotton** and **Joe Scaife**, manager **Stan Moress** and RCA exec, the great **Joe Galante**. I take off my ego to all you men. You have excellent taste in women and music.

By the way, K.T.'s album *80's Ladies* debuted on the country charts at 15 with a bullet... the highest entry album debut ever by a female. Congratulations to all involved.

Unwalking the aisles are **Lee** and **Melanie Greenwood** and **Marty** and



BMI HONORED ONE OF THEIR OWN

Left to right, BMI's Roger Sovine and Del Bryant, hillbilly heart-wrencher Randy Travis and sultry songstress Tanya Tucker gathered to honor Paul Overstreet, with songwriter Paul Davis and BMI's Harry Warner looking on. "On the Other Hand," "Same Ole Me," "Digging Up Bones" and "Long Line of Love" are four reasons BMI honored Overstreet. I think he earned the honor, don't you?

People

Cindy Cash Stuart. I'm not acquainted with Lee and Melanie, but I love both Marty and Cindy. Sorry you couldn't work it out.

Glenda Faye, acoustic guitarist with **The Right Combination,** and **Porter Wagoner and Company,** have a fine album on the Flying Fish label. Porter produced the album which features guest appearances by **Bill Monroe,** **Jesse McReynolds** and **Vassar Clements.** Glenda Faye is an original Right Combination member.

Speaking of Porter, he and his great band broke attendance records at five fairs this summer. Isn't it great to know that Porter can still "draw the fans" after 30 years. The *Nashville Network* is largely responsible for the increase in popularity of many of the entertainers. TV is like a photo...worth a thousand words. Nashville is blessed with this media.

Jerry Douglas, the world's greatest dobroist, and **Jill French** said their vows at the Two Rivers Mansion this past fall. Their photographer picks a pretty mean mandolin, and fiddle, and acoustic guitar, and electric guitar, and sings too. Who does all this and does it well and can take pictures too? **Ricky Skaggs,** that's who!

DESERT ROSE CHRIS HILLMAN TOO BIG FOR HIS BRITCHES?

It was not the case at all. It's just something that's too cute not to say. Hillman just took off his britches that he wore when he was a founding member of the Flying Burrito Brothers and donated the Nudie-made garment to the Hard Rock Cafe in Dallas. Them britches played onstage with Gram Parsons, I'll have you know.

FRIENDS—MY SOURCE OF STRENGTH

My friends are the most important people in the world. From every walk in life, my friends are the best. There's none, not one, that is just average. In their own way, they each excel. My friend the garbage man is the best one in Nashville. My friend the Federal Express man looks for packages on Saturday, calls to see if I need my delivery before Monday. My friend **Bob Oermann** is on top of what's happening in Music City and his com-padre **Tommy Goldsmith** is nearby. And I? I hunker close to their hearts, a breath away and no further than a phone call.

Do I have to tell you my friend **Kinky Friedman** is, by God, the best Kinky Friedman alive today!! With a new book from his used typewriter titled *A Case of*

FROM KIDS TO ROYALTY



Ricky Skaggs has been a busy boy lately. First he took part in "For Kid's Sake," a national public service campaign, where he is featured in television spots which are aimed at making adults aware of the importance of taking time to help the youth of America. Then he kicked off the entertainment at a charity fundraiser for the Save the Children Fund and played for Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal, Princess Anne of England. After the concert Ricky and Princess Anne chatted privately, along with Jane Dudley, the hostess of the event. Of the Princess Ricky said, "I know she has a lot to live up to, but I can tell she's a real down-to-earth country girl!"

Lone Star, Kinky's flirting with the friends and neighbors on the highways and byways of the U.S. of A. Flying in to Music City, he dropped in on **Ralph Emery** for TV. **Ruth Ann Leach** for radio and to my house for dining and good timing. Actually, the great **Tompall Glaser** and the legendary **Captain Midnite** and several bright and hip folks, including yours truly and of course the visitor from space, Kinky, drank for pleasure at a local drinkery/eatery until the manager unsmarterly remarked, "Don't drink too much sake!" We, upon that remark, took our barefeet and unsmiling

faces to our shoes and departed to regroup elsewhere.

We further feasted at Gotten where many dollars were spent. Gotten's gain was the other place's loss. They were too big for their kimono anyhow!

Now about Kinky's book! Where do I start? Lined with interesting characters, the mystery takes place in and around the Lone Star Cafe in N.Y. City where a bunch of hillbilly folks gather to enjoy music from Music City and beer from the breweries around the world. As a fan of country music, you will love Kinky's book. I don't claim to be a book reviewer;

CMM Update: *Melba Montgomery*



"I have always worked," says Melba Montgomery from her Nashville home. "I have not gone a year and not gone out on the road and worked a certain amount of dates. And in fact I'm workin' probably as much now as I did six or eight years ago. Next month we have some dates in Canada. So we still do a lot of travelin'."

A hardcore traditional singer, Melba's career really took off when she and George Jones recorded "We Must Have Been Out of Our Minds" (written by Melba) in 1963. "That's considered a country classic," she says. "I still draw (royalties) on that." She and George cut six more hit duets. When country/pop duets were rare, "Baby, Ain't that Fine," teaming Melba and pop vocalist Gene Pitney (who also duetted with George), did well in 1966.

However, her biggest success came in 1974 on Elektra Records when "No Charge" hit Number One and stayed on the charts 16 weeks. Records—and duets—remain important. "We have a traditional country duet out on GBS Records, an independent label, with a new artist named Lee Dillard, startin' to kick up some fuss around

the country," she declares.

"We do *Nashville Now*, on an average about every eight weeks. It's such a wonderful feeling to know that many people are watching. They say 25-30 million people see you every time. We work a lot of dates, I guess, because people see us on shows like that." She works some dates as a single; on others she carries her own band.

Of Nashville today, she says, "We used to call it a family, but it spread out and we have a lot of people from Los Angeles and New York. It's totally a different thing than it used to be."

Melba outspokenly defends traditional country fans. "I'm not knocking any entertainer no matter what type music they perform," she emphasizes. "But it's a shame when record labels forsake the fans and country people who have made this business what it is over the years and have not been able to give them records and radio play from artists they want to hear."

"I had a lady up in Ohio—I was on a show with Faron Young, we had two packed houses—she said, 'Melba, this is the first show I have been to in a long time. I almost didn't come because the last show I went to was so loud you couldn't hear the singer.' It's a shame people don't use more traditional artists, but I think it's comin' back around."

She and husband Jack Solomon work out of their Nashville home, which has a bit more musical talent with daughters Jackie, 17, and 16-year-old Missy. "They play piano very well, we're proud to say," declares Melba. "They may pursue it as a career, especially Jackie. They love music."

Recently Melba's also found the opportunity to return to an old and valued activity. "I've started back writin' (songs) again," she says proudly. "That's one thing I would like to pursue in the next two or three years, get involved with."

—RICH KIENZLE

however, I will tell you that the murderer does send potential victims lyrics from various **Hank Williams** songs to clue them in to their potential destiny. For instance, "You'll never get out of this world alive" is about as blatant as one can get.

POPOVICH POPPING AROUND

Yep, **Steve Popovich** is popping around for Polygram. **David Lynn Jones'** record is hotter'n a two dollar pistol on the 8th of January. If you haven't heard the album *Hard Times on Easy Street*, surely you have seen the video "Bonnie Jean (Little Sister)" and heard the single on radio. I gotta tell you, the entire album cooks. **David Lynn** is a good writer. His lyrics have a real curve to them.

Then Popovich has **The Cannons**. The duo, managed by **Irby Mandrell**, is stirring up some dust. Struck up some love, too. The brother of the group, **Larry**, recently wed in Oklahoma and honeymooned in Europe. Seems his twin siblings **Karla** and **Donna** vocalized at the knot-tying.

Everybody's favorite Man in Black is adored by millions, including me and Popovich. 50,000 strong turned out to see the great **Johnny Cash** in Seattle recently.

Others under the care of Popovich are **Donna Fargo**, **Tom Kimmel**, **Kris Kristofferson**, **Kathy Mattea**, **The Statlers**, **Marshall Tucker Band**, **Frank Yankovic** and others. A good roster of talent that I hope climb the charts like a fireman saving a pretty lady!

USA'S JUDDS WARBLE FOR USO

Wynonna and **Naomi**, **The Judds**, are set to sing on a USO tour. Lord help us, please. War may break out with them pretty ladies singing for lonely GIs. Their first gig is Guantanamo Naval Base in Cuba. Maybe old Castro will swear peace upon such singing as Wynonna can do.

HIGHER GROUND BY THE FIRST LADY AND HER SUBJECTS

Tammy Wynette, Country Music's First Lady, has a new album out, produced by the golden-eared **Steve Buckingham**. **Buckingham** and **Wynette** called in the cream of the hillbilly crop to harmonize. Subjects include: **Ricky Skaggs**, **Gene Watson**, **Vern Gosdin**, **Emmylou Harris**, **Vince Gill**, **Larry**, **Steve** and **Rudy Gatlin**, **The O'Kanes**, **Ricky Van Shelton**, **Paul Overstreet** and **Rodney**

The Royal Road To Riches

Dear Friend,

My name is John Wright. Not too long ago I was flat broke. I was \$31,000 in debt. The bank repossessed my car because I couldn't keep up with the payments. And one day the landlord gave me an eviction notice because I hadn't paid the rent for three months. So we had to move out. My family and I stayed at my cousin's place for the rest of that month before I could manage to get another apartment. That was very embarrassing.

Things have changed now. I own four homes in Southern California. The one I'm living in now in Beverly Hills is worth more than one million dollars. I own several cars, among them a brand new Mercedes and a brand new Cadillac. Right now, I have a \$1 million dollar line of credit with the banks and have certificates of deposit at \$100,000 each in my bank in Beverly Hills.

Best of all, I have time to have fun. To be me. To do what I want. I work about 4 hours a day, the rest of the day, I do things that please me. Some days I go swimming and sailing — shopping. Other days, I play racquetball or tennis. Sometimes, frankly, I just lie out under the sun with a good book. I love to take long vacations. I just got back from a two week vacation from — Maui, Hawaii.

I'm not really trying to impress you with my wealth. All I'm trying to do here is to prove to you that if it wasn't because of that money secret I was lucky enough to find that day, I still would have been poor or may be even bankrupt. It was only through this amazing money secret that I could pull myself out of debt and become wealthy. Who knows what would have happened to my family and me.

Knowing about this secret changed my life completely. It brought me wealth, happiness, and most important of all — peace of mind. This secret will change your life, too! It will give you everything you need and will solve all your money problems. Of course you don't have to take my word for it. You can try it for yourself. To see that you try this secret, I'm willing to give you \$20.00 in cash. (I'm giving my address at the bottom of this page.) I figure, if I spend \$20.00, I get your attention. And you will prove it to yourself this amazing money secret will work for you, too!

Why, you may ask, am I willing to share this secret with you? To make money? Hardly. First, I already have all the money and possessions I'll ever need. Second, my secret does not involve any sort of competition whatsoever. Third, nothing is more satisfying to me than sharing my secret only with those who realize a golden opportunity and get on it quickly.

This secret is incredibly simple. Anyone can use it. You can get started with practically no money at all and the risk is almost zero. You don't need special training or even a high school education. It doesn't matter how young or old you are and it will work for you at home or even while you are on vacation.

Let me tell you more about this fascinating money making secret:

With this secret the money can roll in fast. In some cases you may be able to cash in literally overnight. If you can follow simple instructions you can get started in a single afternoon and it is possible to have spendable money in your hands the very next morning. In fact, this just might be the fastest *legal* way to make money that has ever been invented!

This is a very safe way to get extra cash. It is practically risk free. It is not a dangerous gamble. Everything you do has already been tested and you can get started for less money than most people spend for a night on the town.

One of the nicest things about this whole idea is that you can do it at home in your spare time. You don't need equipment or an office. It doesn't matter where you live either. You can use this secret to make money if you live in a big city or on a farm or anywhere in between. A husband and wife team from New York used my secret, worked at home in their spare time, and made \$45,000 in one year.

This secret is simple. It would be hard to make a mistake if you tried. You don't need a college degree or even a high school education. All you need is a little common sense and the ability to follow simple, easy, step-by-step instructions. I personally know a man from New England who used this secret and made \$2 million in just 3 years.

You can use this secret to make money no matter how old or how young you may be. There is no physical labor involved and everything is so easy it can be done whether you're a teenager or 90 years old. I know one woman who is over 65 and is making all the money she needs with this secret.

Here's what newspapers and magazines are saying about this incredible secret:

The Washington Times:

The Royal Road to Riches is paved with golden tips.

Los Angeles Herald Examiner:

We've all got to start somewhere... *The Royal Road to Riches* is the first step in the right direction!

National Examiner:

John Wright has an excellent guide for achieving wealth in your spare time.

Income Opportunities:

The Royal Road to Riches is an invaluable guide for finding success in your own back yard.

News Tribune:

Wright's material is a MUST for anyone who contemplates making it as an independent entrepreneur.

Success!

John Wright believes in success, pure and simple.

Money Making Opportunities:

John Wright has a rare gift for helping people with no experience make lots of money. He's made many people wealthy.

Hollywood Trade Press:

We have never heard of an advertiser offering to pay readers \$20 to try its program. Wright's willingness to do this convinces us that his money secret must really work.

California Political Week:

...The politics of high finance made easy.

Hollywood Citizen News:

He does more than give general ideas. He gives people a detailed A to Z plan to make big money.

The Desert Sun:

Wright's *Royal Road to Riches* lives up to its title in offering an uncomplicated path to financial success.

When you use this secret to make money you never have to try to convince anybody of anything. This has nothing to do with door-to-door selling, telephone solicitation, real estate or anything else that involves personal contact.

Everything about this idea is perfectly legal and honest. You will be proud of what you are doing and you will be providing a very valuable service.

It will only take you two hours to learn how to use this secret. After that everything is almost automatic. After you get started you can probably do everything that is necessary in three hours per week.

PROOF

I know you are skeptical. That simply shows your good business sense. Well, here is proof from people who have put this amazing secret into use and have gotten all the money they ever desired. Their initials have been used in order to protect their privacy, but I have full information and the actual proof of their success in my files.

More Money Than I Ever Dreamed

"All I can say — your plan is *great!* In just 8 weeks, I took in over \$100,000. More money than I ever dreamed of making. At this rate, I honestly believe, I can make over a million dollars per year."

A. F., Providence, R.I.

\$9,800 In 24 Hours!

"I didn't believe it when you said the secret could produce money the *next morning*. Boy, was I wrong, and you were right! I purchased your *Royal Road to Riches*. On the basis of your advice, \$9,800 poured in, in less than 24 hours! John, your secret is incredible!"

J. K., Laguna Hills, CA

Made \$15,000 In 2 Months At 22

"I was able to earn over \$15,000 with your plan — in just the past two months. As a 22 year old girl, I never thought that I'd ever be able to make as much money, as fast as I've been able to do. I really do wish to thank you, with all of my heart."

Ms. E. L., Los Angeles, CA

Made \$126,000 In 3 Months

"For years, I passed up all the plans that promised to make me rich. Probably I am lucky I did — but I am even more lucky that I took the time to send for your

material. It changed my whole life. Thanks to you, I made \$126,000 in 3 months."

S. W., Plainfield, IN

Made \$203,000 In 8 Months

"I never believed those success stories... never believed I would be one of them... using your techniques, in just 8 months, I made over \$203,000... made over \$20,000 more in the last 22 days! Not just well prepared, but simple, easy, fast... John, thank you for your *Royal Road to Riches!*"

C. M., Los Angeles, CA

\$500,000 In Six Months

"I'm amazed at my success! By using your secret I made \$500,000 in six months. That's more than twenty times what I've made in any single year before! I've never made so much money in such short time with minimum effort. My whole life I was waiting for this amazing miracle! Thank you, John Wright."

R. S., Melean, VI

As you can tell by now I have come across something pretty good, I believe I have discovered the sweetest little money-making secret you could ever imagine. Remember — I guarantee it.

Most of the time, it takes big money to make money. This is an exception. With this secret you can start in your spare time with almost nothing. But of course, you don't have to start small or stay small. You can go as fast and as far as you wish. The size of your profits is totally up to you. I can't guarantee how much you will make with this secret but I can tell you this — so far this amazing money producing secret makes the profits from most other ideas look like peanuts!

Now at last, I've completely explained this remarkable secret in a special money making plan. I call it "The Royal Road to Riches". Some call it a miracle. You'll probably call it "The Secret of Riches". You will learn everything you need to know step-by-step. So you too can put this amazing money making secret to work for you and make all the money you need.

To prove this secret will solve all your money problems, don't send me any money, *instead postdate* your check for a month and a half from today. I guarantee not to deposit it for 45 days. I won't cash your check for 45 days before I know for sure that you are completely satisfied with my material.

\$20.00 FREE!

There is no way you can lose. You either solve all your money problems with this secret (in just 30 days) or you get your money back *plus \$20.00 in cash FREE!*

Do you realize what this means? You can put my simple secret into use. Be able to solve all your money problems. And if for any reason whatsoever you are not 100% satisfied after using the secret for 30 days, you may return my material. And then I will not only return your original UNCASHED CHECK, but I will also send you an *extra \$20.00 cashiers check* just for giving the secret an honest try according to the simple instructions.

I GUARANTEE IT! With my unconditional guarantee, there is absolutely NO RISK ON YOUR PART.

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Suite 3065
Santa Monica, CA 90405

Since the material I'll be sending you is heavy, please add \$1 to cover portion of shipping costs.

But the supply of my material is limited. So send in your order now while the supply lasts.

If you wish to charge it to your Visa or MasterCard — be sure to include your account number and expiration date. That's all there is to it. I'll send you my material right away by return mail, along with our unconditional guarantee.

SWORN STATEMENT:

"As Mr. John Wright's accountant, I certify that his assets exceed one million dollars."

Mark Davis



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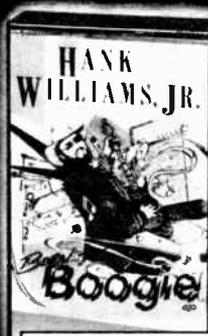
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12 HOT HITS FOR A



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



353250. George Strait—Ocean Front Property. *All My Ex's Live In Texas*, more! (MCA)



357194. Willie Nelson—Island in the Sun. Title cut, *Little Things*, etc. (Columbia)



352633. D. Parton/L. Ronstadt/E. Harris—To Know Him Is To Love Him. (Warner Bros.)



355876. Reba McEntire—Greatest Hits. *What Am I Gonna Do About You*. (MCA)

- 359208 LOVERBOY WILDSIDE
- 359612 ELTON JOHN GREATEST HITS Volumes 3-1979-1987
- 353839 BOB WILLS & TEXAS PLAYBOYS The Golden Era
- 348987 LINDA RONSTADT ROUND MIDNIGHT
- 354878 "PLATOON" AND SONGS FROM THE ERA
- 350058 MEL MCDANIEL JUST CAN'T SIT DOWN MUSIC
- 354738 HOLLY DUNN HOLLY DUNN
- 3551231 THE BEST OF LIBERACE
- 354324 FERRANTE & TEICHER AMERICAN FANTASY
- 340463 THE BEST OF FRANK SINATRA
- 343319 JANET JACKSON CONTROL
- 347153 CYNDI LAUPER TRUE COLORS
- 342608 LIONEL HAMPTON SENTIMENTAL JOURNEY
- 305672 ANNE MURRAY GREATEST HITS
- 346296 JANIE FRICKE BLACK AND WHITE
- 342766 TV'S GREATEST HITS FROM '50'S & '60'S
- 313734 WILLIE NELSON ALWAYS ON MY MIND
- 341958 JOHN CONLEE HARMONY
- 314443 NEIL DIAMOND 12 GREATEST HITS, VOL. II
- 336818 THE NITTY GRITTY DIRT BAND PARTNERS BROTHERS AND FRIENDS
- 314957 STEVIE WONDER'S GREATEST HITS
- 337899 JANIE FRICKE VERY BEST OF JANIE FRICKE
- 314922 THE GOLDEN HITS OF THE EVERLY BROTHERS
- 337998 WILLIE NELSON HALF NELSON
- 315341 LEFTY FRIZZELL
- 338301 GEORGE STRAIT SOMETHING SPECIAL
- 345231 JOHNNY CASH/WAYLON JENNINGS HEROES

- 356139 ANNE MURRAY HARMONY
- 359521 THE CARS DOOR TO DOOR
- 343012 TANYA TUCKER GIRLS LIKE ME
- 343236 WAYLON JENNINGS WILL THE WOLF SURVIVE
- 343004 REBA MCDANIEL WHOEVER'S IN NEW ENGLAND
- 323337 "THE BIG CHILL" ORIGINAL MOTION PICTURE SOUNDTRACK
- 342873 MICHAEL MARTIN MURPHEY TONIGHT WE RIDE
- 321380 BARBRA STREISAND'S GREATEST HITS VOL. 2
- 342360 ANNE MURRAY SOMETHING TO TALK ABOUT
- 321349 CRYSTAL GAYLE GREATEST HITS
- 342253 JOHN SCHNEIDER A MEMORY LIKE YOU
- 320911 JOE COCKER'S GREATEST HITS
- 342097 BARBRA STREISAND THE BROADWAY ALBUM
- 320705 BOB SEGER LIVE BULLET
- 340885 GLEN CAMPBELL IT'S JUST A MATTER OF TIME
- 319981 MISSION: MICHIGAN'S 25 #1 HITS FROM 25 YEARS
- 339911 JIMMY BUFFETT'S GREATEST HITS Songs You Know By Heart!
- 318733 MELISSA MANCHESTER GREATEST HITS
- 339812 STEVE WARINER LIFE'S HIGHWAY
- 318394 M O E B A N D Y GREATEST HITS
- 339481 RICKY SKAGGS LIVE IN LONDON
- 317990 MERLE HAGGARD & WILLIE NELSON PANTHO AND LEFTY
- 339325 MEL MCDANIEL STAND UP
- 317149 DAN FOGELBERG GREATEST HITS
- 339317 SAWYER BROWN S H A K I N
- 344721 LIONEL RICHIE DANCING ON THE CEILING
- 338608 ORIGINAL SOUND TRACK "SWEET DREAMS" Life And Times Of Patsy Cline

- ### CLASSIC ROCK OF THE 60'S & 70'S
- 321067 THE CHARLIE DANIELS BAND A DECADE OF HITS
 - 3080491 CREEDENCE CLEARWATER REVIVAL CHRONICLE 28 Greatest Hits
 - 246888 JIM CROCE PHOTOGRAPHS AND MEMORIES HIS GREATEST HITS
 - 293597 LED ZEPPELIN HOUSES OF THE HOLY
 - 287003 EAGLES GREATEST HITS 1971-1975
 - 345793 STEVE EARLE GUITAR TOWN
 - 323774 KENNY ROGERS TWENTY GREATEST HITS
 - 345785 "T O P G U N" ORIGINAL SOUNDTRACK
 - 326629 BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN BORN IN THE U.S.A.
 - 345777 PETER GABRIEL SO
 - 328609 JUICE NEWTON GREATEST HITS
 - 345751 PAUL SIMON GRACELAND
 - 329235 BARBARA BAKEL/RENEE GREENWOOD "MEANT FOR EACH OTHER"
 - 345744 THE BEST OF THE NITTY GRITTY DIRT BAND Twenty Years Of Dirt
 - 330738 PROFILE II: THE BEST OF EMMYLOU HARRIS
 - 346288 RAY CHARLES FROM THE PAGES OF MY MIND
 - 331934 THE BEST OF BILL COSBY
 - 346312 BILLY JOEL THE BRIDGE
 - 334409 VARIOUS ARTISTS 15 TOP TEN HITS FROM THE '60'S & '70'S (GEM SET)
 - 334541 DIANA ROSS & THE SUPREMES 25th Anniversary Album
 - 334466 GEORGE STRAIT GREATEST HITS
 - 345389 GEORGE STRAIT # 7
 - 334607 CARPENTERS YESTERDAY ONE MORE
 - 344622 ANITA BAKER R A P T U R E
 - 335067 WAYLON JENNINGS, WILLIE NELSON, JOHNNY CASH, REUBEN KNEIBT/TERESA HIGHTWAYMAN
 - 344614 DWIGHT YOAKAM GUITARS, CADILLACS, ETC.
 - 318493 LYNRYD SKYNYRD BEST OF THE REST
 - 219477 SIMON & GARFUNKEL'S GREATEST HITS
 - 306241 THE DOORS GREATEST HITS
 - 286740 LINDA RONSTADT GREATEST HITS
 - 291278 THE DOOBIE BROTHERS BEST OF THE DOOBIES
 - 335638 BARRY MANILOW THE MANILOW COLLECTION TWENTY CLASSIC HITS
 - 346635 EXILE GREATEST HITS
 - 335935 ROSANNE CASH RHYTHM AND ROMANCE
 - 346536 THEN AND NOW THE BEST OF THE MONKEES
 - 336222 DIRE STRAITS BROTHERS IN ARMS
 - 346510 THE FORESTER SISTERS PERFUME, RIBBONS & PEARLS
 - 336321 REBA MCDANIEL HAVE I GOT A DEAL FOR YOU
 - 346485 MEMORIES WITH LAWRENCE WELK
 - 336396 BILLY JOEL GREATEST HITS Volumes 1 & 2
 - 346155 "THE WIZARD OF OZ" ORIGINAL SOUNDTRACK
 - 336669 STING THE DREAM OF THE BLUE TURTLES
 - 346122 T. G. SHEPPARD IT STILL RAINS IN MEMPHIS
 - 354464 OAK RIDGE BOYS WHERE THE FAST LANE ENDS
 - 345868 GENE WATSON STARTING NEW MEMORIES
 - 354720 SCHUYLER, KNOBLOCH & OVERSTREET—SKO
 - 346478 M A D O N N A TRUE BLUE
 - 354845 JUDY RODMAN A PLACE CALLED LOVE
 - 346445 THE BEACH BOYS MADE IN U.S.A.
 - 354860 CONWAY TWITTY BORDERLINE
 - 344697 THE WHITES GREATEST HITS
 - 354902 FLEETWOOD MAC TANGO IN THE NIGHT

- 359273 "38 SPECIAL "FLASHBACK"
- 356279 GLORIA ESTEFAN & MIAMI SOUND MACHINE LET IT LOOSE
- 346957 STEVE WINWOOD BACK IN THE HIGH LIFE
- 354910 NITTY GRITTY DIRT BAND HOLD ON
- 346965 RANDY TRAVIS STORMS OF LIFE
- 353540 RONNIE MCDOWELL OLDER WOMEN AND OTHER GREATEST HITS
- 347047 HANK WILLIAMS, JR. MONTANA CAFE
- 350124 JOHN ANDERSON CONFIRMED
- 347104 T. GRAHAM BROWN I TELL IT LIKE IT USED TO BE
- 350173 HANK WILLIAMS, JR. THE EARLY YEARS
- 347161 AMY GRANT THE COLLECTION
- 350272 MARIE OSMOND I ONLY WANTED YOU
- 347187 ROY ORBISON EVERYBODY HAS ALL TIME GREATEST HITS
- 352294 LOS LOBOS—BY THE LIGHT OF THE MOON
- 347237 AIR SUPPLY HEARTS IN MOTION
- 352369 DAVID ALLAN COE A MATTER OF LIFE AND DEATH
- 347427 MICKEY GILLEY ONE AND ONLY
- 348979 TINA TURNER BREAK EVERY RULE
- 347757 THE KENDALLS FIRE AT FIRST SIGHT
- 353383 M O E B A N D Y YOU HAVEN'T HEARD THE LAST OF ME
- 347955 HUEY LEWIS AND THE NEWS FORE!
- 353490 RAY STEVENS GREATEST HITS
- 348110 BUDDY HOLLY 398115 FROM THE ORIGINAL MASTER TAPES
- 353482 GREGG ALLMAN BAND I'M NO ANGEL
- 138586 BOB DYLAN'S GREATEST HITS
- 351486 ANDY WILLIAMS CLOSE ENOUGH FOR LOVE
- 187088 BARBRA STREISAND'S GREATEST HITS

- 356113 M HAGGARD/JONES/W. NELSON WALKING THE LINE
- 356287 SUZANNE VEGA SOLITUDE STANDING
- 352179 VARIOUS ARTISTS TRUE ROMANCE A COLLECTION OF GREAT LOVE SONGS
- 3113731 LENA HORNE THE LADY AND HER MUSIC LIVE ON BROADWAY
- 359679 MEL MCDANIEL MEL MCDANIEL GREATEST HITS
- 311001 WILLIE NELSON'S GREATEST HITS (READ SOMETHING THAT WILL BE)
- 359539 T.G. SHEPPARD ONE FOR THE MONEY
- 310219 JOHNNY MATHIS THE FIRST 25 YEARS THE SAVIEST SONGS PART 2 ALBUM
- 359620 EXILE SHELTER FROM THE STORM
- 291427 THE BEST OF BREAD
- 3511481 STEVIE RAY VAUGHAN AND DOUBLE TROUBLE LIVE ALIVE
- 291302 JAMES TAYLOR'S GREATEST HITS
- 352641 STAND BY ME THE BEST OF BEN, KING AND BOB B. KING WITH THE DRIFTERS
- 252445 THE LETTERMEN ALL-TIME GREATEST HITS
- 355255 MICHAEL MARTIN MURPHEY AMERICANA
- 256560 CAT STEVENS GREATEST HITS
- 355115 PRINCE SIGN O' THE TIMES
- 252387 THE BEST OF NAT KING COLE
- 359190 MERLE HAGGARD & WILLIE NELSON THE SEASHORES OF OLD MEXICO
- 321307 AIR SUPPLY GREATEST HITS
- 359794 DAVE MASON GREATEST HITS
- 236885 CARPENTERS THE SINGLES 1969-1973
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**359307. Crystal Gayle/
Gary Morris**—What If We
Fall In Love. Title hit, etc.
(Warner Bros.)

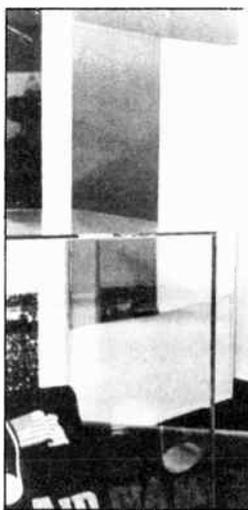


359158. Highway 101.
Whiskey, If You Were A
Woman, etc. (Warner
Bros.)



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

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| 358507 WHO'S THAT GIRL ORIGINAL SOUND TRACK | 356808 STEVE EARLE & THE DUKE EXIT O | 357988 THE CHARLIE DANIELS BAND/ POWDER KEG | 356154 WHITNEY HOUSTON WHITNEY | 357467 SAMMY HAGAR GATEWAY | 357087 GRATEFUL DEAD IN THE DARK |
| 356873 THE OUTFIELD BANGIN' | 357939 L.A. BAMB A ORIGINAL SOUNDTRACK | 356675 BEVERLY HILLS COP II ORIGINAL SOUND TRACK | 357863 BARBRA STREISAND ONE VOICE | 356667 HEART BAD ANIMALS | 357616 THE BEST OF THE DOORS |
| 355305 JANIE FRICKIE AFTER MIDNIGHT | 349571 BOSTON THIRD STAGE | 357681 DESERT ROSE BAND FEATURING CHRIS WILLIAMS John Jorgensen, Herb Pedersen | 352427 TAMMY WYNETTE ANNIVERSARY 20 YEARS OF HISS | 350041 SAWYER BROWN OUT GOIN' CATTIN' | 349548 REBA MCDENTIRE WHAT AM I GONNA DO ABOUT YOU |
| 348318 THE POLICE EVERY BREATH YOU TAKE THE SINGLES | 356915 MASON RUFFNER GYPSY BLOOD | 352757 CHARLY McCLAIN STILL I STAY | 348235 RAY STEVENS SURELY YOU JOUST | 353565 THE WHITES AIN'T NO BINDS | 351478 THE O'KAYNES |
| 355420 GENE WATSON HONKY TONK CRAZY | 349233 THE GATLIN BROTHERS LARRY STEVE RUBY PARTNERS | 357772 TOM PETTY & HEARTBREAKERS LET ME UP IF IVE HAD ENOUGH | 354076 JOHN CONLEE AMERICAN FACES | 352252 HANK WILLIAMS, JR. HANK "LIVE" | 349985 JUNNY WATKINS/HENRY MANCINI THE HOLLYWOOD MUSICALS |
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WILLIE SCORES AGAIN

With the continued success of the Nelson Exhibit at the Hall of Fame, the decision to hold it over until 1988. Willie reminisced as he memories with BMI Executive Officer Franc

ROY CLARK DEBUTS

It had to be five, maybe six. Carol and Mary Beth work for Roy Clark, said that anything in the world I wanted to be a member of the Opry. I casually mention places but nothing happens there was an opportunity, I would. I am positive that had absolutely nothing to do with the fact that Roy Clark was fitting and proper, the way King Roy Acuff introduced Clark the night Clark joined the Grand Ole Opry stage. Roy. Can you dig it!

RODMAN ADDS BYRD

Guitarist Byrd Burton joined Rodman's band. Also Davis.

EARL SCRUGGS HAD HIS

Banjoist Earl Scruggs was born in his hometown, Flint Hill, Tennessee, recently. (Now we know that great instrumental was his!) Scruggs' three-fingered banjo added a unique twang to music in the mid-1940's.

child, an infant daughter. She's not a California native, she has no relatives by the name of Wayne or anything else in the music business, and she wasn't christened Juice; she was born into a Navy family in Virginia Beach, Virginia, and christened Judy Kay Newton. She doesn't know exactly where "Juice" came from, but it was somewhere back there in her childhood.

Juice wasn't a country kid. Her father was an officer whose assignments moved the family only three times during her childhood, so basically she grew up in a relatively stable middle-class kind of environment with a military twist. Neither was she a country-oriented kid—Hank and Patsy and George and Tammy didn't penetrate her consciousness at all—or for that matter a rock 'n' roll kid; she absorbed a lot of the rhythm-and-blues her older brothers listened to, but her own active interest in music developed when she and a group of her friends got acoustic guitars and started learning the songs of Bob Dylan, Pete Seeger, and other mid-1960's "folkies" from songbooks. "It was mostly four-chord stuff—you know, pretty easy. You could sound pretty good without knowing a lot." Rock 'n' roll came later, once the Rolling Stones had established themselves as the kings of youth music in these United States, and country-rock and country-country came even after that, when she was already singing for a living out in California. Basically, then Juice's musical education, an ongoing progress from folk to rock to country-rock to whatever fit, was that of the typical middle-class American Baby Boomer.

Her progress after high school was also typical: though she grew up with a great fondness for animals and had considered becoming a veterinarian, she opted instead for a Northern California college education in the liberal arts. After college, however, she diverged from the path most of her friends took. The guitar didn't go into the closet, to be brought out occasionally at parties or in teen-nostalgic moments. It became the tool of her trade.

She was a part-time musician at first, waiting tables in the bars where she also sang, but gradually—notably after she met Otha Young, the musician and songwriter who is still her professional partner today—music began to yield enough money to support her full time. It was at this point, incidentally, that she started investigating real country music, studying Patsy Cline and Brenda Lee records because club owners would hear her Virginia twang when she talked, and mark her for a hillbilly singer.

She and Otha worked as a duet or in a trio or with a band, performing a combination of classic folk/country/rock songs and their own original material—

never Top 40 cover tunes—on the Northern California club/bar/coffeehouse circuit.

"We were always able to make a good living from performances," says Juice. "We worked a lot of clubs and a lot of bars, and we always got good jobs. We paid a lot of attention to our music, we did a lot of original music, and we could hold an audience. That's what the club owners wanted; they wanted the customers to stay in their bar and drink. We did that for them, and we just got better all the time."

There came a point when Juice and Otha and their Silver Spur band realized they'd gone as far as they could; they'd done very well, and become big fish in a small pond. To progress—to make the leap into the music industry big time—they had to move to New York, Los Angeles or Nashville. Strictures in their relocation budget dictated the choice: Los Angeles, just a few hundred miles down the coast.

It was a fortunate choice, for at that point in pop-musical time, the mid-1970's, Los Angeles was where a disproportionate amount of it was at. And it was right up Juice's alley: the solid gold folk/rock/country boom led by the Eagles, Linda Ronstadt *et al.* Juice and Silver Spur connected with RCA Records without an unusually arduous struggle.

They were hardly an overnight sensation. A single from their first album, *Juice Newton and Silver Spur*, made it to the country charts, but the second album, *When the Dust Settles*, flopped more or less completely.

Juice was not discouraged, however. "The recording contract didn't do a great deal, and the records themselves hardly did anything," she explains, "but all the same we were very fortunate. Every once in a while we'd get these big pluses, you see—such as the recording contract, and the records. Those things were important. They boosted our egos, they were encouraging. They gave us staying power."

Behind this observation is a steady sense of reality. "A lot of artistic personalities are very delicate," Juice observes. "They can't handle the amount of stress and disappointment that comes with this business. I'm not like that. I've always known that the music business is a hard row to hoe. There are only so many record companies and so many contracts available. It's a limited field, and frankly, I think that luck and timing are the most crucial factors in a lot of careers."

Juice is well equipped to cope with such uncertainties. "I have a great deal of stress, but I handle it," she says. "I manage it, whatever that means. 'I vent it. If I'm not happy with somebody about something, I make my feelings

"There were goals I set for myself early on, and I wanted to achieve them before becoming a mother."

known; I've always been good at speaking my mind. And I've gotten better that way, too—I can identify and vent stress more quickly these days, get it over with. Also I've learned more about what's important and what's not; what to get excited about, and what will work itself out."

Listening to her, I recall hearing somewhere that she once described herself as "happily pessimistic." Would she still say that, I ask?

"Oh, yes. That's correct. I'm prepared for the worst, but I don't expect it. I know there are going to be problems, so I'm prepared for them. It doesn't blow me out of the water when something goes wrong."

Two points about that statement. First, the problematical stage of Juice's career is quite obviously over. It ended when, after three more commercially lackluster albums on the Capitol label, she connected with producer Richard Landis to make *Juice*, her three-hit platinum breakthrough album, in 1981. Second, we now have a fair idea of what kind of character we're dealing with.

What it comes down to is that Juice Newton is a combination of elements usually unassociated with each other. "An intelligent tornado" is an accurate description; so's "a contained explosion."

But she describes herself best. "Yes, I'd say I'm driven," she says, "but I'm not an A-Type personality, the heart attack type. I just move around a lot. I'm always in motion on stage, and I'm like that in life too. I'm like a wildcat; I run at a very high energy level."



In practice this means that when she's not recording or touring or doing music business business, she's taking care of her daughter Jessica, playing polo with her husband (the aptly named Tom Goodstead, a professional polo player and owner of the star-studded Los Angeles Equestrian Center), riding her own horses and ministering to them and her three dogs and two cats, lifting weights three times a week, doing 150 pushups per day, running six miles two or three times a week during which she also checks out what's happening in radioland on her Walkman, zipping around in her Jeep (another entry point to radioland), playing racquetball regularly, and doing housework. That last activity seems to strike even her as a touch strange in light of everything else she does. "I still do it, even though we've had a live-in helper since Jessica was born," she says. "I mean, I'll clean the pool."

All of this, of course, means that "well, yes, I'm very fit," which may in turn explain why, a mere six months after she crushed a vertebra in a riding accident, she is able to continue her ultradynamic lifestyle with only the occasional twinge of pain—on the other hand, maybe she just got very, very lucky; crushed vertebrae are no respecters of marvelous muscle tone. Also, with her kind of interest in physical health and addiction to action, it's not at all surprising when she says that she has never had a problem with drink or drugs: "Well, we've all experimented along the way, but basically I've never really had time for that. I actually enjoy feeling normal; I don't need to escape, or mask what's going on in me, and I never

have."

This is all beginning to suggest a solution to what I perceive as Juice's lack-of-image problem—Aha! *The Jane Fonda of Country, fit as a fiddle and sharp as a tack in mind, body, career and spirit!*—but I have the vestigial wisdom to avoid suggesting the notion to Juice. Instead I wonder to myself how she fits Jessica into her life, then realize what a dumb question that is, and ask her instead whether the decision to have a baby was a difficult one.

"Well, it wasn't difficult," she says. "It was more a question of 'When?' than 'Whether.' It was an issue of security, really—not financial security, but of being secure enough in my music, in my career. There were goals I set for myself early on, and I wanted to achieve them before becoming a mother."

Which, obviously, she has. Now she finds motherhood truly inspiring: "I've always loved to watch things grow—plants, animals—and I can't really tell you how much more wonderful it is to see that in a *child*. It keeps you young yourself, you know. I'd strongly advise it for anyone who's thinking about it; I'm going to have another."

Motherhood, she figures, will have little effect on how she runs her career. She's already shifted a lot of the business end of things from her own shoulders. She's looking around for a manager who doesn't also have the responsibility of producing her and other people's records, as Richard Landis does. And, when she starts touring to support her latest album, she's planning road excursions of three weeks at a time rather than six or eight.

All of this is just practical stuff, easily

managed "once you know what's essential for you to do yourself, and what someone else can do for you. You just *think* you don't have enough time, you see; in reality, you do."

If all this clearheadedness suggests a character more sensible than spontaneous or passionate—which in theory it does, at least on paper via Juice's analysis of herself to a reporter—the music suggest otherwise quite strongly. Juice's music leaves you in no doubt whatsoever that she's feeling what she's singing. I mean, here's a woman who puts a song *across*.

That's always been true of Juice's performances, even before she found a genuinely sympathetic record-making partner in Richard Landis, and it's a quality she's kept now that she's successful; her most recent and aptly titled album, *Emotion*, is clearly the most subtle and variously emotive record she has made. And that's nice. It's encouraging when you hear somebody with their head so obviously screwed on right feel their heart breaking—or their knees shaking, or their anger rising—when they get in front of a microphone. Not surprisingly, Juice knows that this is the source of her appeal as an artist just as she knows that the source of her career success is a combination of effort, persistence, timing and luck. As in most other things, she opts for the strength of reality over the illusions of ego.

"I've never thought that I have a beautiful voice. I know I'm not a great singer in a technical sense," she says. "But I'm an emotional singer, I'm a *real* singer. And that makes up for a lot."

Sure does. ■



During his long career, Kenny Rogers has learned which elements keep him successful. He's passed the point where he has to prove himself, so today he can enjoy the fruits of his labors.

Creative hobbies and family interspersed with concerts keep him happy. And his fans feel good, too.

Kenny Rogers has been talking about *The Gambler III*, a TV-movie product with which he seems well pleased—it's about an interesting subject, the last gasps of the Sioux Nation in the 1880's; it features much fun with an educational twist; and it's full of good actors who make *him* look good—and now he's talking about his new photography book.

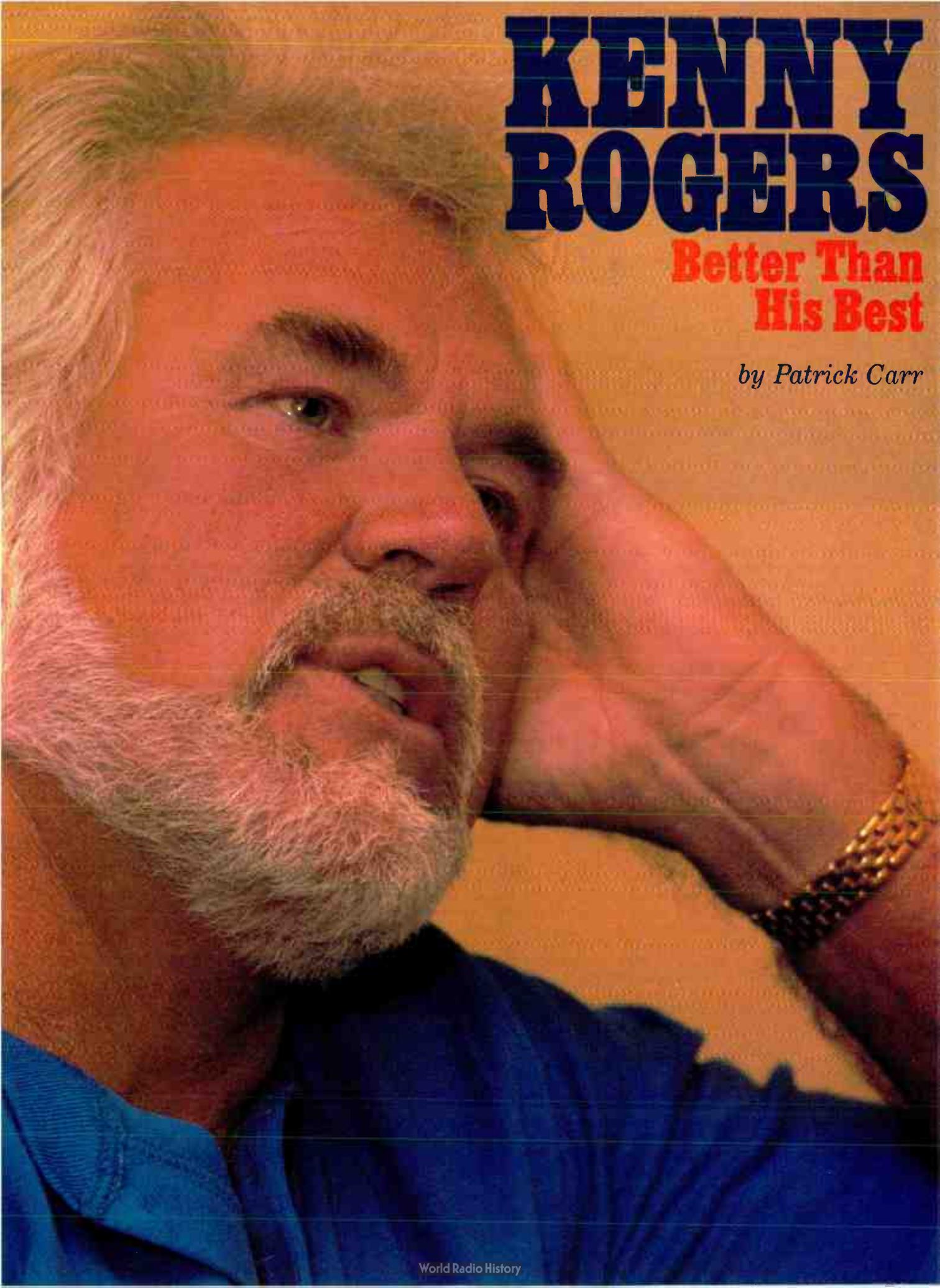
Again, he seems pleased with both the project and the final product. For a year and a bit he went half crazy enticing distinguished persons of all sorts, everyone from Ronald Reagan to Muhammad Ali to Clint Eastwood to Little Richard to Dolly Parton, within portrait-posing range of his 8 × 10 view camera. He posed them in all kinds of settings in all manner of just-so lighting setups, taking infinite care with props and costumes and a hundred other

details when he could, winging it when he couldn't, and then he made no more than ten exposures per subject, taking up no more than half an hour of each person's valuable time (except, that is, for Linda Gray and Linda Evans, with whom he worked all day).

He didn't make the prints himself because, after experiencing far more sore-throat problems than any singer should even consider trying to live with, he'd discovered that he was allergic to the chemical fixer used in the printing process. But he did supervise the work, and he got the best help available; the final duotone laser publication prints were made by the man who prepares all the great Ansell Adams' work.

After all that expenditure of creative and organizational energy, he ended up with a book of 70 very superior, often magnificent portraits rendered with

CHRISTOPHER WRIGHT



KENNY ROGERS

**Better Than
His Best**

by Patrick Carr



stunning quality. Really—by any standards, including those by which critics judge the work of the world's premier professional photographers, *Your Friends and Mine* is a genuinely impressive, exciting collection. Ole Kenny is one hell of a photographer, and his book is a testament to a powerful creative force at work.

I ask him about that, about how the creative energy so obvious in those photographs relates to the rest of his life, specifically his main job: making music.

"Well, it's a great creative outlet for me," he begins. He talks fast and precisely, with a sure sense of knowing his own mind. "The beauty of doing a book, you see, is that I have someplace to store my pictures—what else am I going to do with them, hang them on the wall? But really, I *need* that type of outlet. I need to get away from music so that when I come back to it, I'll enjoy it."

With no further prompting, he locates the issue squarely within the context of something Kenny Rogers is always ready to talk about: his career philosophy.

"You see, there are people who make music 95% of their lives," he says. "That's all well and good as long as music's going well—but the minute the music quits, 95% of your life is gone. So you have to balance it out with other things that interest you. Then, when the music's over, it's not as painful. You have another source of relief and release. That's what photography means to me: something I can do when music is no longer available to me. There's no age limit on photography, you see."

"There's an age limit on music?" I ask, thinking to myself that if there is, the single most likely exception to it, a performer whose immense success is less dependent on the projection of youthful vitality than that of any other international megastar—a performer, in fact, whose whole attractiveness resides in his easy, well-rounded maturity—is sitting in front of me.

"There's no question that the day will come when I can't do this anymore," he replies. "But then, when I look at Sinatra...but all the same, my whole thing is that I live my life based on the probability, not the possibility. The possibility is that I'll be the exception, like Sinatra is or Elvis could have been. But the probability is that I'll have my run at the top, have my tenure, then be forgotten like everybody else.

"The way it works is this, you see. If you live your life on the probability, and the possibility happens, it's gravy. If you live your life on the possibility, and the probability happens, you're never ready."

And there you have it. The Kenny Rogers philosophy, and character, in a nutshell.

The biography of our hero is familiar enough checkout-counter material for us to forego description in favor of comment. To wit, the man's whole story can be reduced to three elements: levelheadedness, perseverance, and insecurity.

The first quality must have been there from the start. Unlike the majority of his peers in the Houston ghetto in which

he was raised, Kenny eschewed the immediate glitter on an arsenal of intoxicants in favor of the more difficult but promising rewards of sports and music. And while his first semi-professional adventures in the music trade with a high school doo-wop cover band called The Scholars were designed simply—and one gathers successfully—to obtain access to girls he couldn't otherwise get near, and his first real success, the 1956 million-selling single "Crazy Feeling," left him flapping around confusedly in an utterly unfamiliar environment, he steadied down real fast.

He had some help, some very sound advice. It was communicated to him at the age of 18 in the coffee shop of the Thunderbird Hotel in Las Vegas by a jazzman called Kirby Stone, and it went like this: "This business is more than just wet towels and naked women. It's a *business*, and if you treat it that way, you can make a living for a long time. How successful you'll be is another thing, but you *can* make a living. If the show starts at eight o'clock, start it at eight o'clock. Be careful what you do in front of your audience. Give them their money's worth as best you can." And other practical, long-view stuff like that.

Kenny didn't have to heed such words—thousands of cocky, hot-burning young music business firebrands throw away similar truths along with their future royalties, past loyalties, used groupies and intoxicant-sensitive bodily organs—but he's the kind of steady character who would, so he did. And because he did, now he can sit back

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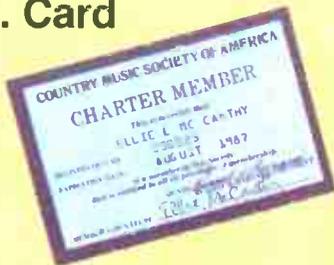
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Russell D. Barnard

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CMSA President

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CMSA NEWSLETTER OF THE COUNTRY MUSIC SOCIETY OF AMERICA JANUARY/FEBRUARY 1988—EDITOR, HELEN BARNARD

Newsletter

REVIEWS & FEATURES

A Grab Bag—Part Two / A Radio Special—Part One

Now that's a mouthful. Let me explain...

Back in May/June 1987, we published our first Grab Bag of Good Reactions issue of the *Newsletter*. Now, in honor of the new year, it's time for another.

We love to hear from you. You know that—we say it often enough. Plus, you can see that the *Newsletter* is made up of your words and drawings and inquiries. So keep those cards and letters coming.

In addition to your reactions to various things, we begin a two-part update of one of the CMSA's favorite topics: country music on

the radio, who is playing what and why, and what are some of your favorite stations. Leading off this first half of a two-part section which we will conclude next issue is a feature on the Academy of Country Music's 1987 Radio Station of the Year, Buck Owens' own KNIX of Phoenix, Arizona. Included also a report on Bev King's survey of stations that play traditional country music and a few words from one of you readers. More stations and more words from readers next time.

Happy New Year to all.

Calling Reba McEntire

Member Reba Morris has an idea for a new kind of club that would include a famous singer and perhaps some others, too! This letter is written partly to Reba McEntire and partly to Country Music Magazine.

Is it against the rules or can you send me the address of Reba McEntire? My name is also Reba Nell (McNeely—and now Morris). I was born near Mayfield, Kentucky, right smack dab in hillbilly country.

I have thought of writing Reba for some-time. I know she is busy and on the run all the time, but I wanted her to know that she wasn't the only Reba Nell Mc... from the south who likes country music. If we can find more, we could have us a very distinct club. I'm sure she is much younger than I, for I was 70 years old the fourteenth of January 1987. At least we partly share the name.

My family played a lot of hillbilly music when I was growing up in Kentucky. My mother picked a guitar and sang those old ballads for many a year. My older brother played a violin and another brother played a mandolin, saw blade, spoons or anything he could get his hands on. I played the piano and we had a band in the family. We also had lots of company that came to play music with us, especially on the weekends.

We never performed anywhere except that when my brothers came to Detroit, they played in Ford's band. They worked for Henry Ford and played in the Ford band in Highland Park, Michigan.

Reba Nell, I sure do love your music, and all country music in general. I have several of your tapes. Keep up the good works. I'll



Reba Nell McNeely Morris would like to meet Reba Nell McEntire.

think of you often and wish you the best. I sure do like your name, don't you?

I hope you get this.

Reba Nell Morris
Lincoln Park, Michigan

We sent this letter to Reba McEntire at her fan club address, Star Route, Stringtown, Oklahoma 74569. Any other Reba Nell Mc...s out there?—Ed.

More on Independent Record Dealers...a Thank You Note

Dear Helen:

Now that the excitement has calmed down some, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for featuring King's Record Shop in the September/October *Newsletter*. We think the story was great and along with the Rosanne Cash affair, we have been swamped with mail and calls.

I appreciate your interest and hope to be of some service to you in the future.

Brother Pee Wee says he knows your husband real well and sends his best.

Gene King
Louisville, Kentucky

We will call on you.—H.B.

...and Another Store Recommendation

I'm a collector of hard-to-find and out-of-print records. While in Nashville, where I take my vacations, I found a record shop where, when my family and I went in, a man and woman greeted us as if we were friends that they hadn't seen in a long time.

The people were Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence. The shop has the air of friends and you feel welcome. Mr. Lawrence is right there to help you and answer questions that you might have. I would recommend this shop. They also have mail order.

I've been back there four times, and the Lawrences remember us every time. The shop is **Lawrence Brothers, Western Store and Record Shop, 409 Broadway, Nashville, Tennessee 37203.**

Bruce Davis
Palestine, Texas

In This Issue

- Readers' Reactions
- A Radio Special
- Readers Create
- Collections



Rose Maddox Celebrates 50 Years in Show Business

Thanks to Johnny Bond of Cudahy, Wisconsin, for this report on Rose and Fred Maddox's celebration of 50 years performing held in Nevada City, California, last August. Plus his update on Marvin Rainwater and the address of still another independent record store.

This August I flew out to California to



Rose Maddox celebrates 50 years in show business in California.

attend the 50 Years in Country Music Show for Rose Maddox and her brother Fred. It was held at the American Victorian Museum in Nevada City, California, on August 15th—that day was also Rose's birthday. She was 62. They had about a half-dozen cakes, and Rose helped cut and serve several of them.

Some of the people on the show were Bonnie Owens, Hoyt Axton and Chester Smith. Rose's brother played the ole slap bass and tore the audience apart with his jokes and songs. To see Rose and Fred perform together is something special.

Rose had just returned from Europe this summer where she says she packed them in every night. She says the fans were mostly younger people who wanted to hear the pure, traditional country music. She says they knew some of her old songs that she hasn't done in years. She also told me that she has just cut a new album with Desert Rose. A label or time of release is unsure yet.

Number two, you mentioned Marvin Rainwater in your *Newsletter* a couple of times. Well, I got to see him perform in September. He was in Grafton, Wisconsin, at McCormick's 11 Ballroom. He put on a real good show. It was my first time to see him. He is a real good singer. I got to talk to him after the show. He was planning to go to Germany in October to perform. He says the same thing that Rose did. The European fans like the traditional country music. He says they know songs of his, too, that he forgot about.

Number three, you just did an article on where to buy country records or participate in auctions. I have been buying old country records through auctions from John Tefteller. He sends lists in the mail every now and then. When he says mint condition, it's mint. I just got some old Buck Owens

albums from around 1960 or 1961. One was still in the plastic. His address is *Mr. and Mrs. John Tefteller, P.O. Box 1727, Grants Pass, Oregon 97526.*

Well, got to go. I think I wrote enough! Enjoy the magazine and keep up the good work.

**Johnny Bond
Cudahy, Wisconsin**

The Maddox Brothers and Rose were featured in Legends of Country Music in the September/October 1984 Newsletter. As for the album with Desert Rose, John Jorgenson has been producing some sides with Rose Maddox. What's to become of them is not known at the moment. —Ed.

Freddy Powers Album Available



Karen Winter, president of the Freddy Powers Fan Club, announces the availability of the country jazzman's latest, *The Country Jazz Singer*, for \$10.00 (includes postage and handling) through the *F.P. Fan Club, Box 26064, Wauwatosa, Wisconsin 53226.* Freddy has worked with Willie

Nelson and Merle Haggard and wrote such songs as "Friend in California" and "Natural High," included on the album along with 12 others.

According to Karen, radio station KRTZ in Cortez, Colorado, has been giving the album a lot of airplay, with tremendous response. Any KRTZ listeners out there?

—H.B.



NOVEMBER 1987 POLL Album and Single of the Month

George Strait *Ocean Front Property*
George Strait "Am I Blue?"

George Strait reigns supreme in CMSA hearts this month, with a double win, both album and single. For more on George, see special on country music radio in this *Newsletter* and see People section in *Country Music*. Second in albums is Randy Travis with *Always and Forever*, third is Reba McEntire with *Greatest Hits*. Second in singles is also Randy, with "I Won't Need You Anymore (Always and Forever)," third is Ricky Van Shelton with "Somebody Lied."

Sonny Boy and the Loden Family as they appeared with Jack McCoy on radio station WJDX in Jackson, Mississippi, in the 1940's. L. to r., Pop and Ma Loden, McCoy, Sonny Boy and sisters.



HISTORIC PHOTOS

Sonny James as Sonny Loden

Here's a glimpse into Sonny James' past from Mildred Fortenberry of Mississippi.

I am enclosing a photo of Sonny James when he was known as Sonny Boy Loden. At that time he and his parents and sisters were performing at the schools in our area. I believe it was in the early 1940's. Back then there were many elementary schools, and I remember them being at Leesburg and Henry Grady Schools in Rankin County.

Mildred Fortenberry
Pelahatchie, Mississippi

Johnny Hicks Country Gold Club

Norma Lucas of Seaside, California, has a historic photo to add to our CMSA collection, plus news about an innovative disk jockey of the 1940's and 1950's who is still active today.

Johnny Hicks celebrated his 50th anniversary in broadcasting in 1987. Norma also has some record dealers to recommend.

I'm President of the Johnny Hicks Country Gold Club and a member of the Country Music Society of America. I enjoy the *Newsletter* and the historic pictures. I came

across one of Johnny Hicks that I thought you might be interested in. The picture was taken in 1956 backstage at the *Big D Jamboree* by Dusty Borelson of South Dakota.

Johnny Hicks was the disk jockey for the *Hilbilly Hit Parade* on station KRLD in Dallas, Texas, in 1948. Then in 1949 he originated the name of the *Big D Jamboree* and was the master of ceremonies until late 1959. Such stars as Faron Young, Johnny Cash, Billy Walker, Hank Williams, Hank Thompson and Elvis Presley got their start on this *Big D Jamboree*.

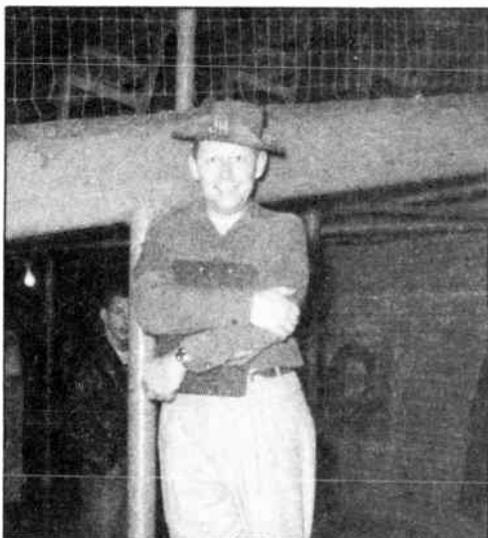
In April of 1987, Johnny Hicks celebrated his 50th anniversary in broadcasting. He now has his own *Country Gold Show* on KTOM-AM in Salinas, California. He plays two hours of the older country music each Sunday evening from 5-7 P.M. That's what our club is all about. We are trying in some way to preserve the older country music and keep it alive.

I also have a couple of addresses of record dealers that I'm sending along. They deal in bluegrass and country music. Also they have hard-to-find records and a lot of reissues: *County Sales, Box 191, Floyd, Virginia 24091* and *Old Homestead Records, Box 100, Brighton, Michigan 48116*.

Keep up the good work.

Norma Lucas
Seaside, California

For more information about the club, or to join, write Norma Lucas at Box 1310, Seaside, California 93955. -Ed.



Johnny Hicks then and now: left, the disk jockey in 1956; right, Hicks today.

DUSTY BORELSON

COUNTRY RADIO: A SPECIAL TWO-PART SECTION

How did KNIX in Phoenix, Arizona, the ACM's Radio Station of the Year in 1987, get started? What makes it tick today? Here's what we found out. Plus a word from Bev King of Madill, Oklahoma, on how her survey of stations playing traditional country music on the

radio turned out. Bev is a specialist in preserving traditional country music.

We also include a few well-chosen words from a reader in California. More stations and more letters next time.



Award-Winning Station Tells How It's Done

Twenty years ago, Buck Owens bought radio station KNIX in his old hometown of Phoenix, Arizona, making him owner of two stations, one in Bakersfield, one in Phoenix. Today, two Owens sons are involved in KNIX-FM/AM, Michael as General Manager and Buddy as Music Director. Larry Daniels, General Program Manager, worked with Buck at KUZZ, the Bakersfield station, before coming to KNIX in 1971. Larry gave Michael lessons in how to be a deejay when Michael was a teenager.

The station has a coherent philosophy which involves a lot of interaction with its audience.

In 1987, the year KNIX celebrated its twentieth anniversary, it was honored by the Academy of Country Music as Radio Station of the Year. Out of 2,200 radio stations broadcasting country music fulltime in the U.S., the ACM electors picked KNIX as the station best presenting country music to its audience and best supporting country music overall.

Here Buddy Owens, Music Director, discusses how the playlist is developed. Then Larry Daniels talks about how he initiated listener surveys when he first joined the station.

At KNIX our music is chosen by committee. By this I mean the music director, me; the Program Director, R. J. Curtis, and General Program Manager Larry Daniels all sit in on each music meeting. I guess the first question we ask ourselves is, "Does it sound like KNIX?" This is the most important aspect in our music selection. We do weekly research, phoneout and mailout, on the music as well as in other areas, such as



KNIX was proud to get George Strait to endorse the station on TV. With George are Larry Daniels and Michael Owens.

artist popularity studies, music perception studies and lots more. It is because of this research that we feel we have a better "handle" on what our listeners want to hear, or what they are more likely to like, or dislike. Since our goal is to keep them listening for as long as we can, we know one bad song could make them "tune-out." They've told us to play more oldies and spice it with a good amount of currents, and that's what we do. About 65% of our music is from our oldies library, including what we call "classics"... we play Lefty, Patsy, Elvis, Reeves and lots more.

At the same time we devote a good amount of play to the current music by the artists that are happening now...Strait, Travis, Judds, Oaks, Alabama, Rogers and many others. It seems that with all the new people coming along doing good music, the state of country music is in great shape for the future. And we certainly like that, because good music gets played on KNIX.

—Buddy Owens

Buck left me to sink or swim at KNIX. First I worked on the station's sound. We were

directionless and prone to play favorites of the staff. In 1974 I started mailing out surveys to listeners. I licked stamps and tabulated results by hand...not a sophisticated system. But it helped us get on the right track with the music.

Then I established a more companionable relationship with our audience. I scratched and clawed for gifts and prizes for promotions. Thanks to some steadfast advertisers, we built a loyal core of listeners.

—Larry Daniels
KNIX Newsletter

Singing for soup bowl change taught me a useful lesson which I try to pass on to the people who work for me. Music, whether live or on the radio, has to be sold. If you don't play what people want to hear, they will turn quickly to another station.

When I got into the radio business, I thought we should try to help clients present their messages in a way that would encourage listeners to say, "Yeah, let's go down there and see what's happening." Also, we stayed in touch with our audience, which is a lot of family people. Whether it's music or advertising, if you don't want your children to hear it in your home, you won't hear it on KNIX.

—Buck Owens
KNIX Newsletter

| SONG | ARTIST | LENGTH | LIBRARY |
|---------------------------------|---------------|--------|---------|
| 1 IF YOU'RE GONNA PLAY IN TEXAS | ALABAMA | 3:30 | 61-5 |
| 2 YOU AGAIN | FORESTERS | 3:07 | 207-2 |
| 3 MY WAY | ELVIS PRESLEY | 3:31 | P20 |
| 4 IT WON'T HURT | DWIGHT YOAKAM | 2:55 | 106-2 |
| 5 RIGHT FROM THE START | EARL T CONLEY | 2:55 | 116-6 |
| 6 UP TO HEAVEN | REBA MCENTIRE | 2:39 | M7 |
| 7 THREE BELLS | THE BROWNS | 2:43 | 812 |
| 8 RAKE AND RAMBLIN' MAN | DON WILLIAMS | 2:38 | 143-10 |
| | | 23:58 | |

Part of KNIX's playlist for a Wednesday afternoon. Out of 34 selections in a two-hour period, 24 are on compact disc and 7 are KNIX "classics."

In addition to its music programming, KNIX-FM/AM offers news and traffic-reporting. The station has a full-time research staff and a promotions department and a sales department. According to promotions person Doug Brannan, "Both air personalities and station employees support dozens of community service organizations



Teasing George Strait, the KNIX Programming staff went out to the "beach" at the Big Surf wave pool in Tempe. See, George, "Ocean Front Property." L. to r., John Michaels, the station's overnight personality; Erik Foxx, Program Director; Buddy Owens, Music Director; Ken Koziol, Fun Van driver; and George King, evening personality. Seated, Brian Kelly, afternoon drive personality. He's worn out. Promotions are a big part of this and many stations' efforts.

on the air and by attending events in person."

In October, to celebrate their 20th year, KNIX-FM/AM hosted a three-day party with lots of songs and a BBQ cook-off. Artists who participated included Bobby Bare, Tom T. Hall, Lyle Lovett, Nitty Gritty Dirt Band, Ray Price, Ricky Skaggs, Tanya Tucker and Tammy Wynette. Local talent including cloggers also came. Admission fee, \$5, a portion of the proceeds to be donated to the upcoming Arizona 75th Anniversary in February.

KNIX listeners, let us hear from you!

—H.B.

"They Can't Find a Thing to Play"

Listener Karen Stanley of Mission Viejo, near Los Angeles, would like to see country music's classic songs preserved.

I have been a country fan since I was ten years old and Marty Robbins hit the airwaves with "El Paso." I have lived in the Midwest, Texas, both east and west, the East Coast, and now we live in California. Listening to the local stations is something I do for an average of 9 hours a day. I'm a dyed-in-the-wool country fan, and proud of that fact.

But what I see happening now in country music hurts to say the least. It deals mainly

with the radio stations. How can any country station, anywhere, neglect the stars that laid the foundation for country music as we know it today?

I'm talking about Ernest Tubbs, Hank Sr., Marty Robbins, Patsy Cline, Loretta Lynn, Jim Reeves, Sonny James, Eddy Arnold, Faron Young, and the list goes on and on. How can the music directors of these stations let these people who gave their all and put their hearts and souls into country be shelved in their libraries gathering dust. And when you do call and request an artist, in my case Marty Robbins, they can't find a thing to play. My word, the man had 31 hits, and two Grammys.

Of course the radio industry, from where I sit, and I admit I know nothing about it, except from a listening standpoint, seems to think that the almighty dollar does a lot more talking. But where would these same stations be, if not for the listener? I'm sure they research what the public wants to hear, but I would sure like to know who they are asking. Certainly not me.

I'm sure not all feel the way I do, but I think there are more people like me out there. So, if you don't like what is going on, write a letter to the program director of your station. Let him or her know your feelings.

I would really like to see a blending of the old and the new, and it can be done. KILT in Houston is a prime example.

What more can I say. I think it's important enough to at least try, and I have written the program directors at the stations here a number of times. For the most part, the response has been favorable.

Karen Stanley
Mission Viejo, California

For suggestions on how to do more than just write letters, see Bev King's booklet. KILT listeners, let us hear from you. —Ed.

Preserving Country Music

Bev King has compiled a booklet on radio stations that play traditional country music. In it she discusses how country music itself has changed over the years and how fans can get more traditional country music played on the radio today.

I sent out over 700 survey forms to stations on a listing from the International Bluegrass Music Association. Of the more than 100 that responded, nearly all of the bluegrass programs also included traditional country music, and some stations have programs of strictly traditional country in addition to bluegrass shows. A few claim to play traditional country full time, and some intermingle it with Top 40 stuff. There were some interesting comments written on the survey forms about modern country from



Bev King's radio booklet.

disk jockeys, program directors and station managers.

When Roy Clark became the 63rd member of the Opry last August, he and Roy

Acuff were on the televised segment of the show. Roy Clark did a new song he had just written about traditional country music—I don't recall the title but it had a line that went something like "they changed country to rock, and then rolled it away." He dedicated it to Roy Acuff.

I have also written a song about traditional country music, called "Come On Home, Country Boy," which I am just now in the process of recording. I'll enclose a copy of the lyrics.

Bev King
Madill, Oklahoma

To get a copy of Real Country Music: Finding It, Preserving It, send \$4.00 (includes postage and handling) to Country Heritage Productions, R.R. 1, Box 320, Madill, Oklahoma 73446. Watch for Bev's song, in Readers Create in an upcoming issue. —Ed.

Readers Create

Dreaming of Dwight Yoakam

Here's how one girl spends her time in class. She's Melissa Summersell, a Music Industry major at Hattiesburg, Mississippi. She loves classical music, but...

Worlds Away

"And now, David So-and-So will sing Stravinsky's *bla...bla...bla...*" Glancing up from my magazine, I caught a glimpse of this guy in a very chic suit, flaming red tie and weird shoes. His chest was pokin' out like a Banty hen, and his left eyebrow was so high it almost blended in with his hair line. With arms bowed at his side and his head high in the air, he belted out the first note of the piece... "A little nasally, but a nice sound," I thought.

Looking around to be sure no one was watching, I slowly lowered my head back into my copy of *Country Music Magazine*. "I wanna thank you, girl, for teachin' me brand new ways to be cruel..." Dwight Yoakam's voice seemed to sing out from the very pages of the book I held in my hands. His lean, lanky figure began to dance before my eyes, and I found myself at a tiny table in the center of the Palomino Club in Los Angeles. Smoke hung heavy over the dance floor and gave life to the colored lights filtering through its rolling movement. Captured by his performance, I was swept through every emotion from "Honky Tonk Man" to "South of Cincinnati" and never noticed the crowd dwindle. The band played their closing song and drifted from the stage one by one, each with a beer and an instrument, and I was left alone in the club with the drunks and hangers-on.

Silence lay like a blanket over the room. I lifted my eyes to find myself alone in a room drowned in fluorescent light, staring at a grand piano where David So-and-So had just sung Stravinsky's *bla...bla...bla...* I tucked my *Country Music Magazine* inside my book of *Five English Folk Songs* and made my way down the hall. "Now it's guitars, cadillacs, hillbilly music..."

—Melissa Summersell

Two-Step to the Stars

Members have requested the answers to Wanda J. Watson Pirani's puzzle that appeared in the May/June 1987 Newsletter. As Mrs. J. T. Whatley of Duncan, Oklahoma, says, "We are not all winners, but we would be wiser if you printed the answers." Here they are! Check your work.

Winners were announced in the September/October 1987 Newsletter. Apologies to Bettye Trahan of Salem, Oregon, second/ third tie winner, for misspelling her name.

Answers to Step One— Fill in the Blanks

King of Country Music Roy Acuff; Mister Cowboy Rex Allen; Whisperin' Bill Anderson; Tennessee Plowboy Eddie Arnold; Mr. Guitar Chet Atkins; Mayor of Bull's Gap Archie Campbell; Man in Black

Johnny Cash; Crash Billy Crash Craddock; Mysterious Rhinestone Cowboy David Allan Coe; Pea Picker Tennessee Ernie Ford; Happiest Girl in the USA Donna Fargo; Jolly Giant Jack Greene; The Voice Vern Gosdin; The Hag Merle Haggard; The Storyteller Tom T. Hall; The Solemn Ole Judge George D. Hay; The Singing Fisherman Johnny Horton; The Southern Gentleman Sonny James; Possum George Jones; International Ambassador of Country Music George Hamilton IV; Kentucky Mountain Boy Bradley Kincaid; Little Miss Dynamite Brenda Lee; Coal Miner's Daughter Loretta Lynn; The Dixie Dewdrop, Uncle Dave Macon; Father of Bluegrass Bill Monroe; Yodelling Cowgirl Patsy Montana; Snowbird Anne Murray; Round Mound of Sound Kenny Price; Cherokee Cowboy Ray Price; Gentleman Jim Jim Reeves; Silver Fox Charlie Rich; King of the Cowboys Roy Rogers; Singing Ranger Hank Snow; Gentle Giant Don Williams; Drifting Cowboy Hank Williams; Bocephus Hank Williams Jr.; Queen of the Ivories Del Woods; The Singing Sheriff Faron Young; First Lady of Country Music Tammy Wynette; High Priest of Country Music Conway Twitty.

Answers to Step Two— Circle the Names

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High Priest of Country Music

Art student Tammy Belts loves to draw. Here's her rendition of Conway Twitty.

I'm 19 years old, a student at the Colorado Institute of Art, majoring in Advertising Design. I have always loved drawing. It started as a hobby, then I became more involved and decided to go on to college.

I like to read your magazine—my dad subscribes to it. I like looking at other people's drawings, so here's mine of Conway Twitty.

Tammy Belts
Dorchester, Nebraska



A familiar face in country music, Conway Twitty, by Tammy Belts.

More in the Saga of "Who's Gonna Fill Their Shoes?"

Remember Karen Thorsteinson? Her poem "Answer to 'Who's Gonna Fill Their Shoes?'" appeared in the September/October 1986 Newsletter. Then in May/June 1987, she told us she had written more! Here it is. We can't resist.

Hi! Or as Ray Stevens would say, "It's me again, Margaret!"

This is really your own fault. I almost fell off my chair when I read my letter in the May/June 1987 Newsletter. I didn't want you to think I was talking through my hat, and since I had already written the sequel, I was encouraged to send it in. I hope you like it.

In some issues you ask for reviews of albums we have purchased. I have three new ones: *Ocean Front Property* by George Strait, *Hillbilly Deluxe* by Dwight Yoakam and *The O'Kanes* by The O'Kanes. The first two were as good as I knew they would be. The last, *The O'Kanes*, was sensational! It is a real keeper. Their harmony reminds me of The Everly Brothers in the 1960's and 1950's. It is an excellent tape.

I promise I won't bother you again with George's song (or rather replies to his song).

Karen Thorsteinson
Grafton, North Dakota

Sequel to "Who's Gonna Fill Their Shoes?"

"Who's Gonna Fill Their Shoes?" asks Jones. I'd guess Randy Travis, "Diggin' Up Bones." Or John Schneider, who was left all alone With an empty house and a code-a-phone. Or Dwight Yoakam with "Honky Tonk Man." He'll get you up dancing if anyone can. T. Graham Brown "Tells It Like It Used To Be," But his future looks bright if you ask me. Kathy Mattea "Walks the Way the Wind Blows." Her talent makes her a winner wherever she goes. Sweethearts of the Rodeo or Schuyler, Knoblock & Overstreet

Show us how lucky we are when such talents meet. Judy Rodman is off to a promising start, "Daddy's Hands" by Holly Dunn gets to the heart. Marie Osmond is back where she belongs. Paul Davis writes and sings beautiful songs. Janie Fricke was divinely blessed With more talent than even she guessed. The O'Kanes' future also looks bright, A great new duo who sing what they write. Johnny Rodriguez was missed for awhile, But now that he's back his fans will smile. T. G. Sheppard has the power to stay,

His style of singing is popular to play. Gary Morris is unique in voice and style. Steve Wariner is ahead by a country mile. Eddy Raven calls himself a "Right Hand Man" And writes and sings as well as anyone can. And there's Reba's brother, Pake McEntire. And Gail Davies and her new band, Wild Choir. Vern Gosdin's voice could melt a heart of ice. And for Gene Watson's records we pay the price. I know this is long and I'd hate to bore. I hope my message is clear—there are *More!* I have only one worry! Oh, gloom! Oh, doom! Can I fit all their records into my little room?

—Karen Thorsteinson

COLLECTIONS

Information, Please

Write to these members directly.

- Would like to find the record "Wreath of Holly" by Brian Hyland and "To Hear Old Johnny Sing" by Shel Silverstein. Mrs. Leroy Brooks, Rt. 2 Box 171, Stuart, OK 74570.
- Please write and tell me what albums, 45's or cassettes you have of Conway Twitty, what songs are on them and how much you want for them. Mrs. Ruth A. Morris, R.R.2 Box 40, Martinsville, IL 62442.
- Searching for a song by Hank Sr. called "On My Farm in Louisiana Where the Old Red River Flows." Anyone have it? Billy Cass, 1543 Sunkist Way, Ft. Myers, FL 33905.
- Looking for "Sitting Bull," Charlie Louvin; "You Ain't Woman Enough," Warner Mack (both written by Loretta Lynn); "Old Time Lovin'" Kenny Starr and "Thank God for Loretta Lynn," Sara Lane. Lenny Mattison, Hong Kong Rd., Parish, NY 13131.
- Wanted: *Country Music Who's Who*, 1970, Record World Publishing Co., also other *Who's Who* books. Arlene Steward, Box 368, Durand, IL 61024.
- Where can I get a broken record fixed? It is one of Elvis' first. Nancy Meinert, 11827 W. Cedar Creek Rd., Cedarburg, WI 53012.
- Am looking for LP or 8-T of *Happy Hour* by Tony Booth, on Capitol; and LP, cassette, 8-T or 45 of Tammy Wynette, "The Wonders You Perform." Mary Frances Felts, 3361 Cattail Rd., Chillicothe, OH 45601.
- Wanted: records, tapes, photographs, magazines, memorabilia of Ernest Tubb, especially two albums, *Saturday Satan*, *Sunday Saint* and *Family Bible*. T. W. Pitcox, Box 935, Brady, TX 76825.
- For sale: country records all speeds, send want list. Wanted to buy: country records all speeds, radio transcriptions, articles, magazines, books on country music, items with artists' names. Thomas Nowacki, 7212 Algonquin, Wonder Lake, IL 60097.
- Looking for the title to a Wilburn Bros. song about providing a home for an elderly couple, recorded in the 1960's or early 1970's. Iva Hoffman, 1108 S. Locust, Freeport, IL 61032.
- Looking for George Jones' "Your Angel Steps Out of Heaven Each Night" from album *George Jones' Country Hits*. Would buy entire album. Also Melba Montgomery's "No Charge." J. W. Blackwell,

1516 Vinewood-101, Detroit MI 48216.

- Wanted: Elvis Presley bubble gum cards numbers 1, 7, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 19, 20, 22, 31, 43, 46, 47, 48, 51, 54, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66. Cards issued by Boxcar Enterprises. Have extras for sale of other numbers. Cindy Cummings, 859 Ironwood, San Jose, CA 95125.
- Wanted: cassettes by Arthur Smith of the 1940's and 1950's, especially "Spanish Fandango," "Two Step" and "Guitar Boogie." E. Bartlett, 6030 SW 35th, Miramar, FL 33023.
- For sale: country albums and 45's. Send wants or request large, complete catalog. Jim Magee, 3454 Ridgecrest Dr., Birmingham, AL 35216.
- Help! Looking for these originals: Ray Price Presents the Cherokee Cowboys, *The Buckaroos Strike Again* (Capitol ST 2828); Ernest Tubb Presents His *Texas Troubadors* (Decca DL4459), *Charlie Pride Live at Panther Hall* (RCA LSP4094). Fred Hirsch, 10504 Cambridge Ct., Great Falls, VA 22066.
- For sale: about 300 8-T and 500 LP's, assorted country artists, 1960-1970, in excellent condition. E. Ashton, 36 Pine, Sherwood Park, Alberta, Canada T8A 1G5.
- Am looking for single or album version of Eddy Arnold's "The Easy Way." Virginia Lott, 1106 Grant, Lima, OH 45801.
- For Sale: Country records, all artists, all originals, 1940's through 1980's. Jack Pruitt, Box 3351, Huntsville, AL 35810.
- Looking for the following records: "We Must Have Been Out of Our Minds," M. Montgomery and G. Jones; "I Can Almost See Houston From Here," R. Milsap; "We Should Be Together," C. Gayle; "Slow Dancin'," J. Rivers; "Am I Standing in Your Way," M. Haggard; "Stand Tall," Burton Cummings. Wanda Owen, Box 254, Paris, AR 72855.
- Need two albums to complete my collection: *Reba McEntire*, Mercury (her first album on Mercury); *Country Music Hall of Fame*, Ernest Tubb, Wilfred Lerche, 3123 W. Larsen Rd., Neenah, WI 54956.
- Trying to locate: VHS tape of *Nashville Now*, Carl and Pearl Butler, guests; VHS tape, *Nashville Now*, G. Jones, Connie Smith, R. McEntire, guests; album or cassette of *Reba McEntire* (her first album for Mercury). Ron Schaefer, 4373 Sheldon Ave., Baltimore, MD 21206.
- Wanted: name and artist of old song

Catching Up

Requests are printed in small type to catch up on our backlog.

that went "I love you... I love you... I'm waiting, my dear, to hear you say 'I love you.'" Emma Haine, 2600 W. Co. Rd. 60E, Ft. Collins, CO 80524.

- Looking for 1950's record by Jimmy Boyd, "I Saw Mommy Kissing Santa Claus." Sue Parker, 16822 Levan, Livonia, MI 48154.
- Wanted: VHS tape of Mac Davis Christmas show filmed in California a few years ago. Verna Parmeter, 3415 S. Griffon, Milwaukee, WI 53207.
- Looking for two singles by Red Foley, "Old Shep" and "Beyond the Sunset." Mildred Fields, 423 E. Main, Peru, IN 46970.
- Am interested in Jim Reeves and Patsy Cline records or material. Rose May, 700 McKinley, NW 413, Canton, OH 44703.
- Need three Statlers albums: *Flowers on the Wall*, *The Big Hits and Country Symphonies*. Pattie Calloway, 1000 Van Buren, Wichita Falls, TX 76301.
- Trying to locate 45 (or taped copy) of "Shade Tree Mechanic," popular in 1965-66. Mary Hyson, 123 Marion, Leavenworth, KS 66048.
- Looking for three albums put out in 1970's by Wild Country, today known as Alabama: *Deuces Wild*, *Wild Country*, *Alabama-Wild Country*. Virginia Parkhill, 901 Myrtle, Cape May, NJ 08204.
- For sale: Elvis single, Sun label, "Mystery Train" and "I Forgot to Remember to Forget Her." Best offer. Mrs. C. Elliott, 3506 Ammons, Richmond, VA 23223.
- Wanted: VHS tape of *Marty Robbins-The Legend*, aired on TV in Fall 1986. Jean Lockhart, Rt. 3 Box 158, Weiser, ID 83672.
- For sale: book of Johnny Cash salvaged from tornado in Arkansas, *Cash Family Album*, 241 pages, copyright 1970, 8 x 11. Will send pictures on request. Make me an offer. Mrs. Roy Wilson, 6th No. 6, Rt. 8 Aerial, Easley, SC 29640.
- Wanted: 78 rpm records by Roy Acuff on Columbia. Need about 30 to finish my collection. Leo McCarty, Rt. 1 Box 73, Wilmar AR 71675.
- Wanted: John Schneider's old records/tapes. Michelle Rader, St. Rt. 3, Box 140, Mt. Nebo, WV 26679.
- For Sale: items relating to country music, rock and TV stars, such as Dolly, Loretta, Barbara and Louise Mandrell, Osmond Family, Charlie's Angels, some from 1960's and 1970's. Send SASE for prices. List your favorites. Steve Bumm, Box 121953, Nashville, TN 37212.
- Wanted: Hank Snow's instrumental "Rainbow" (single or tape) and an album by various artists, *Nashville Christmas Party*. Robert Love,

Box 74, Glendale, MA 01229.

- Looking for old records, "Atomic Power," Hawkshaw Hawkins, 1947; "Missouri," Merle Travis, about 1945-46; "Wildwood Flower," Travis; "You All Come," Cousin Herb Henson, Capitol; "Love Grown Cold," Johnny Bond. I would like the 45's of "Wildwood Flower" and "You All Come," but would take tapes of others. Marvin Black, Rt. 1 Box 41, Wasco, CA 93280.
- Need Hank Williams Jr.'s *My Songs and Sunday Morning* to complete my collection. Beverly Trobaugh, Box 41, Mt. Crawford, VA 22841.
- Anyone know why two top artists like Doug Kershaw and John Hartford are not seen nor heard of in this area? Leo Slutskin, 2723 Ave. Y, Brooklyn, NY 11235.
- Looking for three albums by Buck Owens: *Buck Owens on the Bandstand* (Capitol ST 1879); *Christmas with Buck Owens* (T 2396); *Buck Owens* (La Brea 8017). Also George Jones 2-record album, *The George Jones Story* (Musicor M25-3159). Also Loretta Lynn's single "Honky Tonk Girl," Vern Kongsle, Box 234, Towner, ND 58788.
- Trying to locate songbooks by the following: Bailes Brothers, Texas Ruby and Curly Fox, Floyd Tillman. Also pictures of Pete Cassell, Radio Dot and Smokey, Daisy Mae and Ole Brother Charley, York Brothers, Floyd Tillman, Jimmy and Leon Short, all old-time traditional country singers who go back to the 1940's. John Bell, 2520 Valarie Dr., Zeeland, MI 49464.
- Looking for albums of Johnny Bush. Would prefer albums, but will buy anything at a reasonable price. Wanda Watson, 2842 Santa Rita, Grand Prairie, TX 75051.
- Would like information, pictures, news items, anything on Ed Bruce. Pat Kanninen, 2338 County Rd., Calumet, MI 49913.
- Looking for older albums of Ernest Tubb and pre-1975 singles or albums of Justin's. Send me price and condition. Dean Rathbun, Box 6077, Sisters, OR 97759.
- Interested in reasonably-priced Porter Wagoner records and memorabilia; ditto Dolly Parton (for years 1967-75). Will pay reasonable xeroxing costs for copies. Steve Eng, Box 60072, Nashville, TN 37206.
- Looking for any Christmas album by Patti Page, true stereo and mint. Bob Weber, 8602 Standing Rock, San Antonio, TX 78242.

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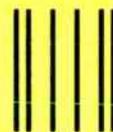
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W.A. Harrell
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HIS WIFE MARIANNE (right)

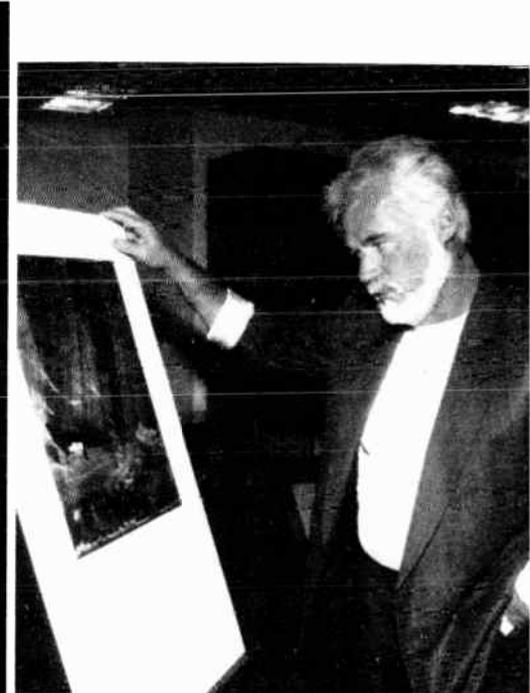
"Your *Friends and Mine* is as much Marianne's book as mine, for the simple truth is that I could not have done it without her."

DOLLY (far left)

"What I hoped to capture was a special quality—a quality not only of talent and style but of complete self-assurance that I've come to see in Dolly as we've worked together in the last couple of years. I think I succeeded."

BARBARA (left)

"Barbara's face is so photogenic that I don't think it's possible to get a bad picture of her. She also loves to experiment with her appearance. I found this "look" in a magazine, so we robbed Marianne's closet at midnight to get the right clothes."



Kenny's first book, *Kenny Rogers' America*, is on display at the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum. At left are some shots from his second book, *Your Friends and Mine*.

and pass some more wisdom along.

"You must be in this business because you love it, not because you want success," he says. "The likelihood of real success is astronomically against you, so the trick is to enjoy what you're doing. Then, if you're not successful five or ten years from now, you can give it up and say 'God, I enjoyed those years!' Otherwise, if success doesn't come, those years become a sad part of your life."

Which of course didn't happen to Kenny, so now he can add that "I've been very lucky. With very little talent, I've become very successful. And I think that speaks very highly for the business of the music business: if you pay attention to certain things, you don't *have* to have the greatest talent."

Kenny is pretty free with talk about the extent of his talent. He has described himself in public as "boring," noted that "I have nothing specific to offer except professionalism and commerciality," said that he's spent his career "kind of joking my way through, half-singing." Today he stands by those statements, adding only that "I do have one very important talent a lot of people don't: I can pick hit songs."

And of course he has stuck with himself, kept after the big time and achieved it. He pursued it selfishly, at high cost to others—his first three marriages came apart while he ran after it with the jazzy Bobby Doyle Trio, the pop-folky New Christy Minstrels, and the rocking 'n' rolling First Edition—and then, as he attests, he pursued it by way of a duty to his fourth and present wife Marianne. He stood there in the ruins of the First

Edition as a longhaired, earring-wearing pauper, and promised her the world. He delivered. So perseverance mattered just as much as levelheadedness; his combination of realistic self-appraisal and businesslike behavior would have got him nowhere but where he already was without a stiff dose of true long-haul grit.

He finally made it in country-pop music, of course, and therein lies a subject of some sensitivity in certain quarters. The critics, for instance, have not been, and are not, among his greatest fans; Kenny in fact is something of a critics' punching bag, flak bait of the first order.

The reasons have less to do with his self-professed shortage of genius as a singer than with his style in its historical context. Basically, Kenny and his only slightly country-accented ballads came along at a time when a good many of us out here were suffering through the commercial burnout of both real old hard-core honky tonk country and the heady new creativity of the outlaw days. His mass success as a pop star hastened that process; Nashville soft-pedaled the production of outlaws and 'billies and put its major money behind crooners and cocktail-music sentimentalists in an effort to cross such folks over into Kenny Rogers megaseller turf.

So while Kenny was always judged to be a nice enough feller personally, you can see how a lot of people wished he'd grow his hair and pick up his electric guitar again, or quit finding those incredible hit songs, or burn out his weak throat for good, or fall off a pier

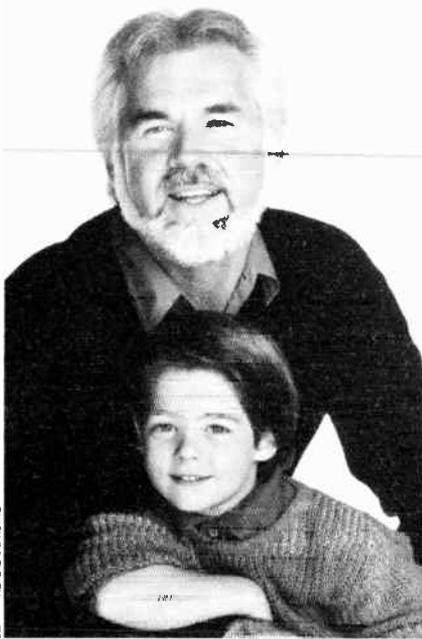
someplace.

Kenny felt the heat, and has commented on it in the past. When he was a rock 'n' roller, he has said, he suffered the cold shoulder from rock's live-fast-die-young/anything-whatsoever-goes royalty because he plainly just *wasn't like that*—but it didn't really matter to anyone but himself because he never went that far, never made it to a position in which his success could threaten the basic assumptions of the rock 'n' rock lifestyle.

Similar feelings surrounded his early and middle-period career in country, which differed from his career in rock in that it was influential—massively so. Basically, he just wasn't one of the boys. He came from pop and he operated more or less independently of the Nashville business family, and suddenly there he was, the biggest game in town. The result was some resentment. Perhaps that is why, despite his immense late 1970's and early 1980's sales figures and his public identification as a country artist, Kenny never won the CMA's Entertainer of the Year award.

Today Kenny has nothing particularly controversial to say about this last point. He has said in the past that at a certain point in his career, after the First Edition folded, he gave up seeking the elusive respect of his music business colleagues and began to accept the worth of his fans' acclaim. "Public acclaim is first," he told *Playboy*, "peer approval is second, and critical acceptance, though nice to have, is third."

As to the issue of his musical influence, he points to the inevitable cyclical nature



Kenny dedicated *Your Friends and Mine* to his son Christopher. In *Gambler, Part III*, Kenny stars with Bruce Boxleitner and Jeffrey Jones.



of pop music. "Country music is the white man's rhythm-and-blues, the foundation of all pop," he says. "Pop music starts off as country, then it gets to be country rock, then it gets to be rock, then it gets to be rock-jazz, then it gets psychedelic, for want of a better term—and at that point it's so obtuse that the average person can't relate to it. So then somebody slips in with a very simple little record, and the whole process starts again." He was part of that process in the late 1970's; another simple starting point in the cycle of popular music.

These days the brouhaha about what Kenny Rogers represents is pretty much over. The critics aren't so het-up because recent history has shown that he didn't after all turn country music into a minimally Southernized succession of laid-back lounge lizards. New stars and new controversies have risen, the music's started getting country enough and rocking enough and just-about-anything-enough to satisfy most known varieties of taste, and Kenny just isn't that important any more.

Which is certainly something to ask Kenny about. For along with acceptance on all fronts has come a certain cooling of the career heat. In Kenny's case it's relative—he's had Top Ten hits but no Number One's since "Islands in the Stream" (with Dolly Parton)—but it's nonetheless troubling, perhaps. Kenny has said so much in the past about a desperate personal need for success, combined with great insecurity even in

the best of times, that one wonders how he feels about the state of his recording career right now.

"Well, radio really likes new talent," he begins. "To play a record of mine is not exciting. If both I and a new artist sang a certain song, and I sang it just as well, they'd be more likely to play the other guy's version. That's just the way it is.

"But really, I don't begrudge anybody that. The most important thing to me is to stay contemporary. I don't like living off past laurels, and I think I'm as capable as anyone of getting a hit record. Timing is everything—but I've been around a long time, and I'll be around a long time, and I'll have another shot at it."

None of this suggests any pain on his part, so we try again. Has he stopped feeling those old chill winds of insecurity?

"I don't have the same needs I used to have. I don't need to achieve success any more, because I've achieved it, but to me, there are very few things sadder than being an 'ex'—an ex-boxing champion, whatever. So my goal is never to be an 'ex'. To stay contemporary. To perform for as long as I want to perform, until I choose to give it up. I don't want people saying 'We don't want you any more.'

"So yes, I guess I really do have those same old insecurities, those same needs."

It seems ridiculous for us to be sitting

here talking this stuff, what with Kenny perched atop 200 employees, the most expensive piece of domestic real estate in the United States, a whole empire's worth of other holdings, and a position in the hearts of millions of dedicated fans which guarantees at the very least a Wayne Newton-like career of sold-out resort shows even if his recording career ends forever, right this moment—but nonetheless, here we are. Insecurity City.

Time to get real. Bring back that levelheaded, persevering fellow. "Okay," I say. "If you stopped getting Top Ten records for the next five years, what would you do?"

He laughs. "I'd get a new producer," he says quickly. "I'd get someone who was better able to guide my career, because my talent wouldn't have changed. And since my only real talent is picking hit songs, I'd associate myself with a producer who was more contemporary. He'd get me where I needed to be, and then we'd go where I'd like to be."

That's better, and he continues in a realistic vein about his current career condition.

"I'm successful enough to satisfy my ego, but I'm unsuccessful enough to enjoy my life. I'm having a wonderful time," he says. "And really, I couldn't care less about being Number One. I do like hanging around that Top Ten, though, 'cause that's where your longevity is. The faster you rise and the harder you run at it, the shorter your tenure is.



“You must be in this business because you love it, not because you want success.”

So for me it's been kind of a slow-building process. I have better years than others, I go up and down. And I enjoy those valleys. There's more personal time in them. You need that respite to back off and enjoy your life a little, and then you come back and make another run. That's where we are. We've been in a valley, and now we're getting a lot going again this year. The bottom line is that you can't stay hot all the time. You *shouldn't*. People get sick of you if you're coming at them from everywhere all the time."

Now, that's *sensible*, and frankly, I'm beginning to marvel at how well this man has his head screwed on. I'm impressed by the way he manages to accentuate the positive, so to speak, to view what could easily be interpreted as insecurity boosters in the light of real-world showbiz processes over which he has little control, but to which he can, if wise and careful, respond effectively. In short, I like the way he refuses to feel threatened despite an old, deeply ingrained susceptibility to doing so at the drop of a sales figure or critical put-down.

I also like the concept of valleys, since I am often amazed or even horrified by glimpses into the lives of Major Entertainers who, despite being richer than God and equipped with leisure tools and opportunities far, far beyond the reach of we mere mortals, spend 99% of their time running after even more money and public love. Therefore I get a nice little

kick out of Kenny's description of what a megastar's valley is like.

"I enjoy stuff like building a little golf course on my farm in Georgia," he muses. "I get out there every day with my little spray gun, paint out the outlines of the sand traps I want, and the guys come right behind me with the tractors. I mean, I'm having the time of my life. What else is there?" Good question.

His account of his working life is similarly inspiring. Doesn't sound like too much of a chore, really.

"I like this split life I have. I have two families, my band and road crew and my family at home, and I get to alternate between the two. It's the best of both worlds. And really, music is a vehicle to get me to the next golf course. We go out and play golf all day, then do a show. Then we go to another city, play golf all day, do a show, and so on. I do that for a couple of weeks, then I go home."

Having travelled and golfed, our man is now ready to work. He breezes easily around the backstage dressing rooms in Florida, showing off the first unbound copy of his book he got today—God, the pictures are good!—and attending to business with considerable grace.

There are radio station contest winners to be posed with, for instance, and a young girl afflicted with leukemia to be greeted, and as I watch him performing these little tasks—very well indeed,

with what seems like genuine friendliness rather than a star's necessary tolerance for his public in person—a thought strikes me. Could your average dyed-in-the-wool *creative artist*, your basic self-absorbed, inward-looking creature of fantasy and temperament and wayward emotion, be so good at making people feel so good in this particular way: touched, greeted like a real individual, at least briefly cared for?

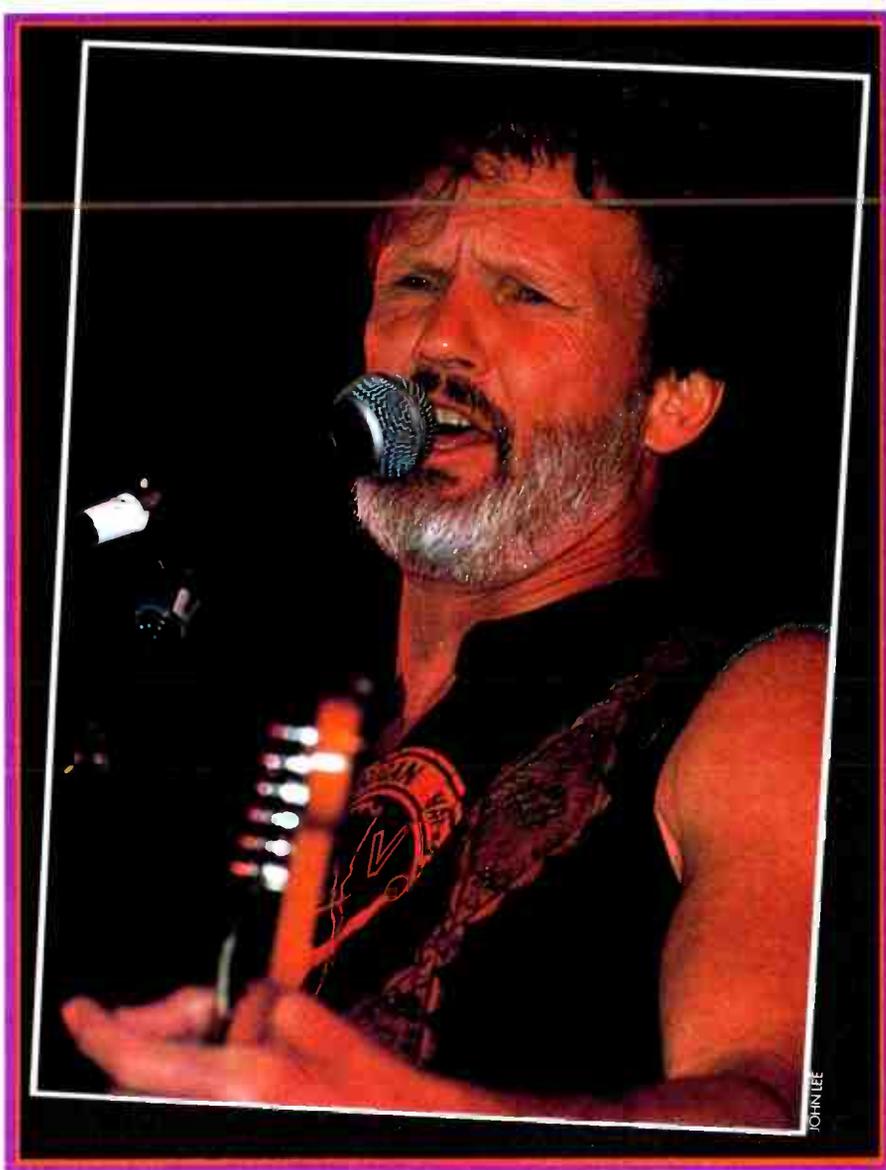
Maybe, maybe not—but whatever, this ability is an element of the boring, half-singing/half-joking, only semi-talented Kenny Rogers we haven't talked about.

It is a quality immediately, obviously apparent the moment he takes the stage; Kenny's live-in-person act is an affair of casual, no-big-deal, we're-all-friends-here banter with the crowd, full of little jokes and self-deprecating asides which both humanize the star and project an impression of self-confidence; it's the only-the-truly-secure-can-laugh-at-themselves truism demonstrated to a T. and used to make the crowd feel likewise.

The fans just love this stuff, eat it up and respond like crazy. It's a sort of ultranormal, superwholesome, TV-dinner Woodstock out there in the hall; a mass lovefest with no bum trips, no hangovers, no pretensions, and no meaning other than the warmth of the moment. In a word, it's just plain nice.

Backstage, looking over Kenny's photographs, my photographer wife remarked that gee, the man's work with a camera is, all things considered, a lot more interesting than his records. I tend to agree with her, but watching Kenny do his live-in-person thing, I realize that the point is irrelevant. The photography is almost private, but Kenny the performer is public in the truest sense of the word.

Here, you see, is a performing artist who has accepted his limitations, grown to be comfortable with them, and done something quite wonderful, the very best he could possibly do. Rather than trying to impress people, to make them feel awed and dazzled by *him*, he has set out to get large numbers of them feeling good about themselves. Ultimately, that's what his middle-of-the-road music and his crowd-pleasing concerts are all about; that's his real job. He's very good at it. ■



KRIS KRISTOFFERSON

The Rebel Lives On

He still sings about what he believes in and though it may not be popular, it's never held him back before. If there are any changes to mark this 50-year-old maverick, they are to be found in his sober, family-minded lifestyle.

by Patrick Carr

Kris Kristofferson and Mickey Newbury, two famously funky old smart-country songwriting roustabouts, are sitting in Kris' bus outside an upscale Houston honky tonk and laughing about their young days.

"You remember me trying to get Roger Miller to listen to 'Me and Bobby

McGee'?" asks Mickey.

"Yeah," Kristofferson laughs. "That whole thing was nuts. I was holed up in some hotel in Nashville with some old girl, no money, *nothin'* goin' for me. I'd quit being a janitor, but I was still just tending bar now and again for a living, and Mickey calls me and says, 'Get your ass down here, we'll pay for the cab,

Roger'll take you to California if you can get here in time.'

"So I got there just in time, and Roger drove us out to the plane, driving on the sidewalks, anything, and we got to California."

"You remember we got him those walkie talkies to keep in touch?" asks Newbury. "He was trying to get off pills, and we were trying to keep him straight so he'd listen to us?"

"Yeah, he loved gadgets. But he got us out there and didn't listen to one god-dam song 'til you just about strangled him!"

"I'd been with him for two weeks trying to make him pay attention," Mickey explains, "and in the end I grabbed him by the face, held him right there and *talked* the lyrics at him, slowly and clearly: '*Busted flat in Baton Rouge, waiting for a train.*' And finally it sank in. He says, 'Shit! That's good!.' And he cut it when he got back to Nashville, but even then he didn't remember whose song it was."

Such, the first acknowledgment of the power in that epochal opening line was one of the flashpoints of Kris Kristofferson's rise to fame and fortune. It was about twenty years ago, a time when Roger Miller's reign as Nashville's ambassador to the wider world was ending and Kris' was just about to start.

Now on the bus we start talking about why it was that Roger's star faded so fast as Kris' began to ascend. Kris figures it was probably because Roger didn't want to be just a singer; he wanted to be some sort of legitimate mogul, put all his energy into projects like his infamous King of the Road Motor Inn, and ended up a public ghost before he really knew what was happening.

Mickey and I allow as how that's probably true, but Roger also had an image problem. He kept getting on TV in those tuxedos, the symbol of his defeat of country-boy poverty, and really, the mid-late 1960's weren't the time for tuxedos; not at all. They were the time for Kris' bluejeans.

And then of course as we and everybody else in the business know, there were the pills. Everybody was into them in those days, but Roger was *spectacularly* into them. He wasn't exactly reliable, was he?

The tone of our discussion drops a few octaves as some further instances of Roger's and our own dementia are recalled in all too lurid detail, but then it rises again as it enters the present. The now-sober Roger's music and his desire for respectability have come together brilliantly on Broadway in his award winning *Big River* musical, and each one of us on the bus is pretty much where he ought to be right now. Kris in particular is doing well; his act-

You might be aware of the fact that Kris Kristofferson is a sex symbol, and you might wonder how he feels about that.

He says he doesn't feel so wonderful, really, and unlikely as it seems, I tend to believe him. I've only seen him run the backstage "gargoyle gauntlet" of bold and wanton women four or five times, but he has to do it every night, and it's not pretty. They can get pretty insistent.

"How would you feel having dozens of perfect strangers grabbing you and trying to stick their tongues down your throat?" asks Kris. "I don't understand how they figure they've got the right. I mean, I wouldn't do that to Farrah Fawcett."

There is a short pause while he thinks about that prospect. "Well, ah, not without an invitation ..."

ing roles are more interesting than they ever were, he and his band are now hacking that endless road with a fine, passionate major-label album behind them, and at the age of 50, with his first child three years out of college and his fifth just a few weeks away from birth, he is fit, trim, alert, sober, responsible, humorous and happy.

So some things have changed for Kris lately: the album broke a six-year silence; the sobriety and the shift in the depression/happiness index accompanying it are less than a year old; and there are new priorities on his mind, new fights to be fought.

Other things haven't changed, and probably never will. Kristofferson is still a rebel, a lightning rod for controversy, a disruptive/progressive force in all his worlds, a genuinely square peg in just about any hole you care to mention. He is still very much the exception.

When he first hit Nashville in 1965, he was no back-country kid with stars in his eyes; he was about as "different" as a country musician can get. For one thing he was 29 years old, with a wife and kid. For another he was a captain in the United States Army, and not just any old captain either: he was a Ranger and Airborne-trained helicopter pilot with a distinguished family military history, a Rhodes scholarship to Oxford behind him and a West Point instructorship waiting in his immediate future. He was one of the best of the brightest, the elite of the elite. He came to town in his uniform, for god's sake.

Which of course made him kind of an unusual pickin' person, but no less out of place than he was in the uniform itself. That didn't fit either. Captain Kristofferson wasn't right. He was in trouble.

"It's like when you don't know what you can do, but you know you don't know what you're doing," he says. "That's how it was with me. I'd never even considered making a career out of the Army, but things were turning out that way, and it was scary. So I have a very

warm place in my heart for Nashville. It saved my life. If I hadn't gone there that first time, I would *definitely* be a dead man today.

"I was high on the road to hard alcoholism, you see, and I was drinking and flying. I just ran into my old crew chief a few days ago, and we were remembering how it was. He was the guy who had to fly with me on the low-level nap-of-the-earth missions, and we thought we were the hottest team in the Army, so we flew dangerously: lower than anybody else, in weather nobody else would fly in, anything. He was talking about me dipping the skids in the Rhine River, drunk. He said, 'The worst was the time you tried three times to get in the door of the helicopter. Finally you got in, held onto the stick, pulled the visor down over your face and said, 'If I puke, you take the controls.'

"So, y'know, my ticket was fixing to get cancelled at any time, and really, that was just fine with me."

But Nashville intervened. He got there because he'd always been into music—he had a band in Germany—and he'd written some songs and sent them to Marijohn ("Long Black Veil") Wilkin through her cousin, a member of his unit.

"I was on leave, and I went directly from West Point, which terrified me, to Nashville. I hung out with Marijohn and Mel Tillis, Cowboy Jack Clement, Johnny Darrell, Tom T. Hall; just went along with them. They'd start drinking when the sun went down, and start *roaring*. They'd end up in other people's apartments, and I saw them writing songs together, and it was so exciting to me. It was so free. It was everything I wanted to do, right there in front of me all of a sudden."

Marijohn Wilkin almost cried when the lunatic in full officer's uniform told her he was going to quit the Army and become a songwriter, and the lunatic's poor wife Fran and his mother and all his friends and relatives back in Texas and California couldn't even begin to



In the early days with Billy Swan and then-wife Rita Coolidge.

The Borderlords are professionals; early middle-aged musician/song-writer/singers who've seen it all and done it all and somehow managed to retain both enthusiasm and their sanity. Kris introduces them like so: Sweet Billy Swan (writer of "I Can Help," "Lover, Please" and multiple other grade-A hits) is "the purest soul on the planet"; slow Donnie Fritts, a longtime creative force in the Muscle Shoals region and a professional gunshot victim in the late Sam Peckinpah's movies, is "the Legendary Alabama Leaning Man"; Slammin' Sammy Creason is "the best drummer in rock 'n' roll"; Danny Timms on keyboards "sings like an angel and is a semi-genius"; bass player "Hungry" Tommy McClure is "the man with all the moves"; and the oustandingly female-attractive lead guitarist Steve Bruton is "the wild card of the group."

They all get along pretty well; they understand each other. This particular fellowship of the road works well.

Everyone gets teased a bit. Like on the way from the motel to the club in Houston, Steve and Kris are getting on Billy because a girl in the crowd last night was pulling her shirt up and flashing her chest at him—not Kris or Steve, the usual targets of such displays—and just the memory of it turns him bright blushing scarlet.

Kris is laughing along with this, but then he pulls back a curtain on the bus window and looks out. And there before him is a lovely, radiant sunset over Houston.

He watches it for a moment, then speaks. "Look at that, boys," he says. "A little piece of eternity right there."

There's a pause while the boys look, and do indeed seem to be contemplating said eternity. Then Bruton turns away from the window, grins hugely.

"Ah, screw it," he says. A perfect two-beat pause—"You think that chick's gonna be back tonight, Billy?"
Score one for Steve.

understand, but there was no stopping him. "Within weeks I was established; I was a janitor at Columbia Records," he laughs, and of course you know the rest. He made it with "Me and Bobby McGee" and kept it with "Sunday Morning Coming Down" and "Help Me Make It Through the Night" and "Why Me, Lord" and all those other gems of hard raw life and consummate composition, and country music was never the same again.

Neither was Kris. "In the Army I really didn't mind the idea of dying," he says, and in reality he would have had plenty of opportunities to go that route. And worse, too! "I was watching *Apocalypse Now* a while ago and thinking about Martin Sheen's character," he says, "and you know, I could have been that guy. I wanted to find something with some real meaning to it, which God

knows the Army in Germany didn't provide, and I think I would have found it in Vietnam. I was very aggressive, and my Ranger training had channelled that aggression *very* effectively; that's what it's for, to direct aggression against the enemy. And Vietnam has so many gray areas that I hate to think what I would have done in the name of duty, what kind of atrocities I would have committed, 'cause I would do *anything*. I mean, you never know. I have enough of a Second World War feeling of respect for the veterans that I think it's audacious for me to even speculate about how I might have acted in combat, but I thank God I never found out what I was capable of.

"So yeah, I was an unhappy person in the Army, but after that I was okay, generally. I was real grateful to be doing what I wanted. I still am."

What Kris Kristofferson wants to do is not perceived very accurately by the world at large: Contrary to what seems to be public belief, he did not spend the first stage of his career re-writing Nashville's soundtrack, then leave his accomplishments in the capable hands of Waylon and Willie and the boys and jump ship for the bigger bangs and bucks of Hollywood. The fact of the matter is that except for a period when he was on location in Montana filming *Heaven's Gate*, he and various permutations of his current Borderlords band have been out there working since 1972. When he says, "I have a home in California, but I live on the road," then, he's not kidding.

And anyway, he never "went Hollywood" in the full sense of the phrase to begin with. Except for *A Star Is Born*, all his movie roles have been in productions outside the major-studio Hollywood system. He's an independent movie person, a maverick and member of "alternative" Hollywood, just as he is and always has been an outsider to mainstream country music. So although history will very likely remember him as one of the major movie stars of his era, he doesn't make big-star money, he doesn't play the big-star game, and he doesn't live the big-star life. Though he can obviously afford better, for instance, the only car he owns is a '78 Monte Carlo with a front fender "hingin' off like a Mexican mustache."

Kris has been sober about six months when we talk. It's brought a lot of changes. One was the sudden departure of his "Silver Tongued Devil," the slippery-poetic-manipulative character who occupies the same body as the normal-person walking-around Kris Kristofferson: "For a while there he just split; said 'to hell with this, I'm goin' where it's more fun.' Now he's back, though, and we get along pretty well. We're a lot more like each other than we used to be."

Another was a very simple revelation which is one of the primary psychological dividing lines between a practicing drunk or drug addict and a recovering drunk or drug addict: "I used to think I drank and took drugs because I had so many problems. Now it seems like I had so many problems because I drank and took drugs."

Kris says he still has problems, but now he can deal with them. He still gets depressed, but not for nearly as long as he used to.

His kids love it, call it "the rhino chaser." In Houston he and the band stay at a \$40-a-night motel.

Partly that's his style, but it's also a function of the fact that the economics of his music are irregular. Unlike the majority of country stars, he doesn't tour because without the road he'd go broke; his road dates break even at best, and the only reason he keeps at it is "to carry the message and keep the faith."

Which of course raises the question, *What message? What faith?*

And here, friends, we have some things Kris Kristofferson will sing about all week for the price of food, lodging and diesel fuel, and talk about all night for free. Very likely you're not going to hear about them on your local country radio station, as mine tells me (strange how history repeats itself, isn't it?) Kris' latest lyrics are "likely to be offensive to some of our listeners," so you might as well read about them here.

First there's Kris' recent single, likely an oldie-but-never-goldie by the time you read this. It's called "They Killed Him," and it's about the tragedy and evil of certain political murders. Mahatma Ghandi, John F. Kennedy and Jesus Christ are mentioned—okay so far—but then Kris blows it by throwing in Martin Luther King Jr. with the crystal clear message that he considers the Rev. King's assassination to have been a bad thing.

That's the "offensive" bit your radio stations don't want you to hear, and if you're glad you've been spared such radical material, you'll be *real* glad you can't hear some of Kris' other songs without paying the price of a ticket or record. Kris, you see, is also passionately against his country's funding of the contra rebels fighting to depose the Sandinista government in Nicaragua, and has written some very sad, wrenching songs on the subject.

"Those people in Nicaragua have been oppressed all their lives by the Spaniards, by their own dictators, and by us," he says. "They don't want that anymore; they've had a taste of freedom, and they're not going to give it up. But we don't care what they really think. We just label it Communism and make war on them."

Kris believes that the war in Nicaragua is an example of corruption of what his country stands for. "When I grew up, in my mind God was on our side," he says. "We had ideals. We were rebuilding war-torn Europe under the Marshall Plan, doing all sorts of good things. But somewhere along the line we got off the track somehow. Money began to govern our policy; business interests became all we were interested in defending. The American dream to me was supposed to be an experiment in



Kris says he's never "gone Hollywood." He's an independent movie person who doesn't live the big star life. *A Star Is Born* with Barbra Streisand, *Songwriter* with Willie Nelson and *Convoy* are three of his better known films. You might find any one of these on late night TV.



In his movie career Kris is proudest of his work in *Trouble In Mind*, *Heaven's Gate*, *A Star Is Born* and *Songwriter*. He is least proud of *Rollover* (because of a flawed script) and *Vigilante Force*, an "intentionally dumb" movie in which he participated so that he could achieve a certain tax bracket.

He was also kind of disappointed by Sam Peckinpah's *Convoy*. Right at the end of the movie, when the rebel truckers have finished with their point-proving mayhem, Kris was supposed to climb up into his truck and say something like "Well, boys, the convoy was great and we did okay; let's go home." Instead he started climbing, then turned around to the camera and said "_____ 'em if they can't take a joke."

Peckinpah, who had taken on the project in the first place simply because all that smashing and crashing of heavyweight steel looked like a lot of fun and the whole thing was just one giant goof anyway, fell out of his chair laughing. That one line, he figured, made all the hassles of the strife-rich project worth the pain.

Then the editor got involved. "Can't you say that any other way?" he wanted to know.

Hell, no, said Kris. How else can you say that?
So the editor cut the line.

As to his professional future, Kris intends to go on touring with the Borderlords and making records. He likes his new recording contract with Polygram. He especially likes the fact that Polygram's Nashville chief, the lusty, music-loving Steve Popovich, actually comes to his shows and can quote the lyrics of his test songs. Very likely his next album will be produced by fellow folk/rock/country/individualist T-Bone Burnett, and even more likely it won't retreat from the battlelines Kris draws in his music; it won't be dumb, corny, or mealy-mouthed.

In the movie line, he'd like to do "something with humor in it." He likes an idea Arlo Guthrie came up with the other night, a comedy about the Star Wars program. Arlo's already written a song which might figure in such a project, "Sandinistas for Star Wars." Has a Mexican mariachi feel to it, goes like so:
*We're Sandinistas for Star Wars
 Every U.S. weapon in the air
 Is a U.S. weapon which isn't here...*



personal freedom; now it's a dream of personal material success. That's all it is; everything else has gone, and we're going to end up isolated in the world by our selfishness. That was the scenario for the takeover of the U.S. by the Russians in *Amerika*; people just finally said 'Enough! This rogue nation is threatening the world!'"

For him this is not a theoretical problem. He has been to Nicaragua. He says he met the people targeted for assassination by the contras, saw some of the mutilated children, heard the stories of midnight rape and torture and murder firsthand. "The contras aren't equipped to fight the military, so they go after the civilians," he says disgustedly. "They kill doctors, nurses, teachers, engineers, farmers, anyone who's helping the people get a better life, and then they kill their families; 42% of the dead so far have been *children*, man! They don't just shoot them, either. They do the same things they did when they were in the dictator's private army; they torture them to death, they chop them into pieces, they *skin* people. And our government says that's okay because the people they're doing it to are Commies. Well, *are* they? *Is* it? And is that what America stands for? It sure as hell is in Nicaragua."

Such views tend to be more unpopular than not on the country circuit Kris plays at least half the time, and he always makes a point of both acknowledging that fact from the stage and thanking his audiences for their courtesies in listening to his political songs even if they don't agree with his message, but still he gets his fair share of hate mail and personal abuse.

He has an answer to the people who write those letters and hurl those obscenities. It's in his song "The Eagle and the Bear":

*I will fight and I will die for freedom
 Up against an eagle or a bear
 I will help my brother
 We'll sink or swim together
 If you don't like it, mister, I don't care*

Kris and the Borderlords' show is impressive. The band is great—every one of them is a songwriter, but that doesn't mean they can't pick with the best—but mainly what grabs you is the sheer power, and variety, of Kris' songs. They're poetry of course, beautifully written, and they're full, just bursting with real red-blooded honest life, be it violent, funny, depressing, inspiring, worldly or spiritual or (here's the trick) everything at once. Listen hard, or even casually, to a representative cross-section—a little gem of everyday goodness like "Rainbow," the sad compassion of the chilling "Shipwrecked in the '80s," the cunning outlaw humor of "Best of All Possible Worlds," the absolute faith in the Creator voiced by "Love Is the Way"—and you'll get an idea of the depth and integrity of Kristofferson's vision.

You might also perceive something spiritual going on. That perception would be correct. Kris has been a committed Christian since, after an upbringing in the Episcopal Church which failed to impress him, he began to progress towards a personal vision of spirituality through reading the works of William Blake at the age of 22.

"I began to think of God as a creative imagination, a human force," he says, "and along with that comes a sense of duty. As a Christian, I feel that I have a responsibility to be as close as I can to behaving like Jesus. You can't get within a mile of Him, but you've got to try to live by the same codes as He did. You have to love your brother. So I really feel it's necessary for me to be doing what I'm doing. When you start talking about it, it's dangerous, 'cause you can get into sounding like you're some kind of martyr or hero, but really it's a total sublimation of the ego. When I'm at my best it's when I'm going out to do the work.

"That's the spirit which carries me along. It doesn't always; like last night I got a little weak..."

Last night? I ask. You mean during

the second show, when half the audience were too drunk or stoned to stand up by themselves, and the other half, most of the females, were trying so hard to get your attention that they didn't have a prayer of hearing your lyrics?

"Yeah, you got it. You can't do what I do without getting your heart broken every day. You're trying to deliver an unpopular message, and there are so many times when you wonder if you're not just pissing in the wind. And here I am spending my life away from my wife and kids for it. ."

The old songwriting pros on the bus are at it again. This time they're laughing about some of the adventures of their dear friend Willie Nelson. After a few ancient stories they get around to talking about how funny Willie is, how quick.

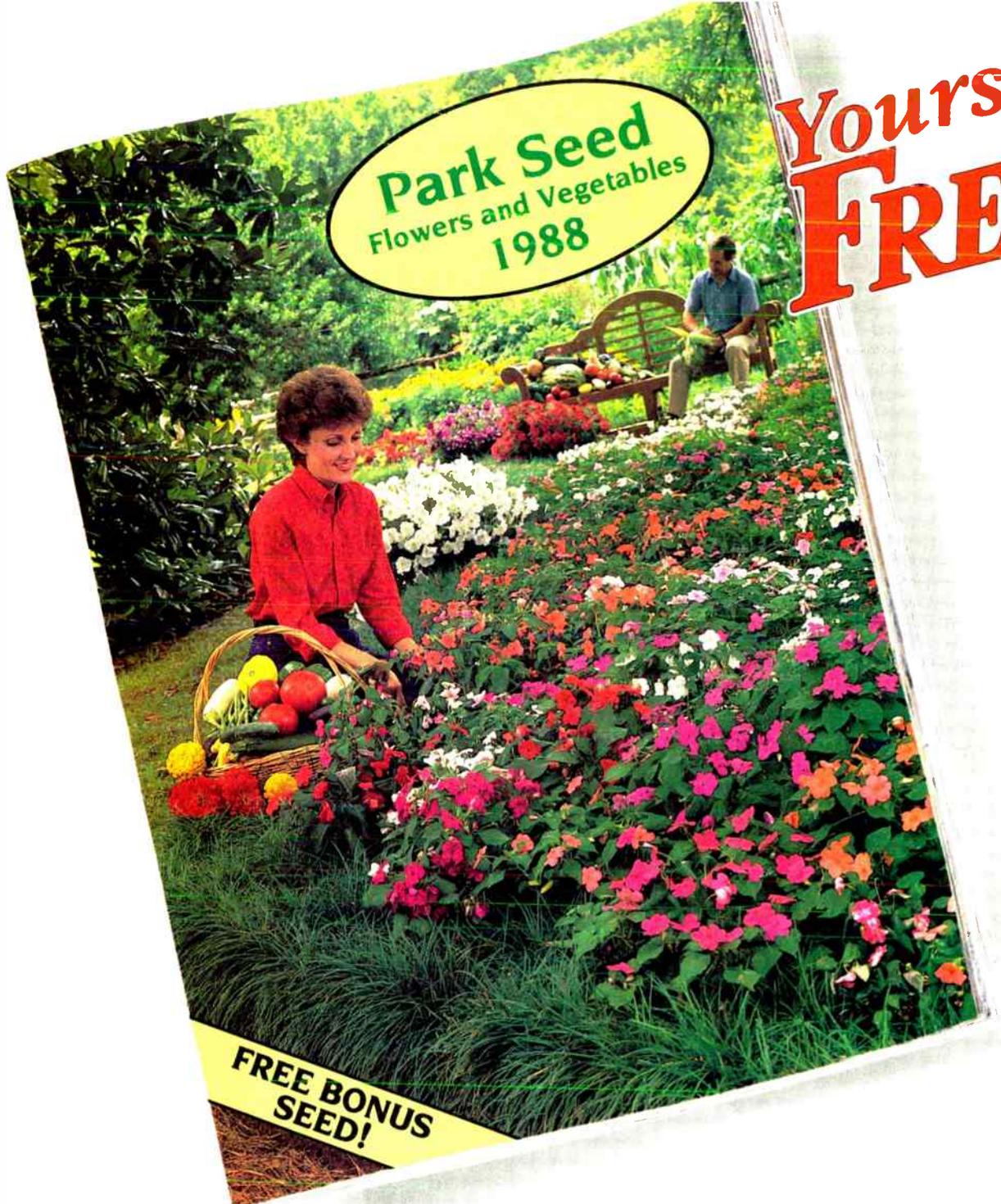
For instance there was the time when he and Kris and a bunch of other infamous songwriters were all on stage together at an awards deal in Nashville, singing "Old Friends," and one of Willie's longtime employees turns to Hank Cochran standing beside him, says "Speaking of old friends..." and decks him. Lays him flat on the stage.

It turns out, according to the story, that Hank ran off with this guy's old lady a couple of years before, and the guy sort of carries a grudge. That's what's happening, but it's not the point of the story. Willie's reaction is.

What Willie does, before firing the guy on the spot and then hiring him back again a few hours later, is turn to Kris and say, "That's just like watching your mother-in-law drive off a cliff in your Cadillac, y'know? Like *Oh, yeah!... Oh, no!*"

"Jesus, Mickey," says Kris. "Y'know, you and I could use some of that. That little sonofabitch is just so *loose*..."

I dunno. Seems to me like ol' Kris is loosening up pretty nicely himself, and just as importantly staying real serious, too. ■



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*A successful songwriter, Holly Dunn hit it big
—and suddenly—with “Daddy’s Hands,”
a song she wrote for her father.*

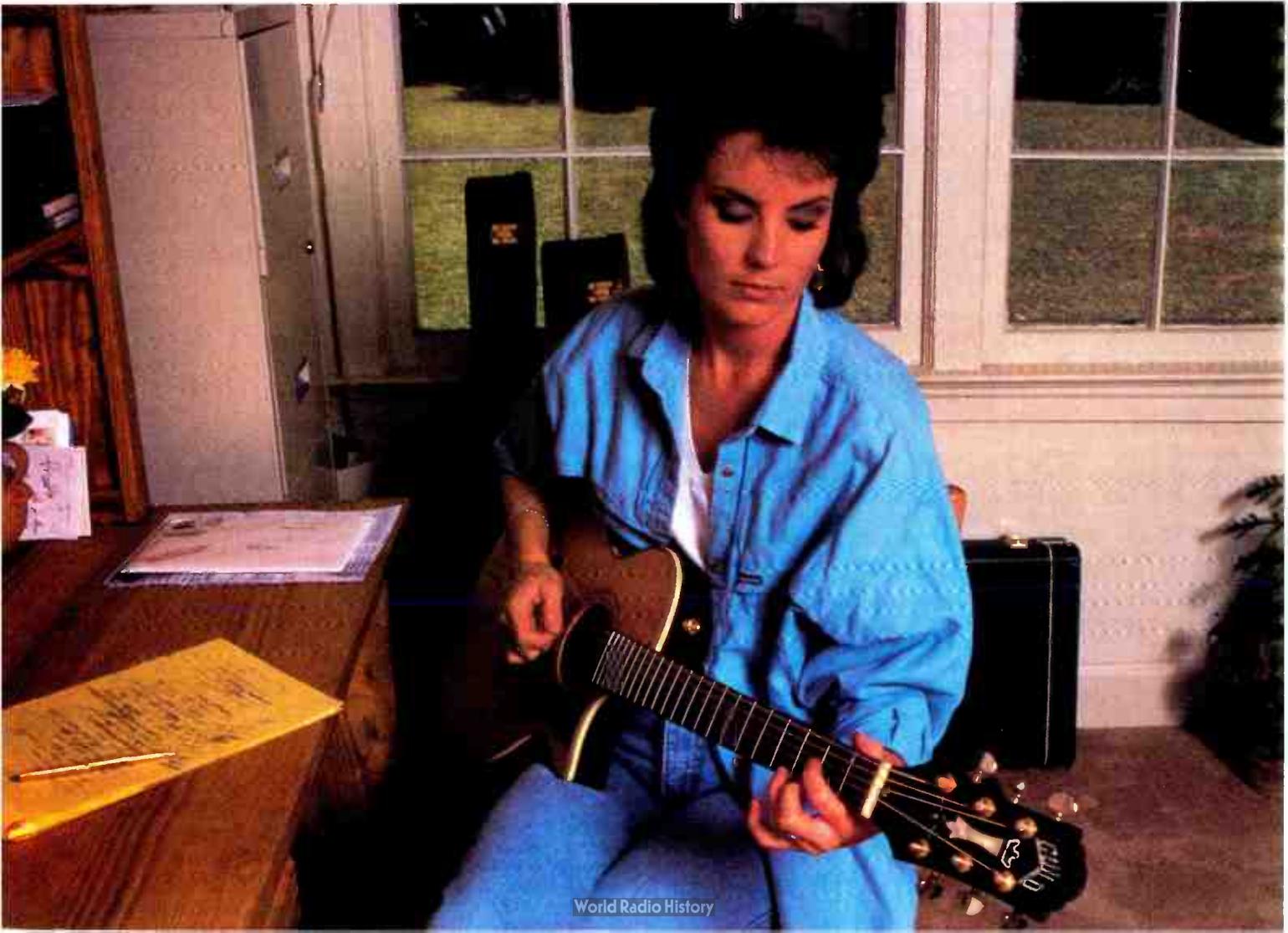
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*This CMA Horizon Award winner has
gone from behind the scenes to the forefront.
Now it’s hard to find time to write songs.*

by Bob Allen

HOLLY DUNN

Keeping Up With the Changes



For Holly Dunn, the transition from behind-the-scenes songwriter to high-profile new recording artist has been abrupt. A year or so ago, her name was largely unknown outside the relatively small circles of Nashville's professional songwriting community. Since then, she has received two Grammy nominations—one for "Best Country Vocal Performance, Female" and one for "Best Country Song." She also walked away with this year's Academy of Country Music Award for "Top New Female Vocalist," and the CMA's "Horizon Award."

All of this recognition has largely been on the basis of one song, a Top Ten hit she wrote herself called "Daddy's Hands." It's an emotional love tribute from a daughter to her father, and it captured the hearts of radio listeners all across the country. "I don't mean to sound mystical or anything," says the tall, slender, dark-haired singer. "But I hardly even remember writing that song. It literally just kind of fell out of the air."

"It was about four years ago," Dunn continues. She is sitting quietly in an unused office cubicle in the Music Row headquarters of her record company, MTM Productions, trying to compose herself after a harrowing drive through Nashville's late afternoon rush hour traffic. "Father's Day was coming up, and I wanted to give my dad something more than just a card. I guess I'd finally hit that point in my life where I was getting older and was beginning to realize that my parents weren't so stupid after all, and that they'd really done a lot of great things for me."

"In fact, all through my childhood, my dad, who's a preacher, always let me be me. He was always real tolerant of me and always gave me a lot of love. And like most kids, I didn't really appreciate it. We had a lot of conflicts. Nothing out of the ordinary, just the normal kinds of teenage kid and parent problems."

"I just felt like I'd never really thanked him for all that, and I felt like I kind of finally wanted to get over the hurdle of doing that. And that's how I came to write 'Daddy's Hands.' I wrote most of it in my car, just riding into the office one day. It just started coming, and by the time I walked in the door, I headed right for my office, and just wrote it down—just like taking dictation."

When she'd finished "Daddy's Hands," Holly, who was a staff songwriter for CBS Songs in Nashville at the time, sent a demo recording of it to her father. She admits that she never felt emotionally close to her father—"he was too stoic of a person for those kinds of open feelings" is how she puts it. As she recalls, she never even called him



Accepting her "Horizon Award"

"I hardly even remember writing that song."

"Daddy." She was amazed at how the song "Daddy's Hands" changed things.

The next time she saw her father, he threw his arms around her and told her how much he loved her—something that he'd never really done before. Later, he admitted to her that he'd cried when he first heard the song.

Needless to say, "Daddy's Hands" came to have great personal meaning for Holly Dunn. But, she insists, at that point she did not really consider sharing it with the rest of the world. "I thought it was just *too* personal for anything commercial to ever happen with it," she recalls. "So after I'd given it to my father, I kind of went on about my business and forgot about it. But one of the other songwriters at CBS Songs happened to play it for Sharon White, and she just broke down and cried when

she heard it. The Whites immediately decided to put it on their next album.

The Whites did record "Daddy's Hands" and intended to release it as a single. But somehow, in making some transitions of their own between record labels and producers, it never quite happened. So Dunn, whose own first album, *Holly Dunn*, was a painfully slow three years in the making, decided to record it herself.

"My first album was kind of pop-flavored," says the singer, who recalls being mainly raised on the mainstream pop sounds of The Beatles and James Taylor. "And 'Daddy's Hands' really didn't fit on there. In fact, it sort of stuck out like a sore thumb. But I insisted on putting it on there, and really had to push for it. Later, it was a logical choice for a single, but I never imagined it would do what it has done."

At age 28, Dunn seems to have reached the point in life where she is not easily taken in by the ephemeral glitter of music business success. She does freely admit, though, to being swept away by her trip last winter to the West Coast for the Grammy Awards—where she was, alas, merely a bridesmaid. During her stay she was treated to chauffeur-driven limousines and lodgings at the posh Beverly Wilshire Hotel. "I always did have this dream of going to the Grammys and meeting *real* stars," she laughs.

It sounds to me as if Holly has some regrets about having been shaken so suddenly out of her more anonymous role as a highly successful Nashville songwriter. Often working with her older brother, noted songwriter Chris Waters, she had been quietly going about her business for several years, with impressive results. Putting in regular nine-to-five business hours in her cozy office cubicle, she turned out songs for Louise Mandrell ("I'm Not Through Loving You Yet"), Terri Gibbs ("An Old Friend"), Sylvia ("True Blue") and Marie Osmond ("Old Devil Moon").

And she freely admits that, "right now, one of my biggest frustrations is that I don't have *time* to write. I find myself doing it now at the most unusual times: when I'm getting dressed in the morning or taking a shower, or when I'm on the road, riding in my van. It's bizarre compared to the way that I used to be able to do it, which was nine-to-five," she sighs. "It just seems like between the demands of a recording career—promotion, interviews, TV stuff—before you know it, there's nothing left of your day."

If Dunn's approach to her chosen profession is a bit business-like, it's not really surprising. She has been singing publicly since age eight. But along the way, the San Antonio, Texas-born

Record Reviews

Reba McEntire
The Last One to Know
MCA-42030

I've ranted and raved often (most recently last issue) when albums fall into ruts and one song blends into another until the whole thing sounds like one unending number. All ballads, all uptempo, all *anything* without variety is a risky proposition. I also loathe critics who routinely read hidden meanings or complex metaphors about a singer's life into popular entertainment like so many nerdy literature teachers.

If you think there are exceptions to both rules, you're right. It's no secret that, like a good percentage of our population, Reba is going through domestic woes. What they are is none of my business. Whether they inspired this concept album I don't know, but it sure seems like it.

Like Willie's *Phases and Stages*, Reba's *The Last One to Know* is built around a relationship shattered, this one by one man's cheating, told from the female perspective. It understandably boils over with the emotions of anger, betrayal, pain and frustration and brilliantly runs that gamut of feelings. Reba sings with her usual conviction and then some, making you *experience* the pain.

The title track depicts the shock and trauma of betrayal and the resulting anguish. Moving a step further, "The Girl Who Has Everything" looks with frustration and bitterness at the "other woman" yet concludes there's no simple answer to the singer's dilemma. On the sur-



face, "Just Across the Rio Grande" takes a break from the domestic turmoil, but the deeper theme is clearly wanting what one can't have.

The swing-flavored "I Don't Want to Mention Any Names" is actually, under the George Strait backing, a flatout confrontation between cheated-on and cheater. It has a certain snarl that doesn't sound contrived. Equally convincing is the rockabilly-flavored "Someone Else" (complete with Sun Records-style slapback echo). Someone's *not* messing around.

Reba's own "I Don't Want to Be Alone" is among her finest compositions. From the lyric to the tense, pulsing arrangement, she evokes the nervousness and ambiguity of a new relationship. The cold, snap-off ending complements the tension of the lyric perfectly. "The Stairs" evokes the cold frustration of physical as well as emotional battery.

The one annoying mistake is "Love Will Find Its Way to You," a piece of fluff more appropriate to a computer dating ad than to this album and unworthy of the rest of the material. All it needs is an announcer bellowing, "Looking for that Special someone? Tired of the bar scene? Well, call Insta-Date!" Dave Loggins co-wrote it, which explains a lot.

However, the sour taste is swept away by the exquisite and bittersweet flavor of "I've Still Got the Love We Made," which marks acceptance, scars healed and memories sweetened by time, and brings the album full circle.

Songs of pain from Doris Day or John Davidson just don't work. But when they're filtered through the voice of a great singer known to be having her own problems, that's a horse of a different color. Besides, last time I checked, that's what this music's always been about.

—RICH KIENZLE

John Cougar Mellencamp
The Lonesome Jubilee
Mercury 832-465-1 Q-1

I don't want to get involved here in an argument about what is and what is not country; however, I haven't seen any albums that came out of Nashville recently that began with a quote from Ecclesiastes: "...Everything is unutterably weary and tiresome. No matter how much we see, we are never satisfied; no matter how much we hear, we are not content..."

John Mellencamp is obviously not content. Since the days of Johnny Cougar and "Jack and Diane," Mellencamp has been pushing the limits of popular music. In some ways he represents the rock 'n' roll branch of the Steve Earle/Dwight Yoakam school of music, pushing *toward* country. Actually, that's not completely true. What Mellencamp shares with people like Earle, Yoakam and even Randy Travis is a gut-level understanding and appreciation of what makes up American music—if you happened to catch Mellencamp's duet with Maria McKee a couple of Farm-Aids ago, you'll know what I'm talking about.

The Lonesome Jubilee is Mellencamp's tribute to American music. It's been a long time since a popular album featured hammer dulcimers, congas, pedal steels, lap steels, mandolins, harmonicas, autoharps, banjos, accordians, saxophones, penny whistles, claves, fiddles, tamborines, dobros, and, oh yes, a bunch of guitars. In fact, no album I know of since the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band's *Will*

Record Reviews

the *Circle Be Unbroken* landmark album back in 1973 has reached so strongly for the stars, been so willing to stretch the standing definitions of popular music.

I find *The Lonesome Jubilee* fascinating. "Paper in Fire," the first rock single off the album, is an incredibly powerful song with a frantic arrangement blending banjos and fiddles in a way that would cause most Nashville studio pickers to have a stroke. Mellencamp layers in the banjos and Lisa Germano's fiddle work the way a Music City ace might layer in strings—just a touch. The lyrics are suitably Biblical:

*He wanted love
With no involvement
So he chased the wind
That's all his silly life
required
And the days of vanity
Went on forever
And he saw his days
burn up
Like paper in fire...*

Like some of the newest country acts, Mellencamp is relentlessly populist in his leanings. In a sense, *The Lonesome Jubilee* is a concept album, an expression of Mellencamp's strong feelings for and about the working man, the plain-dirt farmer, the woman hanging on by a thread. His images are strong and disturbing. That is *The Lonesome Jubilee*'s strength and its weakness.

However admirable Mellencamp's populist leanings are—and I happen to think they are enormously admirable; they are feelings I share—I would have liked to see *The Lonesome Jubilee* be slightly less polemic.

Perhaps it's worth saying that music is our strength in hard times. That if we are going to deal in Biblical allusions, perhaps we should also touch on redemption along with damnation.

This is, I suppose, splitting political hairs. I listen to this album a lot, and I get more from it on each listening. Regardless of what I perceive as the shortcomings of *The*



Lonesome Jubilee, John Mellencamp has reached for something important. That in itself is enough.

—MICHAEL BANE

Alabama *Just Us* RCA 6495-1-R

Oh, God, I'm so excited. They're letting me review the new Alabama record! They know I'm not objective—I've shown them the aerial photograph of Ft. Payne I carry in my wallet, with Teddy's route to the Amoco station marked out in little Confederate flags—but I guess they thought it was time for a real fan to get a chance. Maybe all those death threats you called in after the last review did the trick; keep them coming, okay?

But I guess in all fairness I'd better tell you why I'm not objective, what it is about our boys which makes me and all my friends and relatives except my dad so grateful that God saw fit to keep the Ft. Payne Foursome safe from floods and tornados and things in the second half of the Twentieth Century.

It's simple. It's not the boys' good looks or their personal magnetism; it's not even their humble Christian sincerity, which makes them shine like a new Timex watch. I didn't know any of that personal stuff the first time I heard them, you see; it was their music which got to me first.

It was really neat. It was like when I was a little kid and



me and Mom used to hide in the den and listen to the Helen Reddy records she bought before she married Dad. We'd have the volume turned nice and low (which I liked anyway) because if Dad heard us, he'd come in and make us listen to *his* records (he had hundreds of them). He'd turn the sound way up and play us Wailing Jennings and The Band and The Rolling Stones and that dead guy with the grownup redneck son, Hank whatsisname, and it was like, the instruments were always, like, rough or *whiney* or something just as gross, and the words were, like, weird, so even if you could understand them at all, they didn't make sense.

So maybe Mom's and my little get-togethers weren't really worth it in the end, but we did it anyway. Sometimes we got lucky; we'd have listened to all three of Helen's records and got started on Mom's other album, *John Denver's Greatest Hits*, before Dad came in.

To cut a long story short, I grew up, and I pretty much quit trying to listen to music except when I had to, like in elevators and stuff, until one day I was driving to Wendy's for lunch with my girlfriend Mandi and she played this tape by Alabama. And it was like, magic! It was like, Helen times four, except these were *guys*, and they were in a *band*! Now, to be sure, their instruments did sound a bit rough or whiney sometimes, but it was like, okay somehow (I still don't really know *exactly* how they do that, but I've learned a lot about the

music business by reading articles about them, so now I can tell you it's got to do with "mixing," which is done by a "producer" in a "studio"). And of course the words were really nice. They didn't upset me or anything, and all of them were, like, natural, the way me and my friends talk but without the bits where we get it all wrong.

So now I'm really into country music, and the only thing I think is bad about it is that Alabama doesn't make nearly enough records, and other people make far too many, a lot of them *really* whiney.

But enough about *me*. Let's talk about the new album!

First things first: "Tar Top." Oh, God—at last, a song about the Alabama legend! I've read every word I can find about Randy and Teddy and Jeff when they were just a "cover band" (that's music business talk meaning they didn't get to play their own songs), and I've memorized the names of all their old drummers and everyone, so I *really* know what this song's all about! I love the bit about "Alabama" being just the name of a state before the boys made it famous, and I'm especially moved by the bit at the end when Randy talks about people thinking the band's too rich and plays music that's too "contemporary," then says, like, "It's just *us*." It all makes you wonder how people could be so mean, but yes, Randy, that's the *perfect* answer! And what an album title, too! That'll shut them up!

Another thing about "Tar Top" is how well Randy has fit so many different-sized words into the song and still made a lot of them rhyme. I'm finding out about things like that, which I guess you'd call the technical side of songwriting, and let me tell you, it's a lot harder than Randy and Jeff and Teddy make it sound! Not even Mark can do it quite right, which I guess is why the boys never sing any of his tunes.

Another song I really like is

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Record Reviews

"I Saw the Time," which is sort of like a protest song except it's not against anything, which is really neat. It's about everybody having enough to eat and smiling all the time and not being scared of muggers and stuff, and the way Randy tells it, he remembers when the whole world was like that. He talks about "John, Paul, George and Ringo," (and "John Paul and Martin," whose records I can't find anywhere), so I guess he means the 1960's. God, the Sixties must have been wonderful! I wish I'd been alive then, but on the other hand maybe I'm better off this way; I don't have those lovely memories to make me sad like Randy sounds, now that things aren't so nice. (My dad says this song is "cynical trash" aimed at "undereducated bimbos" and "brain-dead middle-aged nostalgia freaks"—which I don't think is at all polite, and anyway, what does *he* know? He wasn't even *here* in the Sixties; he was someplace called "Vietnam".)

There's another great song about how carefree and nifty it was to "sock hop" in the 1950's—What an interesting life Randy's had! Fancy going out dancing when you're only just out of diapers!—but all the other songs on the album are about love, which I like a lot. Some of them are really sad, which makes me want to make every one of the boys feel better, but some of them are really happy, which makes for a great balance, and all of them are nice and even-sounding.

The best is "Face to Face," which is a *lovely* love song and very intelligent too. It's about being really close with someone, and it's very daring, but what I like most about it is how, like, sensitive it is; Randy and his girlfriend are touching and feeling all the way through the song, but they're only touching each others' okay parts, not the dirty parts under their clothes. Which is really romantic, and also very consid-



erate of them, 'cause everybody's got to realize right *now* that if you touch someone's dirty parts or let them touch yours, God gives you AIDS and you die.

It's just like Randy to slip a socially positive message like that across to his fans without being crude or obvious. Ooooooh, he's so *clever* at figuring out what people need to hear! I love him! I love his *mind*!

Whoops!—I've run out of space! See you in Ft. Payne!

—PADDI CARR

George Highfill *Waitin' Up*

Warner Bros. 25618-1

The Yoakam connection. A formula for success or a one-way ticket to hell? Oops. Excuse me. That wasn't much of an opening line. But there's a glimmer of truth to that little absurdity. With Dwight hot, it's hardly surprising Warners would sign another artist connected with the now-classic *A Town South of Bakersfield* anthology, as both Dwight and his producer Pete Anderson were. Comparisons would be inevitable—and dangerous.

Highfill isn't Yoakam. He occupies a similar, but less hard-edged space. His strength is as a thoughtful ballad singer, Bakersfield-style: sparse backing, fiddles and steel up front. And that's fortunate. Were he pumping out ass-kicking rockabilly-tinged honky tonk, the Dwight comparisons would



be unbearable.

To carry the comparison further, his voice is less distinctive than, say, Randy Travis'. Highfill is looser, less tautly-strung, at his best reflective and thoughtful, at worst flat and indistinct. The material makes all the difference in the effectiveness of his singing.

"Waitin' Up" catches the resignation of domestic life with a great line—"I might as well be in the Army/I might as well be a Marine/'Cause if I'm not on the job or at home/I'm absent without leave."

His version of Mel Tillis' 1971 honky tonk hit, "The Brand New Mister Me," is not only true to the spirit of the original, it reminds everyone of the durability of Mel's best music, a fact often obscured by his unending game-show appearances. "Billfold Size" is a thoughtful ballad of lost love preserved on one wallet photo, with a lyrical feel much like early Willie Nelson. The uptempo Bakersfield-style shuffles, "Mad Money," "Happy You" and "Knockin' at My Door," stick closely to early 1960's Buck Owens and Wynn Stewart.

Highfill's rendition of Hank Sr.'s "My Sweet Love Ain't Around" is straightforward enough, though it lacks the conviction so apparent on "Billfold Size." "West Texas," another subtle, atmospheric ballad, captures the flat, arid yet homey feel of the region as well as any song I've ever heard. "Still Tryin'" brilliantly evokes a man undergoing one excruciating heart-break after another, sustained only by his determina-

tion to press on.

"Nickles and Dimes," a duet with Katy Moffatt, celebrates happiness despite poverty, but does it so infectiously I can't imagine it *not* being a hit single. It's commercial in the same way as Ricky Skaggs' and Sharon White's "Love Can't Get Any Better Than This," with Pete Anderson weaving his trademark Telecaster licks around the vocals.

Highfill has a fine start, yet those spots where he seems uninterested in the material bother me. If everything isn't just quite right, or the material's too lightweight, the boredom shows through and his interest seems to wander. Yet on the right songs he's unstoppable. With carefully-chosen material, he could be a potent force and forge an identity of his own.

—RICH KIENZLE

Willie Nelson and Merle Haggard *Seashores of Old Mexico* Epic FET 40293

I sort of think of these Willie records as a musical subcategory—Maui country, if you will. Maui country is exactly what you might imagine country music to be if it were produced by brilliant, but terminally laid-back, denizens of our fiftieth state. We have hammered our palm trees into guitars, Lord, and like sand through the hourglass run our production values. If this stuff was any more laid-back, it would reach out and turn off the amps.

Well, Willie and Merle are, as Buck Owens once sang with a good bit more feeling, together again. Their first pairing (at least I think it was the first; you'd need a Cray supercomputer and a couple of hoodoo queens to keep up with the mountains of Maui country product) actually

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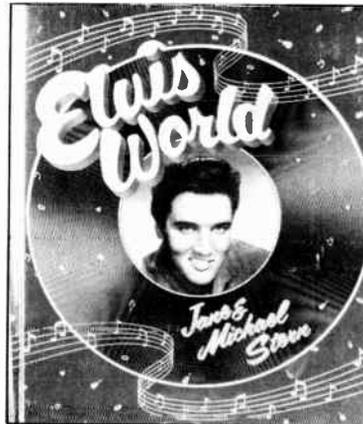
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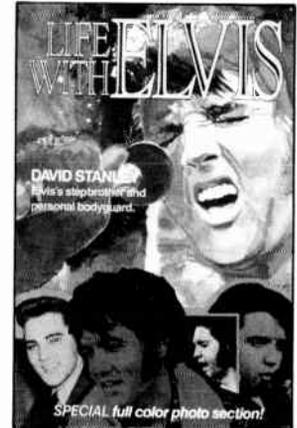
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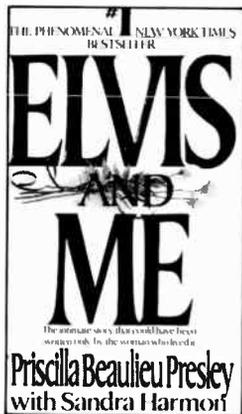
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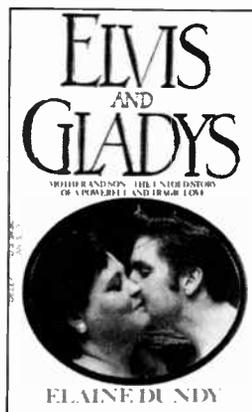
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Record Reviews

produced a good version of Townes Van Zandt's "Pancho and Lefty," one of the great unappreciated country songs of all time. *Seashores of Old Mexico* (see, even the titles of Maui country records are laid-back) I don't think delivers anything that strong.

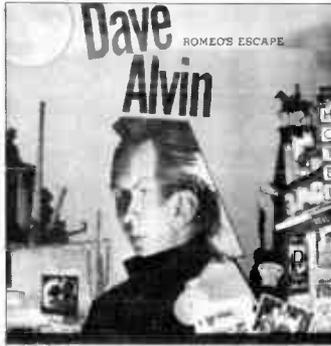
It unfortunately includes yet another endless version of Lennon and McCartney's "Yesterday," which we could all live without. In fact, I would sooner hear three-and-a-half minutes of a dentist's drill run amok in a cage of hamsters than ever hear another version of "Yesterday," much less a version that seems to drag on for a couple of days.

Yes, there are a couple of excellent songs on this album—"When Times Were Good" is a good 'un, as is "Shotgun and a Pistol," which is this album's answer to "Pancho and Lefty."

Well, I don't know why I carp. Given my druthers, I'd be on Maui writing Maui record reviews, where all the songs would be, you know, like *meaningful*. Pass me some white wine, and does anybody out there know if surfboard wax works on records? —MICHAEL "THE BIG KAHUNA" BANE

Dave Alvin *Romeo's Escape* Epic BFE 40921

Once upon a time in the West, there was a band called The Blasters, and they were indeed a blast. Emerging from the lower-rent areas of Los Angeles in the early 1980's to challenge the creative rock 'n' roll supremacy of New York in much the same way the boys of Bakersfield upset Nashville's country music appellation in the 1960's, they had it all: energy, talent, instinct, insight, intelligence and a quality we shall call "beef" instead of a much more appropriate but unprintable four-letter word which also



begins with a "b."

But "beefy" isn't such a shoddy adjective for The Blasters. They were big, bold, red-blooded boys, and their music made one hell of a substantial, all-American meal. It was roots-rock stuff: musical ingredients conveyed to the Los Angeles of the 1980's by almost every river in the American pop/folk musical landscape—Chicago and Mississippi and New Orleans blues, Nashville and California country, Cajun music from Louisiana, honky tonk from Texas, rockabilly from Tennessee, rock 'n' roll from everywhere—and given a new, wonderfully original but traditional voice. As The Blasters' main writer Dave Alvin put it, and his big brother Phil Alvin sang it in their song "American Music," their sound was "a howl from the desert, a scream from the slums, the Mississippi rolling to the beat of the drums."

And really, it was great. With the possible exceptions of Creedence Clearwater Revival and The Band and at times Joe Ely, The Blasters were simply incomparable. Their L.A. contemporaries and the other roots-music bands which followed their lead never even came close.

Why this little history lesson? Well, two reasons. First, The Blasters never made anything like the popular splash they should have, so it's quite possible you country/rock/roots fans out there in radioland might have missed them entirely. And second, everything said above about the band applies also to Dave Alvin and his



new post-Blaster album. It's a killer in a killer tradition.

Dave Alvin, you see, has a gift. We're not talking here about his abilities as a great roots-weaving composer or passionately brilliant guitarist or outstanding leader of musicians, but about his uncanny way with a lyric, his writing gift. His approach isn't that of the universalist—let's have a lost-love song for Everyman, a generic rock 'n' roll anthem, an all-inclusive 1950's nostalgia setpiece, a Tribute to Hope, a song about Feelings! It's the approach of the artist/reporter. Much like Kris Kristofferson at his best ("Casey's Last Ride," "Rainbow"), Alvin looks into moments of people's lives, including his own, and catches what matters in real mood, real dialogue, real detail, real time and place. And so the songs are very vivid, very concrete, and the feelings run around in them like ghosts, electrifying all sorts of emotional nerves and memories precisely because they're so naturally and deeply in context.

Here on *Romeo's Escape*, for instance, the lost-love theme works in reverberant freeze-frames. In one, "Border Radio" (here much deepened and countrified from its original shape on The Blasters' first album), a woman sits at home on a Saturday night, calling in a request to a 50,000-watt border radio station—"this song comes from 1962, dedicated to a man who's gone"—and you know without having to be told that even if by chance the long-gone man is out there any-

where within that mega-beam and he hears it, he won't respond. In another, "Fourth of July," a man preoccupied with a faded marriage smokes a cigarette on the stairs of his apartment building, watches Mexican kids playing in the yard, sees fireworks in the sky, and realizes (without any particular excitement), "Hey, baby, it's the Fourth of July!" In a third, "New Tattoo," another man gets a visit from the woman who threw him over recently, tells her savagely to take off her dress, he wants to see the enraging symbol of her freedom: "Everyone wants a woman like you, 'specially now with that new tattoo."

It's good, real, hard-eyed stuff, this, unromantic in any conventional sense but loaded with passion and humanity and set to music every bit as vital and surprising as the lyrics. So yes, Dave Alvin and his new band, The Allnighters, are keeping it going. They too are a blast.

—PATRICK CARR

The Oak Ridge Boys *Heartbeat* MCA 42036

I don't know. Sometimes I think the string just plays out. I saw The Oaks' first non-gospel performance, a record company showcase at the old Exit-In club in Nashville more years ago than I care to remember. The record company couldn't figure out what to do with the guys, but it didn't really make any difference. The Oak Ridge Boys juggernaut eventually went on to swamp pretty much everything around them.

They did it by creating a seamless blend of country and pop, with a little of the old-fashioned gospel harmonies thrown in to keep the dough rising (it's country homily week here in Florida). As they progressed, we were supposed to start noticing how they dressed like the

Record Reviews

cover of *GQ* run berserk; how all the guys had different personalities—kind of like the four Monkees, you know, there was a cute one, one who sang lowwwwwwwww, one with a lot of teeth, one with long hair.

None of this barrage of Oak-aphernalia had much to do with the music, which just got slicker and slicker. *Heartbeat* is slicker and slicker, but that just ain't gonna do it this time. I live with a confirmed Oaks fan from way back, and even she was distressed. There's one song on this album, "Come By Here," that moves along, but the rest of the album tends to run together into one long, synthesized Oaks song. It just kind of drains off the turntable and dribbles onto the floor.

I think the problem I have is that The Oaks have a very specific formula, and I suppose that, for their fans, it's important to hold to that formula. But music either evolves or it dies. The thing that gave Oaks music its power to begin with was the fusion of gospel, country and pop, the risk, if you will, of taking one heck of a gospel group into the mainstream. Some of the group's most memorable hits ("Elvira" pops to mind) show other fusions, melding gospel harmonies with 1950's rock. Brilliant work. *Heartbeat* sounds as if it could use a pacemaker.

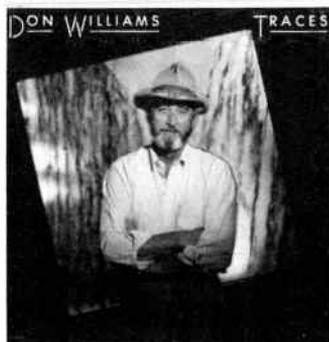
—MICHAEL BANE

Rosie Flores

Rosie Flores

Warner Bros. WB 25626

Is this what it's come to? Already? Rosie Flores began music-biz life as the leader of The Screaming Sirens, an all-girl L.A. country punk band that presented itself as a bad joke without knowing how much worse than bad it in fact really was. Now, with the aid of producer Pete Anderson, the man who helped

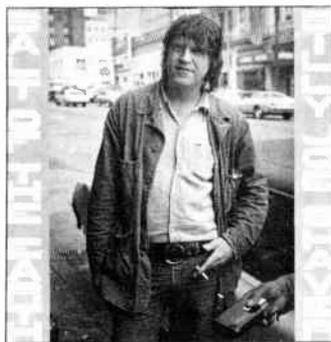


Dwight Yoakam invent himself, she presents herself as the newest of the rock-as-country, country-as-rock bunch. And neither of the pair has much to back it up with.

For her part, she's an admittedly exuberant singer who nonetheless puts across little feeling or personality. I like her best when she's trying to come across as the stylistic bridge between late Patsy Cline and early Loretta Lynn, as on "Blue Side of Town" or "Cryin' Over You." But as a rockabilly—"Heartbeats," "Heartbreak Train"—she sings strictly by rote, and she's equally colorless on the ballads or on honky tonkers like "Turn Around," her imitation of Carl Perkins' imitation of Hank Williams.

As for Anderson, he's basically put together a country sampler—a shuffle here, a two-step there, now a waltz, then some rockabilly—full of textbook-tasty licks and wholly uninspired. It has the feel of a generic "New Traditionalist" album: there are no surprises or novelty, and everything is done with a calculated effect in mind. A rare exception like "Midnight to Moonlight," with its pretty touches for accordion, guitar and mandolin, only confirms the rule.

This approach subverts the whole point of what Anderson (with Yoakam) once stood for. Rosie Flores is an average singer riding a trend. With her Anderson has trivialized his (and Yoakam's) path-breaking approach and even, to a dismaying extent, their



sound, and done a lot faster than any hack Nashville producer could—or would—have it. —JOHN MORTHLAND

Don Williams

Traces

Capitol/EMI CLT-48034

It's all right there on "Desperately," the first track: that spare, acoustic sound; the gentle, loping beat; the gypsy guitar; the straightforward declarations of undying love and devotion. Don Williams is not about to change his ways to accommodate new trends.

This has its good points and its bad. Any singer who stands this naked will rise or fall almost exclusively on the strength of his songs. For Williams, there have always been two kinds, the devotional love song and the uplifting nostalgia song. And nowadays, Nashville doesn't turn out nearly as many good ones of either type as it used to. When he gets strong, vivid material like "Old Coyote Town," Williams remains everything his most ardent fans claim. When the sentiments cross over into conceit and cliché, as on "Easy Touch," he goes in one ear and out the other in no time. With its punchy horns and prickly guitar intro, a song like "Running Out of Reasons to Run" attempts to get around that dilemma, while keyboards give "Til I Can't Take It Anymore" the feel of soul music. But just as often, he's brought down by

empty slogans like "Come From the Heart."

At all times he remains indisputably the one and only Don Williams, and hey, if you ask me, Williams is one of the uncredited creators of what's come to be called "New Age" music, that smooth, mellow and supposedly spiritual blend of acoustic folk, jazz, pop and roots music that has risen to unexpected heights thanks to the Yuppie retreat from rock. He's still the only vocalist working the form who's worth hearing. He just happens to be marketed as a country artist because of his background and because he sings mainly Nashville material. This particular effort may have a little more spark than the last few without matching up to his breakthrough efforts of a decade or so ago. *Traces* thus makes it easy to see why people can get tired of Williams, but it's also clear why many others keep coming back for more.

—JOHN MORTHLAND

Billy Joe Shaver

Salt of the Earth

Columbia FCT 40903

With all the stubbornness of a true Texas boy, Billy Joe Shaver continues to put out his idiosyncratic little albums whether they sound commercial or not. In truth, as the years have rolled by, the band's sound has become a little fuller, the verbiage a little leaner. This has worked in his favor, for his albums remain as erratic as ever.

Just check out the opening "Sweet Mama," with its bluesy guitar, chugging beat and slurred vocals. It is not "pretty" music in any sense of the word, and it is neither self-consciously traditional nor a throwback to "outlaw"—or anything else of that kind, for that matter. It is simply a man saying what's on his mind the best way he knows how. It's pure Billy Joe. But "Hardworkin' Man,"

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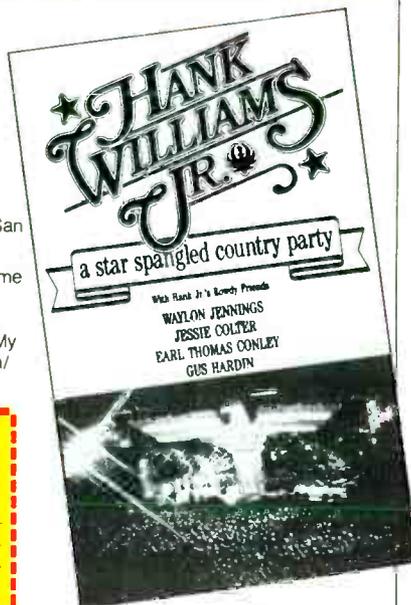
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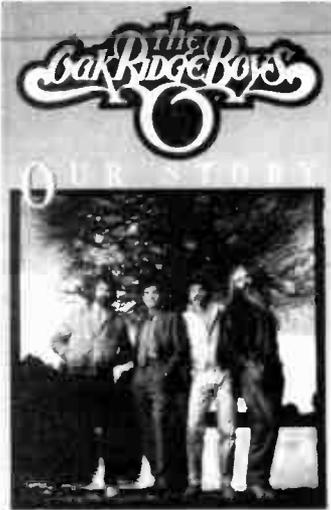
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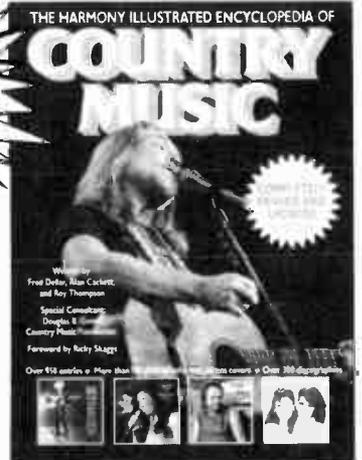
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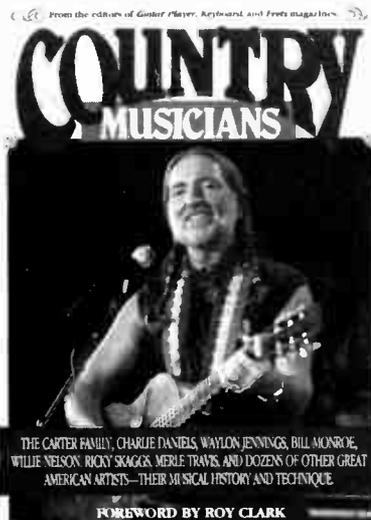


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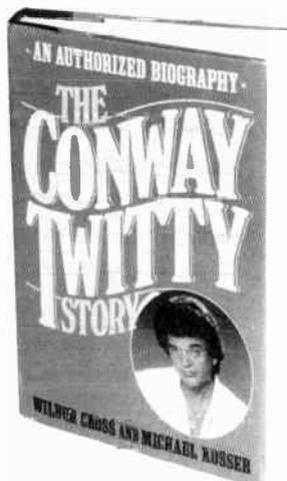
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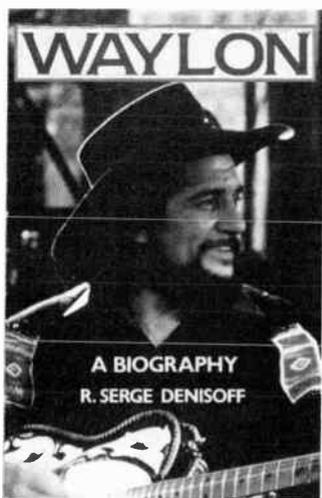
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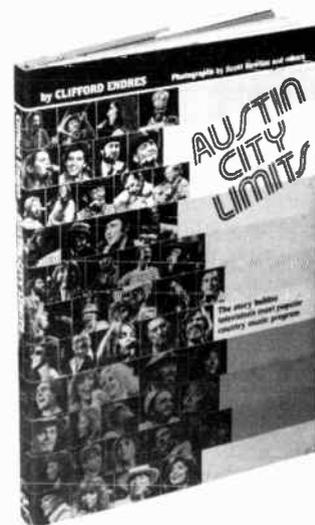
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Record Reviews

which follows it, is a throw-away with no real insights into anything. It's the kind of blues that was popular four and five decades ago, but sounds hollow now because it fails to take into consideration everything that has happened since musically. You just can't get away with lamenting the working man's plight anymore unless you have something to add beyond the initial catch-phrase.

"You Can't Beat Jesus Christ," on the other hand, is my kind of gospel, my kind of gospel being a fairly small category. Billy Joe's phrasing is a cross between Waylon and Hag, but there's no mistaking that voice for either. "Fun While It Lasted" is a prime honky tonk lament that I'd love to hear Jerry Lee do also. The ghost of Jimmie Rodgers walks through the sound of songs like "Whiteman's Watermelon" even if the metaphor is not too clear (and would probably be mighty distasteful if it were). And "Good News Blues" is a happy enough turnabout.

In many ways Billy Joe Shaver is his old confused, contradictory self. I happen to think he's maybe a little better than he was back when he was more highly regarded, so I can accept the warts a lot more easily now, too. Surely he's earned at least that much, and probably more, by now.

—JOHN MORTHLAND

New Grass Revival *Hold On To a Dream* Capitol-EMI, CLT-46962

For some time now the four members of New Grass Revival, John Cowan, Pat Flynn, Sam Bush and Bela Fleck—all four sought-after session musicians and solo recording artists in their own right—have stunned their limited but devoted audiences with their exhilarating, original blend of bluegrass,



Caribbean and rhythm-and-blues music.

With *Hold On To a Dream*, the Revival's second major-label album, the band continues its efforts to make a dent in the country charts and country radio play lists, in hopes of touching base with the sort of mass audience that it takes to keep major record companies interested in continuing to record your music.

Considering New Grass' instrumental brilliance and rampant eclecticism, reaching such an audience might seem to be something of an *impossible* dream. Country radio, for those of you who've bothered to listen lately, tends to deal in predictability, redundancy and mediocrity—qualities that have always been noticeably absent in the New Grass Revival's boldly innovative music.

Until recently, part of the problem of finding an audience was that New Grass' music was simply *too* damned good, and a little bit too complex, to fit the specifications of contemporary country radio formats, where (ironically) the music of less talented ensembles such as Exile or Sawyer Brown has

often reigned supreme.

Grass Revival seems at long last to have found a means of bridging this airplay gap. Without compromising the instrumental virtuosity and stylistic versatility that have always been at the heart of their music, the Revival seems to have headed off in a new direction. It is one that I predict will reaffirm their impeccable credentials among the new-grass eclectics while earning them new exposure in the commercial mainstream as well.

You can hear what I'm talking about on the title track of *Hold On To a Dream*. This song is one of two outstanding selections on the album written by Tim O'Brien, another rapidly up-and-coming new-grass turk who leads the group Hot Rize. You can also hear the shift on the lively "Can't Stop Now," written by Nashville songwriters Gary Nicholson and Wendy Waldman.

The musical territory the Revival is operating in so effectively here is close to what the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band has been working on since it reemerged in the country field a few years

back. But New Grass Revival is doing a better job.

On the above-mentioned tracks, John Cowan shines with his powerful blue-eyed-rhythm-and-soul voice, which has long been the dominant element in the The New Grass Revival's overall four-way vocal harmony sound. The long instrumental breaks heard throughout the album afford lots of stretching room for the soaring interplay of Fleck (banjo), Flynn (guitar) and Bush (mandolin)—all of whom weigh in as contemporary pace-setters on their chosen instruments.

Pat Flynn's songwriting is a third ingredient essential to both this album's stylistic mix and the Revival's evolving sound. Flynn contributes three songs here—"I'll Take Tomorrow," "Looking Past You" and "I Can Talk to You." Though his compositions lack the seamless polish of some of the outside material, such as veteran Jesse Winchester's "How About You," they, more than any others, reflect the sassy, optimistic spirit of this ensemble. They also leave lots of essential breathing space for fine harmonies and free-flight instrumental excursions.

So much for what's different. There are jazzy, free-form examples of the Revival's bold eclecticism on this album, as well. One of these is Bela Fleck's "Metric Lips." Fleck—as he proves here again—is the Thelonius Monk of the banjo: he teases and coaxes the kinds of sounds out of his banjo that you would ordinarily expect to hear from a jazz saxophone or a classical guitar.

Here's to The New Grass Revival and *Hold On To a Dream*—one fine breakthrough album. If nothing else, this thoroughly intelligent and eminently listenable record proves that one does not always have to forsake the realities of commercialism while stretching for the outer limits of musical creativity. —BOB ALLEN

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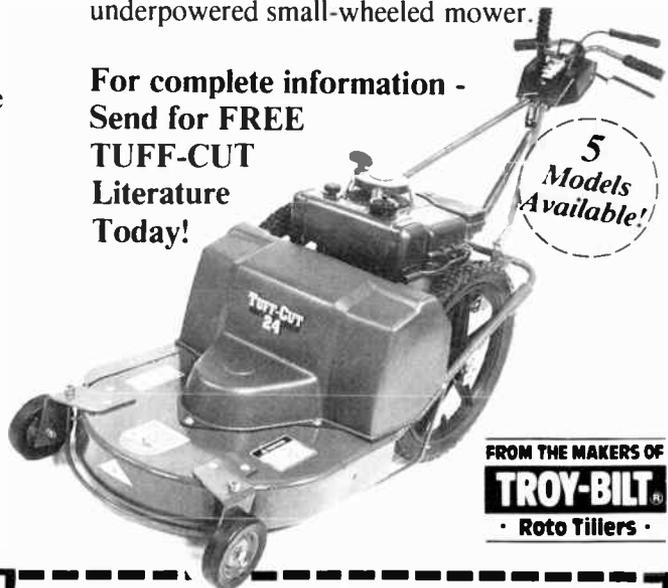
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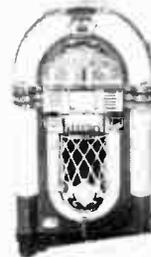
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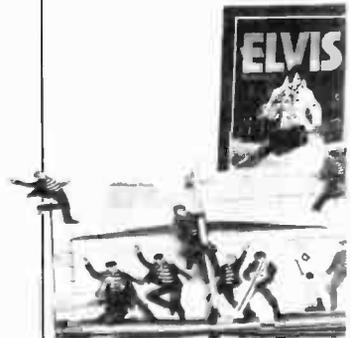
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Stetson Records continues reproducing old Capitol albums in the original covers. Their reissues lack Bear Family's extensive sleeve notes, rare photos and discographical detail, but much of this material is so hard to get, it doesn't matter.

The Louvin Brothers: The Louvins' first LP record, *Tragic Songs of Life* (HAT 3043), came out in 1956. It was previously reissued on Rounder. But the new Stetson version has the original liner notes and cover, with its 1950's pulp magazine-style illustration that makes Ira and Charlie resemble two Mickey Spillane heavies.

The music is largely acoustic, with Paul Yandell's (not Yaldell, as the notes state) Travis-picked electric guitar the sole electric instrument. Replete with eerily beautiful Louvin harmonies, their performances of traditional folk tunes like "Knoxville Girl" mix with the Blue Sky Boys' "Katie Dear," the Louvins' own "Alabama," Karl Davis' "Kentucky," A.P. Carter's "I'll Be All Smiles Tonight" and a haunting rendition of "In the Pines." An essential set.

Rose Lee and Joe Maphis: "Uncle Joe and Aunt Rosie" gave Barbara Mandrell some of her earliest stage experience. Joe, one of country's finest guitarists, died in 1986. At this point little of their early work is available in any form, including many of their classic Columbia honky tonk sides. In 1962, however, Capitol gave the Maphises bluegrass backing to create *Rose Lee and Joe Maphis with The Blue Ridge Mountain Boys* (HAT 3048).

Neither Maphis was really bluegrass-oriented, but they do a respectable job nonetheless. The bluegrass backing is fine, and Joe's acoustic picking is clean and clear (this album came before Doc Watson was widely known). Most of the songs are such traditional standards as "Maple on the Hill," "Little Rosewood Casket" and the amusing, exaggerated moralizing of "Whiskey is the Devil in Liquid Form." Merle Travis' original liner notes are an added bonus.

Jean Shepard: Reba McEntire's current album, *The Last One to Know*, is a concept album dealing with a broken love affair. Willie's

1971 *Yesterday's Wine* dealt with various points in a man's life, and the 1974 *Phases and Stages* dealt with both male and female sides of an ended marriage. But the reissue of Jean Shepard's 1956 *Songs of a Love Affair* (HAT 3042) demonstrates how history repeats itself. It was among the first—if not *the* first—concept albums.

Jean wrote each song specifically for the album. As with Reba's, each song deals with a different aspect of the situation beginning with "A Passing Love," moving through the disappointment of "Over and Over," the acceptance of "Hello, Old Broken Heart" and renewal as expressed in "I'll Thank You All My Life." Like Reba's album, each song moves closer to a resolution. If you have both albums, play them back-to-back. You'll see how 32 years change things—and how much they don't.

Tex Williams: Tex Williams had Capitol Record's first million-seller single in late 1946 with his recording of Merle Travis' witty talking blues "Smoke! Smoke! Smoke! (That Cigarette)." Typecast as a talking blues

singer, when he returned to Capitol in 1960 to record *Smoke! Smoke! Smoke!* (HAT 3047), he rerecorded his old hits, including "Smoke!," "That's What I Like About the West" and "Who? Me?" along with such country standards as "The Ballad of Thunder Road" and "He'll Have to Go."

The downside on this endeavor was the backing: a big band, horrible "rock" beat on some numbers and a chorus that together create a sound perfect for Tex's talking blues predecessor, pop singer Phil Harris. But for Tex, it is far inferior to what his old Western Caravan band provided. One enjoyable exception is his interpretation of Travis' "Start Even."

Faron Young: In 1959 Capitol released three Faron Young albums, including *Talk About Hits* (HAT 3046). On it Faron interprets a dozen hits from the 1950's, from "Making Believe," "Hey, Good Lookin'" and Eddy Arnold's "Bouquet of Roses" to Marty Robbins' "I'll Go On Alone," Lefty's "Mom and Dad's Waltz," Webb Pierce's "Slowly," "Chattanooga Shoe Shine Boy" and "Tennessee

Waltz."

Though there's nothing earthshaking here, Faron's versions of these standards are pleasant. It's even possible to forgive his occasional lapses into outright imitation of Marty and Lefty on their songs, a skill he later worked into his onstage act.

Kay Starr: One of my favorite records of any style by a female vocalist is the 1944 "Share Croppin' Blues," sung by Kay Starr as a member of Charlie Barnet's big band. It would be country by today's standards. Kay, a Memphis native, went on to an even bigger pop career after that, but she was comfortable with hard country music. Witness "I'll Never Be Free," her duet with Tennessee Ernie Ford, an enormous hit in 1950.

Just Plain Country (HAT 3049), originally released in 1962, demonstrates her affinity for the music as she tackles everything from Roy Acuff's "Pins and Needles" to Patsy Cline's "Crazy," "Four Walls" and "Oh, Lonesome Me," plus a fantastic version of "Singin' the Blues." Patsy Cline fans in particular will enjoy Starr's vocals—they had much in common, though the overproduction that creeps in is an occasional pain.

Bob Wills: Before Delta Records folded in 1985, they'd begun reissuing some 1953 radio shows Bob Wills and His Texas Playboys recorded at KXLA in Los Angeles. We looked at *Volume 1* of this now-discontinued series awhile back, and the newly-available *Rare 1953 California Radio Broadcasts, Volume 2* (DLP-1162), despite the uncreative title, contains some of the last really good Texas Playboy performances.

The band, with rhythm guitar master Eldon Shamblin, Keith Coleman's brilliant, swinging fiddle and steel guitarist Billy Bowman (of "B. Bowman Hop" fame), plays with incredible fire. Shamblin gets off an amazing solo on "Lone Star Rag." The sound isn't great; it was recorded off a radio speaker. But as often happens with

such records, the feel of the music is so strong, you forget the pops and hisses. It's unfortunate Delta never went any further with this project.

Rockabilly: While Epic did three excellent 1950's-1970's rockabilly anthologies some years ago, *Rockabilly Hot* (FC 40904), their latest, largely concentrates on 1970's rockers ranging from Rick Nelson's "That's Alright, Mama," to Billy Swan's slow version of "Shake, Rattle and Roll," live Jerry Lee Lewis and Carl Perkins performances from *The Survivors* album, Charlie Rich's "Big Boss Man" and Marty Robbins' outstanding 1956 version of Little Richard's "Long, Tall Sally."

If you don't have any of these, this set is worthwhile despite a horrible cover. Compiler Jim Kemp only includes information on who produced the tracks. He says the producer of "Long, Tall Sally" is unknown. Had he called the Country Music Foundation or the CBS archives in New York, he'd have found out Don Law produced it. What dedication.

Merle Travis: In mid-1946, when Merle Travis had been a Capitol Records artist only a few months, a minor folk music boom swept the country. Though Travis was known primarily as a honky tonk singer, Capitol producer

Lee Gillette, looking to cash in on the boom, suggested he record an album of folk songs. (Albums in those days were sets of 78 r.p.m. records!) Merle insisted he knew no folk songs. "Write some!" was Gillette's reply.

Drawing on his rural western Kentucky background, he selected a few existing folk songs, but he also took Gillette's advice and wrote "Dark As a Dungeon," "I Am a Pilgrim," "Over By Number Nine" and most notably "Sixteen Tons." He cut them in August of 1946. The album, *Folk Songs of the Hills*, garnered acclaim, but far less than Travis' big honky tonk hits of the day.

Travis' most amazing achievement was blending "John Bolin," "Muskrat," "John Henry" and "Barbara Allen," traditional folk tunes, with his originals so the new tunes fit perfectly with the old. His stunning vocals, with only his Martin D-28 for accompaniment (with some fine picking), rang true. The new songs had a timelessness that blended them with the old.

No one thought any more about the album until 1956, when Tennessee Ernie Ford's version of "Sixteen Tons" became a huge crossover hit. Attention turned to Travis. He was honored in his Ebenezer, Kentucky, birth-

place with a huge celebration and dedication of a monument. Capitol then reconfigured the old album of 78's as a long-playing record and released it as *Back Home* (HAT 3044), now recently reissued by Stetson.

Speedy West: Speedy West's wildly creative steel guitar playing was as subtle as Mt. St. Helens. Featured on Los Angeles' popular TV show *Hometown Jamboree* of the early 1950's with his longtime partner, country-jazz guitarist Jimmy Bryant, both were in demand as studio pickers. In one five-year period West cut 6000 records (including many hits like Tennessee Ernie's "Shotgun Boogie") with 177 different country and pop artists. He later produced Loretta Lynn's first hit, "Honky Tonk Girl."

Originally issued in 1960, *Steel Guitar* (HAT 3045) compiles twelve of Speedy's Capitol instrumentals recorded from 1951-1955. Even in the synthesizer age his sound has a hi-tech edge. The driving "Speedin' West" (1953) was a popular theme song with 1950's country deejays. "West of Samoa" (1954) and "Stealin' Moonlight" (1955) are sweet and subtle, while his bold interactions with Bryant on the 1954 "Flippin' the Lid" (a jazzed-up variation on the old song "Pretty Little Pink") and "Stainless Steel," dating from 1951, must be heard to be believed.

West wrote his songs before the sessions (as did Bryant for his solo recordings), but they worked the arrangements out on the spot. Unafraid to experiment, they became one of country music's finest instrumental teams. They went their separate ways in the mid-1950's. Bryant died in 1980, and a stroke has left Speedy unable to play, but *Steel Guitar* contains some of their finest work. If you like this one, Stetson plans to reissue Bryant's brilliant Capitol album *Country Cabin Jazz* soon—stellar country-jazz from the same era.

—RICH KIENZLE

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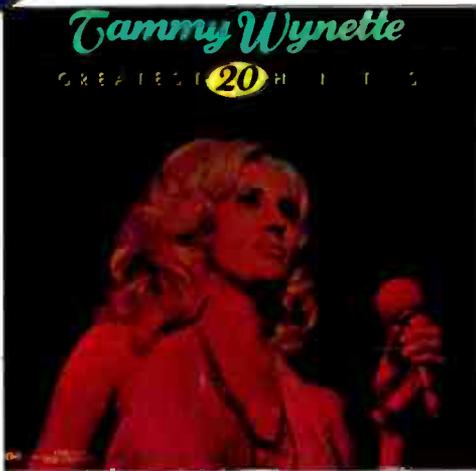
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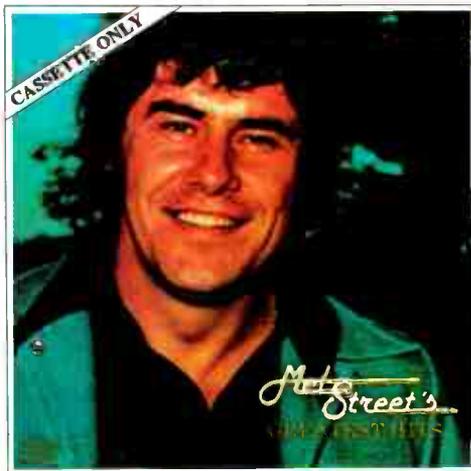
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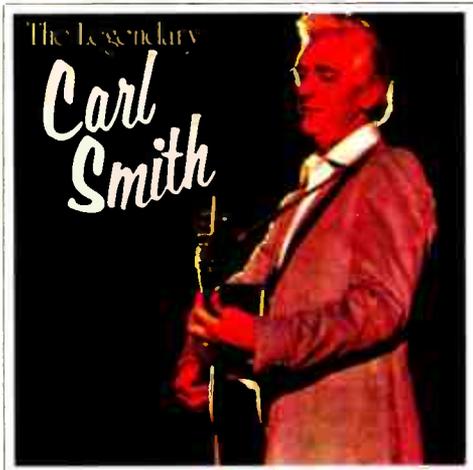
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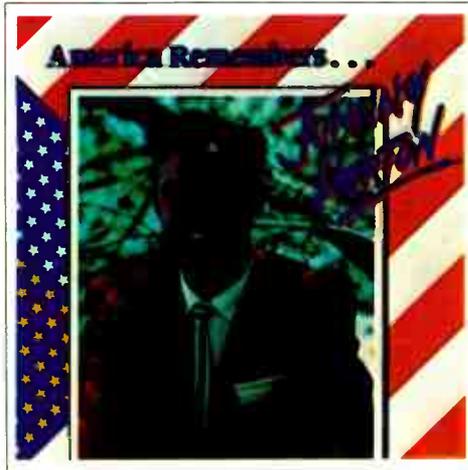
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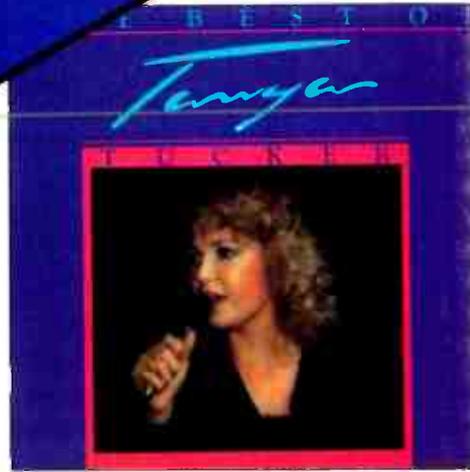
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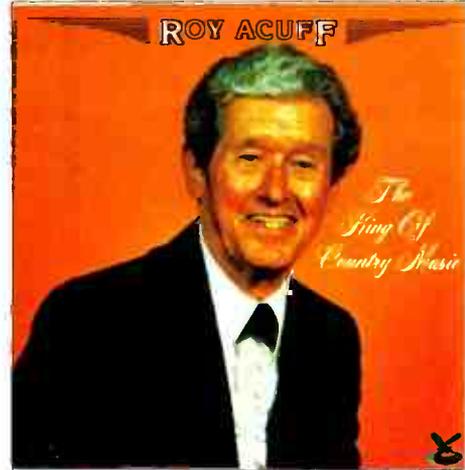
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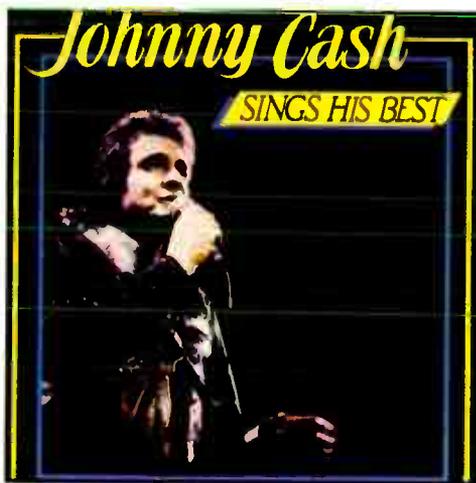
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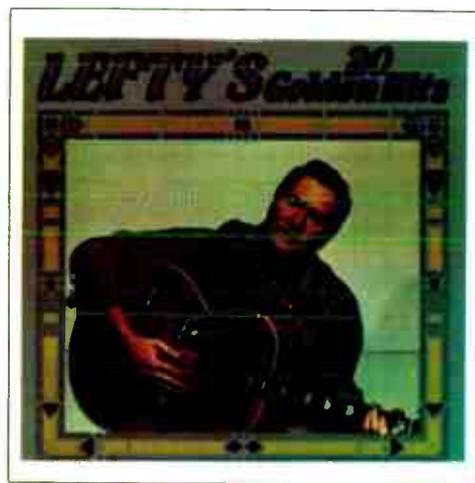
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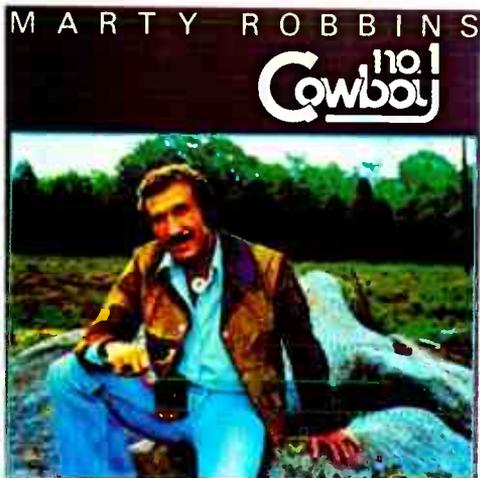
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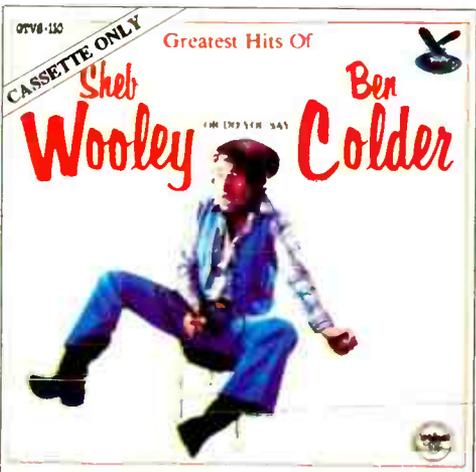
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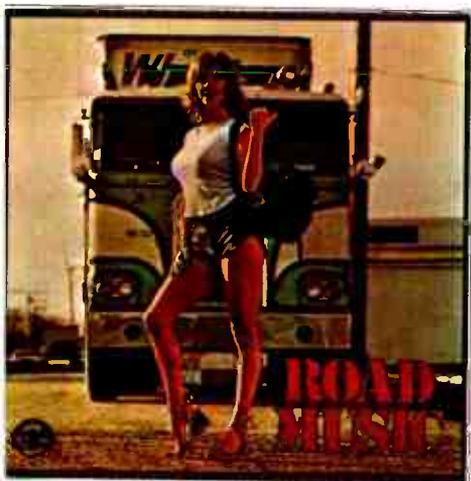
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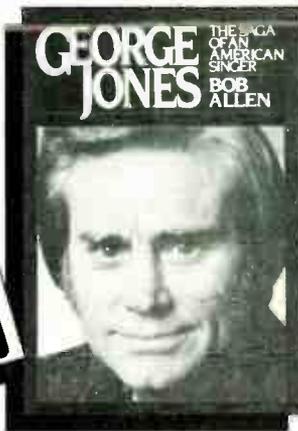
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| <input type="checkbox"/> Lefty Frizzell | <input type="checkbox"/> LP | <input type="checkbox"/> 8TK | <input type="checkbox"/> Cass. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tammy Wynette | <input type="checkbox"/> LP | <input type="checkbox"/> 8TK | <input type="checkbox"/> Cass. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mel Street | CASS. ONLY | | <input type="checkbox"/> Cass. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> George & Tammy | <input type="checkbox"/> LP | <input type="checkbox"/> 8TK | <input type="checkbox"/> Cass. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Marty Robbins | <input type="checkbox"/> LP | <input type="checkbox"/> 8TK | <input type="checkbox"/> Cass. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wooley/Colder | CASS. ONLY | | <input type="checkbox"/> Cass. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gene Watson | <input type="checkbox"/> LP | <input type="checkbox"/> 8TK | <input type="checkbox"/> Cass. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Carl Smith | <input type="checkbox"/> LP | <input type="checkbox"/> 8TK | <input type="checkbox"/> Cass. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Johnny Horton | <input type="checkbox"/> LP | <input type="checkbox"/> 8TK | <input type="checkbox"/> Cass. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Roy Acuff | <input type="checkbox"/> LP | <input type="checkbox"/> 8TK | <input type="checkbox"/> Cass. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Road Music | <input type="checkbox"/> LP | <input type="checkbox"/> 8TK | <input type="checkbox"/> Cass. |

I've ordered 4 selections for the price of 3. Enclosed find \$29.91 plus \$3.45 post. & hand.

Offer Expires 5/31/88!

IMPORTANT NOTICE: This coupon is to be used only when ordering from this offer. DO NOT combine offers, this delays handling.



Member's Bargains \$4.99
 Hank Williams and George Jones. What great stories the lives of these legends are. CMSA members can now obtain copies of two classic books on these superstars' lives at a special members-only price of \$4.99. That's about 70% off the publisher's price of \$15.95 for George Jones and 45% off Hank Williams. **To Order:** send check to *Country Music Magazine*, Book Dept., Suite 2118, 342 Madison Avenue, New York, New York 10173. Add \$8.95 for postage and handling. Limit of two copies of each book per member order.

■ **Hank Williams**
Your Cheatin' Heart

Your Cheatin' Heart is the best book ever written on the life of Hank Williams. Hank's story is all there - including the warts, pain and heartache, success and failure, triumph and tragedy. Lots of good pictures, too.

This book raised a stink in Nashville when it came out. A lot of people felt that the naked truth about ole Hank was more than you Hank Williams fans could take. It's funny, some of the folks who now want us to believe that Hank is a dead saint are the same ones who wouldn't have anything to do with him when he was a living sinner. Remember, Hank got kicked off the Opry for drinking, and he died alone in the back seat of his car, his body full of pills and booze.

Anyone who knows the power of Hank's songs and legend will want to read how the pain and turmoil in his life contributed to the lonely force of his music.

■ **George Jones**
Saga of an American Singer

Well, ole George has probably had even more ups and downs than Hank, mainly because he survived.

His biography was written by *Country Music* editor Bob Allen. Bob spent more than a year doing research on this book, and he got the whole story. From George's East Texas boyhood, to his early struggles to make it as a singer, to the dizzy heights of success, to marriage and divorce, to the great Tammy Wynette love affair, musical marriage, real marriage, battles with drugs and booze, fights, divorce, and musical reunion.

The story comes full circle through George's career, including the financial and business woes during his worst problems with drinking, all of which brought him to the brink of ruin before he finally was able to whip his problems and emerge again as one of country music's greats.

This one has great pictures, too. Don't miss it if you are a Jones fan.

Historic Photos

In May 1987, sparked by a marvelous photo of Johnny Cash and Elvis Presley taken in 1956, sent in by member Dennis Devine, we called for more historic photos to run in the *Newsletter*—older photos of stars or of members with stars, things that ring memory's bell. Since then, we've received a wealth of material which we've featured in succeeding issues.

Buried Treasures Specials

Members may deduct \$2.00 from the price of every album listed in *Buried Treasures*. This month's offerings include gems from The Louvin Brothers, Rose Lee and Joe Maphis, Jean Shepard, Tex Williams, Faron Young and more.

To Order: send check or money order to *Country Music Magazine*, 342 Madison Avenue, Suite 2118, New York, New York 10173, Attention: Dept. 1288N. Add \$8.95 postage and handling for each item ordered.

MEMBERS POLL / JANUARY 1988

VOTE

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

Bought Any Good Records Lately?

1. Did you buy any albums (records or tapes) in the last month?
 Yes No
 How many records? _____ How many cassettes? _____
2. Which ones did you like best? List performer and album title.
 a. _____
 b. _____
 c. _____
 d. _____
 e. _____

Your Choice for Album and Single of the Month

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

Been to the Grand Ole Opry Lately?

4. Have you or any member of your family been to the Grand Ole Opry? Yes No
5. Would you go again? Yes No
6. Did you or any member of your family ever attend the Grand Ole Opry at the Ryman Auditorium? Yes No
7. How would you rate the Opryland performance compared to the Ryman, if you have seen both?
 About the same Opryland better Opryland worse
8. If you have never been to the Opry, do you plan to go in the future? Yes No

Who Can Vote

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

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 and mail to: January Poll, *Country Music Magazine*, 342 Madison Avenue, Suite 2118, New York, New York 10173.

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.

John Wesley Hardin

Jesse James

New Mexican
Cattle Rustler

The toughest hombres who ever slapped leather.

Jesse James. John Wesley Hardin. Billy the Kid. Clay Allison. Butch Cassidy and his Wild Bunch. Each a legend in his own time. But what was the truth behind the myths?

Now there's a book with the answers: *The Gunfighters*, from TIME-LIFE BOOKS, tells the real story of the old West. You'll learn the truth about:

- John Wesley Hardin—so mean, he once shot a man just for snoring . . . he had 44 notches on his gun.
- Bat Masterson, who filed the hammer off his six-shooter until "the blamed gun would pretty near go off if you looked at it . . ."
- Judge Roy Bean—the only Justice of the Peace ever to fine a dead man \$40 for carrying a concealed weapon . . . and all the rest.

Rare photographs show what the West really was. You'll see the weapons the gunfighters brandished, the saloons they gambled in, the women they fought over, and the lawmen who hunted them down. Plus classic Western art by master Charles Russell—and more in 238 pages of high, wide and handsome excitement.

The Indians, The Cowboys, The Gamblers, The Trailblazers, The Pioneers, books that capture that marvelous blend of fact, legend and myth, known as the Old West.

Now you can meet them face to face in *The Gunfighters*

Enjoy *The Gunfighters* for 10 days free as your introduction to THE OLD WEST series. If you decide to keep it, pay just \$12.99 plus shipping and handling. Future volumes, such as *The Great Chiefs, The Cowboys and The Gamblers*, will come, one at a time, about every other month. Same free trial. Same low price (\$16.99 plus shipping and handling in Canada). There's no minimum number to buy—and you can cancel at any time.

Mail the coupon or reply card, or for faster service, use your credit card and call toll-free 1-800-445-TIME, 10 A.M. to 11 P.M., Eastern Time (for customer service, call 1-800-621-7026; in Illinois, 1-800-572-8255).

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Send no money now. All orders subject to approval.
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- Authentic reproductions and photos, many in color
- 238 pages
- The look of hand-tooled leather

TOP 25

Singles

1. Randy Travis..... *I Won't Need You Anymore*
(Always & Forever)
2. Steve Wariner *Lynda*
3. Ricky Van Shelton *Somebody Lied*
4. Holly Dunn *Only When I Love*
5. Reba McEntire..... *The Last One to Know*
6. T.G. Sheppard *One For the Money*
7. T. Graham Brown *She Couldn't Love Me Anymore*
8. K.T. Oslin *Do Ya'*
9. Lee Greenwood *If There's Any Justice*
10. Dolly Parton,
Linda Ronstadt,
Emmylou Harris..... *Those Memories of You*
11. David Lynn Jones *Bonnie Jean (Little Sister)*
12. Highway 101 *Somewhere Tonight*
13. Waylon Jennings *Rough and Rowdy Days*
14. Sweethearts of the
Rodeo *Gotta Get Away*
15. Kenny Rogers..... *I Prefer the Moonlight*
16. The Bellamy Brothers.... *Crazy From the Heart*
17. The Judds *Maybe Your Baby's Got the Blues*
18. Hank Williams Jr. *Heaven Can't Be Found*
19. Exile..... *I Can't Get Close Enough*
20. Tom Wopat..... *Susannah*
21. Vince Gill *Let's Do Something*
22. Dan Seals *One Friend*
23. Ronnie Milsap *Where Do the Nights Go*
24. Lyle Lovett *Give Back My Heart*
25. Glen Campbell *Still Within the Sound
of My Voice*

Albums

1. Alabama..... *Just Us*
2. Randy Travis..... *Always & Forever*
3. George Strait *Greatest Hits, Vol. 2*
4. Reba McEntire..... *The Last One to Know*
5. Hank Williams Jr. *Born to Boogie*
6. Dwight Yoakam..... *Hillbilly Deluxe*
7. The Judds *Heart Land*
8. Ricky Van Shelton *Wild-Eyed Dream*
9. K.T. Oslin *80's Ladies*
10. Reba McEntire..... *Greatest Hits*
11. George Strait *Ocean Front Property*
12. Highway 101 *Highway 101*
13. Restless Heart *Wheels*
14. Dolly Parton,
Linda Ronstadt,
Emmylou Harris..... *Trio*
15. Randy Travis..... *Storms of Life*
16. Tanya Tucker *Love Me Like You Used To*
17. Rosanne Cash *King's Record Shop*
18. The Statler Brothers *Maple Street Memories*
19. Sawyer Brown *Somewhere in the Night*
20. Exile..... *Shelter from the Night*
21. The Oak Ridge Boys..... *Heartbeat*
22. The Forester Sisters *You Again*
23. John Schneider *Greatest Hits*
24. Alabama..... *Greatest Hits*
25. Steve Wariner *Greatest Hits*

A 25% Discount For CMSA Members Only

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

Unfortunately, we can't supply you with singles.

By the way, all you *Country Music* subscribers who are *not* members of the Society, doesn't this offer alone, which will be repeated month after month, just make your mouth water? Why not join the Society today? There is a special Charter Member offer for *Country Music* subscribers shown on order cards inserted in this issue...or see For CMSA Members Only page.

CMSA

COUNTRY MUSIC SOCIETY OF AMERICA

Send me my choice(s) circled below. I have enclosed \$8.98 (CMSA members enclose \$6.73, that's 25% off) for each choice plus \$1.95 postage and handling for my first selection and \$.95 for each additional selection. I want _____ LPs
_____ cassettes (no 8TK) as checked.

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|---|----|----|----|----|
| 1 | 6 | 11 | 16 | 21 |
| 2 | 7 | 12 | 17 | 22 |
| 3 | 8 | 13 | 18 | 23 |
| 4 | 9 | 14 | 19 | 24 |
| 5 | 10 | 15 | 20 | 25 |

Mail to: TOP 25, COUNTRY MUSIC MAGAZINE
342 MADISON AVE., SUITE 2118, N. Y., N. Y. 10173

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