



TK kicks off its entry into the jazz field with the signing of John Tropea to the Marlin label. Steve and Henry watch.

THE STORY

(continued from page TK 25)

corded for Stone's Dade label and according to Henry Stone was "a real mystery to me. His voice, songs and arrangements were great yet we couldn't get the big hit. It wasn't until he redid T. Bone Walker's "Stormy Monday Blues" — a kind of 1950s throwback really — that he broke wide open."

Latimore, who has an exotic appearance and a Bentley, doesn't really ever use his first name. Benny.

Timmy Thomas' "Why Can't We Live Together" was a world smash hit, a two million seller, who first went to Stax Records (by way of studying music with the late Cannonball Adderley) and didn't arrive in Miami until 1970, just in time to latch on to the Stone funkwagon. He had his own lounge by 1972 and there he tried out "Why Can't We . . ." a song he had written that caught the so-receptive ears of Henry Stone. For Stone's Glades label it was the first national hit (and remember the label had been recording since the 1950s).

Now Thomas is called the Rhythm of the Brotherhood of Man.

KC

Harry Casey probably hasn't answered to his first name in years — around T.K. he's KC (of KC and the Sunshine Band), another former member of Henry Stone's star studded set of warehouse workers and switchboard operators. Now KC's Sunshiners are stars in their own inalienable right, having worked up from being the T.K. house band. With Rick Finch (also a warehouse graduate) the bass player with the Sunshine Band (originally the Sunshine Junkanoo Band that forced whistles into everybody's mouths with their 1973 hit, "Blow Your Whistle" in the discos), KC is a multi-faceted talent — writer, producer, arranger, engineer and performer. They were introduced at Clarence Reid's wedding at Betty Wright's house which naturally brought them right into the T.K. family.

And together, and almost accidentally, KC and Finch recorded the T.K. sound that was heard around the world!

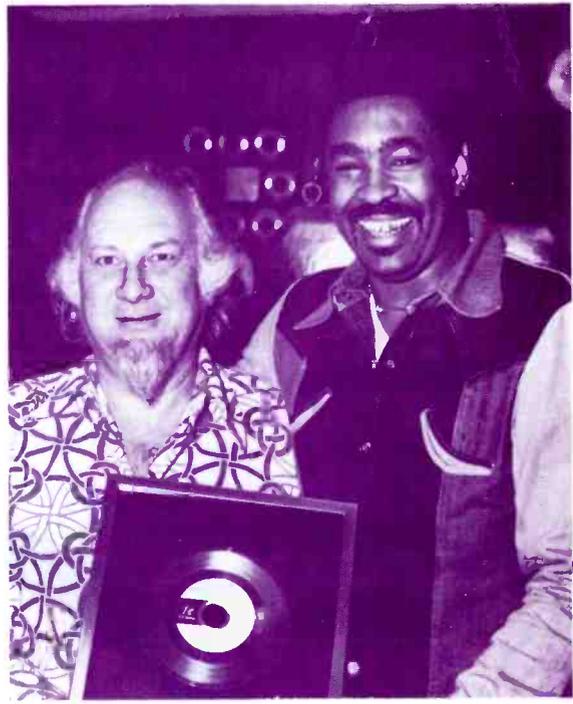
In April 1974 they were in the attic studio with a rhythm track they'd written. It needed a voice and they thought of a female singer, in particular Gwen McCrae. However she was recording an album, but her husband George was around and available. So with the happy inspiration that T.K. seems to be able to manage, George — at that time living in the shadow of his wife's success and with a job outside music as well — came in and cut the record.

'Rock Your Baby'

The rest, and seven million sales and still going, plus cover versions arranged by T.K.'s Sherlyn Music, is history. "Rock Your Baby" is T.K.'s best known song and the 1974 record of the year.

Gwen McCrae managed to keep pace with her world selling husband. "Rockin' Chair" was a #1 hit and the title song of her album and the couple toured, quite aptly called Mr. and Mrs. Soul, and were soon to record a duo album.

Meanwhile T.K. started attracting outside attention — artists such as King Floyd, John Tropea, Bobby Byrd, Terry Collins, Gospel Truth, Robbie Wilson, Hokis Pokis, Debbie Catillo, Snoopy Dean, Family Plan, Seven Seas, Miami, Dorothy Moore, Controllers, Wilson Pickett and Jackie Moore.



A gold record for George McCrae's "Rock Your Baby," the single credited with starting the TK Explosion.

Henry Stone's Miami base was attracting musical activity in the shape of artists, producers and labels.

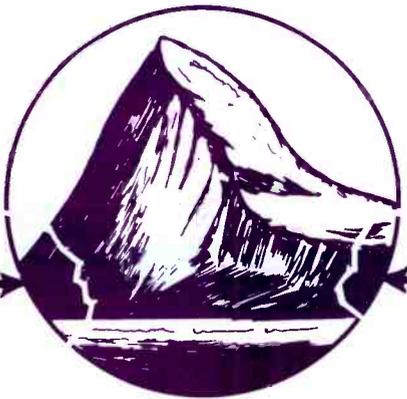
Busy

The studio was busy 24 hours a day and a new 16 track studio was built for the new and overflow . . . KC and the Sunshine Band went on a second British tour . . . then on a major American tour while "Get Down Tonight" became another T.K. smash . . . Jimmy 'bo' Horne emerges with his single "Gimme Some" . . . records by Fire . . .

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