

WSM to Hold Opry Fete With Unchanged Agenda

NASHVILLE—WSM has announced its agenda for the 44th anniversary celebration of the "Grand Ole Opry," with few changes from preceding years.

The principal alteration is in

New Tree Post To H. Cochran

NASHVILLE—Hank Cochran has been moved to director of music and talent coordinator, in a major addition at Tree International. Jack Stapp and Buddy Killen, the firm's top officers, also announced the appointment of Early Williams as national promotion director.

Cochran, long-time executive and writer with Pamper, was closely associated with that catalog when it was acquired by Tree in May of this year. Cochran, among his other accolades, has 10 BMI Awards for country songs.

Williams, former front man for Gene Vincent, has a background in promotion and broadcasting.

Tom Hartman, who has been with Tree for two years, advances to professional manager. Other officials are Happy Wilson, director of Tree Enterprises, and Tom Casassa, chief engineer and technical director.

the WSM-sponsored function, which in the past has always been an "Opry" spectacular at which every member of the cast is introduced following a breakfast. The same procedure will be followed this year but at a luncheon on Oct. 6.

"We are making the move primarily to convenience others," said E.W. (Bud) Wendell, "Opry" manager. "One of our main concerns is the disk jockey, and this allows more time for the DJ-artist tape session on Friday morning." Wendell noted the success of this venture last year, as pioneered by George Hamilton IV and the Who's Mike Hoyer, and said it should be of even greater this year.

All of the official functions (i.e., those for which a pre-registration badge and ticket are required) again will be held at the Municipal Auditorium except for the Friday and Saturday night performances of the "Grand Ole Opry."

The Country Music Association holds its annual membership convention in association with the "Opry" birthday celebration, and the two organizations work in close cooperation. However, although many attend the activities of both, pre-registration is not a requirement for CMA involvement.

CMA this year also will sponsor

a special seminar on country radio programming, advertising, etc., on Saturday morning following the RCA show, and will present a special international seminar dealing with country music in England as added attractions to this year's gathering.

As noted earlier (Billboard, Sept. 13), everyone who attends the WSM convention must register beforehand, paying \$10.00 in advance to the "Opry" Trust Fund, established through a local bank to aid indigent artists or their families in times of stress.

No registrations will be mailed out, so all money should be mailed by check or money-order and made out to "Opry Trust Fund." Registrants may start picking up their packets of badges, tickets, etc., early Oct. 16. They will be located in the Fourth Avenue lobby of the Municipal Auditorium. The Country Music Association also will have its booth in that lobby, where individuals may join or renew membership.

Unofficially, the affair gets under way Oct. 10, when professional golfers and celebrities hold practice rounds for the massive Music City Pro-Celebrity Invitational golf tournament at Harpeth Hills, and the touring pros conduct workshops for the public. Some of the

(Continued on page 48)

COUNTRY GOES ANOTHER STEP IN RIGHT DIRECTION

NASHVILLE—Choreography has moved into the country scene with the accent on pilot films for syndication or network.

What may be Nashville's first full-time dancing group has been formed, known as the Triple Threat.

The group consists of Susan Hullette, wife of a Nashville musician, who has worked as a dancer in New York and Las Vegas, playing such clubs as the Dunes and the Frontier; Joy Grant, who recently became a part of the Cedarwood Publishing organization as video representative for the firm, and Kathy Binns, a University of Tennessee student. The three have appeared most recently on WSM-TV's morning show.

Mrs. Hullette has choreographed the Boots Randolph Show pilot, and the pilot of "Nashville," a program prepared for possible future network use. Singly or as a group, the Triple Threat feels it will become deeply involved in many of the shows which are moving away from the stand-up singer routine and including considerable more movement.

WSIX-FM Refute Stringer's Claim

NASHVILLE — Officials of WSIX-FM have taken strong issue with a claim made by writer-publisher Lou Stringer that the station once used the term "Countryopolitan," a name which he has registered.

Stringer said in a story (Billboard, Sept. 6) that WSIX "at first called itself 'Countryopolitan' but later changed that to Metropolitan Country."

"This is totally untrue," asserted Bill Gerson, program director of WSIX. "When WSIX-FM changed its format in June 1967, the whole concept was to tie in a new, modern approach to country music with the city of Nashville itself. We wanted to showcase the new image of country music and let

the listeners know that it was a product of Music City, USA."

Gerson said the term "Metropolitan Country" created an association with Nashville's metropolitan form of government and, at the same time, lent an air of sophistication to the air image.

"We have never referred to ourselves as Countryopolitan and I suggest that Mr. Stringer investigate the matter further before tossing call letters around before the public," Gerson stated. All promotional material, both on and off the air, prior to our initial broadcast in June of 1967 refers to WSIX-FM as "Metropolitan Country," he said.

He further added that some-

(Continued on page 59)

Kilgore Professional Mgr. Of Williams' Pub Complex

NASHVILLE — Merle Kilgore, long-time artist-writer-publisher, has been named general professional manager of Hank Williams Jr. Music, Inc., Aud-Lee Music, Inc., and Red Coach Music, Inc., a newly formed BMI firm.

Kilgore's credits are long. He came here in 1962 to work in the office of Shapiro-Bernstein Music, Inc. (ASCAP), then became the company's BMI catalog with Painted Desert, Inc. While with this company he

wrote two of his classics, "Ring of Fire" (in collaboration with June Carter) and "Wolverton Mountain," whose recording by Claude King was the No. 1 country record in 1962 on the Billboard chart.

In 1964, when Al Gallico formed All Gallico Music, Inc., Kilgore left Painted Desert to head Gallico's Nashville office. He helped develop Gallico's country music catalog and discovered new talent. One such

(Continued on page 60)

Cap Puts 'Country People' Promotion in Full Swing

ATLANTA — A full scale "Country People" promotion was unveiled here this week by Wade Pepper, country promotion director for Capitol, which includes the purchase of time on radio in 27 markets.

A "Country People Scrapbook" is sealed inside the wrapping of each LP released this month, containing pictures, brochures and biographical data of the artists whose records are contained therein.

The all-out country drive includes "Sonny James at the Astrodome"; "Portrait of Merle Haggard"; Wynn Stewart's "Yours Forever"; "Seven Lonely Days by Jean Shepard"; "Roll Your Own" by the Buckaroos;

"Square Dance USA" by Cliffie Stone; Jim and Jesse's "Twenty Songs"; and the "Big, Beautiful Country World of Melba Montgomery."

Miss Montgomery is making her first appearance on the label following her move from Musicor, and Ken Nelson has revived 20 of the old Jim and Jesse "pure" bluegrass songs from the Castle Recording Studio days of the late 1940's to put out this double album on the brothers.

Pepper said the company has purchased spots on the stations in the leading markets in America to give full impact to the promotion on behalf of the country performers.

To DEAN MARTIN:

EVERYBODY LOVES SOMEBODY, and I will always love You especially, because my Daddy's share of the royalties on "EVERYBODY LOVES SOMEBODY" goes into my Trust Fund and will pay for my High School, College and quite a bit beyond that.

Gratefully,

Cara Louise Coslow . . (Age 11)

P. S.

My Daddy says to tell you he loves you too.