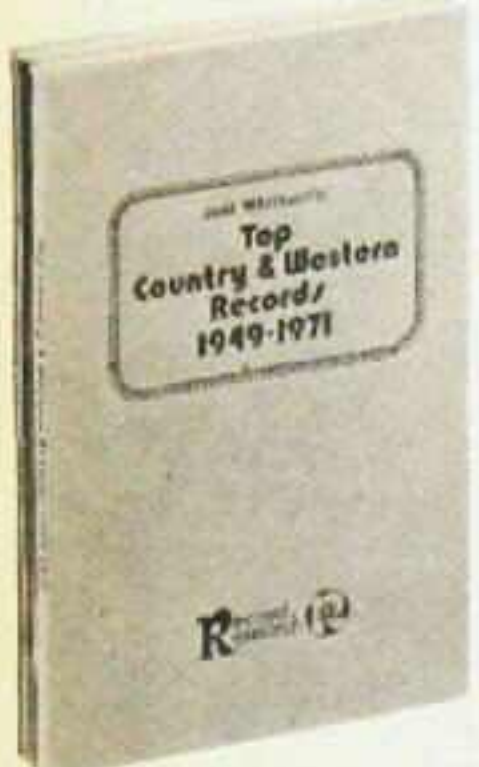


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PEACHY LADY—Margo Smith takes part in a live interview with Lee Shannon of WIRE during a Peaches opening in Indianapolis. Shannon and Ken Speck ran remotes during the two-day opening ceremony, giving away Peaches T-shirts, cans of peaches and peach crates.

Singer Rodgers Stamp Unveiled

NASHVILLE—A U.S. commemorative stamp bearing the likeness of the legendary country singer Jimmie Rodgers was simultaneously unveiled and videotaped Jan. 6 at Nashville's Country Music Hall of Fame.

The unveiling, presided over by Postmaster General Benjamin Bailar, Bill Ivey, executive director of the Country Music Foundation; Ralph Peer, head of the Peer-Southern Organization and publisher of all Rodgers' songs; Joe Talbot, president of the CMA, and Frank Jones, chairman of the Country Music Foundation's board of trustees, was videotaped by Joe Cates Productions for broadcast to the national public on Sunday (22) as part of a three-hour NBC special, "Fifty Years Of Country Music."

The Rodgers stamp, first in a series on American performing arts and artists, depicts country music's first recording star, known as the "Singing Brakeman," who was also the first member elected to the Country Music Hall of Fame.

The original artwork for the commemorative will be displayed at the Country Music Hall of Fame on extended loan from the U.S. Postal Service.

Van Zandt On Upbeat

NASHVILLE—The career of Townes Van Zandt appears to be on the rise again.

The singer-writer, now living in Nashville, is working a new LP with Chips Moman producing. It'll be his first newly recorded album in five years.

Van Zandt's label, Tomato Records, is considering reissuing some of his previous out-of-print albums formerly on Poppy Records.

Titled "For The Sake Of The Song," the first Van Zandt songbook is now available through Wings Press in Houston. It will be distributed to bookstores, record stores and music shops.

Hardback copies run \$7.50, soft-cover editions cost \$5 and signed and numbered copies are available for \$10. The books contain song lyrics, music, photos and information regarding Van Zandt.

The Tomato Records artist recently completed a three-week tour through Texas, performing in concerts and taking part in a signing party in Houston—one of several promotional ventures planned for the songbook.

Tulsa Date, But No Act

TULSA—For the third time in a year, George Jones has failed to appear at a scheduled concert here. The latest no-show was a New Year's Eve concert and dance scheduled for the International Petroleum Exposition Building with co-headliner Johnny Paycheck.

Promoter Dayton Blair had advertised an "artists appearance guarantee," but that apparently wasn't enough to ensure an appearance by Jones. The show was heavily promoted but drew a smallish crowd, probably because of the artist's "no-show" reputation in Tulsa.

Jones' band, the Jones Boys, did appear. The group arrived on time at the exposition building and didn't know until 8 p.m. that Jones would not be there.

"It's pretty discouraging," confided one member of the group. "It's hard to play without your leader. We really thought he was going to be here."

No explanation was given for the no-show by Jones. The band played two sets as an opener for Paycheck.

Few fans sought refunds, and most stayed for Paycheck's two shows, giving the singer an enthusiastic response. Paycheck, riding in the No. 1 spot on Billboard's Hot Country Singles chart with "Take This Job And Shove It," was presented with a plaque from KVOO radio for having "the hottest record on the KVOO charts."

ELLIS WIDNER

TV Beckons Tillis

NASHVILLE—Mel Tillis will be taping two George Schlatter Production series shows this month including "Laugh In" and a new comedy show "Just For Laughs," marking his first television appearance on a total comedy show.

Early in January, Tillis will also make a guest appearance on the "Gong Show" as a celebrity "gonger."

4 Disks Worked

NASHVILLE—The World International Group, Inc., a Nashville-based promotion and distributing company, is working four new single releases.

The releases include "I Just Want You To Know" by Ken Sheldon on BMA Records, "When's The Hurtin' Gonna End" by Taylor and Stone on the Friday Nights At Home label, "Hold On" by Rick Landers on Door Knob Records and "At The End Of The Rainbow" by Jerry Wallace on BMA Records.

Stock Show Talent

SAN ANTONIO—One of the top slates of entertainers in the history of the San Antonio Stock Show and Rodeo has been signed up for 1978.

Red Steagall and the Coleman County Cowboys will perform Feb. 10-11, Mel Tillis Feb. 12-14, Jim Ed Brown and Helen Cornelius Feb. 15-16 and Johnny Rodriguez Feb. 17-19.

Defers Pool Appeal

NASHVILLE—An appeal filed by music business executive Joe Talbot to revoke building permits issued to Webb Pierce and Bill Donoho for a guitar shaped swimming pool on Music Row has been deferred. The Metro Nashville board of zoning appeals is expected to act on the controversy at its Thursday (19) meeting.

SONGS ALL OVER CHARTS

Throckmorton's Up At the Count Of 10

By GERRY WOOD

NASHVILLE—The hottest writer in country music was picturing himself as "unlucky" just a few months ago.

Sonny Throckmorton's success with four strong songs on Billboard's Hot Country Singles chart, one on the Hot 100 pop chart and Hot Soul Singles chart and a previous Easy Listening charter comes after giving up as a Nashville writer two years ago.

Throckmorton's present hot songs include Jerry Lee Lewis' "Middle Age Crazy" at number four, Dave & Sugar's "I'm Kneep Deep In Loving You" which peaked at number two, "Star-Studded Nights" by Ed Bruce, and "Yes Ma'am" by Tommy Overstreet which debuts at number 66 with a star. "If We're Not Back In Love By Monday" by Millie Jackson is in the upper portion of both the Hot 100 and Hot Soul singles charts. It was previously a country charter by Merle Haggard, and was co-written by Throckmorton and Glenn Martin.

Another Throckmorton song, "I Haven't Learned A Thing," by Porter Wagoner recently departed the charts.

"I didn't have any luck until the trends started changing," comments Throckmorton who writes for Tree International. He cites a move away from hard country and "more of a beat" as the subtle musical trend changes that have helped his career.

Throckmorton first joined the Nashville songwriting industry in 1964, working with Pete Drake. Two years later he scored his first nationwide hit, "How Long Has It Been"

by Bobby Lewis, and followed with several more Lewis chart records.

However, the hits were few and far between, the years grew lean, and Throckmorton grew tired of the battle for Nashville writing success. He left Nashville late in 1975, returning to his native Texas.

He was restless in Texas, too, and returned to Nashville in six months with his writing skills in high gear.

He signed again with Tree where he had been a writer from 1973 to 1975. This time he enjoyed major success, racking up more than 30 cuts during the past year.

Among some of the biggest songs have been "Thinking Of A Rendezvous" by Johnny Duncan, "She Can't Give It Away" by Barbara Fairchild, "I Don't Know How To Tell Her" by Gene Watson, "Mama's Sugar" by Lonzo and Oscar, "It Always Rains On Me" by Wynn Stewart, "Thank God She's Mine" by Freddie Hart, "Easy Look" by Charlie Rich, "You're Gonna Be The Cowboy For Awhile" by Johnny Paycheck, "Leona Don't Live Here No More" by Wayne Kemp, and "What We're Taking Here Tonight" and "I'm Way Ahead Of You" by Bill Anderson and Mary Lou Turner.

Following the usual Nashville procedure of hot writers gaining attention as recording artists, Throckmorton has received some feelers about recording contracts.

"I'm thinking about going into the studio real quick," he says. "I've never had any luck at that either, so maybe that trend will change too."

Nashville Scene

By PAT NELSON

If "It Started All Over Again" makes the charts, it will be the fifth consecutive charting single from Vern Gosdin's Elektra LP, "Til The End." Gosdin has teamed with R.W. Blackwood and the Blackwood Singers for a string of package shows. The Kendalls taped Hair Hensley's syndicated radio show, "Inside Music City," produced by Hits Inc. and broadcast in 94 U.S. markets.

Connie Cato is back on the road after a two-month absence with her new son, Josh. Dottie West and Don Gibson appeared on the premiere of "The Nashville Scene" being shown in 25 television markets. ABC artist Tom Bresh is wrapping up a busy month of tv tapings on the "Des O'Connor Show" in London, the "Jim Nabors Show" and "Dinah!" from Miami Beach.

Some people just won't venture out on unlucky days. A telephone call to Shelby Singleton's office Jan. 13 curtly revealed that he never works on Friday 13. Danny Davis and the Brass head to Sparks, Nev. Feb. 23 for a 10 day engagement at the Nuggett Show Lounge.

Red Sovine has released "The Farmers And The Miners" on Gusto-Starday Records to help nationally expose the plight of those groups.

Ron Barlow, director of WMNI Radio's Country Cavalcade in Columbus, Ohio, has just added Johnny Swendell to the Cavalcade's list of regular artists. David Houston guests on "Hee Haw"'s Feb. 25 segment. WYK program director Bobby Denton and Dave McClellan, Warner Bros. Southeast regional country sales and promotion director, were backstage after Con Hunley and T.C. Sheppard's successful performance on the Shindig show at the Coliseum in Knoxville, Tenn.

Both songs on Terry Tigre's double-sided Gusto Starday single, "Love Is A Poor Man's Luxury" and "Before The Feeling Slips Away," were written by Charlie Craig, head of the label's publishing arm.

Reba McEntire will perform on a telethon in Abilene Friday (13) Saturday (14) to benefit the

West Texas Rehabilitation Center. Ruth Buzzi is jetting back and forth between Muscle Shoals, Utah and Canada for recording sessions and television tapings. The former "Laugh In" prankster who launched her singing career with a country single on United Artists Records has finished a new Disney film.

Republic Records artist Ray Sanders has completed bit parts in a feature film with George C. Scott titled "Double feature," and a Dick Clark production, "The Dark," set for release this year. The label has shipped his latest single "Tennessee." Each high school library in Mississippi's public school system was gifted with a copy of Jerry Clower's book "Ain't God Good" as a Christmas gift from the MCA artist.

Gene Hughes, promotions director for Gusto-Starday Records, guest deejayed on WMAK in Nashville with staffer Alan Dennis.



CUE TIME—Stella Parton, left, and Dinah Shore wait for a cue as taping begins for the Elektra artist's segment of the "Dinah!" show.