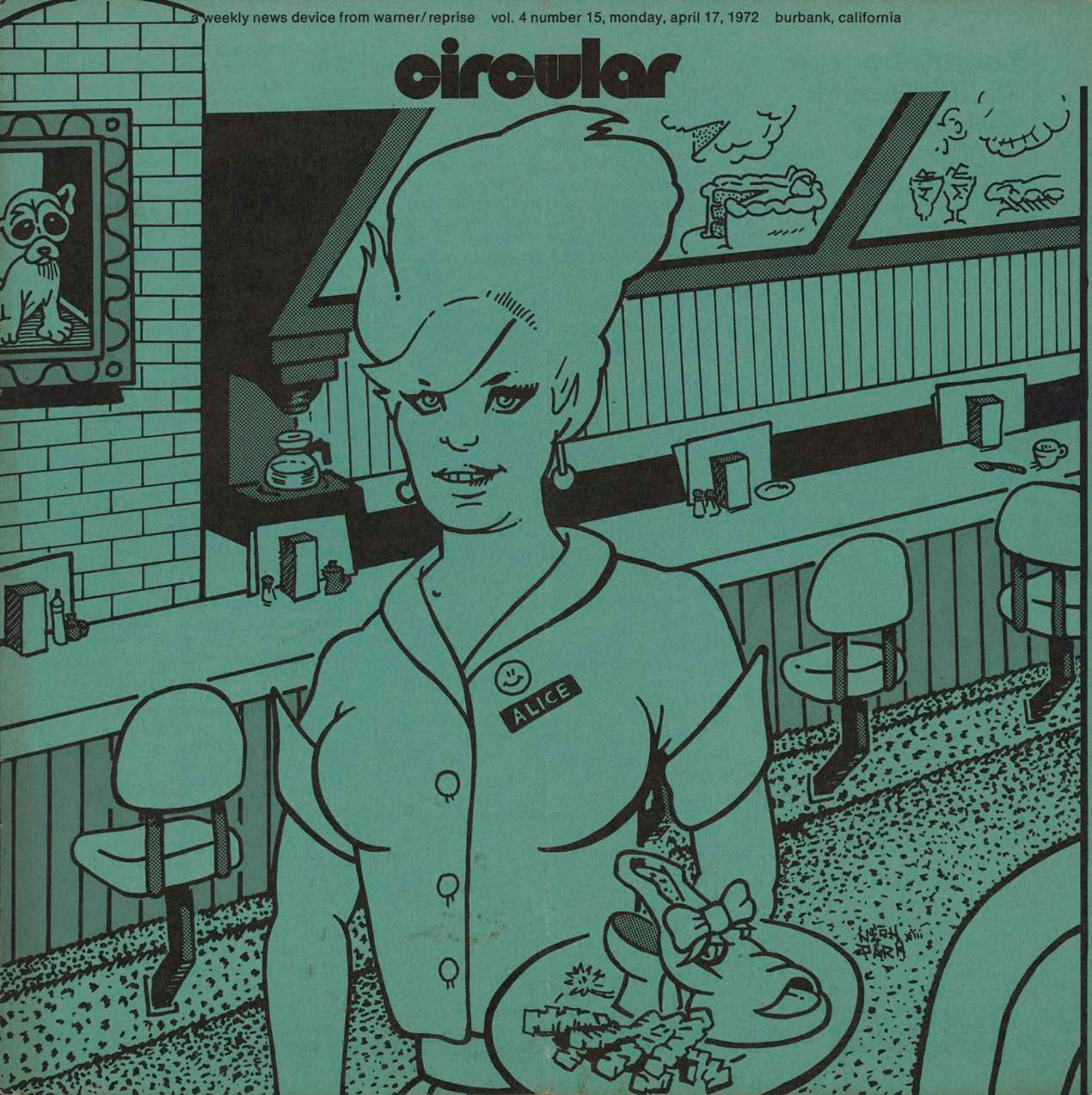


circular



Lowell George Talks About Little Feat

"You'll have to excuse me this morning," Lowell George apologized, "because I'm still recovering from the strange party I attended last night in Hollyweird." *Circular* nodded in understanding and feigned sympathy. The leader and lead guitarist of Little Feat had come down to the Warner Bros. offices to talk about his group, hoping to create some positive momentum in the form of publicity.

Little Feat has two albums to its credit: *Little Feat* (released in 1970), and this year's *Sailin' Shoes*, both of which were critically acclaimed as top-flight rock 'n' roll records. But critics lauds do not a hit group make. Thus far, Little Feat's success can barely be measured in sales, though each album has received considerable FM airplay.

Patties or Burgers

"All we need," Lowell asserted, "is a little more media on us and a bit more publicity. There are so many groups around that it comes down to 'What would you rather have—a patty melt or a cheeseburger?' For most groups, only the packaging sets them apart. One half of what sells records is the media. The *media* builds personalities. The nature of society at this point is that if you're different enough, you can be a success. Alice Cooper is different enough. And Beefheart. And Rod Stewart."

Circular asked Lowell if he'd like to be a "superstar." The question seemed to amuse and intrigue him. "There are no superstars. If you can pick up a telephone, then you're not a superstar. If you ever eat a burger you're not a superstar. You know what I mean? Neil Diamond is a superstar because all he eats is Granola and raw milk."

Lowell explained that he and the rest of the group would be quite satisfied with mere stardom, *un-supered*.

A Fractured Image

"It's like the giant cosmic snake eating its own tail. What happens is, someone says 'Gee, *that's* genius!' and the so-called superstar says 'Thank you' and he won't settle for any less praise than that, from then on. He begins to believe it himself. That cosmic steak, snake, steak that eats its own—uh—*A-1 Sauce*, is not a healthy thing for anybody's mind." The previous night's party had caught up with his metaphor.

"The current American artist is not a very settled human being, because the society he lives in is not very settled itself. In song writing, the idea is to make a portrait of the status quo into something that's positive. All I really want to do is make records. Play for an audience too—but I want to make records especially. I'll do it in my living room, if I have to."

Home-Made Music

Actually, the basic track to Little Feat's "Cold, Cold, Cold" was recorded in Lowell's living room (on a conventional tape recorder), so Little Feat could probably make it on their own if times got hard. But they don't seem headed that way.

The author of most of Little Feat's songs discussed the immediate future. "There's going to be a concerted effort in the Warner Bros. promotion department concerning our group. We're going to blitz Los Angeles. I've got to go upstairs and hang around a lot of offices. I'm going to get either a new set of drapes from Mo Ostin's office or a billboard on our band. One of those two things. That billboard would be nice, 'cause we're going to do a week at the Whisky, the first of May. It would be nice to have a billboard over the club." *Circular* knows a hint when it hears one.

"Neon Park's album cover for our *Sailin' Shoes* LP would be very interesting. It would definitely catch your eye. Some people have actually gotten the willies from looking at that cover." And no wonder. Park's cover features Gainsborough's Blue Boy and a snail, both spying on a frolicking female cake who is missing a slice from her torso. A grotesque moderne.

Lowell, a graduate of the Mothers of Invention, has an even more ambitious (and admittedly far-fetched) publicity idea. "We want to rent the Goodyear Blimp to fly over the Whisky a few times. Because what is L.A. famous for, besides Disneyland? The Blimp. It should have 'Little Feat' painted on the sides. That would go great with our billboard."

A Trio of Execs

He shifted in his chair, and began talking about live performances. "We recently did a concert at a university in Williamstown, Massachusetts, where there was a rapport and an energy level that I've never felt anyplace else." It was a definite improvement over one of Little Feat's first gigs, in New York City. Only three people showed up—all execs with Warner Bros. Records. "The thing about live performances is the magic. There are times when we get up and play and realize 'that's the best we've ever heard it—too bad we couldn't get it like *that* in the studio.' And when that happens, it's just amazing."

Little Feat do fine in the studio, too. One of the best cuts on their first album is "Forty Four Blues/How Many More Years," which came about quite accidentally, during a jam. Lowell is a big Howlin' Wolf fan, so they did "Forty Four" just like the Wolf did it. "I didn't sing into the mike leading to the studio," he explained, "but into the mike leading to a cheezy amplifier. That's why it sounds so raspy, like a live happening."

"We did that on the second album too. 'A Political Blues' was



recorded in that same style. Nowadays in the studio everybody wants separation on instruments, so you put them behind dividers. The drums are in the corner and everybody's stuck away from each other so that no sound leaks into another instrument—so you can pull one track out if you don't like it. Back then, they had one-track mono machines, so you had to play a song just like you intended it to be. Sometimes it was just so horrible you couldn't stand it—and then *sometimes* the magic of a record was more apparent then."

Several of Lowell's songs concern themselves with trucks and truck drivers. Like "Willin'," a ballad of the highway:

"I've been from Tucson to
Tucumcari
From Tehachapi to Tonopah
Driven every kind of rig that's ever
been made
Driven the backroads so I
wouldn't get weighed . . ."

1971 Abraham Music (ASCAP)
Reprinted by permission

"Why trucks?" *Circular* asked.

"That's all there is," Lowell replied. "I mean whether you realize it

or not, the whole West Coast of the country is gonna look just like the East Coast. And it's all going to be one huge Arby's stand from San Francisco to L.A. within the next 10 years—unless everybody says 'Please don't do that!' In Mexico, the peasants want land. Well *here*, the peasants have the land but the peasants—or the great unwashed middle class—don't know the whole situation. The upper middle class and the upper class speculate on land and sell it to a developer who ruins it forever. *Forever*. Once there's an Arby's stand on a given plot of land, it'll *never* come down. It's paved; a permanent landmark.

"That's why I have such a thing about truck drivers. Here are these people that are caught—stuck just like you and I are stuck. Here's this guy who enjoys himself, doing what he's doing—driving trucks. He loves it.

About Little Feat's Music

"I still consider what we do to be 'good-time rock 'n roll music,' except it has other elements too. And it's nasty—a juxtaposition of qualities and quantities. The term 'rock n' roll' was a pigeonhole for something that existed before the fact. The words are only valuable as a marketing vehicle."

Noticing the time, Lowell was re-

mindful of the band rehearsal that afternoon.

"Why don't you drop in and take a look?" he asked.

"Sure thing!" *Circular* chortled.

2:30 p.m. Sound Stage 5. They were already at it. Bill Payne at keyboard and Richard Hayward on drums. Three new members were present too. Replacing Roy Estrada (now with Capt. Beefheart) was Kenny Gradny on bass (whose history spans the arc between Bonnie & Delaney and the Shirelles). And there was Paul Barrere (grandson of a famous flautist and veteran of an L.A. group which never made it out of the basement, Lead Enema) on guitar, plus Sammy Clayton (brother of Merry Clayton) on congas. Lowell George, at lead guitar, led Little Feat in "A Apolitical Blues" and "Teen-age Nervous Breakdown."

It was a tight group of musicians practicing that afternoon. The sound was forceful, engrossing. They assisted each other in working out the arrangements, and it was serious business. The scene reminded *Circular* of what Lowell had said, earlier that day: "It's tough to enjoy yourself. I find it very hard to extract myself from what I do."

Except, of course, for an occasional Hollyweird party.

—Mike Harris

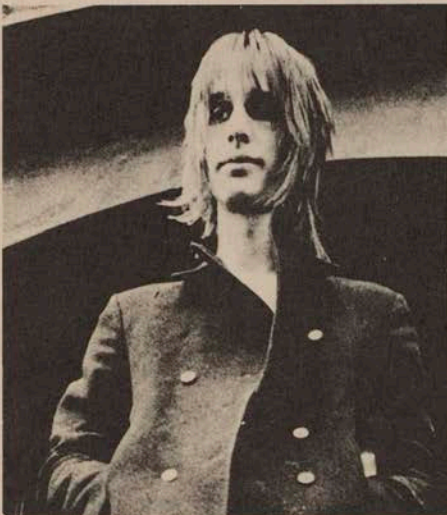
Little Feat (L-R): Bill Payne, Lowell George, Kenny Gradney, Sammy Clayton, Paul Barrere and Richard Hayward.



Items

Rundgren on the Move

★ Bearsville whiz Todd Rundgren begins his first big national tour this week with an appearance at the Troubadour in Los Angeles, billed here with Ry Cooder. Backing him for the spotlight trek are bassist Stu Woods, guitarist Tom Cosgrove, drummer Norman Smart and the Hello People on back-up vocals. The latter group also offers a mime performance during Todd's stage act. Todd's "I Saw the Light" single continues to burgeon into a Top 40 staple, towing that nice *Something/Anything?* album briskly along behind it.



Todd Rundgren

Beefheart Brochure

★ Accompanying this week's *Circular* is a booklet prepared by Captain Beefheart and Warner/Reprise's color-coordinated art department for distribution along the path of his current tour. Enjoy it.

Down to Four

★ Best current estimates on when you'll be able to get untouched-by-English-hands copies of Jethro Tull's *Thick as a Brick* album put the figure at just under four weeks from now. Meaning about May 10.

Tull-Beefheart Alliance

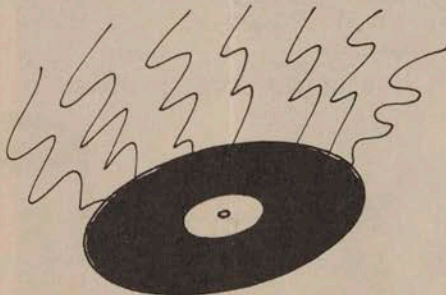
★ Captain Beefheart joins fellow Reprise artists Jethro Tull for 10 concerts this month, commencing with an April 19 appearance at the Cumberland County Auditorium in Fayetteville, N.C. Beefheart and Tull continue their concert liaison with a series of dates in Virginia, Kentucky, West Virginia, Georgia and Florida. Jethro Tull has an additional 22 dates in this North American tour, which ends June 15 in Kansas City, Mo.

The Name Game

★ Last week's trade papers announced two too-timely titles of singles by familiar names. Tom T. Hall's record company, Mercury, took out full-page ads to tout his new single, "Me and Jesus (Got Our Own Thing Going)." As if that weren't enough for one week, Steve Alaimo finally found a 1970s comeback to his mid-60's hit of "Every Day I Have to Cry Some." It's called "Amerikan Music." With a K.

Success Smells Sweet

★ Those crazy devils in WB's Merchandising Department have done



it again: the new catalog and order form for the seven Mystic Moods Orchestra albums is perfumed.

Birthday Bonanza

★ This week's celebrations include the following musical notables: Alan Price (April 19), Johnny Tillotson (April 20), Nickey Barclay (April 21), Yehudi Menuhin (April 22) and Roy Orbison (April 23).

Canada Has Good Taste

★ Gordon Lightfoot's new *Don Quixote* album has rocketed into the Number One spot on Canada's charts, the same charts which are bulleting Fludd's "Get Up, Get Out, Move On" single at 64.



Gordon Lightfoot

Alternative

★ If you've just about worn out your copy of *Sesame Street 2*, you might consider something called a *Sesame Street 2 Tote Kit* which WB has just released. It's four 45-rpm records containing all the songs of the album, accompanied by a book, Muppet stick-on labels and Sesame Street punch-outs (that's what it says).

Around the Bend

★ If the future album schedule is to be trusted, which it isn't (but it does at least contain possibilities), May will see the release of new albums by, among others, Van Dyke Parks, Jeffrey Cain, Herbie Hancock, Bob Weir, Arlo Guthrie, Randy Newman, Peter Gallway, the Beach Boys, Terry Melcher, Daddy Cool, Frank Sinatra, the Meters, Charles Wright and Top Rapp. A month later brings the likes of Grateful Dead, Beaver and Krause, Black Sabbath, Curved Air, Alice Cooper, Seals and Crofts, Labelle, Michael Hurley, Allen Toussaint, John Fahey, Jimmy Webb, John Cale, Norman Greenbaum, T. Rex, Jesse Winchester and Geoff and Maria Muldaur. Look for a new James Taylor album on or about Sept. 25.

Hour of Power

★ Warner Bros. has signed Tower of Power, a 10-piece San Francisco area band. The group, led by Emilio "Mimi" Castillo, Frank Rocco Prestia and Steve "The Doctor" Kupa, recently completed their first Warner Bros. album, *Bump City*, produced by Steve Cropper in Memphis.

Only You Know and I Know

★ Thirteen years ago this month WB made its bid for the popular market with the following LPs: *Dick Cathcart, Charleston 1970* by the Bob Prince Tentette, *Original Jazz Performance of Roberta* by the Morris Nanton Trio and *Jazz Festival in HiFi* by various artists.

Dates Scrubbed

★ Beset by yellow jaundice and hepatitis, Ritchie Blackmore had to cancel out of Deep Purple's current US tour. Almost current, that it. After attempts to enlist a substitute lead guitarist, Deep Purple had to pull out of the tour themselves. Beastly luck. Last year the same thing happened to lead singer Ian Gillan. The group's fresh *Machine Head* album is, fortunately, uninfected.

The Continuing Saga of Fruity

★ That international sampler album *Circular* told you about the other day is looming ever closer to reality. Latest bulletin detailed the line-up of artists as Van Morrison, Alice Cooper, Fanny, the Allman Brothers Band, America, Grateful Dead, Fleetwood Mac, John Baldry, Ry Cooder, Faces, Curved Air and Malo, all performing potent songs from recent albums.

Making Do

★ Tricia Cox, offspring of President Nixon, recently presented a plaque to Shirley K. Price, 27, a 3-foot 6-inch administrative aide in Houston's Manned Spacecraft Center who was named this year's outstanding handicapped federal employee. Miss Price, who hails from a family of 21, was born with arms terminating at the elbows; she learned to type with her toes, which are currently capable of 50 words per minute. She also files, answers the telephone, drives a car and, for hobbies, sketches and does needlework.

DOCTOR DEMENTO



Duane Allman, Gregg Allman, Johnny Sandlin, Paul Hornsby and Jesse Willard Carr were the members of Hour Glass, a group that was prominently featured at the Whisky A Go Go in L.A. in 1967-68, and made a Liberty album called *Power of Love* (with aforementioned notes by Neil Young), the Allman Brothers Band.

Question for Next Week

Eight years ago this spring was a time of moderate disc success for a Columbia act named Bruce and Terry. Their hits included "Custom Machine" and "Summer Means Fun." Both Bruce and Terry are now Reprise recording artists (the former as a group member, the latter as a solo) and both will have platters available come May 15. For the platter of your choice, who were/are Bruce and Terry?

The winner of Dr. Demento's two-weeks-ago question (Q: Who made the first 45s? A: RCA again) is Dan Hoffman, Program Director of KJOY in Stockton, Calif. who requested the very first Grateful Dead LP.

Honorable mention, but no album, to Steve Ciano of Brooklyn.

Each week the good doctor poses a music lore question whose answer is the focus of his subsequent column. The earliest reply to his question (mailed to Dr. Demento, c/o *Circular*, Warner Bros. Records, 4000 Warner Blvd., Burbank, Calif. 91505) wins any single Warner/Reprise catalog album (please specify choice). Answers will be geographically pro-rated on the basis of two days per time zone, ties will be judged on the basis of penmanship, wit and lucidity.



Pictured showing teeth at Don the Beachcomber in Los Angeles are audio and video personality Gary Owens, thrust Goldie Hawn and Warner/Reprise mogul and president Mo Ostin. Goldie's new album is called *Goldie*.

New Singles

Just a Little More

Redeye
PE 213

Ruby-hued groups are the order of the day, what with Redbone; Red, Wilder & Blue; Redwing and Red-eye, not to mention Rosie and the Originals, but never mind all that because it's got nothing to do with the single, which is a nice piece of



work. A broad-brushed harmonica and a subtly insistent piano riff set up the structure for an easy-going song about the joys of letting go. If their name is based on a physical characteristic of the quintet—i.e., red eyes—they at least don't sound hostile. There is only one Redeye album to date, *One Man's Poison*, on Pentagram. It does not contain this track.

Queen of My Heart

Benny Whitehead
REP 1081

Straight from Nashville comes Benny Whitehead, who sounds it. The record transcends its roots, however, and is quite possible as a pop hit, though its first home will undoubtedly be the country market. Whitehead's voice echoes itself most effectively as the song opens in a suitably haunting manner. An eloquent dobro (that's the instrument that sounds like a short-winded steel guitar) creates luminous punctuation between the vocal lines. The song is fraught with good changes and catchy lines and Benny rises to its challenge with a first-class vocal performance. Chip Young produced.

Guess Who

Dean Martin
REP 1085

What with "Puppy Love" currently riding the top of the charts in its reincarnation by whatshisname Osmond, it seems not unreasonable to think that "Guess Who" might be due for a revival. It holds up right well. Source of the cut is Dean's latest LP, *Dino*, which has garnered the usual hefty sales figures which all of his albums enjoy. Juke boxes will rejoice with the arrival of the single. Middle of the road stations will be happy. The good cheer might even extend to the reaches of Top 40. Jesse Belvin had the original, a version whose shape is still quite evident in Dean's version.

Do the Dirt

The Meters
REP 1086

Despite a similarity of titles, this record has no relation to Paul Kelly's current "Dirt" single, which is burgeoning into a hit via the R&B station route. The Meters, who were voted the top rhythm and blues instrumental group by *Billboard* and *Record World* for two years running, have found a voice for their Reprise dance record debut. The song is quite funky, as they say, but so laid



The Meters

back that one is led to suspect the dance is performed with closed eyes. An album, *Cabbage Alley*, will follow shortly from this New Orleans band, who are produced by Allen Toussaint and Marshall Sehorn.

Dreams

High Country
WB 7583

High Country are an aptly-named bluegrass quintet who have released two albums on Raccoon, the Northern California diskery wheeled and dealt by the Youngbloods, an outfit whose distribution is tended to by WB. Meanwhile, back at High Country, this is the flagship of the group's just-released second album, *Dreams*. The single is undiluted country music and will rise or fall on the enthusiasm of C&W pros and buffs, with a teeny assist from those who honestly believe in the uncategorical nature of music. Instrumentation comprises mandolin, bass, guitar, a fiddle or two and a plaintive blend of voices.

Weave Me the Sunshine

Peter Yarrow
WB 7587

An uplifter from Peter's *Peter Yarrow* solo debut album emerges as his latest single offering, pared down from its original 4:30 length into a trim 2:50, a perfect size for that Top 40 maw. The title conveys its message and mood, and even a bit of the feel of its music. Peter wrote it, of course. If there's anyone out there who's been on a desert island for the last couple of years, yes, he *is* the Yarrow of Yarrow, Stookey and Travers. The very same guy.

Inspirational Verse

The movie wasn't so hot
It didn't have much of a plot
We fell asleep
Our goose is cooked
Our reputation is shot

—Everly Brothers
"Wake Up Little Susie"

Artist Itineraries

Alabama

Kindred
4/21, Municipal Auditorium, Mobile
Jethro Tull/Wild Turkey
4/21, Univ. of Alabama, Tuscaloosa

Arizona

Alexis Korner
4/18, Travelodge Theatre, Phoenix
Van Morrison
4/22, Travelodge Theatre, Phoenix

California

Ry Cooder
4/18-23, Troubadour, Los Angeles
Todd Rundgren
4/18-23, Troubadour, Los Angeles
Van Morrison
4/21, Albert S. Goode Auditorium, Bakersfield
Cold Blood
4/21, Merced County Fairgrounds, Merced
4/22, Civic Auditorium, Sacramento
4/23, Long Beach Auditorium, Long Beach

Connecticut

Allman Brothers Band
4/21, New Haven Arena, New Haven
Alex Taylor
4/21, New Haven Arena, New Haven
Seals & Crofts
4/22, Univ. of Hartford, Hartford
4/23, Univ. of Connecticut, Storrs
Youngbloods
4/23, Southern Connecticut State College, New Haven

Florida

Tony Joe White
4/18, Veterans Memorial Auditorium, Jacksonville
4/19, Sports Stadium, Orlando
4/20, West Palm Beach Aud., West Palm Beach
4/21, Sportatorium, Hollywood

Georgia

Wild Turkey
4/22, Municipal Auditorium, Atlanta

Illinois

Fleetwood Mac
4/19-22, Brown Shoe, Chicago
John Stewart
4/19-23, Smile Club, Chicago
Rod McKuen
4/22, Arie Crown Theatre, Chicago

Indiana

Wild Turkey
4/18, Athletic & Convention Center, Univ. of Notre Dame, South Bend

Kansas

Rod McKuen
4/18-19, Kansas State Univ., Manhattan
Kindred
4/19, The Store, Emporia

Kentucky

Jethro Tull/Wild Turkey
4/17, Kent State Convention Center, Frankfurt

Louisiana

Zephyr
4/19, Willy Purple's Lafayette
4/21, The Watchtower Club, Thibodaux
Wild Turkey
4/23, Willy Purple's, Lafayette

Massachusetts

John Baldry
4/20, Aquarius Theatre, Boston
Malo
4/20, Aquarius Theatre, Boston
Jackie Lomax
4/20-23, Stonehenge, Ipswich
Youngbloods
4/21, Wheaton College, Norton
4/22, Williams College, Williamstown

Minnesota

Wild Turkey
4/19, Metropolitan Sports Stadium, Minneapolis
Rod McKuen
4/21, Minneapolis Auditorium, Minneapolis

Missouri

Daddy Cool
4/22, Western Missouri State College, Maryville
Fanny
4/22, University of Missouri, Rolla

Nebraska

Daddy Cool
4/21, Fremont State College, Fremont

New Hampshire

Seals & Crofts
4/20, Univ. of New Hampshire, Durham
Youngbloods
4/20, Univ. of New Hampshire, Durham

New York

Fleetwood Mac
4/18, War Memorial Auditorium, Buffalo
John Baldry
4/18, War Memorial Auditorium, Buffalo
4/23, Saratoga Raceway, Saratoga Springs
Alice Cooper
4/21, War Memorial Auditorium, Buffalo
4/23, Coliseum, Rochester
John Sebastian
4/22, Clarkson College, Potsdam
Malo
4/23, War Memorial Auditorium, Buffalo

North Carolina

Captain Beefheart
4/19, Cumberland County Auditorium, Fayetteville
4/20, Dorton Arena, Raleigh
Jethro Tull
4/19, Cumberland County Aud., Fayetteville
4/20, Dorton Arena, Raleigh
Gordon Lightfoot
4/22, Appalachian State Univ., Boone
Tony Joe White
4/23, Memorial Coliseum, Winston-Salem

Ohio

Jethro Tull
4/18, Lorain Admiral King High School, Lorain
Peter Yarrow
4/19, Ohio Theatre, Columbus
4/22, Taft Auditorium, Cleveland
Allman Brothers Band
4/23, Cincinnati Gardens, Cincinnati
Rod McKuen
4/23, Veterans Memorial Auditorium, Columbus

Oklahoma

Kindred
4/22, State Fairgrounds Arena, Oklahoma City

Pennsylvania

Wild Turkey
4/20, Cambria County War Memorial, Johnstown
John Baldry
4/21, Univ. of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia

Malo
4/21, Univ. of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia
Allman Brothers Band
4/22, Kutztown State College, Kutztown
Alex Taylor
4/22, Kutztown State College, Kutztown

Rhode Island

Malo
4/19, The Ballroom, Providence

South Carolina

Gordon Lightfoot
4/21, Furman Univ., Greenville

South Dakota

Daddy Cool
4/23, Blackhills State College, Spearfish

Utah

Alexis Korner
4/20, Salt Palace, Salt Lake City

Virginia

Captain Beefheart
4/22, Scope, Norfolk
4/23, Salem Civic Center, Salem
Jethro Tull
4/22, Scope, Norfolk
4/23, Salem Civic Center, Salem

Washington, D.C.

Alex Taylor
4/23, American University
Peter Yarrow
4/23, Lisener Auditorium

Canada

Rod McKuen
4/20, Centennial Concert Hall, Winnipeg, Manitoba
John Baldry
4/22, Civic Auditorium, Ottawa, Ontario
Malo
4/22, Civic Auditorium, Ottawa, Ontario

Top Ten

1. Neil Young/*Harvest* (MS 2032)
2. *America* (BS 2576)
3. Jimi Hendrix/*Hendrix in the West* (MS 2049)
4. Deep Purple/*Machine Head* (BS 2607)
5. The Allman Brothers Band/*Eat a Peach* (2CP 0102)
6. The Mothers/*Just Another Band From L.A.* (MS 2075)
7. A Clockwork Orange/*Sound Track* (BS 2573)
8. *Malo* (BS 2584)
9. T. Rex/*Electric Warrior* (RS 6446)
10. Gordon Lightfoot/*Don Quixote* (MS 2056)