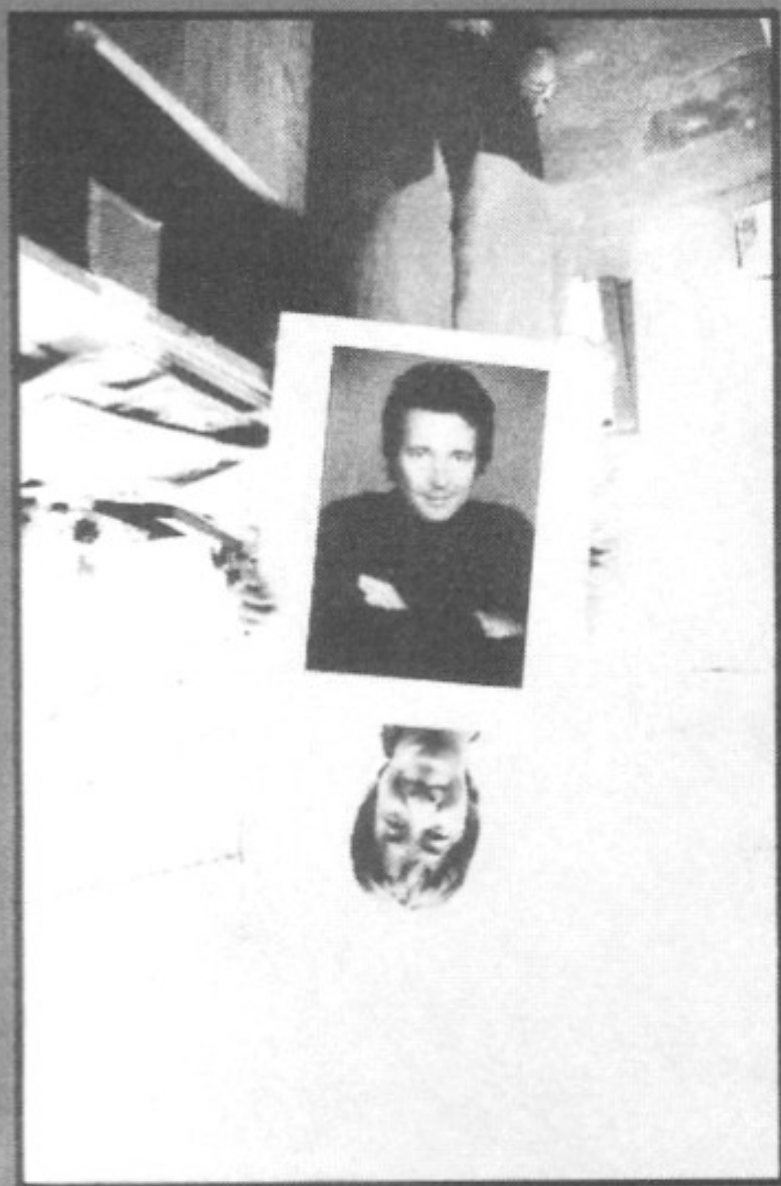


The A&M Compendium

APRIL

Nazareth: Louder'N'Prouder
Dave Cousins' Strawbs
Album Covers: Art Meets Commerce



Herb Alpert
Roland Young

WHIPPED CREAM

Shorts

New Joe Cocker album coming — set for early June.

Richard Carpenter has been practicing the "Warsaw Concerto" in preparation for his upcoming appearance on Public TV with Arthur Fiedler's Boston Pops. Along with Richard's debut as a classical pianist, the program will feature a Carpenters segment. Watch for it in late summer.

The Blackberries — Vanetta Fields and Carlena Williams have ended their support work with Humble Pie in order to work on an album of their own. Billy Preston will be producing.



Herb Alpert's Back

Herb Alpert, who stepped back from performing five years ago when he realized he was no longer having fun doing it, has returned. He had a simple explanation for his decision to start playing again: "I feel I have something to say now."

For a period of several weeks, old-timers at A&M experienced a strong sense of *deja vu* when they walked across the Lot. Through the slightly ajar door of the projection room came the familiar sounds of Herb and the Brass rehearsing. By grabbing a seat on the hood of any convenient Mercedes, you could comfortably pass an afternoon under the spell of a string of the old hits — and many took advantage of the opportunity.

Alpert's first album of new material in five years, *You Smile — the Same Begins*, is in the May release. Herb's formal return to the concert stage takes place April 19, when he and the Tijuana Brass begin a two-week engagement at Harrah's of Lake Tahoe.



Rita Coolidge Kristofferson went almost directly from the recording studio to the maternity ward recently. Immediately after finishing work on her new album, Rita gave birth (on March 21) to a seven-pound-six-ounce daughter. Title of album: *Fall into Spring*. Name of baby girl: Casey.



LTD drew a crowd to their Whisky opening in L.A. According to our reporter, "visible luminaries" (does that mean they glow in the dark, Jack?) included foreman Jerry Butler, Merry Clayton, assorted members of Wonderlove, Ron Davies, Joe Cocker, some Friends of Distinction, and some Towers of Power. After the set, our reporter managed to squirm into the group's commodious dressing room, which — with all those friends plus LTD's 11 members — was about as packed as the Standard station on the corner of Highland and Franklin.

Studio Stargazing: Our star-spotting reporter informs us that producer Henry Lewy has been using A&M's studio facilities to mix Joni Mitchell's upcoming live album, recorded on her most recent tour. Ode's Tom Scott & the L.A. Express backed Mitchell on the tour and should appear prominently on the album.

The Carpenters have been in the studio busily rehearsing for upcoming U.S. dates, after returning from a European tour so successful that two-thirds of the mail orders for tickets had to be returned to less fortunate fans. All European concerts sold out almost immediately. And the beat goes on. . .



Hoyt's Mom Hits the Highway: Hoyt Axton's mother, Mae B. Axton, who co-wrote "Heartbreak Hotel," thereby changing the course of history, may have a new career for herself in independent record promotion. She's loaded down her Toyota with copies of her kid's new album, *Life Machine*, and single, "When the Morning Comes," and is currently cruising around the Southern half of the U.S., hitting the local stations, and picking up airplay. When he called a particular station down South, *Life Machine* producer Allan McDougall was told, "Oh, yeah, Hoyt's mother was here this morning and we're now playing the single." So keep your eyes peeled for a dusty, low-sitting Toyota — Hoyt's mom may be visiting your town soon.



No, this was not done with mirrors, and it isn't a "Which twin has the Toni?" ad. Backstage at the recent Yes concert in Long Beach, California, Rick Wakeman happened to bump into Sarah Kernoche, and each noticed something strangely familiar about the other. Sarah, an Oscar-winning director (for *Marlowe*), has just had her first album, *House of Pain*, released by RCA, and now that she's in the music biz, she was pleased to meet the look-alike she's heard so much about. Sarah, by the way, is the one on the right. She plays keyboards, too.

OTHER DELIGHTS

Peter Frampton, who received a standing ovation after a recent set at L.A.'s Santa Monica Civic, introduced an old friend and former Herd group-mate, Andy Bown, on keyboards. Bown, who has two fine solo albums (on Mercury) to his credit, added texture and fullness to Frampton's live sound. The most stirring music of the evening came during a genuinely inspired performance of "Lines on My Face" (which appeared on Frampton's *Camel*). We understand that Frampton and company (who have a new album, *Something's Happening*), have been generating real excitement all along the current tour.



Cat Stevens Tour Causes National Aluminum Tubing Crisis!

To coincide with the release of his latest album, *Buddha and the Chocolate Box*, Cat Stevens will embark on a North American tour beginning April 19. The tour marks Stevens' first American appearance in two years (excluding his *In Concert* TV special last October); some innovative stage components will highlight his return.

Jeremy Railton, who usually designs stage sets for theatrical productions and TV commercials, was commissioned to design the setting, and he came up with a rather clever idea: "It's like a fabric Hollywood Bowl," he began, going on to describe an aluminum frame with white cloth covering similar to a "half a parachute turned inside out." The setting is lit from behind, "calmly and quietly, with vibrant color," and it's quite large: 40 feet from end to end and 30 feet in height. Remarkably, it was designed by Railton in such a way that it can be assembled—lights and all—by four people in just two hours.

In building the aluminum frame, the construction team managed to completely use up America's stockpile of aluminum tubing. At least this shortage was created for the sake of art.



God Goes Gold

Everybody's favorite Australian singing nun, Sister Janet Mead, has just earned her first gold record for her rockin' rendition of that old standby, "The Lord's Prayer." The single's wildfire success—it spread with startling rapidity from Los Angeles across the U.S.—marks it as a major record-biz phenomenon, along with "The Americans" and Blue Swede's oooga-chuckas.

But unlike most newly popular recording artists, eager to make the most of sudden success, Sister Janet has made no plans to tour the States. Right now, she's too busy teaching music and drama at Adelaide's St. Aloysius College (as the above photo attests), and giving interviews to *Time*, *Newsweek*, and *People*—not to mention the *National Enquirer*.

The considerable money Sister Janet makes from the record will go directly to her order, the Sisters of Mercy. It will be used to help finance an expedition to Vietnam by the Sisters, who will give aid to the orphaned and homeless children there.

As for Sister Janet herself, the next project is an album. She's selecting the tunes right now, and she has a load of material to go through. The psalms alone would make up a four-record set—with solos.

"Thanks, I Needed That." Here's an intriguing movie synopsis from the *L.A. Times*' TV supplement: "Drama (1966). 'Rage,' Glenn Ford, Stella Stevens. A guilt-ridden physician, half-bent upon self-destruction while working in an isolated construction camp, gets a new set of values when he's bitten by a rabid dog."

Newest lyricist to be linked with composer Burt Bacharach is famed playwright Neil Simon (who in turn is now legally linked to brilliant actress Marsha Mason). No word yet on the results of the Bacharach-Simon collaboration. Burt, incidentally, recently did a two-week stint at Las Vegas' Riviera Hotel.



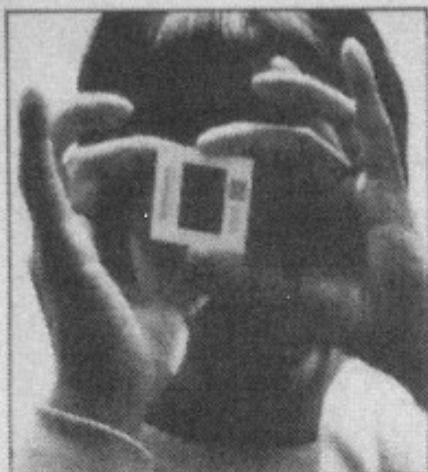
The Persuasions, who have been keeping acappella alive almost single-handedly over the last few years, are now on A&M and have just completed a brand-new album, with Jeff Barry producing. Half was recorded live in the traditional manner (and it struts, by the way), and half—now hang on, purists—was done in the studio with some discreet instrumental support. Musicians include members of Stevie Wonder's band and, on one track, Cheryl Diller's group.



Bare and Proud: We first heard about the latest collegiate diversion (and aren't those kids wonderful, folks) way back last fall, when U. of Maryland college rep Gail Davis let us in on the, uh... truth of the matter. Then we coaxed Gail into revealing where she stood—or ran, that is—on the issue. Her enigmatically female answer is shown in the photo.

A related note: A report from Oregon's Fun-in-the-Sun Nudist Camp revealed that a man had run across the grounds fully clothed, to the shocked gasps of the camp's guests. Now, *that's* perverted.

He's An Artist, He Don't Look Back



Skylights in the ceilings of the A&M graphics building let in just enough of the sun's rays to give everything within a soft luminosity — it's the kind of light that invites quiet and contemplation. But on this afternoon, the prevailing mood in graphics was anything but placid. A number of album covers, ads, and posters were simultaneously being put together, with plenty of accompanying noise and movement. Drawing boards were crammed with papers, photos, pencils, straight-edges, glue, and the like; people were rushing in and out with oversized envelopes; the atmosphere in the building was saturated with concentration — but not at all tense — activity. And not a single person was sitting down. Was this some special rush project involving the whole department? "Oh, no," someone laughingly said, "it's always like this."

Reflection on the Run

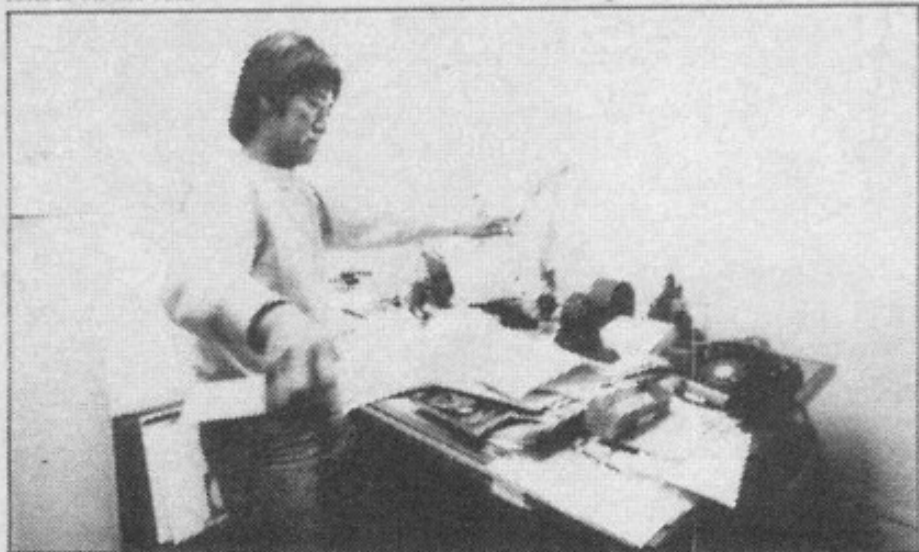
The hub of this everyday action is Roland Young, A&M's Jewish-Chinese jock-artist and graphics director. Although he spurns the aesthetic-philosophic stance taken by many of his art director counterparts — preferring to discuss his role with "let's get the stuff out" pragmatism — there's consistent aesthetic value in Young's work and that of his associates: he and his people have received plenty of recognition for their designs, both within the music business and in the larger sphere of

commercial art — they recently picked up the special-merit medal for trade advertising from the Art Directors' Club of L.A. Roland's rather hard-nosed attitudes about his work reflect the pace at which he and the graphics staff must perform and the multiple pressures to which they must respond. It's a speedy, changeable, constantly stimulating situation that calls for a special kind of visual artist: one who's challenged by deadlines and limitations, one who can reflect on the run.

metabolism working, and to look at it as a positive situation rather than a negative one. The pressure is what makes you creative. What really makes you try to get out your concepts and make them tangible. To get those theories and philosophies down on that board, fast. We'll let others judge its ultimate aesthetic value."

Pulling Ideas off the Wall

In general, Roland sees the record company art director as maintaining "a consistency of execution. To maintain



"It's very hard," Young says, pausing between tasks for a few moments, "to come in from nine to five, or nine to eight, or whatever hours, and come up with an idea within a given time. It's channeled creativity and it takes years to acquire. The outsider looks at it as a philosophical, very reflective kind of thing. But look, how many reflective minutes have you had here? Hey, it's a business. We're here to sell records. A lot of pressures come into play."

"You have to accelerate your design capabilities toward the deadline. You have to get that record out. So when you're walking down the street, your survival mechanism is on. For me it's my eyes. Every time I see something it means something to me. You have to get your body and brain and your whole

a level of graphic reflection to the company. At A&M, I design a certain way; if I worked for another record company, I'd design differently. When people say, 'That's Roland Young's work,' that's not quite true, it's actually A&M's work. As art director, I'm the visual spokesman for the company."

From that explanation, you might think the task of the graphics department could be reduced to the plugging in of formulas and the establishing of patterns. But it isn't nearly that simple or automatic. Ideas and inspirations come in all the time, often at strange times and strange angles — sometimes literally off the wall:

"Roland was walking down a hallway in the art school where he teaches one night," another A&M graphics de-



goer recalls, "and he stopped suddenly in front of this picture on the wall done by one of the students and said, 'That's *Body Heat*.' He was referring to the Quincy Jones album that he was trying to figure out a cover for. So he took the picture off the wall and got in touch with the artist." But Roland soon found an even better illustration for the album — in the pages of a German photography magazine. Quite often, it happens in much this way.

Where's the Lamppost?

Roland is so preoccupied with the six at hand that he has trouble when asked to recall past achievements and victories. He admits to a liking for the cent Cat Stevens' *Buddha and the Chocolate Box* cover, but adds quickly: "The most rewarding cover for me isn't been designed yet. I tend to forget what I've done. Those moments of making a cover are very rewarding, but in the problems that are presented to me on the next batch become more interesting than the things I've finished. He energy shifts to looking around the corner and into the future."

When pressed to name a specific cover or two, Young thinks of the Carpenters' *Now and Then*, "because it's a painting and everybody thinks it's a photo. It's like Norman Rockwell of the Seventies. That cover was done at design Maru by a Japanese cat who's able to reason. And everybody asks me, here's a shadow on the house of a lamppost — where's the lamppost?" We look it out just for fun.

As he tells the story, Roland's grin says the lie to the all-business viewpoint he's been dealing out. There's an element of joy implicit in Roland's work — a joy derived not just from the finishing accomplishment of non-numberless design tasks but also — in common with his more reflective, less assured cousins in the fine arts — from a fundamental act of working in his medium and making his ideas visible and concrete. He reveals it in his smile, movement, and, of course, in his work, even if he can't — or won't — articulate it. In summing up, the most offer is, "So I take my work seriously, but I don't take my work seriously — you know what I mean?"

Yes, Roland, we know what you mean.

Executive Action, Second Half



Artie Wayne

Irving/Almo/Artie/Wayne Artie Wayne is the brand new executive director of publishing for Irving/Almo Music, Inc.

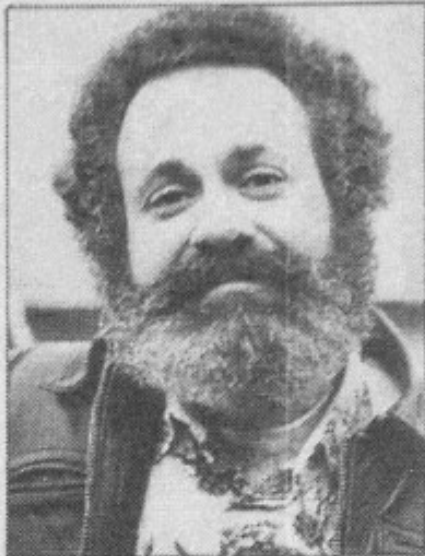
Wayne was formerly a partner in Alouette Productions, a top New York-based administration and exploitation firm in the late Sixties. Most recently he was general professional manager and director of creative services for Warner Bros. Music, where, for three years, he headed Warner's Hollywood, New York and Nashville professional staffs.

Now only an "occasional" songwriter, Artie can claim nearly 200 records on his own compositions over the last ten years, his most recent chart record being "Flashback" (co-written with Almo O'Day), recorded by both the Fifth Dimension and Paul Anka.

When asked to comment on his new position, Artie stated, in nearly his own words, "We've only just begun!"

Travelin' Man: A&M's new FM promotion director, Richard Totoian, is spending his first weeks on the job visiting major markets, meeting A&M personnel and associated independent distributors. Totoian will be travelling extensively in his new capacity, and he plans to join A&M artists while they tour the U.S.

Totoian's involvement with artists is a natural one; he's had a fascinating



Richard Totoian

career in the music industry. He was a DJ, retail buyer, salesman, and a San Francisco distributor's promo manager before becoming the regional promotion manager for Columbia Records in the Northwest. While at Columbia, Totoian made an important discovery of new talent — his find was Santana.

Soon after, he became national promotion director for Bell Records. While at Bell, Totoian met Felix Pappalardi (producer of Cream and Mountain). He then toured extensively with Mountain and was named national promotion director of Windfall.

Totoian has recently been involved with several major tours, including the Who tour in 1972 and the Festival Express train that traveled across Europe. Now, with A&M, Totoian's on the road once again.

The Taming of the West: The team of Fitch and Dunn, often mistaken for a leading West Coast law firm, have assumed control of the Western part of the United States under the watchful eye of Harold Childs, vice president of promotion. Dunn, who is now the special projects director for the Midwest, and Fitch, who is performing in a similar capacity on the West Coast, were formerly local promotions representatives in Detroit and Denver, respectively.

AND A PHOTOGRAPH



Reprinted from New Musical Express

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Nazareth: "Scottish Bands Are Very Wild"



Success often takes its fickle time before springing. For Nazareth it took three albums, dozens of English tours, and a healthy share of hard knocks. Made up of four Scotsmen, who play their music hard and drink their whiskey straight, Nazareth has become a starring act in Britain and is on the verge of conquering the U.S. as well. The band's fourth and newest album, shamelessly titled *Loud 'N' Proud*, exposes their cockiness and musical daring much more dramatically than their earlier efforts.

"Things are finally starting to bubble over for us here," notes lead singer Dan McCafferty, "and that's mainly due to *Loud 'N' Proud*. It's a better album than the other ones."

For starters *Loud 'N' Proud* features ex-Deep Purple bassist Roger Glover at the producing helm. Glover not only directed the band from the recording console but functioned as an extra ear, easing the band over particularly rough spots and even advising them to try certain chord sequences and melodies. This is Glover's second effort with the group; he also worked on their previous album, *Razamanz*, which exhibits unmistakably Deep Purplish influences.

"The band found its footing, its level," mustachioed guitarist Manuel Chariton explains. "We had the right

producer, the right songs, and the right attitude — and it just worked. Roger's a musician, which is great. I mean a producer doesn't have to be, but Roger was just like —"

"— another guy in the band," concludes bassist Pete Agnew. "He was good on shortening things when we'd begin to meander and roam. When we'd begin to drag, Roger would see it and tell us."

"Roger really worked his arse off on this album," declared Dan. "On *Razamanz* we had demo takes, sometimes two and three of each song, so all he had to do was sort of tie everything together. But when we went in to record *Loud 'N' Proud*, we were in the middle of touring, had two hit singles ("*Broken Down Angel*" and "*Bad Bad Boy*") on the BBC, and we hadn't written anything new. Everybody just learned the songs as we played them."

Of the eight songs, five are original compositions and the remaining three were written by Little Feat's Lowell George, Joni Mitchell, and Bob Dylan. You wouldn't expect a high-volume band from Scotland to pick up on reflective American songwriters like Dylan and Mitchell for material, but this band loves American music and presents it in its own unique way. Their name is evidence of their preoccupation with American rock: it was drawn from

a line in Robbie Robertson's "The Weight" — "Goin' down to Nazareth..." All the songs, borrowed and original, speak powerfully, and even the slower cuts vibrate with subtle, low-keyed power.

While they consider their albums the most important key to success, the band members believe their somewhat frantic stage show has also contributed to the band's popularity.

"We get more excited than the audience when we play," McCafferty laughs. "We even start throwin' things at one another. Our records are important, but so is our stage show. Because there's no other band around who comes on and runs amok for an hour. It's just that Scottish bands are very wild."

Finishing their bottles of beer, the band members talk excitedly among themselves about the new album and the single release of Joni Mitchell's "This Flight Tonight." With success finally realized in Britain, they're convinced that *Loud 'N' Proud*, in conjunction with their next American tour, will break the States wide open. As McCafferty says: "We want to improve all the time and keep it fresh. And as this is the first album we've ever made that we've been totally happy with, we must be on the right road."

Strawbs: A Long Way from Strawberry Hill



Dave Cousins, founder of the Strawbs and the only original still with the group, is among the most well read and articulate of rock figures. The Strawbs have grown with him, from tentative, naïve beginnings to a position of prominence among Britain's progressive bands. Here's their story, related by freelance writer Jeff Walker, with the aid of Mr. Cousins himself:



The first germ of the Strawbs was born when Englishmen Dave Cousins, Tony Hooper, and Ron Chesterman, inspired by an Earl Scruggs tape, began playing bluegrass together as the Strawberry Hill Boys. The original direction

of the Strawbs changed abruptly, though. "We were playing in a club one night and Tony and I were singing 'Rabbit on a log and I ain't got my dog' when we both stopped at the same time, broke down and collapsed with laughter at the stupidity of what we were singing. I mean, two English blokes from London singing hillbilly songs is just ridiculous. We explained that to the audience, they understood, and that was the last time we ever played bluegrass."

In 1968 and '69 the Strawberry Hill Boys, now more succinctly known as the Strawbs, recorded three albums, the second and third (*Strawbs* and *Dragonfly*) on English A&M. "At the time," Cousins recalls, "we were consciously trying to make the music sound ancient, drawing upon a thousand years of troubadour music."

Inspired in part by *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*, Cousins began to seriously develop the spiritual side of the Strawbs' music. At the same time, beginning with the first American release, *A Collection of Antiques and Curios*, (on which the group's lineup included Rick Wakeman, Richard Hudson, and John Ford), the Strawbs began to energize their austere style with rock and classical elements. That modification put the group on its present course.

That lineup continued for two albums, until, after *From the Witchwood*, Blue Weaver replaced Rick Wakeman. On the next album, *Grave New World*, the Strawbs made their most clearcut spiritual statement. Cousins' lyrics celebrated the personal spiritual quest in a sequence of related songs, while electric guitars rang and mellotrons swirled in a fury of sound. That album earned the group the enthusiasm of a new segment

of the rock audience, and the Strawbs were suddenly being compared to certain British progressive bands. While Cousins concedes, "There is a musical school of thought in which you could include Genesis, King Crimson, Yes, to an extent, Procol Harum, and us," the Strawbs' combination of traditional and spiritual concerns sets them apart from any general movement in rock.

Their next album was almost the antithesis of *Grave New World*. The title *Bursting at the Seams* describes what was happening within the group. Conflicts over the Strawbs' direction after their first number-one British hit, "Part of the Union," came to a head, and the Strawbs went through another realignment, with Hudson and Ford leaving to form their own group.

The latest album, *Hero And Heroine*, is the work of a new group of Strawbs, with Cousins firmly at the helm. Only Dave Lambert, who had joined the Strawbs for *Bursting* . . . remains with Cousins from the previous group. But Cousins didn't add the new members for their willingness to be led. John Hawken, Chas Cronk, and Rob Coombes are expert in the many facets of English rock, and they help Cousins and Lambert make this the most powerful group of Strawbs ever.

The mythical-spiritual still preoccupies Cousins: in almost every song on *Hero and Heroine* he ponders life, death, eternity and other rather non-top-40 topics. The music of the Strawbs isn't as easy to grasp as that of the typical pop group, but patience has its rewards. As Cousins sings in "Round and Round":

"It's not that I'm confused
But I've an awful lot to learn
But I will be the one
To make you work for what you
earn. . . ."

Telex from London

In the same way that Mark Twain described the report of his death as "exaggerated" I feel it is time someone this side of the Atlantic set the record straight about the economic hardships we are all supposed to be experiencing over here. Okay, so they've cut out our late-night TV viewing, the railways are on strike, there's a fuel crisis, and food prices are rising faster than Richard and Karen's records. But I wouldn't like you to think that the situation has affected us adversely here at A&M London.

While industry has been gradually grinding to a full-stop, it's been "green for go" here, with the hits and sales booming. The funny thing is that, curiously and coincidentally, the titles of a

lot of our recent product seem to reflect, ironically, the current crises. For instance, the Gallagher & Lyle single, "Shine a Light," might easily have been dedicated to the power problem. Billy Preston's "How Long Has That Train Been Gone" to the rail strike, and Rick Wakeman's "Journey to the Centre of the Earth" to the mineworkers.

Despite the pinch, Richard and Karen completed their European tour on schedule and their concerts were a sensational sell-out. Happily, *The Singles* hit number one the week they arrived — to give them a total of five gold and two silver discs in the U.K. High spot of their visit came at the tour's end with a cancer charity midnight gala at the Talk of the Town, which a host of VIP's attended — at \$40.00 a head. Who said Britain's feeling the pinch?

The wind of change that produced new faces on the British government front blew gently through A&M's London office also: Mike Doud, the company Californian and art director for the past two years, departs for new pastures at the end of the month. Mike, who will be much missed, is to open up a London office of Album Graphics, Inc. He was responsible for sleeve work on albums by the Strawbs, Stealers Wheel, Humble Pie, and Rick Wakeman, among others. Mike hands the reins over to Italian-born Fabio Nicoli (26), former freelance graphics man, whose credits include the 1972 New Musical Express award for sleeve design for *The History of Fairport Convention* and Emerson, Lake & Palmer's *Brain Salad Surgery*.

—Mike Ledgerwood

Irving/Almo Songs & Writers



Here are some IRVING/ALMO songs that have recently been recorded:

SONG TITLE	WRITER	RECORDING ARTIST
THAT'S WHAT FRIENDS ARE FOR	Paul Williams	Rita Coolidge
YOU AND ME AGAINST THE WORLD	Paul Williams/Ken Ascher	Helen Reddy
SITTING IN LIMBO	Jimmy Cliff	Three Dog Night
MANY RIVERS TO CROSS	Jimmy Cliff	Martha Reeves
JUST A MAN	Valdy	Quincy Jones
IF I EVER LOSE THIS HEAVEN	Leon Ware	Quincy Jones
I WANT YOU	Leon Ware/Arthur Ross	Miracles
I CAN'T GO ON LIVING BABY WITHOUT YOU	Nino Tempo	Herb Alpert
SONG FOR HERB	Roger Nichols	Herb Alpert
LOVE'S A RIVER FLOWING	Roger Nichols/John Bettis	Skylark
EVERYTHING MUST CHANGE	Bernard Ighart	Quincy Jones
AH, MY SISTER	Helen Reddy/Peter Allen	Helen Reddy
LOVE SONG FOR JEFFREY	Helen Reddy/Peter Allen	Helen Reddy
LOVING ARMS	Tom Jans	Maxine Weldon
THE LONELY BULL	Sel Lake	Al Hirt
YOU GOT ME FOR COMPANY	Billy Preston/Bruce Fisher	Martha Reeves

Songwriter Sketch: John Bettis

As the lyricist of several of the Carpenters' hits and the long-time writing partner of Richard Carpenter, John Bettis knows his way around the pop song. But his musical beginnings were more esoteric than mainstream. As a teenager, John, his songs and his acoustic guitar traveled the same folk-club circuit as his Orange County contemporaries, Jackson Browne, Steve Noonan, and Tim Buckley. But after months of strumming and singing somberly into the espresso gloom, John began to feel that none of it was relevant any more.

"Folk died," Bettis recalls, "and I bounced straight out of folk music into Long Beach State College and Richard Carpenter. I'd almost decided to quit writing songs and get out of show business completely. But Carpenter showed me what being in love with records is like. He gave me a valid emotional center for what I wanted to do. And I grew up with him as a lyricist."

Bettis doesn't see any irreconcilable gap between the folk music he grew up with and the mainstream pop music he's presently involved with:

"A lot of people feel bad about being from Middle-Class America, and that's a damn shame. My old man was a Middle-Class American and he was



all right. The reason my lyric to 'Top of the World' doesn't have any references to whether it's male or female, a marriage or an affair, is because it's about my feeling toward my family. It's a valid part of me that needs expressing. Richard lays a great foundation for me to express that part of myself."

There are other parts to John Bettis as well. There's the part of him that respects and learns from fine country songwriters like Troy Seals and Will Jennings. There's the part of him that would "love nothing better than to write a Broadway musical." And there's the

part of John that wants to start a school in which kids learn positive things rather than being "victims of education." These aren't random dreams — Bettis has worked out a schedule for himself:

"When I was in college I told myself that by the time I was 24 I had to have my first hit record — 'Goodbye to Love' came out 60 days before my 24th birthday. I told myself that by the time I was 26, I wanted to have done something significant — and 'Top of the World' was released and outsold 'Close to You.' By the time I'm 28, I want to have a recording contract and try to combine the several arts I'm interested in into the recorded product."

"From the ages 30 to 40, I'm gonna be touring. I'm gonna be getting my prose act together, and I'm also gonna be getting a Ph.D. in education. So by the time I'm 40 I've got to be well on my way to starting my own private school. Then, a fitting conclusion for anybody's life — I would think — is to take the precious little that you've learned and allow yourself, with other people that you admire, to try to impart some of that back. I've been lucky so far, and looks like I'll continue to be lucky enough to do what my heart leads me to do. So that's what's gonna happen... or I'll know the reason why."

Meanwhile, back in the present, there are those Carpenters hits to attend to.