

Area musician helps brighten nursing home residents' days

In spite of the fact that Roy Acuff got Carson Lowry kicked out of the Boy Scouts 47 years ago, Lowry still loves the singer's music and works a lot of it into his own repertoire.

The Boy Scout incident happened like this: Back when Lowry was a young'un in North Carolina, his mama one day gave him \$1.20 to pay his annual scouting dues.

But the adolescent didn't take that cash to his scout master. Instead, he went into town and put the whole sum into the juke box so he could feast his ears on Acuff's singing.

As a result, he and the scout troop parted company. Lowry still regrets that, but he'd probably do it all over again because country music is in his bones. It's also in the fingers that pluck the strings of his \$150 Alvarez guitar, or his banjo, mandolin or fiddle.

And it's certainly in the strong voice that booms down the halls of the area's nursing homes, drawing residents from their rooms and hurrying them, fascinated and grinning, to his side.

His appearance Tuesday at Redbanks was no exception. It was sunny outside the nursing home, but it was even sunnier in the room where the cowboy-hatted figure perched on a stool and did some impromptu entertaining. Feet tapped the floor as he did songs associated with his favorites, Acuff, Jimmy Rogers and Charlie and Bill Monroe.

"And here's a tune that was one of the first ones Johnny Cash's mother taught him," he smiled. He then broke into the first verse of a gospel number whose lyrics proclaim that "life is like a mountain railroad."

In no time, residents Joe Fenwick, Lillian Skaggs, Ruben Abney, Mandy Cox and Golda Overfield



Judy Jenkins
Gleaner columnist

were joining in.

That delighted Lowry, who loves an accompaniment. Looking out into the hallway where a bashful patient sat in a wheelchair and listened to the musical merriment, Lowry said, "That feller likes music. Come on in here and sing one with me!"

This Pied Piper from Evansville is so popular that no one minds his Hoosier status. Or if they do, they wind up excusing it because Lowry's wife of 31 years, Rosemary, is a Kentuckian.

Lowry, who charges Redbanks only enough to pay for his gas to and from Henderson, is becoming a familiar face here. Some may remember him from last summer, when he and his "Old Time Country and Bluegrass Pickin' and Singin' Band" played at Senior Fun Day in Central Park.

Tuesday, one lady kept asking him, "Weren't you in the Grand Ol' Opry?" He wasn't, but most people think he's good enough to grace that Nashville stage.

In fact, about 20 years ago, he "got a foot in the door and recorded several songs" in the country music capital, but he says that lifestyle doesn't blend with raising five kids and maintaining a marriage.

Consequently, he stayed with his 33-year-long job with the railroads, mostly L&N, working in the freight

house and round house.

There was a time in his youth, he tells his audiences, when he played the "honky tonks," but he's long since given that up. His appearances for years now have been primarily in Tri-state nursing homes. And on the first Sunday of every month, he and a bunch of other veteran musicians and singers can be seen at no charge from 2 to 4:30 p.m. at the C.K. Newsome Community Center in Evansville.

He talks almost as much as he

sings, relishing the history of every song. He told his listeners Tuesday that the composer of "Amazing Grace" once had been "a real mean man," who found salvation after nearly losing his life on a storm-tossed sea.

"There's a story behind a lot of the songs, if we but only knew," he sighed.

There's a story behind Carson, Lowry too, stretching from the boyhood when he spent every Saturday night listening to country and

Bluegrass music on his granny's battery-powered radio and including the massive heart attack that almost claimed him in 1976.

As a result of that coronary, he says, he began concentrating more on meaningful things and living a healthy lifestyle. He automatically starts lecturing on smoking when he sees anyone lighting a cigarette.

"I was raised on a tobacco farm and started smoking when I was 6 or 7," he notes, adding that he continued the habit until his heart

brought home to him the damage that he'd done himself.

"I feel great now," he says, claiming that performing for senior citizens and others "is like a workout for me. I feel better than I have in years."

That's one reason he'll never give up his music. As he puts it, "If somebody came up to me and said, 'I'll give you a million dollars if you never pick up a guitar again, I'd tell 'em to take their money and get lost.'"



Ruben Abney, left, was among the Redbanks residents who were entertained Tuesday by country singer Carson Lowry.

COMMUNITY FEATURE

LOCAL ROCK-N-ROLL BAND ENJOYS JAMMIN' TOGETHER

BY ELLEN HILL, PSU STUDENT
Pembroke—"The neighbors complain all of the time, and the police have come out to tell us to stop," says Brent Hunt.

What exactly have the police come out and told Hunt to stop doing? Why playing that "loud rock-n-roll music," of course.

Hunt is a member of Maskerade, a four-man southern rock band from Pembroke.

Hunt, 19, sings and plays the bass guitar; his twin brother Kent, plays lead guitar and also sings. The rest of the band is Ronald Locklear, 19, on rhythm guitar and Shay Jones, 18, on drums.

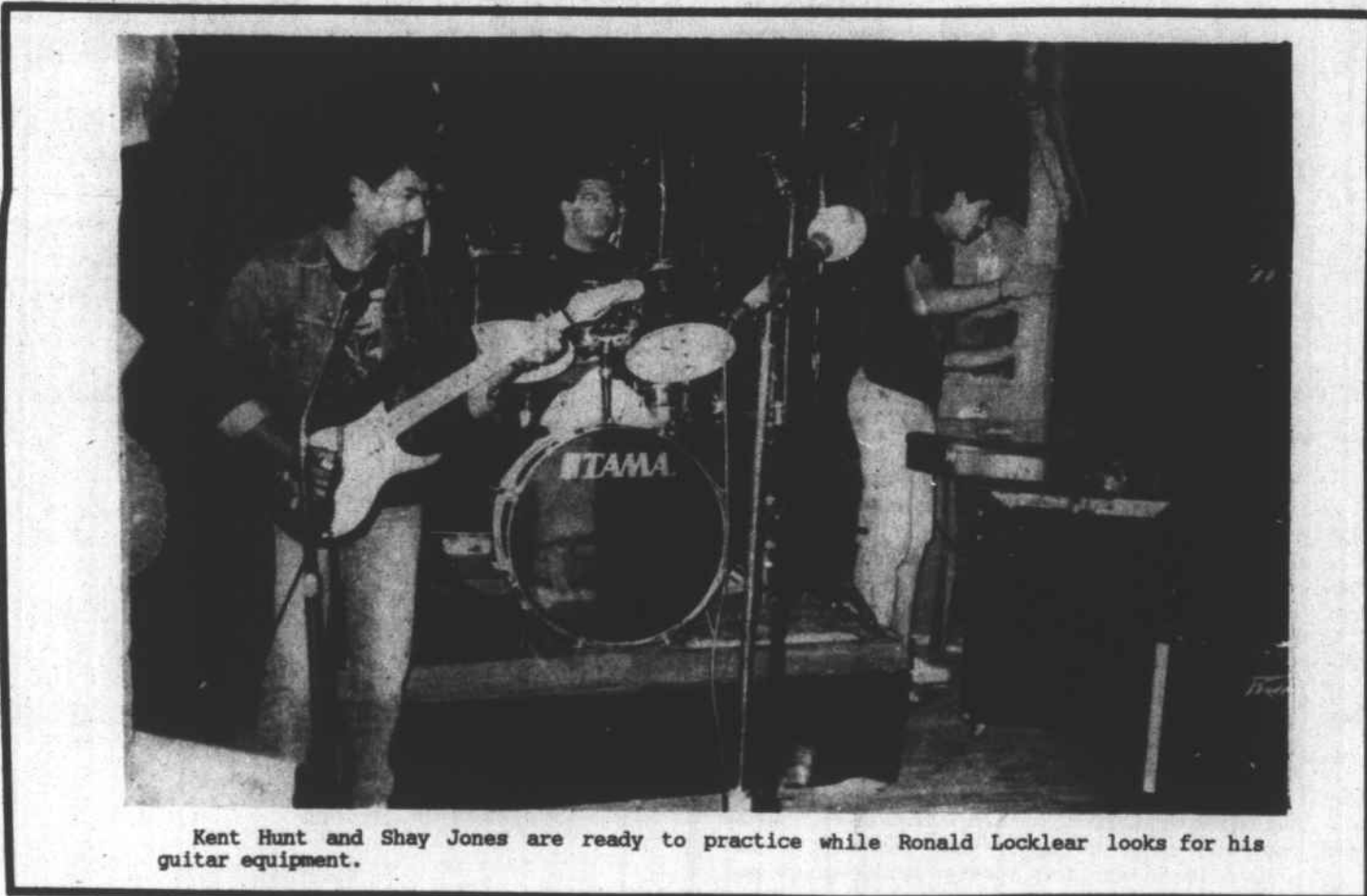
Maskerade has been together for a year and a half. The Hunt twins and Locklear have been playing their instruments for two and a half years. Jones started playing drums five years ago.

"All of us were friends in high school," says Locklear. "We were really into music and always talked about getting a band together, so we all started taking lessons."

"Yeah," agrees Kent. "Shay, Brent, and I played in the high school jazz band. After one gig, we said 'well, let's jam together.'"

Playing with instruments bought by hard-earned money and by their parents, the boys practice at a friend's house in Maxton.

All of the members are in-



Kent Hunt and Shay Jones are ready to practice while Ronald Locklear looks for his guitar equipment.

fluenced by the southern and classic rock they play. Some influences include Led Zeppelin, Bad Company, Eric Clapton and Van Halen.

"We are influenced by the oldies but the goodies," says Kent.

"We play mainly classic rock," comments Brent, "but we

try to play something that relates to everybody; music that's got meaning to it for all ages."

Maskerade plays at private parties around Pembroke and

Mr. P's Private Den in Lumberton. Though the band makes some money, they play as a hobby.

"We play as a hobby because we like it so much," says Brent. "Money is no object."

As for future plans, Maskerade is planning to record some originals at a studio, so they can get some airplay on Rock 101's "Homegrown," a program that features local talent.

The band is also planning on touring clubs on the east coast this summer.

"Our manager travels in the northeast a lot," explains Brent, "and he is going to leave our business cards at some clubs along the coast. We want to see what he can do about getting some gigs for us this summer."

If everything goes smoothly, the boys plan on sticking with the band to try and make something bigger happen.

"We work well with each other," says Kent. "We like jammin' together and playing for other people. There aren't many Indian bands, and we want to encourage other kids."

When asked about some advice for the kids, everyone agrees that patience and hard work is the key.

"Start young," advises Locklear. "Don't wait until you're our age to begin. If you're dedicated, it will all work out."

"Yeah, stick with it," agrees Kent. "You'll go somewhere if you really want it."

"Hollywood: The Golden Years"

The history of Hollywood's film industry reads like the rise and fall of the Roman Empire: monumental productions followed by major disasters. RKO Radio Pictures streaked across Hollywood's glittering heavens—producing such beloved RKO classics as *King Kong*, *Bringing Up Baby*, *Top Hat* and *Citizen Kane*—but plunged to earth with one scandal after another.



In a newly-released TV series, "Hollywood: The Golden Years," actor Ed Asner takes us back in time to capture the real Hollywood. Recent never-before-seen interviews with RKO's leading actors, actresses and directors reveal the grueling behind-the-scenes action that made the Hollywood magic possible. Fred Astaire, Ginger Rogers, Katharine Hepburn, Robert Mitchum, Jane Russell and Lucille Ball tell all in this six-part documentary series premiering Sunday, Aug. 14 at 10 PM EDT, nationwide, on the A & E Cable Network.

COMMUNITY

APPLICATIONS FOR MISS LUMBEE AVAILABLE
The applications for the Miss Lumbee Pageant are now available. The pageant will be held June 30, 1989 at the PSU Performing Arts Center. Applicants must be Lumbee Indian and must be a high school graduate between the ages of 18 to 25 by the day of the pageant.
For additional information, please contact Patricia B. Locklear or Belinda S. Harris at (919)521-8602 at Revels Plaza.
Deadline for applications is May 15, 1989.

BAKER'S CHAPEL PLATE SALE MAY 12
The Baker's Chapel W.M.U.'s will be holding a plate sale on May 12th at the Baker's Chapel Church, located on SR 1165 just off Hwy. 74 West approximately five miles from Pembroke. Chicken and barbecue plates will be sold for \$4.00 with proceeds going to the W.M.U.'s. The plate sale will begin at 10:30 a.m.

RESCUE SQUAD PLATE SALE APRIL 28
The Pembroke Rescue Squad will have a plate sale April 28 beginning at 11 a.m. at the Rescue Squad building on Union Chapel Road in Pembroke. Chicken and barbecue plates will be sold for \$3.50 with proceeds going to the Rescue Squad.

SHEWAN'S SCHOOL OF DANCE SPRING RECITAL
SheNan's School of Dance in Pembroke will present its Spring Dance Recital for public school children on Tuesday, May 9 at 10 a.m. in the Performing Arts Center at Pembroke State University. Reservations for the

performance may be made by calling 521-2392. Admission is \$1.00 for students. Teachers accompanying a class are admitted free. The public is welcome to attend. SheNan's School of Dance is a non-profit organization.


LITTLE MISS LUMBEE APPLICATIONS AVAILABLE
The Little Miss Lumbee applications are now available at the LRDA/JTPA office. The pageant will be held on Wednesday, June 28 at the PSU Performing Arts Center. Applicants must be between the ages of 4 to 6 by the date of the pageant and must be Lumbee Indian.

For additional information, contact Ms. Bobbie Ann Oxendine at (919)521-0528. Deadline for applications is May 3, 1989.

ROBESON COUNTY ARTS COUNCIL ANNUAL MEETING MAY 2
The Robeson County Arts Council will hold its annual meeting on Tuesday, May 2 at the Hector MacLean Public Library in Fairmont at 7 p.m. The public is encouraged to attend.

JAZZ RECITAL AT ROWLAND UMC
The Rowland Centennial Commission will sponsor a Jazz Recital on Tuesday evening, May 9, at the Rowland United Methodist Church at 7 p.m. Allan Youngblood, visiting artist at Richmond Community College, will be on keyboard and Maggie Pate, formerly of Rowland and currently a radio announcer in Wilmington, will be vocalist. There will be no admission charge.

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