

# Cowsills Hit Charlotte

By MONTE ZEPEDA

The Cowsills, recording artists for MGM Records, are going to make it big in the entertainment business; they have to.

A little over three months ago, the Cowsill family was living in a somewhat poverty stricken state.

The Cowsill home is a three-story, 22-room mansion in Newport, Rhode Island. Because of the investments in musical equipment, the house was neglected. Ivy was growing over the walls; windows were broken and screens were hanging. The living room was decorated with two chairs, a sofa and a TV set. Cooking was done on a 1917 gas range which

required several matches and a prayer to light.

For three years, a major amount of the Cowsill's income had been used to put the necessary equipment for a professional-sounding band -- instruments, sound systems, and amplifiers.

The singing group, the Cowsills, began over three years ago when bud Cowwill, father of the family and manager of the group, retired from 20 years of duty in the service. The two older Cowsills boys, Bill, 19 and Bob, 18, had been singing for some time and wanted their younger brothers to join them and enlarge the group. Bud decided that the group should turn professional. The boys had more than

enough talent to land a contract with a record company.

The next three years were spent in training for that purpose. During that time the boys never had a single lesson of formal training. Those three years were pretty rough for the Cowsills. John, 11, saved his allowance for six weeks to get "Clyde", a miniature monkey. "I waited for him to come and then, the next day after I got him, I woke up in the morning and there he was -- lying in the bottom of the cage -- frozen." A little white headstone marks "Clyde's grave site at the Cowsill home.

This incident took place when the Cowsills came close, very close to losing everything. They had no money, the phones had been cut off, there was no oil for the furnace during the bitter winter. The boys chopped up their dressers to make firewood for the fire-

place. The mortgage on the house they loved was about to be foreclosed. In desperation, the family came to New York City to seek financial help.

In New York, the family met a writer-producer of songs, Artie Kornfeld. Artie introduced the group to Lenny Stogel, one of the business's leading talent agents. Stogel arranged a deal with MGM and within a few weeks the Cowsills have become one of the hottest prospects in the recording industry.

The Cowsill family consists of parents, Mud and Barbara; sons, Bill, Bob, Barry, John, Dick and Paul; and daughter, Susan. Bud Cowsill coordinates all activities of the group. Dick and Paul Cowsill, road managers, handle the equipment. The main singing group consists of Barbara Cowsill, Bill, 19, Bob, 18; Barry, 13; John, 11; and sometimes Susan, 8.

The boys are average and above average students. Two of them are honor students in their schools at home. On tour a 21 year-old tutor travels with the group to assure that their education continues. Bill, who attends Rhode Island College, has a deferment from the draft for enough time to get the group started. After that, he has to go into the service for four-and-a-half years.

Monday, September 16, the Cowsills were in Charlotte for a performance at the Barringer Inn. On the tour they are covering 50 cities at one city a night.

Seeing the group and hearing just a few selections from their 500-song repertoire, one was impressed by the discipline of the group. Bill controls the group during the actual performance. He is an entertainer in full yet at the same time listens to every sound to make sure that the performance is as perfect as possible. Continually during the show, Bill gives instructions to the others to adjust their instruments or sing louder or anything that will make the group sound as good as possible.

The Cowsills are what many consider the perfect American family. The parents are in firm control but use understanding and love to maintain that control. The kids are the kind everyone would like to have. They are intelligent, not necessarily handsome but good-looking, and they all have personalities that would melt through an ice barrier 12 feet thick.

Everyone in the Terrace Room that night enjoyed the Cowsills' show. Selections covered the field of music from "Uptight" to "The Cruel Way". The second half of the performance was for dancing and everyone did just that. There were some junior high girls dancing with each other, middle-aged disc jockeys, and even the porters, maids, and bartenders couldn't resist joining in.

The Cowsills have gotten a good start on their goal in the Carolinas. All the radio officials at the Barringer Inn for the performance were impressed by the groups quality and versatility. Stations throughout the two states are now playing the Cowsills' first single, "The Rain, The Park, and Other Things". In Charlotte WGIV has given the record much airplay. WAYS, however, has decided to hold off on airplay of the song. Perhaps when the song becomes number one in the nation, "Big Ways" will relent.

(See Cowsills' picture page on P.4)



During the Depression-ridden 1930's, the Southwest was ablaze with the robbery exploits of a pair of lovers, Clyde Barrow and Bonnie Parker, who enjoyed posing for playful snapshots between bank hold-ups and then sending the

photos to local newspapers. In the layout above, Beatty and Miss Dunaway duplicate for the movie a typical fun-and-photography prank by the real Bonnie and Clyde, taken from the pages of a newspaper of the time.

## Bonnie, Clyde Has Thrills

By MONTE ZEPEDA

Warner Brothers - Seven Arts' "Bonnie and Clyde" revives the Depression-ridden Southwest of the 1930's. It was the time when bank-robber Clyde Barrow and his cigar-smoking sweetheart, Bonnie Parker, held sheriffs and bank-tellers in terror and frequently captured headlines with their daring, reckless and often pointless crimes.

The film stars Warren Beatty as Clyde and Faye Dunaway as Bonnie. The supporting cast includes Michael J. Pollard as C. W. Moss who was a Myrna Loy fan who had a bluebird tattooed on his chest. Gene Hackman portrays Clyde's brother, Buck, who told corny jokes and carried a Kodak. Estelle Parsons is Blanche the preacher's daughter who kept her fingers in her ears during the gunfights.

Bonnie Parker was born in Rowena, Texas in 1910; Clyde was born in 1909 also in Texas. Their career of crime began in about 1932. Clyde was fresh out of Huntsville Prison where he used an axe to cut off three of his toes to be taken off of hard labor. Shortly after this, his parole came through and he left prison on crutches. He was somewhat effeminate and needed a gun to make him feel like a man.

Bonnie was a blonde who liked to wear masculine clothes and

smoked black cigars. (In the contract for Faye Dunaway's role in the movie, a stipulation made sure that Miss Dunaway had to smoke no more than three cigars a day because of her allergy to tobacco.)

Bonnie and Clyde's first bank job was far from a success. The bank they chose had failed two weeks before.

The boy they chose as mechanic-driver for them was equally brilliant. During their second bank holdup, C. W. parked the getaway car a half-block from the bank. When Bonnie and Clyde emerged from the holdup, the car was nowhere in sight. After some fender crushing, C. W. managed to get the car on the street and pick up the stranded gangsters.

The real-life Bonnie and Clyde loved publicity. They frequently mailed pictures of themselves to newspapers. Bonnie wrote two poems that were published in newspapers from coast to coast. The titles were "Suicide Sal" and "The Story of Bonnie and Clyde".

After escaping elaborate ambushes, Bonnie and Clyde met their end on May 23, 1934 at 9:15 a. m. on a Saturday morning. They drove into an ambush of six to ten lawmen waiting for them with machine guns. Over 1000 bullets were fired into their car, 43 bullets in Clyde's face, and 31 in Bonnie's.



"Bonnie and Clyde," from Warner Bros.-Seven Arts, tells the exciting story of a band of notorious bank robbers who terrorized the Southwest during the Depression-struck 1930's. Photo 1, two restless, attractive young people, Clyde Barrow (WARREN BEATTY) and Bonnie Parker (FAYE DUNAWAY) meet on a hot afternoon. He's out to build a reputation as a gunman and she's out for kicks. They don't fully hit it off as lovers, Photo 2. But as a holdup team, Photo 3, they work extremely well together. The law starts to close in on the Barrow gang and, Photo 4, they have to shoot their way out of a rented

cottage. Gleeefully escaping capture, Photo 5, the Barrow gang including Bonnie, Buck Barrow (GENE HACKMAN), C. W. Moss (MICHAEL J. POLLARD) and Clyde, cross state borders eluding police. But persistence on the part of the law is rewarded when the gang rides into an ambush. Photo 6, three members of the gang—Bonnie, Clyde and C. W.—survive the attack only to be caught later. Arthur Penn directed and Warren Beatty produced the Technicolor drama which opens on \_\_\_\_\_ at the \_\_\_\_\_ Theater. The screenplay was written by David Newman and Robert Benton.

## ENTERTAINMENT ON REVIEW

By Monty Zepeda

The Villiage Dinner Theatre's latest presentation is a musical comdey, "In Name Only". The plot centers around three bunny girls, one of whom is allowed to live in New York because her uncle believes she is married. When the girls get the word that uncle is coming to the big city, a frantic search begins for a likely male who can pose as the husband during the uncle's visit. Her roommates come up with, and get this, two husbands. Things really take off from there.

The females in the lead are less than professional in their delivery. Although the sizes and shapes of the girls add to the effect of the comedy, it is hard to believe that the Playboy Club would really hire such a variety.

Henreitta, Charlotte Berryman, is the bunny with the visiting uncle. Barbara Dennis as Candy, Henrietta's roommate, adds a lot of comedy to the play.

But the top female actress is Estelle Lee as Mrs. Fisher, a neighbor. She plays the Jewish mother of a male hairdresser. Her over-protectiveness has had quite an ill-effect on her son, Henry.

The male leads offer more of the audience. J. Richard Beneville as Henry is superb. He spends the entire play fighting the domination of his mother. (Henry is the first pseudo-husband for Henrietta.)

Vic Shadroy as Jake, Candy's boyfriend and the second make-believe husband for Henrietta, is second to Henry as a laugh producer. He is the only man in the play who really knows how to handle gabby women, ignore them.

Uncle Horace is played by Earle Edgerton. Edgerton's stuffed-shirt attitude and then conversion to the swinger's code is hilarious. The one male role that flops is that of Dave, Uncle Horace's step son who is in love with Henrietta. Hank Schob does less than well in both acting and singing.

Nevertheless, "In Name Only" is a fairly good dinner theatre play that would provide a good night's entertainment for anyone, however, beware of the risque lines.

### New 45's Look Promising

This week the record distributors have a number of singles that have great potential. One of the best is "I Can't Happen Without You" by the Power Plant. Don't let the name of the group throw you, they are really good. The record is on the Diamond Label.

Bunny Segler's newest release is a compositoy of "Lovey Dovey" and "You're So Fine". Both songs are oldies brought back in the driving style of Segler. This one will rise to the top quickly.

Other new ones include "I'm Wondering" by Stevie Wonder, "Three In The Morning" by Bobby Goldsboro, and "You Can Lead Your Woman To The Altar" by Oscar Toney, Jr.

### COMING

Sidney Poitier should be up for another Oscar for his role in "To Sir, With Love". Read a review of that movie and "The Flim-Flam Man" with George C. Scott in next week's Carolina Journal.