



Through  
THE  
Looking  
Glass

The NEW BERN

# MIRROR

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James F. McCoy  
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Admitting without argument that we're completely out of tune with the times, it still seems to us that folks had more fun when they were singing songs about the moon instead of trying to land there.

Even during the financial difficulties of the Great Depression, New Bernians gave their hearts to Milky Wayish melodies. The lyrics were often putrid and the notes foul smelling, but it mattered not, as long as the virtues of the planetary system were extolled somewhere in the chorus, the world rushed headlong into sentimental acceptance.

Grandpa, and his grandpa before him, suffered enjoyably from a chronic case of the same malady when they were young and foolish. What a pity that such tunes fail to stir the gypsy lying dormant in today's generation. The teenagers of our acquaintance may deny it, but rock 'n' roll—from the angle of romance—is a sorry substitute.

Among the radio and recording stars who were partial to things astronomical, Morton Downey was conspicuous. One of his earlier theme songs was "Wabash Moon" and later he switched his highpitched warbling capacities to "Carolina Moon" to advertise a well known brand of cigarettes.

Kate Smith became internationally famous in the same era with her own theme song—"When the Moon Comes Over the Mountain." Meanwhile, Cab Calloway, who could out holler any of the brayers we have around now, came up with a number dubbed "Underneath A Harlem Moon." As the title implies, it dealt principally with doings on Lennox Avenue. The words were clever and the notes were catchy.

Harlem had no monopoly on moonlight in the grim, bank-busting Thirties. We had an "Old England Moon" and "Moonlight On the River Colorado"—along with "Honolulu Moon" and "Moonlight on the Ganges." Tin Pan Alley came up with "Virginia Moon" too, but it didn't create much of a stir, even on the shores of the Potomac.

Not content with the tremendous popularity of her aforementioned theme song, Kate Smith achieved success with "A Kiss In the Moonlight." The Bowell sisters, with Connie leading the way, did quite well with the same song. Merely mentioning this sister act ought to strike a responsive chord with you oldsters.

Earlier still, Ruth Etting ascended to heights of popular music when she sang "Shine On Harvest Moon" in the Ziegfeld Follies and recorded it for Columbia. Millions bought the disc at a time when money was almost non-existent. Incidentally, Florenz Ziegfeld rated Ruth the greatest entertainer of them all. Considering the fact that he discovered Will Rogers, it was

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**BUSHELS OF LOVE**—David Christopher Riggs, who celebrated his first birthday in January, isn't going to be neglected, although we can't guarantee he won't be spoiled. Born in New Bern, he lives at San Antonio where his father, Kenneth E. Riggs, Jr., is serving in the U. S. Air Force. Impatiently waiting for parents and youngster to be transferred to Petersburg, Va., are two great-great-grandmothers, Mrs. Eva Piner and Mrs. Beulah Wooten Simpson; four great-grandmothers, Mrs. B. R. Gray, Mrs. J. L. Riggs, Mrs. John C. Wooten, and Mrs. S. E. Thompson; and two grandmothers, Mrs. S. E. Thompson and Mrs. Kenneth Riggs, Sr. Unless they draw lots to see who gets to cuddle him next, and for how long, there's gonna be a revolution. Keep the peace, gals, and take your turn.