

# The Hilltop



Mars Hill, N.C. 28754

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## Gene Cotton To Perform November 18 At M.H.C.

The Wren College Union and the Christian Student Movement will present Gene Cotton in concert on Tuesday, November 15 at 8:00 in Moore Auditorium. Admission is free.

From the time a 13-year-old Gene Cotton first heard Harry Belafonte crooning "Jamaica Farewell" from the family's hi-fi in Columbus, Ohio, he has wanted to be a singer. "I can still see myself leaning against that speaker trying to get as much as I could out of it," says Gene. By the 10th grade, he had progressed through a succession of local "copycat" groups and was writing songs himself.

Leaving political science studies at Ohio State University after his freshman year in 1963 to go to New York, Gene frequented the Bitter End, Village Gate, Cafe Wha? and other Greenwich Village landmarks as a regular performer on the tail-end of the commercial folk movement that spawned first the Kingston Trio, then the Limelighters, Simon and Garfunkel, Peter, Paul and Mary and Bob Dylan. A single called "Surfin' in Bermuda" did well in New England until someone pointed out that there is no surf to speak of in Bermuda and the record and Gene's recording career crested temporarily.

Further studies at OSU and a stay in Miami during which he did an album for a small label and established himself as a strong college draw preceded Gene's move to Nashville in 1969. Borrowing \$5000 from the bank, Gene went into the studio and emerged nine hours later with the tapes that eventually became the "In The Gray Of The Morning" album released on the Myrrh label.

The "Liberty" Lp was next and contained the successful single "Sunshine Roses."

"For All The Young Writers," containing the single "Let Your Love Flow," was Gene's ABC debut album. It was a pivotal record for Gene in that it bridged the gap between the message songs which had characterized his two Myrrh albums and his growing realization that he had ignored songs of other emotions, especially love songs. "At one time I felt obligated to make most of my songs social commentaries," says Gene. "I really didn't leave room for other expressions. I think I've worked that out of my system now. I no longer feel that every song has to make a significant social statement. You can sing songs just to have a good time."

"Rain On" is Gene's most contemporary effort to date. From the jazzy strains of the title tune to the lump-in-the-throat emotional hook of "Me And The Elephant" to the Motown feel of "Sweet Destiny" to the sing-a-long single "You've Got Me Runnin'," it is an album of thoroughly listenable pop music.

Perhaps not as vocal on social issues now, Gene is no less involved and continues to work with several organizations combatting world hunger. His large Nashville home frequently has been a refuge for people needing a place to sleep or problem-troubled young people. Younger than most who participate in the program, Gene and wife Marnie are active foster parents.

Though he has performed with some of the most recognized names in the music business (Olivia Newton-John,

the Bee Gees, Charlie Daniels, Marshall Tucker, and Blood, Sweat and Tears among them) Gene downplays the significance of that fact with characteristic modesty: "Playing with people like that only proves that you have a good agent; it says nothing about your talent." Be that as it may, Gene's humor-spiced and variety-packed concerts have long suggested that the talent is there, and "Rain On" is the proof.

Gene isn't interested in becoming a "star," which he says is altogether different from being a commercial success. Should wealth and/or fame come his way, Gene says his lifestyle won't change much — other than having a couple of extra pairs of jeans and perhaps the freedom to realize his dream of dabbling in films. If early reaction to his new single is an accurate indication, Gene Cotton should soon have a lot of new fans runnin' his way.



Gene Cotton to perform in Moore Auditorium on Tuesday, November 15, at 8:00. Free Admission.

## Intercollegiate Canoe Race

By Robin Turley

The 1977 Southeastern Intercollegiate Open Canoe Races were held during the first weekend of October on the Catawba River just north of Morganton, North Carolina. The annual event became a popular success with several students from the Mars Hill College campus. Out of the nineteen students that participated in the races only two of the guys, Steve Holmes and Irvin Crouse, had entered before. In fact, for most of the students, this was their first time ever for being in a canoe race of any kind. Yet, even with a bit of inexperience, Mars Hill did an outstanding job and were proud victors of a third place standing in the overall race.

The "team" of nineteen students began practicing for the race about three weeks ahead of time. Steve Holmes, who has plans of racing in the 1979 World Championship organized the team. Finding a place to practice was difficult at first, but they soon found encouragement in Dr. Charles Powell when he welcomed any use of his lake to prepare on. Canoes were borrowed from the "Y" in Asheville, Jane Holcombe, and David Mauney.

For those of you who are unfamiliar with this style of racing, it might help to explain exactly what was involved. The races are set up into two classes: cruising and slalom. Cruising consists of going down a distance of about two and a half miles as fast as possible. Slalom on the other hand, involves negotiating gates (or obstacles, which our team seemed to have had experience in) over a distance of a 1/4 mile course. Speed, along with accuracy was important in this event. For every gate hit, there were 10 seconds added to the final time. The gates are parallel poles hanging perpendicular to the water.

Cruising is divided up into four specific races: C-1 (one man), C-1W (one woman), C-2 (two men) and C-1M (one guy, one girl). The slalom involves the C-1, C-1W, C-2, C-2W, and the C-2M. The number of points given are determined by the number of boats that are entered in the race. For example, if twenty people entered a race, the first place winner would obtain 20 points, the second place would get nineteen, and so on. The number of points at the end of all the races is added up to determine the winners.

The University of the South came in first with a total of 207 points, followed by William and Mary College placing second with a total of 155 points. Then Mars Hill was awarded third place with a score of 135 points. These points were a result of eight individual medals. Of these eight medals, seven were won by Steve Holmes and Irvin Crouse. The extra medal was by Joy Weidaman. The trophy was dedicated to Dr. Powell. Also, thanks were given to President Bentley for financial help.

Mars Hill has plans to race again in March in the spring races, but the level of ability needs to be higher. Therefore, needed facilities over the winter are pertinent in order to hope for any kind of placement in the spring. The interests among the students is obviously here and is growing fast; but, so far, there is little available help to put this interest to work to develop into something with a high potential of future success.

Participants in the races from Mars Hill College were: Steve Holmes, Irvin Crouse, Chuck Augustine, Charlie Bellisary, Pat Jones, Derrick Sellars, Jim Neely, Don Long, Doug Hartig, Johnny Goin, Rob Nall, Doug Britt, Ben Wax, Joy Weidaman, Cindy Nanney, Janet Quick, Suzanne Moore, Lynn Warren, and Kim Maynard.



Members of the MHC Canoe Team. Pictured left to right - First Row: Irvin Crouse, Ben Wax, Don Long, Steven Holmes, Pat Jones, and Jim Neely.

Second Row: Joy Weideman, Suzanne Moore, Johnny Goin, Lynn Warren, Kim Maynard, Cindy Nanney, Janet Quick, Chuck Augustine, Derrick Sellars, and Roh Nall. (Photo by J.W.)