

# Donovan Returns As His Own Man

by Frank Parrish  
Staff Writer

OPEN ROAD, Donovan (Epic-E 30125)

Donovan, the gentle Scot who once sang, "Happiness runs in a circular motion," returns in this LP with some sidemen and bitter, brash lyrics. His new cohorts are John Carr, drums, Mike Thomson, bass and guitar, and Mike O'Neill, occasional piano.

"Open Road" takes the traveler down a sensitive, intelligent route. It is thoroughly infused with one man's perception of twentieth century life. The accompaniment, always solid, never spectacular, takes a secondary role to the words. The players maintain a comfortable tempo and function smoothly as a unit. No one solos while others hold the melody. The album depends mainly on Donovan's writing for its impact.

It is studded with archaisms and alliterations which are characteristic of Donovan. In "Roots of Oak," he opines, "let me not hear facts figures and logic/fain would i hear lore legend and magic." Then, there is "Riki Tiki Tavi," easily the most misunderstood song on normally bland, harmless "top" 40 radio.

Donovan surprisingly draws on the "white man's burden" theorist to deliver some stinging sarcasm. "Riki Tiki Tavi" is no nonsense song. Donovan rhetorically says, "now everybody who read the jungle book (Rudyard Kipling) knows that riki tiki tavi is a mongoose who kills snakes." He says he once came to believe there were organizations which would kill his snakes (problems, hang-ups, frustrations) for him.

He concludes the problem-solving capacities of religion, government, education, and other institutions are only

mythical. He must look inside himself for solutions. If the "mongoose" song is too vague and mere mildly offensive, the fifth cut on side 2 carries enough outrageous comment to destroy the faint-hearted or unhealthy. The title, "Poke At the Pope," is sufficiently blatant. Then, not to put too fine a point upon the subject, he asks, "would you trust this man ask yourself now/his eyes are sunken and his cheeks are hollow/while you dig the poor of the world the follow/he hoarding up their gold in the vatican."

In another barb not calculated to win the heart and mind of the Catholic Church, Donovan bluntly trills his message in "Clara Clairvoyant." "oh oh oh but but tu tu/have you any perversion to confess/to the lumpy cassock on the other side." However, Donovan casts a cold eye in varied directions. In "Celtic Rock," he laments the plight of industrialized, hollow man.

In fairness to the music on this LP, I must note that it is pleasant enough. But the matchless, imperinent lyrics simply bestrids it. The melodies are simple, hummable. John Carr's drumming is subdued and simple. Mike Thomson's bass line never rises above a nearly muted level.

Donovan may now have a band but it doesn't revoke or even disturb his poetic license. He formerly described himself as "thy humble minstrel." The self-description no longer fits. On "Open Road," he is more bumptious than he dared be before.

But don't trust me. Buy the album. The lyrics are printed inside the jacket. They reveal a bard who has exchanged love and flowers for insight, subtleties for directness, and Christ-like humility for irreverent, salty wit.



Teresa tries on a Hebrew costume from the motion picture "Quo Vadis."

# MGM Props Available To Cinema Fans Here In Clothing Sale

by Sharon Hagie  
Staff Writer

When Metro-Goldwyn-Meyer last spring auctioned most of the props it had accumulated in 45 years of filmmaking to help pull itself out of debt, hundreds of people flocked to Hollywood to purchase relics their favorite movies and stars.

One of them was Mrs. Randy Melson of Burlington, who is now making her purchases available to Chapel Hill film buffs in a sale at J. B. Robbins' clothing store on Franklin Street. The sale will last until Sept. 24.

Charlton Heston fans can buy a number of articles from the classic "Ben Hur," ranging from sandals, capes and spears to the dress worn by Ben Hur's sister.

If your tastes run more to "The Wonderful World of the Brothers Grimm," there is a large selection of props and costumes, including the Lord Mayor's plumed hat and the servant's costume worn by Buddy Hackett.

Unfortunately, MGM's vast panoramas with their casts of thousands involved so many costumes that it was impossible to keep track of who wore what. Mrs. Melson displays a gown worn by Katherine Hepburn and another which graced Lana Turner but even the wardrobe department didn't know what movies they were from. And an overcoat from "Doctor Zhivago" was probably worn by Rod Steiger—but no one knows for sure.

At any rate the costumes displayed are fascinating objects both in themselves and because of the Golden Era of filmmaking which they represent. Mrs. Melson pointed out that Buddy Hackett's

sackcloth shirt from his servant role in "The Brothers Grimm" was lined in a smooth and comfortable silk—"After all, a star is a star."

Most of the articles are well constructed with a careful attention to detail that is surprising for a medium that involves so many actors and extras. Hand embroidery and tiny pearls, for example, may not have been picked up by the camera lens—but they still make a king's doublet an object of elegance.

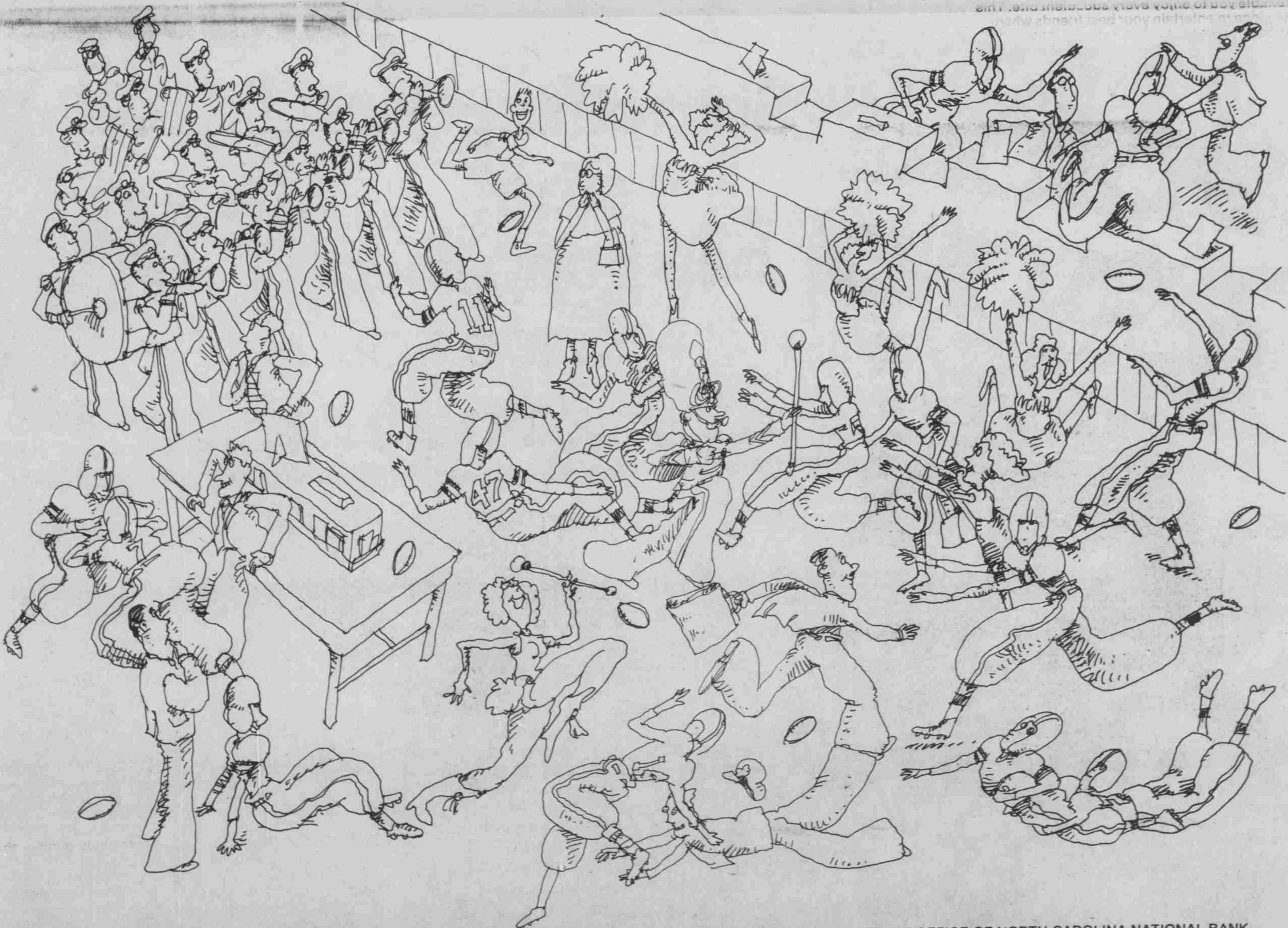
Although Mrs. Melson is offering several hundred articles for sale, there are a few on display which she will probably keep, such as the more expensive "star" costumes, which she feels a special attachment to. "But I may eventually loan or rent them to theaters and universities," she said.

Mrs. Melson, a California native, explained that she made an initial trip to Hollywood in May both to visit relatives and to buy some props. The only ones she could purchase wholesale at the time were Biblical costumes from "Ben Hur," "The Prodigal" and "Quo Vadis." She returned to sell these at Holly Hills Mall in Burlington.

The response was so enthusiastic that she returned to the auction, which lasted over a month, and bought more costumes from a variety of periods. She also concentrated on providing a wide price range; articles now on sale at Robbins' cost from \$8 to \$400. Her total purchases added up to over \$9,000.

Mrs. Melson explained that she chose costumes instead of furniture and heavier props because they would have wider appeal and would cost less to ship, keeping the sale price low enough for the average person to afford.

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