



YOUNG AND INNOCENT—Here, Melissa Lewis is the picture of innocence as she looks through a biography of one of her favorite country singers.



MELISSA AT WORK—Here, Melissa is the picture of professionalism as she performed with The Johnny Cash Show at Hampton Coliseum (Photo courtesy of Larry Bonko, The Ledger-Star)

Melissa Lewis, Country Singer:

A Little Girl With A Big Dream

By KATHY M. NEWBERN

If you can, imagine you're a 12-year old girl. You're in seventh grade, vice-president of the Student Council, and an honor roll student. Sounds normal enough; ingredients that would add up to a happy childhood. But don't stop there. On top of all that, imagine working three and four nights a week doing singing engagements to accomplish your dream of rising to the top as a country singer.

If you can imagine all that, then you can imagine what it's like to be Melissa Lewis.

Melissa, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John Lewis of Rt. 3, Hertford, has been making ripples in the country music business. And, considering some recent events, those ripples may be developing into a tidal wave of success.

Most recent of these events was Melissa's appearance on The Johnny Cash Show, a live concert performance Feb. 18 at Hampton Coliseum in Hampton, Va. Although Cash naturally received top billing, Melissa received a lot of attention. The appearance by Melissa and her back-up band, The Lewis & Clark Expedition, was the result of a talent search sponsored by WCMS radio station, also promoters of the Cash concert. About 25 bands were considered for the honor of performing one number on the Cash show. In an article by Larry Bonko which appeared in The Ledger-Star following the concert, Cash is quoted as saying, "She (Melissa) stood out above all the rest of them." For the show, Melissa sang "It's Only Make Believe." Sonny Butler, leader of the band, sang harmony. When she finished, Cash planted a kiss of admiration and respect

on the tender 12-year old lips. After much prodding, Melissa later admitted her reaction to her mother by saying, "He made me feel important."

The appearance with Cash was not however a single or final effort. Melissa has kept busy working at her art. She recently cut her first record. Out on the American label, she sings "Tattle Tale Eyes," a remake of the George Jones and Tammy Wynette version. The flip side is a remake of "North Carolina" by Dallas Frazier. The new single is receiving air play on local radio stations WCNC and WBXB. It's also being heard on WCMS and stations in Wilmington, Wilson, and Windsor. Some stations in Arkansas are also hopping on Melissa's bandwagon. The record is being distributed by Melissa's family who hopes to soon have it out nationwide.

Melissa's interest in and dedication to her music has become a sort of family affair. Her five brothers and sisters are helping out with household chores to give Melissa time to work, practice, and study. Dad is supportive and Mom is trying to keep Melissa's life as normal as possible for a 12-year old who's been described as a little girl with a big voice — another Brenda Lee.

Melissa has been seriously working at her singing since 1974. Her interest came about rather abruptly. After placing second in a talent show at school, Melissa announced that she was going to be a singer. She started practicing daily and then made her first public appearance with "Vince Chory and the Squires" in Elizabeth City. Needless to say, she's come a long way since those first efforts.

Melissa does not talk openly about her accomplishments. A lot of that is Melissa's personality, but some is the result of advice

offered by family and friends. Her mother says Melissa is "scared of being taken the wrong way." Musicians who've worked with Melissa tell her, "Don't change. Don't let it go to your head." Melissa has taken this advice and copes with her current status by showing no outward emotion or excitement. For her it works.

In addition to mothering six children and a menagerie of pets, Beth Lewis, Melissa's mother, keeps an eye on Melissa's grades and juggles a busy schedule. Mrs. Lewis confides, "She can sing as much as she wants and she can go as much as she wants as long as she stays on the honor roll." Melissa rolls her eyes and says, "Yeah." Her mother added that local school officials have been very cooperative and understanding of Melissa's situation. Concerning her school and her singing career, Melissa simply says, "It's rough." But she continues to do both well.

Melissa's singing has also offered some frustrations. Her mother points out that Melissa works mostly in Virginia because of North Carolina labor laws. In the neighboring state, Melissa is allowed to sing in establishments selling alcohol as long as food is also served. In North Carolina she cannot work in a place selling alcohol. Her mother sees this as a restriction and has taken action to change it, but with no result. Mrs. Lewis said, "I'm not saying we should open the bars to kids. But there are a lot of other young and talented people in North Carolina and it's a shame the state can't get behind them and give them these opportunities." She

further explained that at this point, Melissa needs exposure and in the area, that exposure can only come from making appearances when and where she can which often means singing in clubs. Melissa's parents are still careful about the places they allow to sing. They have only had one bad experience when a fight broke out at one establishment that had booked Melissa. The young talent had seven more engagements upcoming at the same place. Her mother immediately cancelled them all. Mrs. Lewis sees some inconsistencies in the laws and commented, "North Carolina won't let her work but they will take tax money from her and to me there's some kind of discrimination about that. If she ever makes it, then North Carolina will be proud to claim her."

Concerning Melissa's earnings, Mrs. Lewis said, "It isn't the thousands of dollars that people envision when they think show business." While working in a grown-up world, Melissa has had to take on the grown-up responsibilities that go along with it. She is the decision maker and is also responsible for some transportation expenses and buys her clothing for her work. She also gets some spending money but the rest goes in savings.

Just when you start wondering if a 12-year old girl in Perquimans County can cut a record and appear with Johnny Cash without it going to her head, then Melissa comes into the kitchen with her pet chicken, "Pumpkin," and announces she's having a Big Mac Attack. Wonder no more. This is Melissa Lewis and she's not changing.

Scouting Neighborhood Organized

Girl Scouting in Perquimans County has in the past been part of the Elizabeth City Neighborhood organization.

In order to better service local scouts, the troop leaders have decided to withdraw from Elizabeth City. With the help of the Field Director from the council office, a Perquimans County Girl Scout Neighborhood has been formed.

Meetings will be held the second Tuesday of every month at 7:30 p.m. at the Hertford E.I.C. office on Hyde Park and King Street.

Girl Scouting still needs adult volunteers to carry out

its purpose. The scouting program is not designed as a girls' club or as just someplace to leave a young girl. Girl Scouting helps girls grow and develop into mature adults with a sound sense of values and a strong sense of citizenship.

Leaders urge those interested to come to a Neighborhood meeting if: you enjoy being around girls; can keep records; can make out reports; can make telephone calls; can share a special skill or talent; and/or are interested in helping in any way.

The next meeting of the

Neighborhood will be held March 8. Esther Weiner can be contacted at 426-5133 for further information on the meeting or local Girl Scouting.

Got A Fuse Blowin!
Kirkland & Tillett Electric
 Electrical Contracting
 Phone 335-0130, Elizabeth City
 Night - 264-2120
There's Got To Be A Reason?

Recipe Corner

The following recipe was submitted by Ms. Mae Wreathy Hollowell, a member of Bay Branch Extension Homemakers Club. Readers are invited to share favorite recipes for the Recipe Corner.

HAMBURGER NOODLE CASSEROLE

- 1 lb. ground beef
- 1/2 c. chopped onion
- 1/2 c. chopped green pepper
- 1 pkg. Hamburger Helper mix for beef noodle
- 3 c. hot water
- 1 can (10 3/4 oz.) condensed tomato soup
- 1 c. shredded sharp processed American cheese (about 4 oz.)
- 3 green pepper rings if desired

Heat oven at 375°F. Cook and stir ground beef, onion and chopped green pepper in 10-inch skillet until beef is light brown; drain. Mix beef mixture, noodles, sauce mix, water, soup and cheese thoroughly in ungreased oblong baking dish, 11 1/2 x 7 1/2 x 1 1/4 inches or in 2-qt. casserole dish. Bake uncovered until hot and bubbly, about 40 minutes; stir. Garnish with green pepper rings; bake 5 minutes longer. Let stand about 5 minutes before serving. Serves 5.

List Your Property With
William F. Ainsley
 Realtor
 Hertford, N.C.
 Dial 426-7659

Chappell Grocery
 Winfall
 Phone 426-7284

FRYERS LB. **49¢**

SPARE RIBS LB. **99¢**

PIGS FEET LB. **49¢**

SAUSAGE BY BOX LB. **1.19**

PEANUT CITY HAMS BAGGED LB. **1.39**
 NOT BAGGED LB. **1.29**

APRIL SHOWERS

PEAS **3/89¢**

DEL MONTE CATSUP 14 OZ. **2/83¢**

PARADE SUGAR 5 LBS. **29¢**
 WHEN YOU BUY 4 G.E. BULBS 60-75-100 WATT. 2.20

TOMATOES LB. **69¢**

RC COLA 8 PAK 16 OZ. PLUS DEPOSIT **99¢**

ROSES

CHURCH STREET HERTFORD

60-inches wide...
Polyester Knits
 REG. 1.99 **SAVE 51¢** **1.48** YARD

Sporty polyester knits. Perfect for pant suits, slacks, skirts, tunic tops and more. A variety of marvelous patterns and colors to choose from. 60-inches wide.

ROSE'S ADVERTISING MERCHANDISE POLICY

100% nylon...
Panty Hose
 QUEEN SIZE SPECIAL 2 PRS. \$1.00
 REGULAR SIZE 2 PRS. \$1.00

ROSE'S ADVERTISING MERCHANDISE POLICY

Soft and absorbent...

BORDERED WASH CLOTHS 5 TO BAND
 REG. \$1.25 **SAVE 43¢** **SALE 84¢**

BRECK® Hair Spray
 REG. 99¢ **SALE 84¢**

Miss Breck® hair spray holds any hair style. Freestyle, Super Hold or Unscented. 11-oz. (net wt.).

POLYESTER FIBER FILLING REG. \$1.47 **SAVE 47¢** **SALE \$1.00**
 HUNDREDS OF USES **SALE \$1.00**
 Ideal for filling pillows, cushions, toys & many other uses.

TRASH BAGS REG. PRICE \$1.67 **SAVE 42¢** **SALE \$1.25**

ROSE MILK REG. \$1.99 **SALE \$1.48** **SAVE 51¢**

WASH CLOTHS SPECIAL **3 FOR \$1.00**

HAND TOWELS **2 FOR \$1.00**

Jaycettes Plan Fashion Show

The Perquimans County Jaycettes will once again be sponsoring their annual Fashion Show. This year's show will be held Saturday, March 19 at Hertford Grammar School beginning at 8 p.m. The theme for the show is "Fashions A Flutter."

The following stores will be participating in the show with fashions to welcome the arrival of Spring: Youthland, Betty's Boutique, Diver's Jewelers, Woodland Dress Shop, White's Dress Shop, Gregory's Five and Dime, Super Dollar Store, Darden's Department Store, Belk Tyler's (Edenton), Somethin' Else (Edenton), Brooks and the Style Center (Elizabeth City).

Tickets are on sale now and may be purchased from any Jaycette member for \$2 each. Children under 12 will be admitted free. Those interested are urged to purchase tickets as soon as possible since a limited number will be sold.

LASSITER'S APPLIANCE SALES & SERVICE

HARRIS SHOPPING CENTER
WE SERVICE ALL BRANDS OF APPLIANCES

WE HAVE IN STOCK - KELVINATOR - MAYTAG - MAGIC-CHEF AND A COMPLETE LINE OF PARTS FOR ALL APPLIANCES.

PHONE 426-5647

C.H. Mims Real Estate
 ALL TYPES OF PROPERTY FOR SALE
 IN
PERQUIMANS COUNTY
 PHONE: 264-2580

AUCTION SALE
 OF VALUABLE FARM EQUIPMENT
 Saturday, March 5, 1977 -- 10:00 A.M.
 SALE LOCATED: Late J.T. WINSLOW FARM: 4 Miles From Belvidere, N.C.; Take State Route 1200 to 1202 to 1205. FOLLOW AUCTION SIGNS.

- John Deere Tractor—(60)
- John Deere Tractor—(B) with Cultivators
- John Deere Middlebustlers—4 Row with Gauge Wheels
- John Deere Middlebustlers—3 Row
- Hardee Rotary Cutter—No. 166
- John Deere Corn Picker—1 Row
- Farm Trailer
- So-Rite Sower
- Disc—2 Row Drag-Type
- Stalk Cutter—2 Row
- 2 Cule Planters with John Deere Bottoms
- Bottom Plow—2 Bottom on Rubber
- John Blue Fertilizer Hoppers
- Hand Truck
- Hand Corn Sheller
- 2 Iron Pots

HORSE DRAWN EQUIPMENT

- Cart
- Dirt Scoop
- Plows
- Moving Machine
- Cart and Wagon Wheels

TRUCK

- 1964—Ford Pick-up 1/2 Ton F-100 & Cylinder

MANY OTHER ITEMS TOO NUMEROUS TO MENTION
 TERMS: CASH OR GOOD CHECKS
 NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR ACCIDENTS

Sale Authorized by: **HERBERT L. WILLIAMS**
 and **DORIS E. COPELAND**
 Co-Administrators
 Phone: 297-2288 or 221-4210

Bonded License No. 90
 Auctioneer **HAROLD WINSLOW**
 Hertford, N.C.
 Phone: 297-2958