

# Every Gamble Is Carefully Planned At ABC

fr pg. 31

staffers Ron Chancey and B.J. McElwee, Joe Deters, Brian Langlois and Tony Tamburano represent the finest people working for any country label today.

"We try to stay involved on all fronts and be a total country & western label. What's in this year, may be out next year. We've got to be flexible. If we're going to sell our product, we must be in touch with what's happening today. It's our capacity to understand today's music that enables us to prepare for tomorrow's trends. It's true of ABC not just in country, but across the board."

## Anchor Across The Atlantic

Anchor Records, ABC's wholly owned British subsidiary label, was formed in October of 1974 under the direction of president Ian Ralfini. The tasks set for the young label are two-fold, the distribution of all ABC product in the United Kingdom and the search for, and development of, new talent. Albums produced and released under the Anchor banner will be marketed, by Anchor, in England and distributed by ABC in the United States.

Under Ralfini's leadership, Anchor has been able to maintain a "small, high quality operation." The maximum number of acts projected for its completed artist roster is fifteen. This small number "allows intensive personal involvement in the development of each act" according to Ralfini, and is high among the label's primary goals.

Anchor Records' first-year releases were led off with the debut album by the British five-man rock band, Ace. The album "Five-A-Side" included the group's hit single "How Long" and climbed high on both the British and American charts. Among other Anchor releases are albums by Philip and Vanessa, Sam Leno, Cole Younger and Suzie Webb.

"Elastic" by British rock group Stretch is the most recent LP to be issued by the label. Both the album and the first single to be released from it "Why Did You Do It?" have enjoyed a initial success, maintaining high positions on the British charts. ABC's performance in support of such Anchor artists as Ace and Stretch has been the source of much gratification at the British label.

In addition to the excitement generat-

ed by Anchor's new talent, company executives are thoroughly enjoying sifting through the extensive ABC catalogue. There is great enthusiasm about acts like Rufus with Chaka Khan, Joe Walsh, Steely Dan, Poco and John Mayall.

Ralfini is enjoying the relationship with ABC because it goes well beyond that of a typical licensee. The acts mentioned above have received extensive tour support in England through Anchor and the symbiotic relationship has proved successful because of the extensive merchandising and distribution support ABC is able to provide for Anchor product in the United States.

## Money For Progress

Si Mael joined ABC as vice president in charge of financial affairs in May 1975. His job is perhaps the hidden key to ABC Records day-to-day operation. Mael quite frankly stated, "Our essential concern is setting a climate that's conducive to providing all the information necessary to running this business. We seek to establish cordial relationships with everyone we deal with, from artists to suppliers. They're looking for prompt and considerate treatment, and it's ABC's aim to accommodate them. We're constantly looking to improve our relationships with artists, publishers, producers, managers and customers."

"Based on our existing roster, the signing of established artists and the development of new artists, we have forecast a substantial increase in domestic sales. The restructuring of our foreign affiliates will improve our international income. In all, we look for 1976 to be a year of achievement. Our working relationship with each department is intimate. Each tells us what it expects to achieve and we make all arrangements necessary to achieve the goals that they prescribe. It's essential that we cooperate as a team."

Mael, though new to ABC, is well aware of the label's artistic aim and seeks to make that a reality through his department's efforts: "We're building ABC and making it grow to the fullest extent that financial planning can allow. I feel that ABC will have a substantial singles volume in 1976, but a far greater emphasis will be placed on LPs. One of the areas I'm always questioned about is new

acquisitions. Jerry Rubinstein discusses the terms of the proposed new deals with me. Some superstars may be in line for heavy deals, but each bears careful analysis by everyone before it is approved. We may make a substantial investment, but it's not without careful consideration. The numbers of today's deals may seem astounding to the layman, but when you consider the worth of a super act to a label, they make good business sense.

"ABC is an effective force in the marketplace. I've witnessed coordinated marketing through our branch system and I realize that the ability of bringing home a given artist and his product is there. All the elements of an artist's campaign are brought together before the release of a record, not after. It's this kind of planned attack that's going to sell product. At ABC, we're into organized spontaneity. Because we have substantial investments in our artists' respect, attention and zeal are demanded on all fronts. The industry is moving forward and we sense a need for greater artist commitment than ever before. The industry has felt the recession, but I see an overall improvement developing. Because we deal on every level, from the artist to the customer, I feel we have an edge that will emphasize our growing importance in this industry."

## Feeling The Need On All Levels

What is impressive about each division of ABC Records is the determination to interact successfully. Surely, there are growing pains attached to any creative business, but the perseverance serves to remind us of the dedication that is at work daily. Pam Stark, national media coordinator, put it well saying, "We'd be lost without each other. This business is too complex to rely on any one individual. I've been at a number of record companies, but I feel most at home here. Perhaps it's the proximity, but I feel a togetherness here that is refreshing. Crazy as it gets sometimes, I know we'll do what has to be done." From the classical department to a&r, from r&b to Nashville the pervasive tendency is towards action, not blind and haphazard, but meaningful and effective. True, the changeover in administration hasn't been easy, but the results have been significant and the overall impression that ABC gives lends credence to the contention that 1976 will be "their year."

## 'Sedaka's Back' Certified Gold

HOLLYWOOD — Neil Sedaka has been certified by the RIAA, as having earned gold status with his first Rocket Records LP, "Sedaka's Back."

The album includes Neil's hit singles "Laughter In The Rain," "The Immigrant" and "That's When The Music Takes Me," as well as the hit "Love Will Keep Us Together." Neil wrote two of the songs himself and co-authored some tunes with Phil Cody and others with Howard Greenfield. The album was recorded in both the United States and in England. Certain cuts from "Sedaka's Back" were produced by Neil Sedaka and Robert Appere with others produced by Neil in association with 10cc.

## Paunetto Jazz Album 1st Pathfinder Effort

NEW YORK — Newly formed Pathfinder Records has released a first album featuring latin-jazz vibraharpist Bobby Paunetto and musicians from the latin-jazz field. Most of the compositions were composed by Paunetto who co-produced the album with Fred Weinberg.

## Co-Production Pact For Chalice, Renzetti

HOLLYWOOD — Chalice Productions has signed Joe Renzetti to an exclusive co-production agreement according to label principals David Chackler and Lee Lasseff. Chalice will now represent Renzetti in all his production efforts.

Renzetti will operate from the organization's headquarters office in Los Angeles, at 8467 Beverly Blvd., Los Angeles 90048; (213) 658-7002.

Renzetti has been involved creatively, either as producer or arranger, with songs and artists such as Barry Manilow, including the "Mandy" and "Could This Be Magic" singles and the "I" and "II" albums; Gary Glitter, Cashman & West, Spanky and Our Gang, Wayne Newton, Al Hirt and Tony Orlando & Dawn.

As an arranger, Renzetti is currently represented by the David Geddes chart single, "A Blind Man In The Bleachers."

His first hit as an arranger was The Sapphires' "Who Do You Love." He was the first arranger for Gamble and Huff and was involved with "Together" and "United" by the Intruders.

The Renzetti list also includes Bobby Hebb's "Sunny," "I Dig You Baby" by Jerry Butler, "98 6" by Keith, "Let The Good Times Roll," by Bunny Sieglar, Neil Diamond's "Two-Bit Man Child," and the James Darren version of "Mammy Blue."

Chalice now has working arrangements with labels including 20th, Capitol, Arista and CBS. Chalice also has exclusive U.S. distribution rights to Bradley's Records, an ATV label in the United Kingdom, which it operates through 20th.

Chalice artists include Rusty Wier, Mark Ashton, Errol Sober, Steven Fromholz, Jack Carone, and the band Charlie. Current production includes producers such as Glen Spreen, Chris Bond, Don Williams and Roger Harris.

## ASCAP Awards Set For Dec. 3

NEW YORK — The winners of the eighth annual ASCAP-Deems Taylor Awards will be announced on Dec. 3 by president Stanley Adams of the society. The ceremony will be held in the ASCAP boardroom, 1 Lincoln Plaza at 3:30 p.m., where authors of winning works will receive checks and plaques, with publishers of the winning works receiving plaques as well. The deadline for submitting non-fiction books or articles on music and/or its creators published in 1975 has been set for March 31, 1976.



**BMI HAS JONI** — Joni Mitchell has resigned an exclusive, long-term agreement with Broadcast Music Inc. (BMI), the performing rights organization. On hand for the official signing ceremonies were (from left): Ron Anton, BMI vice president of performing rights-west coast; Elliot Roberts, Ms. Mitchell's manager; Joni Mitchell; Gil Segal, chairman of the board of Segal and Goldman, Inc., the artist's business managers.



**HAIL TO THE CHIEFTAINS** — The first full-scale tour of America by Island recording group The Chieftains got off to a triumphant start with a sold-out performance at Avery Fisher Hall last week. The Irish traditional group recently released the LP "Chieftains 5." The Chieftains can also be heard on the soon-to-be-released soundtrack to Stanley Kubrick's new film, "Barry Lyndon." Shown above backstage following several encores at Avery Fisher Hall are (l. to r.): George Schutz, the promoter of the concert; Paddy Maloney, leader of The Chieftains and producer of "Chieftain 5" and Herb Corsak, vice president of Island Records.