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10-17-1971

Newspaper - The Charlotte Observer - Oct. 17, 1971 - Van Ramsey

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The Charlotte Observer

Foremost Newspaper Of The Carolinas

86th Year — No. 206

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 17, 1971

196 Pages 25 Cents

Sing Out Choir—'Outasite, Outasite'

By DAVE BAITY
Observer Gastonia Bureau

SHELBY — "Save your bread in a rusty can. Trade your little beads, Make your deal with a plastic man, Sow your bitter seeds . . . while He bleeds . . ."

Ralph Glenn, 18, a husky youth with medium long hair and sideburns, held a microphone in his hand and sung out the words from the song "Outasite" to a hard rock beat.

About 230 young people sat before him last week in the loft of a former industrial supply house, eyes aglitter, bodies

swaying to the beat, waiting for their cue. It came.

"Life can be anything you make it," they sang in response.

"Why not make it right? Real life is outasite! Outasite!"

Glenn and the chorus were singing the music from the folk religious musical, "Natural High," which carries an anti-drug, pro-Christian theme set to the pounding music of the 1970's. Glenn had the role of the character Murph, who, in the lingo of the times, was expounding materialism. ("Sow your bitter seeds . . . while He bleeds")

The youths are members of the Sing Out Choir organized here by Van Ramsey, minister of music at the 2,500-member First Baptist Church of Shelby. Sometime in December they'll present, "Natural High," written by Ralph Carmichael and Kurt Kaiser and distributed by Lexicon Music Co. in New York, to local schools.

They come from their homes scattered across Cleveland County each Tuesday to rehearse from 5:30 to 7 p.m. from their \$2.95 song books.

(It was Ramsey who led another group of young people, the Good News Singers, on a

singing tour through Europe and Russia in the summer of 1970.)

Glenn, a freshman at Baptist-supported Gardner Webb College, who lives about six miles from Shelby, put down the mike to talk about why he's participating in the program.

As 229 voices went through songs like "Searching Questions," "Teamwork," "We're On Our Way," and "I Can See God," he quietly told about being in a similar program at Mt. Sinai Church a few months ago.

His group was giving "Good News," he said, before the

whole congregation. They didn't really know what to expect. They thought at least the young people would like it, but they got more than they bargained for.

"When we finished, four young people decided to join the church—and we hadn't had any kids join in a long time. And then the whole congregation came forward to rededicate their lives to Christ.

"It was remarkable," he said, obviously still moved by the experience. "We (the young singers) all just stood up there and bawled."

The kids of the Sing Out

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