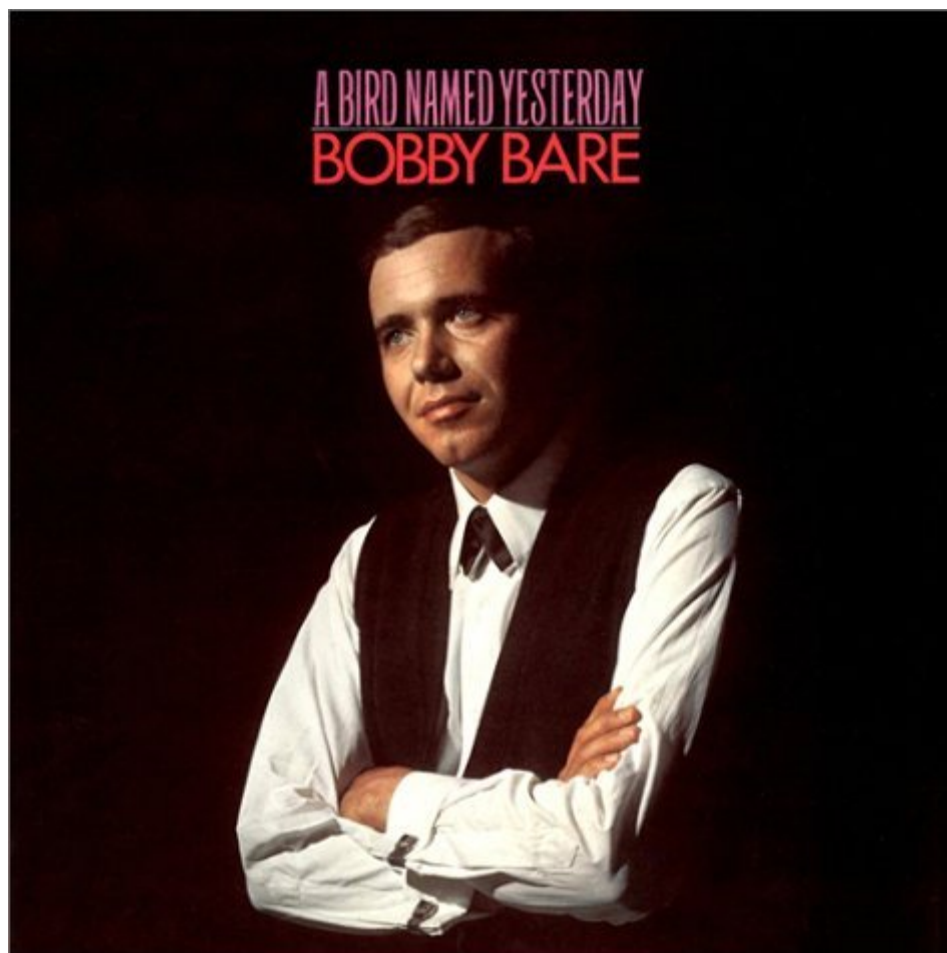


A BIRD NAMED YESTERDAY (1967)

It was very early, but I don't know if it was the first [country album built on a single concept]. "The Air Conditioner Song" from that album, that's one of my favorites that I've written, 'cause it's true. It was me when I was a kid. My mother used to drag me to Newport, Arkansas, several times a year to visit my grandparents. I'd like it once I got there. You could walk to the movie theaters, watch the trains coming in, and you had the levee to play on and slide down on cardboard. I got to experience that small town, Tom Sawyer life, so that was good. Well, I must have been eight or nine, and "You Are My Sunshine" was a big hit at that time. This must have been about 1939, something like that. I'd be laying in my little bed with the window open, and out the window I could hear girls singing "You Are My Sunshine". They sang other things, but they sang that several times a night. They sang it so pretty, and I envisioned them as being beautiful. But I never saw them. That's what "The Air Conditioning Song" is about. It's great to be in a sealed place and not have to sweat, but you miss something when you don't have those windows open. I mean, you can miss something good.



AIR CONDITIONER SONG
(Jack Clement)

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Oh the sound of the thing is not a ring it's more like a pleasant purr
And the only sound I hear at night is the sound of my purring air-conditioner
The air is pure and dehumidified thermostatically controlled
Now I have no desire to perspire and that's how progress goes

But the sound of their singing thrilled me as distantly but clearly it rang
Though I never saw their faces and never knew their names
And the gentle breeze brought sweet dreams of sweethearts that I never saw
Who sang You Are My Sunshine in Newport Arkansas

(I had a bird he flew away and I guess he's gone to stay
But I see him winging on his way my flyaway bird named Yesterday)
(He's riding on a train)
I'm from Chattanooga Tennessee
That's a town that's neither very large nor very small

But it was a very strategic place about a hundred years ago
Though during the Civil War cause it was a very important rail center
In 1862 a federal agent got the idea
Of destroyin' the railroad between Atlanta and Chattanooga
So he alone with 27 volunteers captured the train engine called the General
And they captured it in big Shanty Georgia
While its passengers and crew were eatin' breakfast
And there was a big chase that followed but finally the General was recaptured
In fact that old engine is on display in our train station now
And sometimes they take it out on the tour under its own steam
Yeah the old General still runs and I go down to the station sometimes
And just stand and look at that old engine cause I like trains anyway
You know when you think about it trains are not really much different today
Than they were a hundred or so years ago
Oh the engines have changed from steam to diesel but that's about all
Some folks say they're not very practical for carryin' passengers
And that all the passenger trains will be gone in a few years
But we still have a few of 'em left and every once in a while
I like to get on one and take a trip somewhere
And when I'm on a train I always have a strange feeling that I'm visiting the past
You know Abraham Lincoln rode trains but he never rode in a car or bus or an airplane