

The Bills – Bio

The Bills are a Canadian bred [and based] quintet, consisting of Marc Atkinson [aka Bill Mandolin], Chris Frye [aka Bill Guitar], Adrian Dolan [aka Bill Fiddle III], Glen Manders [aka Reverend Bill Bass] and most recent recruit Jeremy Penner who replaced Beau Klaibert [aka Bill Beau] in the Spring of 2003. The original line-up of this quintet came together in 1996, following a folk music workshop in Esquimalt, British Columbia. Marc Atkinson had a background in jazz and studied the genre at Malaspina College, while Scott White had played in rock bands. Marc Atkinson was raised by piano playing parents on Quadra Island, British Columbia, picked up the guitar in his teens, and went on to play in Loose Gypsies, and later Loose, in Victoria. He also toured North America, Europe and Latin America as a sideman, and went on to form the jazz inspired Marc Atkinson Trio.

Exploring this, for them, new musical area, Marc chose the mandolin, while Scot picked up the fiddle [and therefore became, Bill Fiddle I] and the pair began working as a duo. In time, they recruited Ollie Swain on bass and guitarist Paul Dowd and worked up a set of folk tunes. Chris Frye, a student of Marc's, happened to present at one of their jam sessions, and after they heard him sing he was also recruited. Chris Frye was born and raised in British Columbia. His father played fiddle, and he grew up listening to sixties rock and folk music. For a decade he played in rock/groove/pop bands in Vancouver, and then moved to Victoria where he became reacquainted with folk music. Frye also plays rhythm guitar in Atkinson's Trio.

In November 1996, the name Bill Hilly Band was born during a late night alcohol fuelled music session. Performing initially in Victoria clubs, the quintet's set was a concoction of old timey, Celtic, Caribbean, Mexican and Eastern European music. In mid 1997, The Bills visited Europe for nine-weeks, during which time their only gigs were busking on street corners and the occasional club gig. Concurrently, Scott White appeared with the Cirque du Soliel in Hamburg, Germany. When they returned to Victoria, Dowd and White [he now lives and works in Europe] dropped out and they recruited fiddle player Calvin Cairns [aka Bill Fiddle II]. More local dates followed, as well as a few summer festival appearances. In the summer of 1998, Swain, who shared band vocals, decided to settle in Winnipeg, and Glen Manders took his place. Bassist Glen Manders is the only band member raised in Victoria, in the suburb of Oak Bay.

The band self-released a self-titled CD in 2000, and also began touring across the length and breadth of Canada. Cairns departed to concentrate on a teaching career soon afterwards and Adrian Dolan [Bill Fiddle III – fiddle/piano/accordion] joined the line-up, followed later by Beau Klaibert [fiddle/vocals] – Klaibert was a featured session musician on their second recording, as were Messrs. Dowd, Cairns and White. Adrian Dolan was born in Kingston, Ontario and his family later moved to Victoria. As a youngster he became adept on piano, violin/fiddle, and accordion and is the youngest member of The Bills. Beau Klaibert was raised in Calgary, Alberta. A violin/fiddle prodigy, during his early years he performed country music with his fiddle playing sisters Dixie and Daisy. As a classical violinist he performed with the Greater Victoria Youth Orchestra and was, at one time, concertmaster for the Singing Strings.

Canadian based roots imprint, Borealis Records issued the band's sophomore disc **“All Day Every Day.”** The album went on to win this high-energy band a Western Canadian Music Award as Outstanding Roots Recording, and it was also nominated for a Roots & Traditional Album Of The Year Juno [by a Group]. A set by The Bills can be best described as *fast, furious and funny*. In 2003 the band shortened/changed its name to The Bills, and the following year the quintet released their third album **“Let Em Run”** on Borealis, featuring mostly band compositions. The Bills were nominated for a Roots & Traditional Group Juno in 2005, along with Leahy, The Wailin' Jennys, Nathan and La Volée d'Castors. The latest member of the band is fiddler Jeremy Penner. Penner, who was raised in Winnipeg, Manitoba and now makes his home in Montreal. For seven years, he was a member of the Canadian Celtic roots band, Scrub MacDuhk.

Minneapolis based Red House Records issued **“Let Em Run”** in the States in mid April 2005.

Discography :

as The Bill Hilly Band – **“The Bill Hilly Band”** demo cassette [1997] ; **“The Bill Hilly Band”** [2000] ; **“All Day Every Day”** [2002] :
as The Bills - **“Let Em Run”** [2004] :

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