

## Bob Childers – Bio

Bob Childers was born in West Virginia, and when aged seven his family moved to Ponca City in Northern Oklahoma. Bob discovered music in his early teens, played in a number of high school bands, and went on to study music at the University of California in Berkeley, where he also performed in bands. As the sixties drew to a close, like many musicians [and novelists] before him – ala Kerouac, Childers took to the road and in 1972 happened to be passing through Stillwater in his *adopted home state*, when he heard the music of a local player, Chuck Dunlap.

As a result, Childers spent most of the seventies living in Stillwater and became friends with Dunlap, whose music he has described as *“kinda mystical.”* Childers began writing songs and soon set about performing them in local clubs. In 1978 Bob met Jimmy LaFave who ran a club in Stillwater called, Up Your Alley. LaFave helped Bob cut his debut album, **“I Ain’t No Jukebox”** [1979] and with a record to sell Childers began touring east coast clubs. **“Singing Trees, Dancing Waters”** followed three years later. Through an acquaintance, Childers met singer/songwriter Kevin Welch - California born but raised in Oklahoma - Welch had moved to Nashville in the late seventies. Welch suggested that Bob move to *Music City Tenn.* and work as a songwriter. It was 1986 and at the time Bob was working on the songs that would appear on his **“Four Horsemen”** recording, but he made the move and remained in Nashville for a couple of years. **“King David’s Lament”** which was released the same year, was an instrumental recording.

In the late eighties, Childers relocated to Austin, Texas where LaFave had been living for a couple of years. With Jimmy’s assistance, Bob cut **“Circles Towards The Sun”** [1990]. These days Childers is once more based in Stillwater, and LaFave came to the rescue when Bob was putting together **“La Vita e Bella - Outtakes, Demos and Jams 1980-1988”** [2000], since many of the original recordings were lost when Bob’s house burned down. Luckily LaFave, *the ultimate Childers fan*, had retained a number of mint copies of early recordings as well as numerous master tapes. Since the late nineties Bob has not actively sought and booked gigs, and as such, considers himself to be *semi-retired*. If invited to perform at a club, Bob willingly does so, and, of course, he continues to write songs.

As well as Stillwater, Childers has lived in a number of locations in North-East Oklahoma including Tahlequah and Pawhuska. Childers has expressed admiration for very few American songwriters, but those that he does acknowledge include Woody Guthrie, Neil Young, Kris Kristofferson, Bob Dylan and the late Johnny Cash.

In the latter half of January and all of February 2003, Childers undertook the role of narrator on the Woody Guthrie Tribute tour – Ribbon Of Highway, Endless Skyway. The initial tour featured LaFave, Eliza Gilkyson, Slaid Cleaves, Ellis Paul, Sarah Lee Guthrie and Johnny Irion. Part of that company also undertook Tribute tour dates in the closing months of 2003, augmented by The Burns Sisters, Michael Fracasso and others. Accompanied by Terry “Buffalo” Ware, **“Two Buffalos Walking - Live at the Blue Door”** was recorded at the Blue Door listening club in Oklahoma City on May 17<sup>th</sup> 2000. The album was released through Binky Records in 2003. Childers’ next recording project is a duet album with Randy Crouch titled **“Kindred Spirits.”**

Bob is also reported to have completed an autobiographical fiction titled, **“I Rode With The Rangers.”** It’s claimed that the sub-title runs to **“The past chronicled, history untangled, rumours expounded, myths unravelled, legends probed, wild tales explored, flimsy documents examined, exaggerations refuted, mis-reportings explained, words ungarbled and facts unjumbled”**. You don’t say.....

Discography : **“I Ain’t No Jukebox”** [1979] ; **“Singing Trees, Dancing Waters”** [1982] ; **“Four Horsemen”** [1986] ; **“King David’s Lament”** [1986] ; **“Circles Towards the Sun”** [1990] ; **“Nothin’ More Natural”** [1997] ; **“Hat Trick”** [1999] ; **“La Vita e Bella - Outtakes, Demos and Jams 1980-1988”** [2000] ; **“Two Buffalos Walking - Live at the Blue Door”** with Terry “Buffalo” Ware [2003] ; **“Kindred Spirits”** with Randy Crouch [200?] :

**Arthur Wood**

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[630 words]