

# The Sound of Fury Fan Club

## Newsletter

### Issue 9: July - September 2021



Hi there,  
Welcome to the latest issue of the SOF newsletter. It's been an exciting last few months for Billy fans with the recent release of the new LP from Top Sounds Records and the new book written by our good friend Michael Parkinson. Both are still available - reminder ordering details below for those that haven't yet got a copy.

Due to the relaxation of the Covid-19 restrictions, the Billy Liverpool weekend is taking place in July and we wish all members that are attending a fabulous rocking time!

It was a lovely surprise to hear Billy's Wondrous Place featured on a recent BBC advert for their 'Secret Museum' series. Such a timelessly cool track, let's hope it can reach a new generation of fans who will seek out Billy.

Kind reminder to all members who still want to receive a hardcopy of the newsletter, the annual cost is £8 which is due in July 2021 for most members. Please contact us if you no longer wish to receive the paper copy or if you want to switch to the free email version.

We cannot yet confirm if the planned Mill Hill meeting in October will go ahead. We will be able to confirm in the next newsletter and online in September. If you do want to get in touch with us - [email soundoffurysecretary@gmail.com](mailto:soundoffurysecretary@gmail.com) or write to The Sound of Fury Fan Club, P.O. Box 157, Frodsham, WA6 1BY

**BILLY FURY - 'Three Saturdays With Billy' (Billy Fury On Radio And TV 1968 - 1969)  
TSLP 010 - Vinyl LP with 24 page booklet. TSSCD 010 - Compact disc with 24 page booklet.**

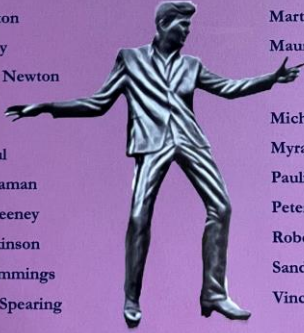
Available via eBay and the Top Sounds website  
<https://topsoundsrecords.co.uk/home.html>  
For those without internet access Top Sounds are willing to take telephone orders on (01283) 299678.



## AMAZING AUDITION

An exciting anthology of stories about Liverpool legend Billy Fury, whose life and music has affected people in so many ways  
by Michael Parkinson and Co-Authors

Angela Peacock	Marina Weedon
Ann Walker	Marion Cave
Avril Dalton	Marty Wilde
Chris Eley	Maureen Spurr
Christine Newton	
	Michael Husband
Colin Paul	Myra Love
Cora Vanaman	Pauline Barker
Daniel Heeney	Peter Williams
Joan Parkinson	Robert McDougall
Mags Cummings	Sandra Anderson
Malcolm Spearing	Vince Eager



**The Statue on Liverpool Albert Dock includes these words**  
BILLY FURY (RONALD WYCHERLEY)  
17 APRIL 1940 - 28 JANUARY 1983  
LEGENDARY BRITISH ROCK N ROLL STAR  
MAJOR UK CHART ARTIST  
OUTSTANDING AND CHARISMATIC LIVE PERFORMER  
SONGWRITER, ANIMAL LOVER AND GENTLE MAN

This book about the influence of Billy Fury on a number of fans lives was assembled, edited and produced by Michael Parkinson, available to order via eBay. Price £14.99 + 2.39 postage and packaging.



## The Billy Fury Connection

Billy Fury fans who were ever members of The Sound of Fury will recall my fascination with performers and songs connected in any way with young Ronnie Wycherley, Billy Fury or indeed sometimes stretching across both persona's. In later fan club magazines we included CDRs resulting from programmes aired by DJ Alan King, (then working at Meridian Radio), featuring just some of the connections. When Lee Fry suggested doing something similar in our newsletters I jumped at the chance. Indeed, we have already touched on this angle in some previous newsletters. It was hard work back then preparing and amending the Meridian scripts, but choosing the recordings then actually doing the programmes with Alan, who soon became a good friend, was really great fun. Less enjoyable was spending a small fortune in obtaining original and often obscure recordings in various formats. My old 'Musical' friend Roy Davis from Bath helped me tremendously with this. The amount of major influences is actually quite limited and the names often appear in articles and CD booklet notes, making most fans well aware of them, but the broader general connection takes in some songs which have been recorded any number of times, and the connections can be tenuous. I once suggested to Harry Whitehouse that we do a sort of Billy Fury Heard Them Here First /The Billy Fury Connection-Covers and Influences release on Peaksoft. Harry was probably right when he said most Billy fans want only Billy, making such a release of limited value. I personally feel that it would make a great release but for me it would only really work if songs still in copyright were also to be included-post '63 recordings, and that could be too expensive for the likes of Jasmine Records, the current primary source for CD releases of 'our' music.

As an aside, Alan King was actually present as part of the set-up at Cinatra's in London when Billy recorded the excellent performances for the Unforgettable show, and has been trying to locate the two missing performances for which we only have the audio recordings as yet-*Like I've Never Been Gone* and *I'd Never Find Another You*. We do hope that all six video performances can one day be assembled and put out there for all to enjoy. In hindsight it was a shame that the two songs were not just set aside for the initial broadcast then reconstituted for a repeat later in the year, when things might have been a little less raw for Billy's family, Lisa and her family and Billy's close friends.

Establishing the veracity of so-called influences is difficult in some areas and we have to make educated guesses based on the recordings themselves or comments made by Billy over the years. We know many of his Decca recordings were suggested by the likes of Dick Rowe who brought in handfuls of demos, many of which we are led to believe were not to Billy's liking, and or/out of his vocal range. There again, there are documented cases of Billy bringing back records ,often black music, from the USA and enthusing about some performers. One definite thing about Billy was that he was not racist. Indeed he was just the opposite, particularly as far as music was concerned. Sometimes however, Billy had never heard the original recording, making it wrong to make assumptions-*Wondrous Place* being an example. There are several versions from around the time but the most well known is by Jimmy Handyman Jones, the high voiced black American singer. It's a great eerie version but on Radio 210 in 1982 Billy claimed he had never heard it. Another issue is in establishing just what period in Ronnie/Billy's life the various connections occurred; and so we may have to take some poetic licence with that in terms of the chronology. We can only, as ever, do our best to cover the angles.

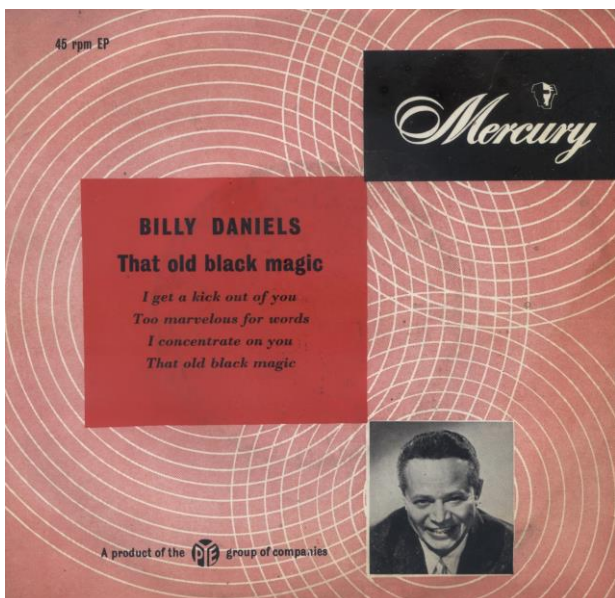
# Billy Fury-Influences, Roots and Covers.

## Part 1-Billy Daniels. (William Boone Daniels).

In entertainment terms it's perhaps not too much of a stretch to compare this exuberant and highly original performer and recording artist with another unique performer and known favourite of Ronnie Wycherley/Billy Fury, namely Johnnie Ray, although in the strictly vocal sense he shared more with two other 50's greats connected to Billy-Frankie Laine and Tennessee Ernie Ford. The difference was that Ray really was a major influence on several aspects of Billy Fury's career; whilst Daniels was much less so-but he was part of the Billy Fury Story and thus deserves a mention here. One thing is sure, it was too early on for the singer's forename to be considered as a stage name by young Ronnie, and the name Billy came from Larry Parnes in any case. Billy, wanting to be Stean Wade, went along with it and according to Jean Wycherley was happy about it because of one of Ronnie's uncles being called Billy.



Unlike Johnnie Ray and several others who have often been cited by Billy Fury as being among his favourites, it was from Billy's mother Jean whom we learned of his connection with this highly popular mixed race performer. Jean often recalled to us that Billy would perform Daniels signature tune-*That Old Black Magic* around the house. We don't know exactly when Ronnie bounced around the house belting out the song, but as it was recorded in July 1951 it's fair to say it would have roughly coincided with his first known interest in music; pre-skiffle and rock'n'roll. This was the time of Ronnie's first piano lessons and his alleged attempt to play the boogie-woogie, (up-tempo blues which also pre-dated rock' n' roll) so it sounds like a whole range of influences were already in play there somewhere. We don't know how long the lessons went on for, something which is pertinent in tying down the where and when's, and can only guess.



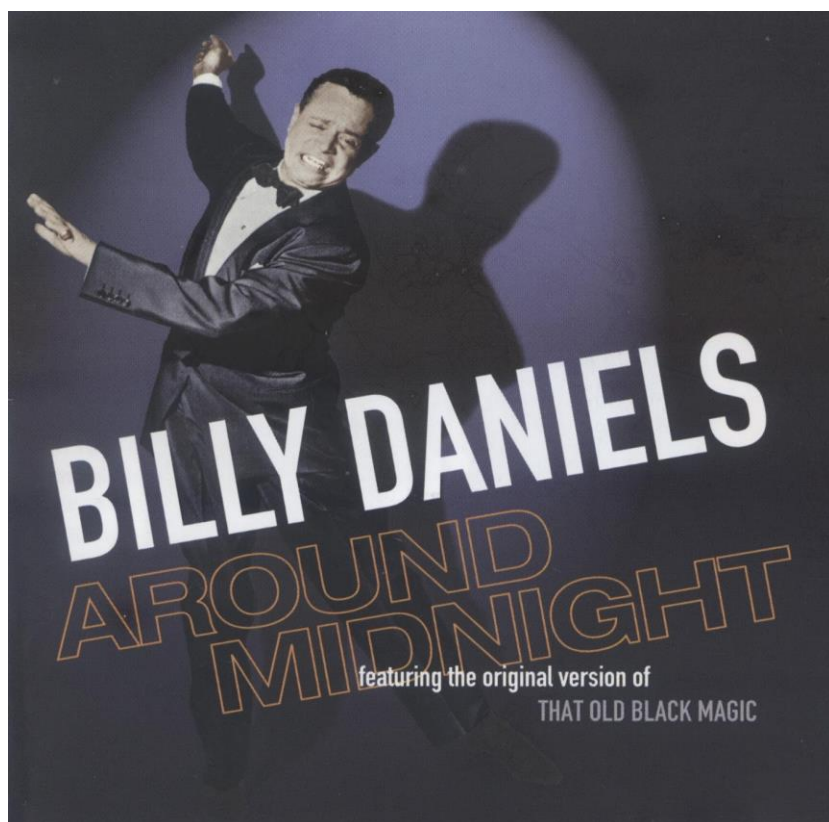


Daniels headlined for a season it seems at the London Palladium in 1952, probably making more UK appearances whilst over here, when young Ronnie Wycherley would have been about twelve and likely beginning to take more interest in music. More appearances followed over the years, but it was during the early 50's that Daniels was billed in the UK as 'America's Most Exciting Singer', no mean title. Ronnie obviously did not miss picking up on this highly charismatic performer and it was something his mum often mentioned, so we can be pretty sure it happened. We should have asked her the source of the recording Ronnie heard-but she probably would not have been sure anyway. Many other artists recorded the number, originally a ballad, from 1942 onwards (the year it was written by Harold Arlen, lyrics by Johnny Mercer-for the war-time film *Star Spangled Rhythm*), some versions of which young Ronnie may have heard, but Jean Wycherley was always insistent that it was the Daniels version which Ronnie liked to perform. Glenn Miller, Sammy Davis Snr, Judy Garland, Louis Prima with Keeley Smith, Marilyn Monroe, Frank Sinatra and Tom Jones, among many others, also recorded it. For me, the best version of all is the up-tempo stereo one by Bobby Rydell on the Cameo label from 1961. As such standards go, for me this is as definitive as Bobby Darin's outtake of *That Lucky Old Son* and Johnny Nash's version of *Ol' Man River*. Much maligned by rock'n'roll purists Rydell actually possessed a fine voice and by being selective about his output (there is much dross among his recordings without doubt, as he tried to be all-things to all listeners), one can find some real gems-this certainly being one. Bobby came over here around '62/'63 and met Billy Fury. Whether they spoke of their mutual interest in *That Old Black Magic* or if Billy had heard Bobby's cut of it we don't know, but given Billy's superb rendering of *Hey Look Me Over* (on his '64 TV Show) and *Just Because* (Jazz style version) on TV we can be sure he would likely have produced a stunning version of this musical standard-especially if he had had the Rydell version as a demo. Of course he may have chosen to tackle it more in the Daniels way than the Rydell style-who can tell. Dick Rowe may also have had his own ideas of how it should be tackled.

The only Billy Daniels recordings I have are twenty-five of those from 1947 to 1952 on a CD entitled *Billy Daniels-Around Midnight*, Sepia Records Sepia 1017, 2003. Playing it as I write I can tell that Billy really had a way with those classic 'Torch Songs', in particular the likes of *How Deep Is The Ocean* and it's easy to see what the young Ronnie saw in this classic swing version of *That Old Black Magic*.

The Pye EP of Mercury recordings shown has no date on it but is listed as being from 1956, so if Billy sang this before 1956, which is likely, then regrettably he probably never owned a copy of this EP. We do know that his Gran owned records, on 78rpm certainly, so perhaps this recording was also in her collection. As indeed I came to Mario Lanza, Gene Krupa and others via my maternal Grandpa's 78rpm collection.

**Chris Eley.**





## Shindig- the Book/Billy Fury on Shindig.

Back in the distant days of 1998 when producer Paul Pierrot was engaged in producing his seminal film about Billy Fury, I told him about Billy appearing during 1965 on the US TV Show Shindig, brainchild of Britain's own Jack Good. No-one had seen the clip of Billy performing *I'm Lost Without You* since the show was first broadcast but thanks to researcher Tori working for Paul, the clip was tracked down and has since become a much loved performance among the faithful. Hal Carter when we spoke about it in 1998 had no knowledge of Billy visiting the States during 1965 and now, after all these years, we know why. Billy didn't actually go to the USA to perform on the show. According to this new self-published book, *Shindig*, by one Peter Checksfield, the performance was filmed in the UK and the film just inserted over there on Episode 29; 30th March 1965. Because Billy had looked so different to usual in the clip, tanned, wearing a roll neck jumper, and with his hair looking like very early Gene Pitney, I for one never questioned the perception that Billy had been filmed in the USA, miming instead of playing live. We now know thanks to Peter that most vocals on the show were indeed live, but the backing tracks were pre-recorded. Despite obviously miming Billy's was a very cool clip and quite why it failed to get Americans in their millions rushing out to buy a copy I don't know. In hindsight one can ask why, with no US hits under his belt, Billy would have travelled all that way just to record a mimed performance. Little did we know then that a little over four years before there was a precedent for this-with the seminal clip of *Just Because* being recorded in London for the Dave Brinkley Journal in the USA. Also, US artists by the dozen had previously come to the UK to promote hits in the same way (miming on TV). I do remember saying in a previous SOF magazine how odd that Billy, having gone over there, should not do as Adam Faith did and perform several numbers actually on the show, but unlike Billy, Adam had experienced a minor US hit and was never shy or seemingly anything but remarkable self-possessed and supremely confident in front of the camera, and off, whilst stage wild man Billy, was always riven with self-doubt. Anyway it's nice to know the apparent truth now and although many of the artists featured in this book (and who all once appeared in either the pilot shows or main shows) are perhaps second rate and/or unknown to UK audiences, it's worth picking up and we should be grateful to Jack Good for getting as many top flight performers squeezed in as he did, for posterity; even if it was later in the careers of many of them. Chuck Berry, Jerry Lee Lewis, Glen Campbell, Roy Orbison, the Everly Brothers, Del Shannon, Charlie Rich, Rick Nelson, Howlin' Wolf, Sam Cooke, Neil Sedaka, Ronettes, Billy J Kramer, Searchers, Beatles, Gene Pitney and others appeared on a total, (less the three 1963-64 pilots) of 85 episodes from September 16<sup>th</sup> 1964 to January 8<sup>th</sup> 1966. PJ Proby, Johnny Cash and Little Richard appeared on the pilots it seems but PJ performing *Turn Me Loose* is currently missing and regrettably, Little Richard didn't get onto any of the actual shows-he probably offended too many white sensibilities and his performances were seemingly too wild. A shame about Richard and PJs *Turn Me Loose*, because they would very likely have been some of the finest performances on the show-ever! PJ's cover of Jody Reynolds/Marty Wilde's *Endless Sleep* is apparently online or on video somewhere and although a seemingly subdued (for Jim Proby!) performance, is reported to be a good vocal. It's good to see a young James Burton and Glen D Hardin featured in the house band, the Shindogs. How I wish I had asked Jack Good during our meeting in April 2003 about the Fury performance on Shindig, who was behind it for instance.

I discovered the existence of the book from the excellent full page review by Trevor Cajiao in the latest (all colour) edition of *Now Dig This*, the excellent rock'n' roll magazine, which landed on my mat this week. I have not yet trawled You Tube for clips but years ago I did get given a DVD of Season 1, Shows 27-30, with only Billy, Adam and Chuck Berry being of note, and aside from Billy Fury of course, and discovering the catchy *Dear Dad* by Chuck Berry, it was Adam Faith who impressed me, as being a major showman during that part of his career, and flying the flag for the UK in no mean way. I only ever saw about three of his seven performances and the prospect of watching his covers of the blues classic, *Boom Boom* and Elvis's *Santa Claus Is Back In Town* are mouth-watering. It can only be imagined what impact Billy and The Gamblers may have made should they have been playing a several number segment on one of the shows; a couple of beat numbers and *I'm Lost Without You*, perhaps but it was likely that where Adams obvious 'Englishness' and Beat Group sound worked for him enough to give him a hit and look good live on his appearances, Billy was just too authentically American, something we loved him for in the UK. At present I have no idea how many of the performances from the 300 or so acts ,and especially the superior artists such as Jerry Lee and the Everly's, are available on YouTube but I wish readers well in trying to track them down! It is very sad that obscene cost and legal issues probably preclude the inclusion of every performance (if indeed they can be located), from pilots to series end, onto an accompanying DVD set, but such is life in today's world for our generation of music lovers. Witness the badly edited and out of synch stuff played on various 60s/70s TV music channels today-a total lack of respect for, in many cases, classic recordings. The books format consists of an episode list dates, then artists and their songs with a paragraph outlining basic facts about the artist. The opposite page features black and white 'screen grab' shots from the show, including of course one such from Billy. Ideal for tracking down which performances you wish to see.

Footnote: I notice since writing that all available episodes including some of the pilot performances are available from the U.S via videobeat.com. Unfortunately their format will not play on older none NTSC (USA) players and the total cost for the whole series (but only some of the pilots) is \$ 255 (dollars) plus postage. Individual episodes are available.

In my opinion it is sheer typical arrogance on the part of the USA not to make their DVDs available also in the European format or more simply, an all-regions format.

**Shindig –the paperback is £9.99 from Amazon. Chris Eley.**

