

What does Titan of the Telecaster and the Godfather of pub rock have in common?

Transatlantica is driven by Bill Kirchen's guitar licks and Austin De Lone's keyboard mastery
by Jan Sikes

WHO REMEMBERS COMMANDER CODY and his Lost Planet Airmen? Pretty much everyone who grew up during the music explosion of the '70s will raise their hands. Bill Kirchen co-founded the group and it was his trademark Telecaster licks that drove their hit, "Hot Rod Lincoln" into the Top 10 in 1972.

Austin De Lone dropped out of Harvard to start Eggs Over Easy, moving to London and recording with Jimi Hendrix's producer/manager and The Animals' bass player, Chas Chandler in 1970. The Eggs were indisputably the progenitors of British Pub rock, the first link in the chain to punk, new wave and beyond.

What does the Titan of the Telecaster and the Godfather of Pub Rock have in common? They have united to record the new studio album *Transatlantica* released by Red House Records.

Kirchen and DeLone cut the album in Austin and London, capturing on disc, the core elements of Americana music — R&B, country, rock and even gospel. Served up with wit and humor, *Transatlantica* is driven by Kirchen's guitar licks and De Lone's keyboard mastery along with musicians who are at the top of their game. It's good, impassioned and fun!

This collaborative album opens with "Hounds of Bakersfield," which is a tribute to Merle Haggard and the electric country sound he, Buck Owens and Red Simpson introduced in the mid '60s.

"Wine, Wine, Wine" comes to us from the first Commander Cody/Billy C. Farlow songwriting session in Ann Arbor, Michigan in 1967 and carries a traditional classic country sound.

The guitar boogie done in classic Bill Kirchen style on "Let's Rock," is a toe-tapper. It was

originally released on a Commander Cody album in 1986.

Butch Hancock wrote "Oxblood." Kirchen calls Hancock one of his favorite writers of all time.

The great Jimmy Donnelly's "Think it Over" is referred to as Swamp Pop. It slows things down with a stirring, "Please don't go/I Love you so/Think it over."

A Memphis soul ballad "Warm and Tender Love" is probably best known as the simple and sweet love song by the always incredible, Percy Sledge. "Oh, I've loved you for a long, long time/Darling, please say you'll be mine/And let me wrap you in my warm and tender love."

"No Need for Knockin'" is all about being open and ready to welcome friends, no matter what condition their condition is in.

"True love follows a winding, blinding and burning path, but no matter how high or low, that girl never fails to tear me up," Austin De Lone says about "All Tore Up."

About "Already Walking," De Lone states, "I wrote this one with the help of my daughter, Caroline, in the midst of a daunting and tragic year which saw sadness and hardships coming at us from all directions. It is hard to sing all the way through, but it still thrills."

Bill Kirchen's wife of forty plus years, Louise, wrote "Back in the Day." She wrote it as a reflection while Bill was attending a memorial for Lance Dickerson. Lance was the first

and, so far, only Lost Planet Airmen, to fall from the sky. Louise arrived in Berkeley, California in 1963 and knows what she's writing about first-hand. "Back in the day, we thought we found a way/Cut to the chase and run/Night after night, we thought we'd got it right/Our day had just begun."

About, "Somebody's Goin' Home," Bill Kirchen said, "I saw the Staple Singers for the first time in 1964 at the Newport Folk Festival, then waited fifty years 'til I saw Mavis again, when we both performed at the Salmon Arms Fest in Canada. It is a nod to that great family. This was done on both sides of the pond, with Sarah Brown on bass, Louise and Sarah on vocals. Blackie Farrell and me, with the yellow pad and a #2 pencil, wrote this as a gospel song without The Gospel. If anyone out there does get the inside memo on posthumous, don't tell me. Somehow, it would spoil everything."

Kirchen and De Lone's ringing, rockified version of Bob Dylan's "The Times They are A-Changin'" closes down the album with a bang. It's a fresh take on a song you've heard a thousand times and somehow these guys infuse it with a singular power that comes from crazy talent, years spent playing together and a deep love of Dylan.

The cast of characters for this unique and refreshing album are: Gurf Morlix, Butch Hancock, Rick Richards, David, Carroll, Sarah Brown, Louise Kirchen, Bobby Black, Paul Revelli, Michael Godwin, Andre Moran, Caroline De Lone, Paul "Bassman" Riley and Malcom Mills.

Bill Kirchen and his band, as well as Bill and Austin De Lone, will be touring through 2016. For complete tour and festival dates, visit, billkirchen.com.



They cut the album in Austin and London: Bill Kirchen and Austin De Lone

Fiddlin' royal family

Texas native, Larry Franklin, returns with the Time Jumpers for Bob Wills Fiddle Festival in Greenville
by Mary Jane Farmer, Scene In Town



They are scheduled to perform at the Bob Wills Fiddle Festival on October 9 in Greenville: The Time Jumpers

GROWING UP IN WHITEWRIGHT, TEXAS, The Time Jumpers' and Nashville studio fiddler Larry Franklin said the only music he heard was fiddle music and it was just natural he was hit with the music bug.

Larry is the great-nephew of Major Franklin and son of Louis Franklin, both world fiddle champions. "And it was not just my dad and uncle," he said, "but most of the Texas-style fiddler players were friends and got together on weekends for jam sessions. Until I started going to school, the only music I heard was the fiddle and what I heard in church."

It was Bob Wills who "kind of generated all this interest in fiddle, and my dad's generation enjoyed that the most." He said there wasn't any bluegrass in the area at that time, and so western swing it was for all of them.

Once he was in school, Larry said, his classmates "gradually found out I was a fiddler and went to contests, and saw articles in newspapers and magazines. The other kids weren't sure what to think about it, and I didn't realize nobody else even knew what a fiddle was."

As one of three fiddlers in The Time Jumpers, Larry keeps his Texas style and western swing fiddle roots alive.

It sort of began for Larry when he moved to Austin, where his break came when he signed on with the premier western swing band, Asleep At The Wheel. "I honed in on that style of music, once I figured out what they were doing."

But, Nashville called, and Larry answered the call. "When I moved to Nashville, I became a recording (studio) musician, so I had to be versatile. There wasn't much swing music to be recorded, and some artists wanted bluegrass and some southern rock — whatever the style of the day was." He's played with Ray Price and Mel Tillis, twin fiddled around with Johnny Gimble. He played on Miranda Lambert's CD,

Platinum; and The Time Jumpers, have had a strong part of Willie Nelson's latest CD project, which is a tribute to the late Ray Price.

Larry said he has no idea how many recording projects he's been included in. "It would be nice to know. I was real busy for a long time, during the 1990s and into the 2000s. We were making records every day. Everybody was doing well, during that time. It changed a lot, though. I now have a small home studio and I can record here for people. A lot of musicians do that now."

One project The Time Jumpers have been really busy on lately is the recording of their latest CD, "Kid Sister," with songs honoring Dawn Sears, their female vocalist who passed away in 2014 from lung cancer. The title song and another, "I Miss You," are tributes to Mrs. Sears. Then, it jumps right back into swing mode with "San Antonio Rose." And, there's "This Heartache," written by Kenny Sears, and other songs pay homage to the band's late member. "We did our best to

honor her, and she sings on a couple of songs in this album," said Larry. "Kid Sister" is available now for pre-order on iTunes. Franklin said they hope to have the entire project completed and printed before they play the Bob Wills Fiddle Festival in Greenville. It will be available on Rounder Records.

Larry joined The Time Jumpers in May 2010. "I remember it so well... the date that I was supposed to start was the weekend of the big flood in Nashville. I thought, 'I don't

know if God's trying to tell me something here, but it gives me one more week to get ready," he said, tongue-in-cheek.

The Time Jumpers play about 25 or 30 roadshows each year, spicing that up with the almost-always Monday nights

at the Nashville venue, 3rd & Lindsley. So many of the 10 members are in other bands with other schedules as well.

"Now I am back to playing Texas swing, again with two other fiddlers. I had never been in a band with other fiddlers."

"The Time Jumpers brings me back to my roots, brings me back home again," said the Whitewright native, who added that he's now spent 25 years in Nashville.

The Time Jumpers, led by Kenny Sears and fronted by Vince Gill and "Ranger Doug" Green, will be playing again at this year's Bob Wills Fiddle Festival in Greenville in October. That whole Greenville weekend will have fiddles sounding out from every proverbial corner, what with other swing bands playing including Asleep At The Wheels, The Cherokee Maidens, Leon Rausch & The Texas Playboys, and the fiddle contest going on Friday and Saturday.

The Time Jumpers will be playing at the Greenville Municipal Auditorium, with showtime for them and the co-billed The Western Flyers, at 7:30 p.m., Saturday, October 9. For more information on this show, go online to ShowtimeAtTheGMA.com and for all of the Bob Wills Fiddle Festival weekend to GreenvilleChamber.com



Whitewright native: Larry Franklin