



AL WILSON ♦ TERRY L...

THE THREE DEGREES ♦

ROY ♦ MARIA MULDAUR

THE HOLLIES ♦ AMERICA

I AM GOLD

1974

I AM GOLD

BILLY SWAN ♦ BO DOLAN

FIRST CLASS ♦ ANDY HIN

THE PIPS ♦ THE KNIGHT & THE PIPS

THE LIES CORPORATION

- 1** I CAN HELP *Billy Swan*
- 2** MOCKINGBIRD
Carly Simon and James Taylor
- 3** THEN CAME YOU
Dionne Warwick and the Spinners
- 4** COME AND GET YOUR LOVE
Redbone
- 5** MIDNIGHT AT THE OASIS
Maria Muldaur
- 6** THE AIR THAT I BREATHE
The Hollies
- 7** TIN MAN *America*
- 8** BILLY, DON'T BE A HERO
Bo Donaldson and the Heywoods
- 9** THE NIGHT CHICAGO DIED
Paper Lace
- 10** SHOW AND TELL *Al Wilson*
- 11** BEST THING THAT EVER
HAPPENED TO ME
Gladys Knight and the Pips



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- TSOP (THE SOUND OF PHILADELPHIA) **12**
MFSB Featuring The Three Degrees
- ROCK THE BOAT **13**
The Hues Corporation
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Dave Loggins

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17 Rock Me Gently 18 Rock On 19 The Show Must Go On 20 The Entertainer 21 Angie Baby 22 Please Come to Boston

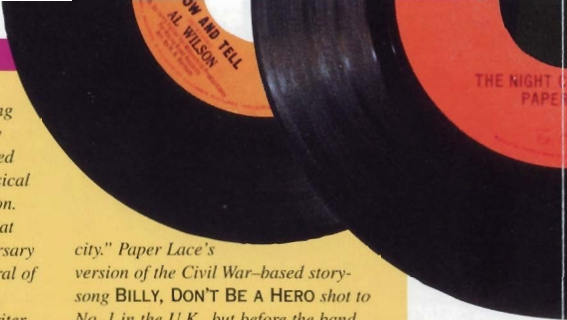
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COMPACT
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In 1964, the Beatles, the Rolling Stones and so many other now legendary English groups conquered America's AM airwaves in the musical attack known as the British Invasion. In 1974, a few unsung heroes of that movement marked its tenth anniversary by playing important roles in several of the year's biggest U.S. hits.

As a young rock 'n' roll songwriter in the early 1960s, Mitch Murray authored a host of hugely successful songs, most notably the very first Merseybeat song to top the British charts, *How Do You Do It?* by the Beatles' Liverpool mates Gerry and the Pacemakers. A decade later, Murray proved his pop instincts had not left him when he and song-writing partner Peter Callander (another '60s veteran who had placed hits with the likes of Cliff Richard and Tom Jones) penned No. 1 hits in the summer of 1974—together they wrote Bo Donaldson and the Heywoods' **BILLY, DON'T BE A HERO**, and Callander co-authored Paper Lace's **THE NIGHT CHICAGO DIED**.

Actually, both songs were written for Paper Lace, the Nottingham, England, pop band that took their name from their hometown's nickname—"lace

city." Paper Lace's version of the Civil War–based story-song **BILLY, DON'T BE A HERO** shot to No. 1 in the U.K., but before the band could make a U.S. deal for the record, Cincinnati keyboardist Bo Donaldson and his group the Heywoods covered the song, and it was their version that became the hit stateside. Two months later, with an American contract finally in place, Paper Lace recorded **THE NIGHT CHICAGO DIED**, a tale of a fictional shoot-out between Al Capone and Windy City police, and finally scored their own chart-topping hit.

Another former British Invasion foot soldier was John Carter, a songwriter and singer who played in an early-'60s band with future Led Zeppelin guitarist Jimmy Page as well as a vocal group, the Ivy League, that had numerous hits on the U.K. charts in the mid-'60s. In 1974, Carter wrote a Beach Boys–styled ode to summer fun, and recorded it with a group of English studio musicians.



Released under the name *First Class*, **BEACH BABY** featured the sunny vocals of Tony Burrows, a well-seasoned singer whose track record with one-off studio group hits included such songs as *White Plains' My Baby Loves Lovin'* and *Edison Lighthouse's Love Grows (Where My Rosemary Goes)*.

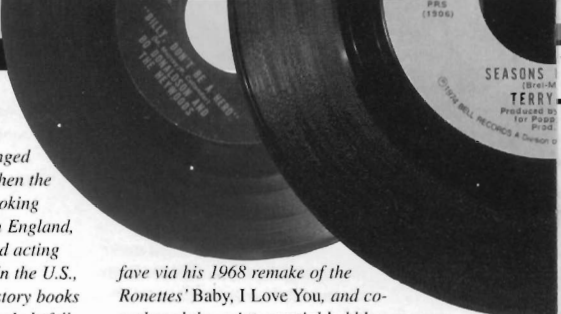
Yet one more record from 1974 with British Invasion connections was **THE AIR THAT I BREATHE** by the *Hollies*. Formed in Manchester in 1962, the group was already big in England before finally getting noticed in the U.S. with 1965's *Look Through Any Window*. Even though the band lost founding member *Graham Nash* in 1968 when he joined *David Crosby* and *Stephen Stills* in the supergroup bearing their names, lead vocalist *Allan Clarke* and lead guitarist *Tony Hicks* were able to guide the *Hollies* to three more top-10 hits well into the 1970s.

Though they were named after their

native country, the trio of singer-songwriters who comprised the group *America* actually formed in *Merry Old England*. *Gerry Beckley*, *Dewey Bunnell* and *Dan Peek* met at a London high school they were attending while their fathers served on U.S. military bases in Great Britain. Perhaps because they grew up around English music the band members asked former *Beatles* producer *George Martin* to be at the controls for their 1974 album, *Holiday*—an international union that resulted in such hits as *Lonely People* and the lilting, Wizard of Oz—referencing **TIN MAN**.

Billy Swan was not from England—the country-rocker was born in Missouri and lived in Nashville—but his vocal resemblance to one of the *Beatles* was enough to make a lot of people mistake his infectious **I CAN HELP** for the latest *Ringo Starr* single. The coincidence certainly helped the song get its initial air play, and gave *Swan*, author of *Clyde McPhatter's* 1962 hit *Lover Please*, the only top-40 single of his own recording career.

Speaking of the aforementioned *Ringo*, the ex-Beatle had a sizable role in *That'll Be the Day*, a 1973 cult movie about the early days of British rock



starred singer-actor David Essex. At the request of the film's producer, Essex wrote the moody, nostalgia-tinged **ROCK ON** for the closing credits. When the song shot up the charts, the good-looking Essex became an instant teen idol in England, and enjoyed a thriving recording and acting career there throughout the 1970s. In the U.S., however, Essex went down in the history books as a one-hit wonder—a fate that nearly befell Los Angeles's Redbone, a Native American quartet led by guitarist Lolly Vegas. They reached the top 30 with The Witch Queen of New Orleans, but are best remembered for their funk-rocking, electric-sitar propelled **COME AND GET YOUR LOVE**.

Winnipeg, Canada's Terry Jacks, whose eerie take on Rod McKuen's translation of Frenchman Jacques Brel's **SEASONS IN THE SUN** went all the way to No. 1, was also a one-hit wonder, but with an asterisk: Under the name the Poppy Family, he and his wife, Susan, had a hit in 1970 with the equally eerie Which Way You Goin' Billy? Guitar legend Link "Rumble" Wray played the dark riffs on **SEASONS IN THE SUN**.

Another native Canadian, Montreal-born Andy Kim, enjoyed the rare distinction of being a teen idol not just once, but two separate times during his career. Kim became a teeny-bopper

fave via his 1968 remake of the Ronettes' Baby, I Love You, and co-authored the quintessential bubblegum song, the Archies' Sugar, Sugar. By 1974, though, Kim's career had gone from sweet to sour, and he was just about to throw in the towel when his personally financed recording of **ROCK ME GENTLY** was heard by executives at Capitol Records. A few months later, Kim had a No. 1 record—and his second go-around as a star.

On the subject of "second go-arounds," singer Dionne Warwick registered eight top-10 hits between 1963 and 1970, but had not scored any in the '70s until 1974, when she toured with the Spinners and, at the suggestion of their producer, Thom Bell, teamed up with lead vocalist Phillipe Wynne and colleagues for the sprightly **THEN CAME YOU**. Another interesting pairing that year came about when singer-songwriters James Taylor and Carly Simon, who were married in 1972 but had never recorded together, pooled their vocal talents on a breezy remake of Inez and Charlie



Fox's 1963 nursery rhyme/novelty hit, **MOCKINGBIRD**.

Another singing team, *Three Dog Night*, probably did not foresee the irony of the title of their 1974 hit **THE SHOW MUST GO ON**. The theatrical tune, written by up-and-coming singer-songwriter *Leo Sayer*, was to be the group's eleventh and final top-10 hit, the penultimate song in *Chuck Negron*, *Danny Hutton* and *Cory Wells*' impressive streak of 18 consecutive top-20 records.

While that trio was ending their run of hits, another singing trio, the *Three Degrees*, was beginning to usher in a whole new era of AM music with their 1974 smash **WHEN WILL I SEE YOU AGAIN**. *Fayette Pinkney*, *Valerie Holiday* and *Sheila Ferguson* were a Philadelphia act that had not had any real degree of national success before they hooked up with writer-producers *Kenny Gamble* and *Leon Huff* for this dance-floor favorite.

Gamble and *Huff* had been creating hits since the mid-'60s for artists ranging from the

Soul Survivors (*Expressway to Your Heart*) to *Jerry Butler* (*Only the Strong Survive*), and in 1971 they started their own label, *Philadelphia International*.

Heard on recordings by the *Three Degrees*, the *O'Jays* and their house band, *MFSB*—who themselves hit with **TSOP (THE SOUND OF PHILADELPHIA)**, the instrumental that became famous as the theme of TV's *Soul Train*—*Gamble* and *Huff*'s part-soul, part-pop "Philly Sound" became one of the cornerstones of an emerging form of music that would soon be sweeping the country.

Neither *Gamble* and *Huff* nor the **ROCK THE BOAT**-ing triumvirate of *Fleming Williams*, *Ann Kelly* and *Bernard Henderson*—the singing partners who comprised the *Hues Corporation*—yet described their music with the one word that would soon categorize all dance-oriented soul and pop music: *disco*. But these songs were the opening volleys of a revolutionary new approach to pop music, and before long, mirror balls and leisure suits would become emblematic of their era—just as moptop haircuts and collarless jackets had been symbols of their time one whirlwind of a musical decade before.

—Billy Altman



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7 ♦ 4

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