

Mp3 Billy Don Burns - Heroes, Friends & Other Troubled Souls



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One man has lived the soundtrack for Hell Back 14 MP3 Songs COUNTRY: Traditional Country, COUNTRY: Country Folk Details: BILLY DON BURNS Heroes, Friends and Other Troubled Souls There's a lot of talk these days about outlaws in country music. Whether part of the new breed or the old guard, the problem has always been if you have to proclaim yourself an outlaw, you're probably not one. Arkansas native Billy Don Burns doesn't have to proclaim himself anything. His worn-out Harley-Davidson t-shirt and dirty red bandana aren't part of some trendy corporate-sponsored fashion-statement/marketing campaign. And when putting his songs down on record, no slick, young, next-big-thing Music Row producer need apply, thank you. Billy Don needs only one thing to get his message across: an open-minded listener unafraid of the dark side--a place Billy Don admittedly knows all too well. These are not your run-of-the-mill, radio-friendly ditties written by some publisher-appointed committee in a cushy Nashville office suite. Scan the titles: "Runnin' Drugs out of Mexico," "Dark Side of the Spoon," "Full Blown Addict"--these are the often harrowing true-life experiences that have poured out on paper, and on record, in a flood of nerve-rattling, mind-bending emotion. If you're looking for the primrose path, look elsewhere, friend. But if you're brave enough to handle it, just push play on any of the 13 tracks on Heroes, Friends and Other Troubled Souls, give Billy Don three or four minutes of your undivided attention (no problem there, you'll be fully involved thirty seconds in), and you'll know just what a real honest-to-God outlaw country singer sounds like. "It's real life," says Billy Don. "It may be a little darker than people like to recognize, but it's there. I wish my life was more of an Ozzie and Harriet kind of life, but it ain't." *** Billy Don Burns was born in the community of 56 in Stone County, Arkansas. A family friend, songwriter Jimmie Driftwood ("Battle of New Orleans," "Tennessee Stud") was Billy Don's mother's

schoolteacher, and inspired the naturally-talented youngster to pursue a singing career. While serving in the US Army, he won a talent competition (his trophy was presented to him by fellow serviceman--and My Three Sons TV star--Don Grady). Billy Don left the Army in 1970 and moved to California, where he bought a new guitar and began performing in clubs. In 1972, Wanda Jackson's steel guitar player, Lynn Owsley, endorsed Billy Don so that he could move into a musician's boarding house in Nashville. By 1973, he was portraying Hank Williams at the Opryland USA theme park, and soon had his songs cut by the likes of country legends Connie Smith and Mel Tillis. In 1975, he formed the Travis Brothers with Jimmy Getzen, and recorded a gospel album. He was also performing around various Nashville clubs, opening for acts such as Boots Randolph and Ronnie Prophet. Billy Don toured North America throughout the early part of the decade and then-Arkansas governor Bill Clinton proclaimed March 27th, 1983, Billy Don Burns Day. In the early 1980s, he was engaged for a time to singer Lorrie Morgan. In 1984, the pair recorded a duet, "New Commitments," which they performed on The Nashville Network. By 1990 things were becoming decidedly darker for Billy Don, both professionally and personally, as involvement in drugs began to overtake his life and interfere with his musical career. Still, Billy Don continued recording, touring and working with other artists on various projects. In 1987, he produced a gospel album for Johnny Paycheck and later recorded a live album for the "Take This Job and Shove It" singer, who was an inmate at the Chillicothe Correctional Institution in Ohio. Due to legal entanglements, both albums remain unreleased to this day. By the mid-'90s, conditions were improving for Billy Don as artists including Willie Nelson and Sammy Kershaw began recording his songs. In 1995, his debut album Long Lost Highway was a critical, if not commercial, success. And in 1996, Billy Don and his frequent co-writer Hank Cochran topped the Americana music chart with the brilliant Desperate Men, which unseated Johnny Cash's Unchained from the No. 1 spot in 1997. Although at the time (to the chagrin of promoters and fellow musicians alike), Billy Don tried--unsuccessfully--to prevent his own album from overtaking that of his hero's, the Man in Black graciously faxed him a handwritten note to congratulate him on the achievement. On 2004's Heroes, Friends and Other Troubled Souls, Billy Don pays tribute to Johnny Cash with a rendition of his 1957 hit, "Give My Love to Rose." "It was one of the first Cash songs I learned as a kid. My mother bought that album, and something about it touched me then. I felt like it was one everybody hadn't done a lot." In 2002, Billy Don Burns released the critically-acclaimed Train Called Lonesome, featuring musical support from the Reno Brothers (Don and Dale) and longtime musical

associate Jeff Williams, plus backing vocals by John Carter Cash. The lead-off track on Heroes, Friends and Other Troubled Souls is the revved-up rocker "Mississippi," co-written by Billy Don with Hank Cochran and featuring guest vocalist Tanya Tucker. Though his heroes and friends are ever-present with him on record, it is perhaps the other troubled souls to whom his songs will always mean the most; those whose lives are lived out of the spotlight and in the shadow of some dark, desperate secret. It is those shadows Billy Don Burns knows all too well--and his music is the light that shines on them, making them real, but ultimately offering hope, a voice, and a way out of the darkness. "It's been a rollercoaster all the way. Every time I play these songs, I hear, 'Man, you wrote that song for me. You told my story.' There's a lot of lost souls out there."

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