

# FOLK ROCK 1964-1967



THE TIME-LIFE HISTORY OF

ROCK 'N' ROLL

# Folk Rock 1964-1967

1. **Mr. Tambourine Man** ☆ The Byrds
2. **When You Walk in the Room** ☆ The Searchers
3. **Laugh, Laugh** ☆ The Beau Brummels
4. **All I Really Want to Do** ☆ Cher
5. **Turn-Down Day** ☆ The Cyrkle
6. **I'll Never Find Another You** ☆ The Seekers
7. **You've Got to Hide Your Love Away** ☆ The Silkie
8. **Do You Believe in Magic** ☆ The Lovin' Spoonful
9. **Where Were You When I Needed You** ☆ The Grass Roots
10. **Sloop John B** ☆ The Beach Boys
11. **Catch the Wind** ☆ Donovan
12. **Turn, Turn, Turn (To Everything There Is a Season)** ☆  
The Byrds
13. **Monday, Monday** ☆ The Mamas and the Papas
14. **It Ain't Me Babe** ☆ The Turtles
15. **Laugh at Me** ☆ Sonny
16. **It's Good News Week** ☆ Hedgehoppers Anonymous
17. **The 59th Street Bridge Song (Feelin' Groovy)** ☆  
Harpers Bizarre
18. **Mr. Dieingly Sad** ☆ The Critters
19. **Elusive Butterfly** ☆ Bob Lind
20. **This Precious Time** ☆ P.F. Sloan
21. **Eve of Destruction** ☆ Barry McGuire



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THE TIME-LIFE HISTORY OF

# ROCK 'N' ROLL

R962-02 TIME  
OPCD-2688 LIFE  
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## FOLK ROCK 1964-1967

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# The Beach Boys

## The Beach Boys Pet Sounds

Sloop John B./Caroline No

Wouldn't It Be Nice/You Still Believe In Me

That's Not Me/Don't Talk (Put Your Head on My Shoulder)

I'm Waiting For The Day/Let's Go Away For Awhile

God Only Knows/I Know There's An Answer/Here Today

I Just Wasn't Made For These Times/Pet Sounds



With Brian Wilson's complex song writing and production, the Beach Boys' *Pet Sounds* album ushered in a new age of experimental studio rock. *Sloop John B* was the most conventional track on this '60s masterpiece.

# The Searchers



The Searchers, who hailed from the Beatles' hometown of Liverpool, were smooth folk-rock trailblazers. From left to right: Chris Curtis, Tony Jackson, Mike Pender, John McNally

**W**hen Bob Dylan ushered in folk-rock, rock 'n' roll began to assume mature trappings. Folk-rock introduced new instruments and new sounds to rock, but it also broadened early rock 'n' roll's inchoate sense of alienation into overtly sociopolitical dissent. Exploding concurrently with the political activism of the mid-'60s, folk-rock was youth music, but not necessarily teenage music.

Indeed, the first folk-rockers had grown up listening to Little Richard, Chuck Berry, Jerry Lee Lewis and Buddy Holly, but had abandoned rock 'n' roll when the music was taken over by an industry that replaced Elvis-like rebels with Pat Boone-like pinup boys. Folk-rockers were likely to have gone to college instead of working in gas stations, even if they soon dropped out, and as they matured, they delved deeper into the music's roots in traditional blues and country. This acoustic music, they figured, was more "real"—more an authentic self-expression than a created product. By the

early '60s, apolitical representatives of the urban folk boom had entered the pop mainstream.

With songs such as *Masters of War* and *The Times They Are A-Changin'*, Dylan was topical folk's avatar. The son of a Jewish hardware store owner from a small town in the Upper Midwest, Dylan arrived in New York in January 1961 to pay respects to his idol Woody Guthrie, dying in a local hospital. Settling into Greenwich Village, the charismatic performer moved quickly beyond interpretations of Guthrie, Blind Lemon Jefferson and the Carter Family and into his own protest material. But those songs began giving way to Dylan originals inspired equally by his favorite traditional and rock songwriters and by literary poets both classical and beat. As Dylan's songs grew more personal and introspective, the folk movement divided.

The death knell came with the Beatles' 1964 appearance on TV's *The Ed Sullivan Show*. The sheer sense of self-liberation the Beatles brought to their music held more potential for Dylan and others than

did protest and political action, and the growing availability of marijuana and LSD was a catalyst.

Though he had recorded his version of rock 'n' roll as early as 1963 with *Mixed-Up Confusion*, and though he had been evolving away from soft folk and protest, Dylan still managed to astound at the 1965 Newport Folk Festival by appearing onstage in loud Carnaby Street threads, backed by the raucous, electric Paul Butterfield Blues Band. He quit after three numbers—either because he was booed offstage or because of a bad sound mix, depending on who tells the story—and

after that, there was no turning back.

The songs on the LP *Bringing It All Back Home*, which preceded his Newport showdown by a couple of months, and on the *Highway 61 Revisited* album later that year, presented the bristling new Dylan. He offered a colorful, majestic synthesis of all kinds of American music, performed with electrified abandonment, while his lyrics ignored specific issues in order to either rail at the whole surreal, upside-down American social order or to emphasize the personal politics of love

and loss. They were oblique, poetic, caustic and estranged, so unlike anything else



that folk instantly sounded old and in the way. His songs were interpreted by so many other artists, and sung at so many campus rallies and peace marches, that Dylan was pronounced the spokesman for his generation, which came to include anyone under 30.

Dylan's songs brought new meaning to rock 'n' roll. With the Beatles growing more and more thoughtful, distinctions between rock styles had blurred. George Harrison's pivotal solo on the Beatles' 1965 *Ticket to Ride* was so similar to folk-rock hits, both before and after, that it became impossible to argue who was influencing whom. The Byrds were the most prominent group of ex-folkies to go electric in emulation of the Beatles, and they used a Dylan song to do it. *Mr. Tambourine Man* came out about a month after Dylan's *Subterranean Homesick Blues* LP (on which his version appeared), and a month before the Newport festival, and made folk-rock commercially viable overnight.

The rest of the music industry followed suit. The other major composer out of New

York was Paul Simon, who wrote flowery, angst-ridden songs for Simon and Garfunkel. After the 1965 sessions that produced Dylan's epochal *Like a Rolling Stone*, producer Tom Wilson had the studio band stick around to overdub the harmony duo's acoustic album track *Sounds of Silence*. In becoming one of the biggest hits of 1966, it established a more Ivy League version of folk-rock that Simon continued to embellish.

But Hollywood yielded a whole other school of folk-rock hit-makers, many of them music business veterans who had been waiting for their opportunity. Sonny Bono and Jack Nitzsche had learned writing, arranging and producing mainly from studio Svengali Phil Spector. Lou Adler formed Dunhill, a label and publishing house that nurtured artists such as the Mamas and the Papas and writers such as P.F. Sloan and Steve Barri. Folk-rock proved to be largely the music of writers, producers and sessions players in the employ of strong voices. The music did not produce many virtuoso instrumentalists, except for 12-string



guitarist Jim (Roger) McGuinn of the Byrds, but it did produce a string of stunning recordings. After all, Dylan himself had never been more than a serviceable musician, and his vocal style broke all known rules while remaining a wondrous instrument for conveying his lyrics.

These veterans had the musical and business savvy to mount the first potent American response to the British Invasion. One school of folk-rock preached the blossoming hippie philosophy of peace, love, spirituality and personal exploration. Another made political protest a pop event, removing all ambiguity and going straight for the overt statement and the catchy phrase. Never before in rock 'n' roll had words mattered so much. After Dylan, rockers could no longer get away with saying, "You left me/and made me blue." Now they had to say something like, "You're so mystifyingly glad/I'm Mr. Dieingly Sad." And they had to have tambourines, too.

## 1. Mr. Tambourine Man

The Byrds

(Dylan) *Original issue: Columbia 43271.*  
*Peak position: No. 1 (6-26-65).* Only one member of the Byrds actually played on the sensational single that first took folk-rock to the top of the charts, but his contribution was definitive. Roger McGuinn's chiming 12-string Rickenbacker echoed George Harrison's on *Ticket to Ride*, which had entered the top 40 just over a month earlier. The other musicians are sessions aces—especially Larry Knechtel, whose rolling bass line proved vital to the folk-rock equation. Producer Terry Melcher deemed this line-up necessary so the novice musicians could concentrate on their vocals. McGuinn aimed his lead halfway between the vocal styles of Dylan and John Lennon, while David Crosby and Gene Clark added harmonies simultaneously lush and soaring, cerebral and removed.

## 2. When You Walk in the Room

The Searchers

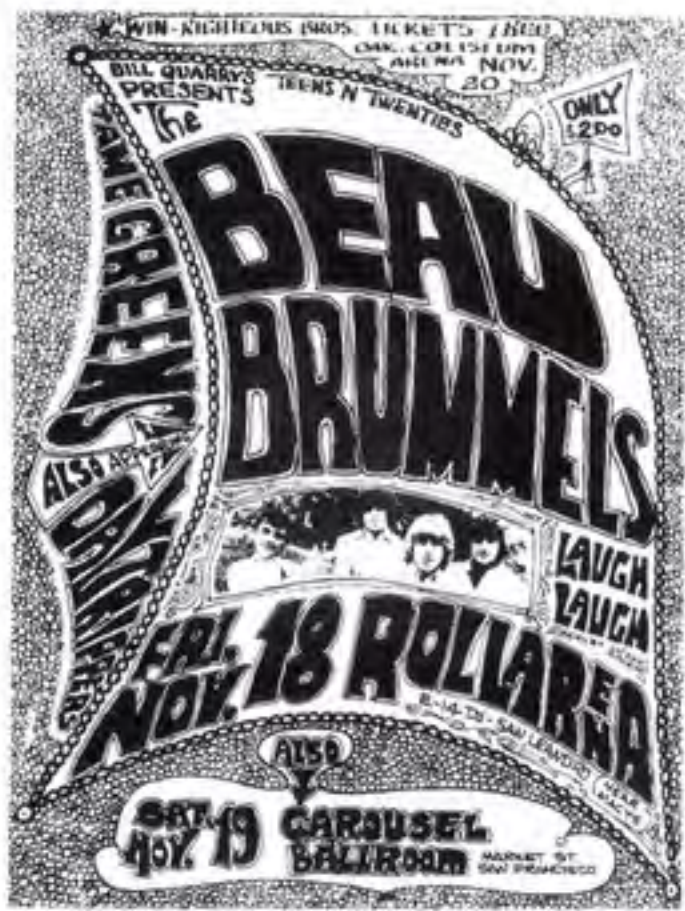
(DeShannon) *Kapp 618. No. 35 (11-21-64).*

# The Silkie



The Silkie, Hull University students inspired by a Beatles song and by the Beatles' manager

Charting nearly a month before *Ticket to Ride*, this song could have inspired George Harrison's guitar solo, and probably influenced McGuinn's on *Mr. Tambourine Man*. But Searchers guitarist John McNally took his lead line from the original recording by unsung folk-rock trailblazer Jackie DeShannon, who wrote it. (Her version of *Needles and Pins*, written by Nitzsche and Bono, had inspired the Searchers' interpretation for their debut hit.) The Searchers, from the Beatles' hometown of Liverpool, split their work between nascent folk-rock and smooth revivals of vocal-group and girl-group oldies.



### 3. Laugh, Laugh

The Beau Brummels  
(Elliott) *Autumn 8. No. 15 (2-20-65)*. This San Francisco quartet actually surfaced before the term folk-rock was coined. They were the Yankee answer to Mersey Beat. Indeed, this debut hit so quickly that the group had to wear Beatle wigs onstage until their hair grew out. *Laugh, Laugh* is one of the most crucial transitional records for the new sound. Its sighing harmonica introduction derives just as surely from American folk traditions, and its harmonies were influenced by the acts that influenced the Beatles—e.g., the Everly

Brothers—as much as by the Fab Four directly.

**4. All I Really Want to Do** Cher (Dylan) *Imperial 66114. No. 15 (8-21-65)*. Cher's solo debut charted just a week after Sonny and Cher's first hit, *I Got You Babe*. Sonny's production leaned heavily on a Byrds bass line, but his echo-laden introduction and pronounced backbeat confirmed that his roots were in the earlier days of L.A. rock 'n' roll. Cher's reading of Dylan's mature love ballad turned the highly personal vow into an anthem aimed at Everykid.

**5. Turn-Down Day** The Cyrkle (Keller-Blume) *Columbia 43729. No. 16 (9-17-66)*. By the summer of 1966, when the Cyrkle released their second and last hit single (their first was *Red Rubber Ball*, co-written by Paul Simon), the folk-rock sound was almost a purely commercial proposition. Beatles manager Brian Epstein handled this group of Pennsylvania collegians, who were previously known as

the Rondells and whose nom de folk-rock spelling was bestowed by none other than John Lennon, undoubtedly in honor of L.A.'s the Byrds. The sitar neatly dates *Turn-Down Day*, while the title is a typically portentous, albeit vague, attempt to coin folk-rock lingo.

## **6. I'll Never Find Another You**

The Seekers

(Springfield) *Capitol 5383. No. 4 (5-15-65)*. The Australian group picked up this song while playing the London Palladium with Dusty Springfield in 1964. It had first been done by her British folk trio, the Springfields, who charted in America in 1962 with *Silver Threads and Golden Needles*. But *I'll Never Find Another You* remains most closely identified with the Seekers, thanks to the guitar solo (yet another candidate for Harrison's *Ticket to Ride* muse) and the vibrant harmonies set against Judith Durham's robust lead.

## **7. You've Got to Hide Your Love Away** The Silkie

(Lennon-McCartney) *Fontana 1525. No. 10 (11-27-65)*. John Lennon wrote this song for the Beatles' movie *Help!* as his homage to Dylan. Since the Beatles never released it as a single, Epstein borrowed it as an entrée into pop for his new act, the Silkie, a Hull University trio formed in 1963 to sing traditional music. Taking no chances, Epstein got John, Paul and George to play on and help produce the record, with George's dobro-sounding guitar a particularly folksy touch.

## **8. Do You Believe in Magic**

The Lovin' Spoonful  
(Sebastian) *Kama Sutra 201. No. 9 (10-16-65)*. New York City's entry in the folk-rock scene labeled its sound "good-time music." Village folkies John Sebastian and Zal Yanovsky started the Lovin' Spoonful, after seeing the Beatles on *The Ed Sullivan Show*, as the electric, rock 'n' roll descendant of the country-blues jugbands of the 1930s, emulated in the early '60s by

Jim Kweskin. Though he claimed the song was inspired by the teenage girls he ogled at concerts, Sebastian's *Do You Believe in Magic* also reflected the sense of liberation reserved folk singers received after rocking out. Sebastian nearly trips over himself in his eagerness to sing, while the acoustic and electric guitars play off each other and Yanovsky's shimmering electric fills complete the sound.

## **9. Where Were You When I Needed You** The Grass Roots

(Sloan-Barri) *Dunhill 4029. No. 28 (7-30-66)*. The Grass Roots did not start as a group at all, but as songwriters P.F. Sloan and Steve Barri composing a song in the studio. Though the pair's version of Dylan's *Ballad of a Thin Man* flopped, this embittered original clicked, forcing them to recruit a local bar band to hit the road as the Grass Roots. The concocted group's very name suggests some vague political orientation, but what is most telling about *Where Were You When I Needed You* is the way Sloan and Barri translate a rather con-

ventional song about female betrayal into hipper terminology.

## 10. Sloop John B

The Beach Boys

(Wilson) *Capitol 5602. No. 3*

(5-7-66). It figures that the premier surf group's notion of a folk song would somehow take place on the ocean. This is a traditional West Indian tune about a sunken boat, culled from a Carl Sandburg song-book. It was adapted in 1951 by Lee Hays of the Weavers as *The John B Sails*, and revived nine years later by Scottish skiffle star Lonnie Donegan. *Sloop John B* was the most conventional track on the Beach Boys' most experimental album, *Pet Sounds*. It's no surprise, having originally been inspired by the Lettermen, that the Beach Boys' Southern California suburban harmonies could be adapted so easily to the folk-rock concept.

# CRAWDADDY!

November

The Magazine of Rock 'n' Roll

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Mamas & Papas

DONOVAN

Butterfield Blues Band

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# The Critters / Younger Girl

including

MR. DIEINGLY SAD • GONE FOR AWHILE • CHILDREN AND FLOWERS • IT JUST WON'T BE THAT WAY



**11. Catch the Wind** Donovan  
(Leitch) *Hickory 1309. No. 23 (7-3-65)*.  
Donovan surfaced as England's greatest Dylan acolyte, favoring the spare sound of voice, acoustic guitar and harmonica. This debut single hints at Donovan's later immersion in hippie mysticism, and came weeks after his first meeting with his hero. This meeting of minds was documented in *Don't Look Back*, the stunning cinéma vérité about Dylan's 1965 British tour.

**12. Turn, Turn, Turn (To Everything There Is a Season)**  
The Byrds  
(Words from the Book of Ecclesiastes—  
Adaptation and music by Seeger) *Columbia 43424. No. 1 (12-4-65)*. For their third single, the Byrds turned to hippie theology in the form of folkdom's mentor Pete Seeger's adaptation of verses from the Book of Ecclesiastes. By now, every member of the band was able to play his own instrument without undermining the sound created by studio players for *Mr. Tambourine Man*. McGuinn's solo break is not a display of

**One school of folk-rock preached the blossoming hippie philosophy of peace, love, spirituality and personal exploration. Another made political protest a pop event, removing all ambiguity and going straight for the overt statement and the catchy phrase. Never before in rock 'n' roll had words mattered so much.**





**The Beau Brummells outside a television station after a taping**

virtuosity so much as it is a way of sustaining a meditative mood.

### 13. Monday, Monday

The Mamas and the Papas  
(Phillips) *Dunhill 4026. No. 1 (5-7-66)*.  
Thanks to the Mamas and the Papas, the migration from dreary, confining New York City to bright, wide-open Los Angeles became one of the subtexts of folk-rock.

They were former New York folkies who went to the Virgin Islands to recharge themselves and form a group, and then moved to Hollywood to try their luck there. This group's two-man, two-woman gentle harmony sound symbolized the folk-rock movement. Producer Lou Adler buttressed the glistening voices with precise and unobtrusive sidemen, and let the melody speak for itself. *Monday, Monday* is archetypal: The bodies don't rock, and

the voices flow.

**14. It Ain't Me Babe** The Turtles  
(Dylan) *White Whale 222. No. 8 (9-18-65)*.  
The Turtles took a different path to show how quickly—and agreeably—a bold new sound becomes formulaic pop. They were originally a Southern California surf band called the Nightriders and then the Crossfires, and briefly an acoustic folk group named the Crosswind Singers. But with both surf and folk waning, the members re-electrified and became the Turtles. All their pop proclivities went into the making of their debut, Dylan's *It Ain't Me Babe*. A tambourine injects urgency into the delicate introduction, and the song builds via rock guitars and a bass line that proves how vital that instrument was to surf as well as folk-rock. It is all topped off by a snarling, nasal attempt to approximate Dylan's vocal style.

**15. Laugh at Me** Sonny  
(Bono) *Atco 6369. No. 10 (9-25-65)*. *Laugh at Me* is what folk idealism and protest be-

came in the hands of a Hollywood commercial producer and songwriter like Sonny Bono. After being refused service at an Italian restaurant in Hollywood because of his hippie clothes, Sonny boiled all his ersatz venom and compassion down into a delightfully corny spoken introduction, outraged vocal phrasing and that ringing 12-string sound. He dressed it up with some arrangement and production flourishes learned from his mentor, Phil Spector.

### **16. It's Good News Week**

Hedgehoppers Anonymous  
(King) *Parrot 9800. No. 48 (1-29-66)*. Folk-rock usually stated its protests directly, so this sarcasm was novel. The members of Hedgehoppers Anonymous came from the British Royal Air Force ground staff, making the antiwar ditty even more ironic. But it was really the product of iconoclastic writer-producer Jonathan King and studio musicians, with the lead singer the only member of the group to appear on the finished product.

### **17. The 59th Street Bridge Song (Feelin' Groovy)**

Harpers Bizarre

(Simon) *Warner 5890. No. 13 (4-1-67)*. This is late-period, orchestral folk-rock, simultaneously arty and middle-of-the-road. Harpers Bizarre deployed five-part harmonies on this Simon and Garfunkel remake, as well as flutes and other orchestral instruments. But their wispy voices remained absolutely true to the original. Their pop vocal style enabled them also to score with folk-rock arrangements of standards such as Cole Porter's *Anything Goes* and Glenn Miller's *Chattanooga Choo Choo*.

### **18. Mr. Dieingly Sad**

The Critters  
(Ciccone) *Kapp 769. No. 17 (10-8-66)*. These New Jersey popsters put the vocal sound of L.A.'s mainstream the Association to the poetry of folk-rock. They also covered the Lovin' Spoonful's *Younger Girl* for one of their two other minor hits. The group's harmonies evoke the soft allure of a pop genre gradually moving away from its traditional roots in the protest song toward a more commercial plane.

# Sonny Bono



Folk idealist and Phil Spector scholar Sonny Bono does his thing during a recording session.

# The Lovin' Spoonful

## Do You Believe In Magic?

words and music by  
JOHN SEBASTIAN

as recorded by  
**THE LOVIN'  
SPOONFUL**

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New York City's entry in the folk-rock sweepstakes,  
the Lovin' Spoonful, labeled its sound "good-time music."

**19. Elusive Butterfly** Bob Lind  
(Lind) *World Pacific 77808. No. 5 (3-12-66)*.  
Speaking of pop poetics, Bob Lind cranked  
up phrases like "...the long abandoned  
ruins of the dreams you left behind." Born  
in Baltimore, raised in Chicago, and based  
in Denver when he came under Dylan's  
sway, Lind enjoyed just this one hit. But  
with its skittery sound, and especially with  
the strings that quickly take over the ar-  
rangement, he and Jack Nitzsche lent class  
to the production possibilities for folk-rock  
introspection.

**20. This Precious Time** P.F. Sloan  
(Sloan-Barri) *Dunhill LP 50007. Did not  
chart (1966)*. The star songwriter for the  
Dunhill label never had much success with  
his own records. Tracks such as *This Pre-  
cious Time*, which was never released as a  
single, make it hard to fathom why. It has a  
remarkably full sound for an acoustic  
record, and the combination of angst and  
urgency in Sloan's vocals is folk-rock crafts-  
manship at its most pop.

## 21. Eve of Destruction

Barry McGuire  
(Sloan-Barri) *Dunhill 4009. No. 1 (9-25-65)*.  
Remember the end of the world? With *Eve  
of Destruction*, songwriter P.F. Sloan took  
on the whole mid-'60s rant—war, racism,  
the space race, religion, the bomb—in just  
over three minutes. Barry McGuire had  
once sung lead for the folk-singing ensem-  
ble the New Christy Minstrels, but he  
sounds raw and harsh here. No doubt,  
that's because the song was recorded at  
four in the morning, and McGuire was  
merely putting down work vocals over the  
martial drums, Dylanesque harmonica fills  
and ever-building arrangement. The effect  
was so perfect—so wounded, so defiant—  
that the working version was released. *Eve  
of Destruction* is easily the most dissenting  
record to hit the pop charts up to that  
point.

—John Morthland



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**Hedgehoppers Anonymous:**  
**From left to right (standing)—**  
**John Stewart, Glenn Martin,**  
**Mick Tinsley, Alan Laud; Tom**  
**Fox (lying in front)**

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# Donovan



Donovan, his music a gift from an English flower to an American garden, was perhaps England's greatest Dylan-influenced singer-songwriter.