



TIME
LIFE
MUSIC



SOUNDS OF THE SEVENTIES • AM TOP TWENTY

1. **Hooked on a Feeling** Blue Swede
2. **Hitchin' a Ride** Vanity Fare
3. **The Night Chicago Died**
Paper Lace
4. **How Do You Do?**
Mouth and MacNeal
5. **Chevy Van** Sammy Johns
6. **Dancing in the Moonlight**
King Harvest
7. **Rock Me Gently** Andy Kim
8. **Jungle Fever** The Chakachas
9. **I'm Doin' Fine Now** New York City
10. **Moonlight Feels Right** Starbuck
11. **Afternoon Delight**
Starland Vocal Band
12. **Beach Baby** First Class
13. **Sky High** Jigsaw
14. **Seasons in the Sun** Terry Jacks
15. **Billy, Don't Be a Hero**
Bo Donaldson and the Heywoods
16. **Tighter, Tighter** Alive and Kicking
17. **Beautiful Sunday** Daniel Boone
18. **My Baby Loves Lovin'** White Plains
19. **Run Joey Run** David Geddes
20. **One Tin Soldier, The Legend
of Billy Jack** Coven
21. **Rings** Cymarron
22. **Shannon** Henry Gross

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WARNER
SPECIAL PRODUCTS

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Harmony groups, harmony groups—what hath Crosby, Stills and Nash wrought? Ironically, at the same time that an emerging generation of rockers was going louder and heavier in the '70s, an equally large group (many of them music-business veterans), inspired by the success of the aforementioned L.A. supergroup, was going in a softer, folkier direction. While the hard rockers, who favored extended jams, were making headway on the FM radio band, the harmony groups, which were more oriented toward carefully crafted songs, were creating a presence on AM. They didn't rock all that much, but they went down sweet and easy. And though many of these harmony groups turned out to be one-hit wonders, they helped define the decade.

Starland Vocal Band was a prime example, even if the group's

antecedents were as much John Denver as CSN. Indeed, group leader Bill Danoff was a friend and co-writer of His Rocky Mountain Highness. Danoff and his wife, Taffy, had cut two inconsequential albums together for RCA before they took on new members Jon Carroll (who had helped out on one of those LPs) and Margot Chapman (who had worked with Bill previously in a group called Fat City). Their squeaky-clean harmonies made them the first act signed to Denver's new label, Windsong.

Bill wrote **Afternoon Delight**—Starland's debut single, No. 1 hit and only Top 40 record—after lunching at a Washington, D.C., restaurant that offered an "Afternoon Delight" menu of exotic dishes like hot brie with walnuts. When he returned home, he told his wife what *his* idea of an "afternoon delight" was, and then set about writing a song that suggested what he had in mind without coming right out and saying it.



Blue Swede hailed from Sweden, and their **Hooked on a Feeling** had been a 1969 hit for Texas balladeer B.J. Thomas. But in 1972 British pop eccentric Jonathan King revived it with a novel intro, and that was the version that Bjorn Skifs and his group Blabius (Swedish for "blue denim") covered; when it hit big in Europe, EMI International agreed to an American release, but only if the group would change its name to Blue Swede.

Bo Donaldson and the Heywoods came from Cincinnati, and Paper Lace from Nottingham (England's "lace city"), but they were connected by a song. British writer-producers Mitch Murray and Peter Callander were American-history buffs fond of the story-song form, and they combined their two loves to create the Civil War tale **Billy, Don't Be a Hero**. They saw Paper Lace on the British television show *Opportunity Knocks* and thought the group and song were perfect for each other. But after getting a hit in England, they were slow consummating an American deal. Meanwhile, ABC head producer Steve Barri cut the song with Donaldson and the Heywoods, who had come to his

attention via regular appearances on Dick Clark's *Action '73* TV show.

The Donaldson version went all the way to the top, but Paper Lace tapped out at No. 96 in the U.S. Vowing not to get aced again, Callander and Paper Lace came back with another Americana story-song, **The Night Chicago Died**, which was about a fictional shoot-out between Al Capone and Windy City police, and this time they got their own No. 1.

Two English studio-concoction groups, White Plains and First Class, had the same lead singer, hired gun Tony Burrows. The team of Roger Cook and Roger Greenaway wrote and produced **My Baby Loves Lovin'** for White Plains. Four years later, John Carter did the same with **Beach Baby**, a Beach Boys-like production released under the name First Class. Carter had once played with the young Jimmy Page in a group called the Southerners, after which he worked with Tony Burrows in the Ivy League and the Flowerpot Men. In addition to White Plains and First Class, Burrows sang lead in such similar "groups" as Edison Lighthouse, the Brotherhood of Man and the Pipkins.

The Poppy Family, which was really just Canadian Terry Jacks and his wife, Susan Pesklevits, went kaput in 1973 when their marriage ended. Jacks then went to work on a Beach Boys' recording session. He suggested they cut Jacques Brel's 1961 *Le Moribond* (*The Dying Man*), which he knew from Rod McKuen's arrangement for the Kingston Trio.

The Southern Californians took his advice, but then left the track in the can for a year. Jacks got permission to rewrite the final verse to make it lighter, and then recorded the song himself under the new title **Seasons in the Sun**. His version became the biggest seller in Canadian history before being picked up for distribution by Bell Records in the United States, where it soon rested in the No. 1 position.

Henry Gross's **Shannon** owed a lot to the Beach Boys sound, though many listeners were surprised to learn that the former Sha Na Na guitarist was singing about a dog and not a woman. Canadian Andy Kim—a bubblegum mainstay who sang anonymous leads on almost as many records as Tony Burrows—enjoyed his chart heyday from 1968 to

1970; he is best known as the co-writer of the definitive bubblegum ditty *Sugar, Sugar*. Kim had been dry for three years, and was without a label when he financed the sessions for **Rock Me Gently**. He played the tape for a promo man from one of his old labels who was now working elsewhere, and the friend got him a new deal, which led to a No. 1 comeback.

North Carolinian Sammy Johns's **Chevy Van**, a longing song about a chance highway encounter, inspired a quickie exploitation movie starring Danny DeVito. Coven's **One Tin Soldier** saluted the hero of the action movie *Billy Jack*, which glorified a Native American who wages a bloody fight to save a freedom school. Daniel Boone (real name Peter Stirling) was a British writer and sessions player who first achieved success when his demo of *Daddy Don't You Walk So Fast* got released in the U.K. and became a surprise hit. Wayne Newton's cover version prevented Boone from duplicating the trick over here, so the Englishman came back with **Beautiful Sunday** in 1972. This time he did get an American hit; the song racked up further sales.

when it was re-released in 1974, and again in 1976 when it became the theme for a Japanese television show.

The Dutch boy-girl duo of Mouth and MacNeal was created after both singers had failed in their solo careers. They managed one U.S. top 10 in **How Do You Do?**, then returned to obscurity here while continuing to do well in their homeland. **Jungle Fever** was recorded by six middle-aged Belgian studio musicians under the name the Chakachas; when it hit in America, Polydor hired a New York salsa band named Barrio to go on the road as Chakachas to promote it.

New York City was fronted by John Brown, who had once sung with the R&B groups the Five Classics and the Cadillac. Philly-sound auteur Thom Bell produced **I'm Doin' Fine Now** for New York City, which then began touring backed by the Big Apple Band (including future Chic braintrust Nile Rodgers and Bernard Edwards). Tommy James co-wrote **Tighter, Tighter** just before he burned out and decided to take some time off, so he didn't record it himself. Instead, he produced it for Alive and Kicking, which considered itself a "heavy" band and was embarrassed enough by this song to

avoid cutting similar material in the future; still, it proved their only Top 40 single.

King Harvest and Cymarron were two more period harmony groups. The former revived **Dancing in the Moonlight**, an old album cut by Boffalongo, keyboard man Davy "Doc" Robinson's first band. Cymarron was named after a television western, and **Rings** was largely the work of lead singer Rick Yancey and producer Chip Young. King Harvest was from New York and Cymarron from Memphis, but that just went to show that all around the country, the Crosby, Stills and Nash sound was taking over.

—John Morthland

DISCOGRAPHY

**Indicates highest Billboard chart position*

- 1. Hooked on a Feeling** Blue Swede • *Music and lyrics by Mark James. Screen Gems-EMI Music Inc. BMI. EMI 3627 (1974).* Ⓟ 1974 EMI Records. *Courtesy of EMI Records Group/EMI Records, under license from CEMA Special Markets. No. 1**
- 2. Hitchin' a Ride** Vanity Fare • *Music and lyrics by Peter Callander and Mitch Murray. Songs of PolyGram International, Inc. BMI. Page One 21029 (1970). From Roger Easterby Management. No. 5**
- 3. The Night Chicago Died** Paper Lace • *Music and lyrics by Peter Callander and Lionel Sticher. Intune Inc. BMI./Murray Callander Music Inc. ASCAP. Mercury 73492 (1974).* Ⓟ 1974 PolyGram Special Products. *A Division of PolyGram Records, Inc. Courtesy of PolyGram Special Markets, a Division of PolyGram Group Distribution, Inc. No. 1**
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- 11. Afternoon Delight** Starland Vocal Band • *Music and lyrics by Bill Danoff. Cherry Lane Music Publishing Co., Inc. ASCAP. Windsong 10588 (1976).* Ⓟ 1976 Windsong Records, Inc. *Courtesy of Windsong Records, Inc. No. 1**
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- 13. Sky High** Jigsaw • *Music and lyrics by Des Dyer and Clive Scott. Duchess Music Corp. BMI. Chelsea 3022 (1975).* Ⓟ 1975 Chelsea Records Corp. *Courtesy of Celebrity Licensing, Inc. No. 3**
- 14. Seasons in the Sun** Terry Jacks • *Music by Jacques Brel. English lyrics by Rod McKuen. Edward B. Marks Music Co. BMI. Bell 45432 (1974).* Ⓟ 1974 Bell Records. *Courtesy of Arista Records, Inc. No. 1**
- 15. Billy, Don't Be a Hero** Bo Donaldson and the Heywoods • *Music and lyrics by Peter Callander and Mitch Murray. PolyGram International Publishing. ASCAP. ABC*

11435 (1974). © 1974 ABC Records. Courtesy of MCA Records, Inc. No. 1*

16. Tighler, Tighler Alive and Kicking • Music and lyrics by Tommy James and Bob King. Longitude Music Co. BMI. Roulette 7078 (1970). Courtesy of Rhino Records Inc. No. 7*

17. Beautiful Sunday Daniel Boone • Music and lyrics by David Balfe and Peter Green. Colgems EMI Music Inc. ASCAP. Mercury 73281 (1972). © 1972 Mercury Records. Courtesy of PolyGram Special Markets, a Division of PolyGram Group Distribution, Inc. No. 15*

18. My Baby Loves Lovin' White Plains • Music and lyrics by Roger Greenaway and Roger Cook. PolyGram International Publishing, ASCAP. Deram 85058 (1970). Courtesy of PolyGram Special Markets, a Division of PolyGram Group Distribution, Inc. No. 13*

19. Run Joey Run David Geddes • Music and lyrics by Jack Perricone and Paul Vance. Music Sales Corp. ASCAP. Big Tree 16044 (1975). © 1975 Atlantic Recording Corp. Produced under license from Atlantic Recording Corp. No. 4*

20. One Tin Soldier, The Legend of Billy Jack Coven • Music and lyrics by Dennis Lambert and Brian Potter. Duchess Music Corp. BMI. Warner Bros. 7509 (1971). Courtesy of PolyGram Special Markets, a Division of PolyGram Group Distribution, Inc. No. 26*

21. Rings Cymanon • Music and lyrics by Alex Harvey and Eddie Reeves. EMI Unart Catalog Inc. BMI. Entrance 7500 (1971). Under license from Sony Music Special Products, a Division of Sony Music Entertainment, Inc. No. 17*

22. Shannon Henry Gross • Music and lyrics by Henry Gross. Blendingwell Music. ASCAP. Lifesong 45002 (1976). © 1976 PKM Productions. Courtesy of PKM Productions. No. 6*



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