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SPATIAL AUDIO



Soul Grass

Nobody Knows
Featuring
Billy Ray Latham



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This album features the legendary Billy Ray Latham, Bluegrass Hall of Fame Inductee (Country Boys/Kentucky Colonels, Dillards) in his last recordings with the band Soulgrass. Sadly, Billy Ray Latham passed away on August 19, 2018. He is remembered and widely respected by his peers as a hard driving banjo player and entertainer.

On this 20-year anniversary of Billy's joining Soulgrass we were inspired to release this album to memorialize his involvement in the band as well as bring to light his incredible history and contributions to Bluegrass music.

Billy Ray is best known as the banjo player from the Kentucky Colonels, formerly the Country Boys, were featured in the first season of the *Andy Griffith Show*. The band toured throughout the US and are still considered to be "one of the most significant of the urban bluegrass groups of the 60s," Peter Kuykendall, *Bluegrass Unlimited* Magazine. The Kentucky Colonels, including Billy Ray, were inducted into the International Bluegrass Music Association's Hall of Fame on September 26, 2019. After the Kentucky Colonels, Billy Ray went on to tour and record with the Dillards, opening for Elton John during his first American tour and was a member of Herb Pedersen's Laurel Canyon Ramblers. Billy also toured and recorded with Ricky Nelson, toured with Roger Miller and played on studio recordings with Johnny Cash and many others.

This album includes 7 never-released recordings made by Soulgrass in 2003: Billy Ray (banjo, background vocals), Debra Lyn (lead vocal, bass) and David Gilbert Foster (background vocals, acoustic guitar) as well as excerpts from a live radio interview with Dave Higgs, *Bluegrass Breakdown* recorded on December 26, 2002.

The album was recorded by the late Bil VornDick at Mountainside Audio Labs, Nashville, Tennessee in 2003 and has been mixed and mastered in Dolby Atmos by Jeff Silverman, Palette Music • Studio • Productions, Mt. Juliet, Tennessee in 2022. The Dolby Atmos/Spatial Audio mix captures the true essence of the band's performances and allow the listener to feel as though they are actually in the room with Soulgrass.

Musicians:

Billy Ray Latham: Banjo, Background Vocals
Debra Lyn: Lead Vocals, Bass
David Gilbert Foster: Acoustic Guitar, Background Vocals
Brad Davis: Acoustic Rhythm & Lead Guitar, Mandolin
Robert Bowlin: Fiddle
Tom Roady: Percussion

Radio Excerpts:

Dave Higgs, *Bluegrass Breakdown* 12/26/2002 (used by permission)

Front Cover Photo: Gary C. Berdeaux

Back Cover Photos (Top 4): KET's *Mixed Media* Show 2002
(Additional photos courtesy of Billy Ray Latham & Soulgrass)

Graphic Design/Layout: DLS Graphics

| | |
|---|------|
| 01. Bluegrass Breakdown - Soulgrass Intro | 0:32 |
| 02. Dooley (Mitchell F. Jayne, Rodney Dillard) Lansdowne Music Publishers/ASCAP, Winston Music Publishers /ASCAP | 2:04 |
| 03. Band Intro | 0:37 |
| 04. Nobody Knows (Mitchell F. Jayne, Rodney Dillard) Lansdowne Music Publishers/ASCAP, Winston Music Publishers ASCAP | 2:12 |
| 05. Beatles to Dillards | 0:29 |
| 06. Across The Great Divide (Kate Allen Wolf) Another Sundown Pub/BMI | 3:49 |
| 07. Billy Ray's Biggest Thrill | 1:45 |
| 08. (Your Love Has Lifted Me) Higher & Higher (Gary L. Jackson, Raynard Miner, Carl William Smith) CHEVIS Publishing Corp/ASCAP, MIJAC Music/BMI, Warner-Tamerlaine Publishing Corp/BMI | 3:05 |
| 09. Wait A Minute (Herb Pedersen) Herb Pedersen, Dear Friends Music/ASCAP | 4:07 |
| 10. Billy Ray's 1st Bluegrass Memories | 0:55 |
| 11. If I Never Wake Up Again / Twist The Knife (Debra Lyn) Debra Lyn Music/SESAC | 3:52 |
| 12. You're Gonna Leave (Debra Lyn) Debra Lyn Music/SESAC | 3:33 |
| 13. Kentucky Colonels Legacy | 2:13 |
| 14. Epilogue by Debra Lyn | 0:59 |

Produced by: Soulgrass

Immersive Producer: Jeff Silverman

Compilation Producers/Album Notes:

Debra Lyn & David Gilbert Foster

Recorded & Engineered by:

Bil VornDick, Mountainside Audio Labs, Nashville, TN

Restoration Engineer: Jeff Silverman

Mixed & Mastered in Dolby Atmos/Spatial Audio by:

Jeff Silverman, Palette Music • Studio • Productions (MSP),
Mount Juliet / Nashville, TN

For Additional Info. Contact: debra@debralyn.com

Billy Ray Latham

Billy Ray Latham was born on January 28, 1938 in a log cabin in Wild Cat Corner, Arkansas. One of Billy Ray's earliest memories was listening to a Grand Ole Opry show featuring Bill Monroe, Flatt & Scruggs, Chubby Wise and Cedrick Rainwater singing "Rollin' In My Sweet Baby's Arms" on a battery-operated radio that his father bought from Sears & Robuck. From that very moment, according to Billy, "something inside him just clicked." Billy Ray fashioned his first "stringed instrument" using a piece of screen wire stretched across a two-by-four. Eventually his aunt gave him a real guitar to practice on.

While working nights at a gas station, Billy Ray tuned in to the Flatt & Scruggs show on a local radio station. Inspired by Earl Scruggs, Billy Ray borrowed an old Kay banjo from a friend of a friend and taught himself how to play. Soon he was on a local radio show and formed a group called the Cumberland Mountain Gang. In 1958 Billy Ray and his brother decided to strike out for California. A few weeks later, he heard a group called the Three Little Country Boys playing live bluegrass music on a radio show out of Pasadena. As luck would have it, the band members: Roland, Clarence and Eric White, soon happened upon Billy Ray at a music store in Los Angeles. They began picking together and Billy Ray was invited to join the band. The name of the band was shortened to The Country Boys and was later changed to the Kentucky Colonels when their first album was released. Although the band was only together for a brief time (1959-1966), they performed across the U.S. and at the prestigious Monterey and Newport Folk Festivals. The Country Boys also appeared in two episodes of *The Andy Griffith Show* which introduced them to a national audience. The band became known for their virtuosity as musicians, close harmony vocals and dynamic and innovative performances. After the group split up, the members all went their separate ways, but they are still considered to be highly influential in Bluegrass music and their record albums have become some of the



A very young Billy Ray Latham

most sought-after bluegrass recordings in history. The Kentucky Colonels (Billy Ray Latham, Roland White, Clarence White, Eric White, Roger Bush and LeRoy Mack McNeese) were inducted into the International Bluegrass Music Association's Bluegrass Hall of Fame on September 26, 2019.



Left: The Kentucky Colonels (The Country Boys) were inducted into the Bluegrass Hall of Fame on September 26, 2019. This would have been a dream come true for Billy Ray. Above: Roland White, Eric White, LeRoy Mack, Clarence White and Billy Ray perform at Ash Grove.



The Country Boys perform with Andy Griffith: Andy, Roland White, Eric White, Clarence White, Billy Ray and LeRoy Mack



The Country Boys: Eric, Roland, Clarence and LeRoy and Billy doing a comedy skit

In 1969 and 1970 Billy Ray played guitar with Dillard and the Expedition and in 1971 he became of member of the original Country Gazette.

Billy Ray joined The Dillards in 1971 and toured and recorded with the group for nearly a decade. This included opening for Elton John during his first American tour. Elton saw the Dillards playing at the Troubadour in L.A. and asked them to open his tour because he thought that they depicted real American Music. During this period, Billy Ray pushed the boundaries of bluegrass banjo by incorporating electronic effects that had rarely, if ever, been used on a recording. Billy recorded three albums with the Dillards: *Roots and Branches*, *Tribute to the American Duck* and *The Dillards vs. The Incredible L.A. Time Machine* in 1977 album which was listed in Billboard's Top Album Picks 11/5/11.

In 1980, Billy Ray toured with the Roger Miller Band. Billy also worked as a guitarist with Herb Pedersen in the Laurel Canyon Ramblers, releasing the album *Rambler's Blues* in 1995 and *Blue Rambler 2* in 1996 on Sugar Hill Records.

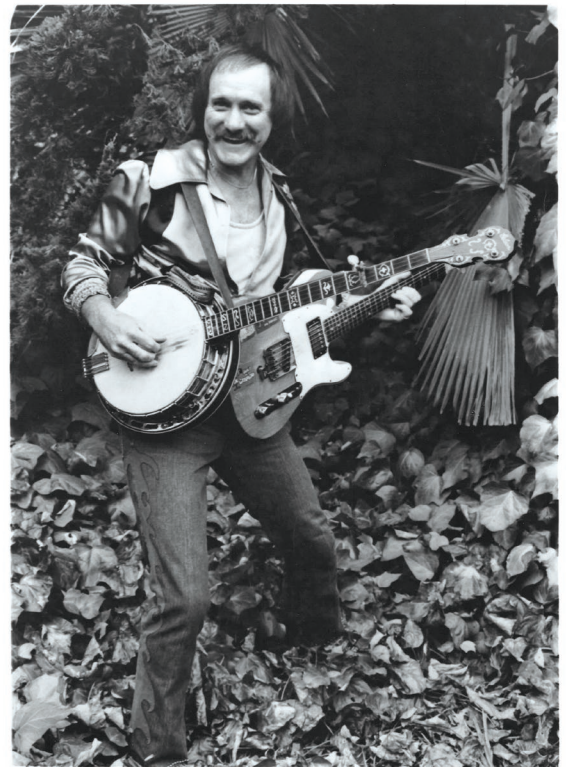
Billy Ray moved to Nashville, Tennessee around 2001 where he met David Gilbert Foster and Debbie Heavers (AKA Debra Lyn) and joined their band Soulgrass. Shortly after, Billy moved to Kentucky and toured and recorded with group for two years. Soulgrass were featured performers in the 2004-2005 Kentucky Performing Arts Directory and performed at numerous festivals and venues across the Southeast including Mayberry Days Festival in Mount Airy, North Carolina, and performed in venues such as the historic Mitchell Opera House, the world-renowned Station Inn and Johnson City, Tennessee's Down Home Pickin' Parlor.

During Billy Ray's long career, he performed with Bill Monroe and his Bluegrass Boys, toured and recorded with Ricky Nelson, toured with Roger Miller and the Dillards. Billy performed on numerous popular records with artists such as Johnny Cash, Fabian, Bobby Vee, Scotty Stoneman, LeRoy Mack and many others helping to popularize banjo music throughout America. He had a strong grasp of traditional bluegrass and was heard by millions of viewers from his stints on the Andy Griffith Show. His influence went far beyond bluegrass. He was one of the first to stretch the boundaries of the types of sounds that could be utilized and accomplished on the banjo.

Billy Ray has left an amazing legacy of recordings to be treasured by bluegrass enthusiasts and discovered by those new to the scene.



Autographed photo of Billy from his band Wildlife.



BILLY RAY LATHUM

The Solo Artist Days



Jeff Silverman & Billy Ray in the early 90s



David & Billy pick a few tunes



DILLARDS

STONE COUNTY

Billy Ray Latham (left) with the Dillards



David, Richie Podolor, Debra & Billy Ray getting ready for the Mayberry Days' parade



← Soulgrass with Richie Podolor
Billy Ray gets the Key to the City ↑



Mayberry Days' actors along with Doug and Rodney Dillard, David Gilbert Foster, Billy Ray Lathum, Richie Podolor and Debra Lyn



← VERY
early morning
radio show!



We were honored to have the legendary record producer Richie Podolor fly in from Los Angeles at Billy Ray's request to perform with us at Mayberry Days. Richie produced Three Dog Night, Steppenwolf, Alice Cooper and the Dillards' "Roots and Branches" album. Billy and he had kept in touch through the years.



← Billy and former Country Boys dobro player Leroy Mack catch up at Mayberry Days.



← before the show



signing autographs



Soulgrass

Soulgrass was a progressive bluegrass band from South Central Kentucky. The original band featured Debbie Heavers (aka Debra Lyn) on lead vocals and bass guitar; David Gilbert Foster on acoustic guitar and vocals; Curtis Burch (New Grass Revival, *The Great Dobro Sessions*, and *O' Brother Where Art Thou*) on dobro; Joel Whittinghill (Kentucky State Fiddle and Mandolin Champion) on mandolin & fiddle and Joe Larson on banjo. Although Curtis, Joel and Joe did perform with Soulgrass, along with occasional performances by Mike Schroeder on mandolin and Steve Cooley on banjo, the core members of the band were Debra and David. *Interesting fact:* Soulgrass was named by John Cowan (New Grass Revival) when Debra & David were opening for him at in club in Bowling Green, Kentucky and he remarked that he liked their "Soulgrass."

Soulgrass released their first self-titled CD in 2002. Two singles, including an original written by Debra, were released in the U.S. on the *Prime Cuts of Bluegrass* compilation CD. Nearly 400 radio stations throughout the U.S. Australia, France, England and the Netherlands reported airplay for these singles. The Soulgrass version of "Love Please Come Home" was also added to the playlist for cable television's *Music Choice*.

After the release of the first album, Debra and David began their search for a third permanent member of the band, preferably someone who could sing and play banjo. As luck would have it, Billy Ray Latham was living in Nashville at this time – just an hour and a half away from Horse Cave, Kentucky where the band was based. From the moment the trio got together, everything just clicked. Billy's vocals, musical style and upbeat personality were the perfect complement to the band that Debra and David had envisioned.

Building upon the momentum created by the release of the first album, Soulgrass quickly got to work creating a new show to feature Billy Ray and choosing material for their second album. During the summer of 2003, Soulgrass began recording with the late **Bil VornDick** at his Mountainside Audio Labs studio just outside of Nashville, Tennessee. The first Soulgrass album had been recorded with Bil at the suggestion of Curtis Burch. Bil was a well-known engineer and producer in Bluegrass music circles with resume featuring a veritable who's who in bluegrass music from Allison Krause, Newgrass Revival and Bela Fleck to Rhonda Vincent so it was a natural choice to record the second album with him.



The first Soulgrass album with Curtis Burch, Joel Wittinghill and Joe Larson was released in 2002.

About "Nobody Knows," the Album

Billy Ray was instrumental in choosing some of the cover songs such as "Dooley" and "Nobody Knows," written by Mitch Jayne and Rodney Dillard, which he performed with the Dillards. Billy also played with Herb Pedersen who wrote "Wait A Minute." Debra and David were introduced to Kate Wolf's music by a Soulgrass fan who suggested that they should consider recording one of her songs. Kate's song "Across the Great Divide" was a natural pick as it is not only a beautiful song, but it also gave the band an opportunity to feature the harmony vocals they were becoming known for. The first Soulgrass album featured a number of interesting remakes so "Higher & Higher" was another perfect song for the trio.

Billy invited **Brad Davis**, his long-time friend to play mandolin and guitar on the album. Brad is a Grammy Record performer, songwriter, producer, session, and touring artist. He has worked with Marty Stuart, Earl Scruggs, Billy Bob Thornton, Forester Sisters, Sweet Hearts of the Rodeo, Willie Nelson, Sheryl Crow, Emmy Lou Harris, Roger Miller, Steve Earl, David Lee Roth, Dwight Yokum, and others.

Robert Bowlin, a two-time National Fingerpicking and Flatpicking Guitar contest winner, has been a band member with legendary artists like Bill Monroe, Maura O' Connell, Kathy Mattea, the Osborne Brothers, and many more. Robert is now touring with singer-songwriter Wil Maring.

Tom Roady was a longtime Nashville percussionist who played and/or recorded with everyone from Emmylou Harris and Art Garfunkel to R&B greats Wilson Pickett and James Brown. Tom was nominated and won Grammy Awards, CMA Awards and ACM Awards.

The album was mixed and mastered in Dolby Atmos/Spatial Audio by **Jeff Silverman**, another long-time friend of Billy Ray's. Billy invited Jeff to play guitar on the Dillards album *The Dillards Versus the Incredible LA Time Machine* and had also coached Jeff in the finer points of playing along with country and bluegrass songs when Jeff took the place of Danny Gatton, playing guitar in Roger Miller's band. Billy, Debra and David had originally spoken to Jeff in 2002 about being involved in the recording, but the logistics of Jeff being in Los Angeles and the band being in Kentucky made that difficult at the time.

Although Soulgrass was only together for a short, few years, they performed at numerous clubs and festivals throughout the southeastern U.S. and were featured performers on many live radio and television programs in Kentucky, Indiana, North Carolina and Tennessee. The band, along with Billy Ray, headlined the Mayberry Days festival in Mount Airy, North Carolina and performed in venues such as Nashville's Station Inn and Johnson City's Down Home Pickin' Parlor.



Billy Ray, Mike Schroeder, Debra, David and Curtis Burch after a show at Nashville's famous Station Inn.

Debra Lyn is an Americana/Folk singer/songwriter and musician based in Nashville, Tennessee (USA). She has released four full-length albums through Palette Records including *I Can't Remember To Forget You 15TH Anniversary Edition (3D Immersive)*, a recent re-release of her first album with producer, Jeff Silverman. The original tracks have been remixed and mastered in Dolby Atmos 7.1.4. format to give the album a new life and listeners an entirely new experience. This album was initially the bridge between Debra's prior bluegrass album with Soulgrass and the Top 40 Country style she has always loved. Three new songs have been added to the album as well as an entirely new arrangement and remix of the title track. Her song "You Can't Hold Me Close When You're Holdin' The Bottle" was nominated for Producer/Production in the prestigious 2021 Hollywood Music in Media Awards. This new release now includes songs that also bring back the Celtic flavor of her previous album *Blue Sun Rises*.

Blue Sun Rises, Debra's third album (2020) brings together traditional music that clearly speaks to Debra's Irish/Scottish/English heritage and intricately weaves these influences with her original material. Included are inspired versions of songs such as the Scottish favorites "The Bonnie Banks o' Loch Lomond" and "The Parting Glass," and a popular American Folk/Gospel song, *Wayfaring Stranger*. *Blue Sun Rises* was produced, mixed and mastered by Debra's long-time collaborator, Jeff Silverman, who co-wrote and performed on many of the album's songs. Three singles were released from *Blue Sun Rises*. The first, "I Pull Me Down - The Maids of Mitchelstown," also featured the musicians in a live video. *Blue Sun Rises*, the title track was the second release as a 3D Binaural single along with a lyric video. "Devil With The Blue Eyes" was also released as Dolby Atmos / 3D Immersive mix. Two songs from the album, "Workin' For The Money" & "Wayfaring Stranger" were nominated for "Americana/Folk/Acoustic" & "Producer/Production" awards, respectively in the 2019 *Hollywood Music In Media Awards (HMMA)*.

A single, "The Wexford Carol (Tom Billy's Jig)" was released for the holiday season 2019 and introduces the Celtic/Folk/Acoustic sound from "Blue Sun Rises" that Debra and Jeff started recording during this time. This was also nominated for Holiday music in the 2020 *Hollywood Music In Media Awards (HMMA)*.

2020 also saw the release of the single and lyric video, *One Voice* that was inspired by the state of the world in 2020 dealing with a global pandemic as well as numerous injustices. Unfortunately, this was not limited to 2020 and 2021, as 2022 sees us now witnessing a new war in Ukraine. "One Voice" was included on the *Peace for Ukraine* album in 2022, which was created by Eric Faulkner, former Bay City Rollers guitarist/singer/songwriter to benefit the people of Ukraine.

As a follow up to *A Cold Wind Blows*, Debra and Jeff released a classic remake of the Steve Winwood/Spencer Davis hit, "Gimmee Some Lovin'" in 2016. This received a nomination for "Producer/Production" in the *Hollywood Music In Media Awards (HMMA)* in 2016. "Gimmee Some Lovin'" also reached #1 on *SoundCloud's Folk & Singer-Songwriter Chart*.

Debra's album, *A Cold Wind Blows*, released in 2014, also produced by Jeff Silverman, garnered a number of accolades. This album was described as "a staggeringly honest work of art that respectfully invites listeners to experience the vast complexities and stark, simple truths that shape our most intimate relationships, define our deepest emotions and ultimately determine who we are ... and who we aren't." The album received a 4 Star Rating from Nashville's "Stacy's Music Row Report" and a stellar review from RJ Lannon, *ZoneMusicReporter.com*. *A Cold Wind Blows* reached #16 on the *Roots Music Report's Weekly Top 50 Roots Rock Album Chart* and the single, *Drunken Fool* reached #5 on *SoundCloud's Top 50 Country Chart*.

Debra was also the lead singer and bass player of Soulgrass, which released their self-titled CD in 2002. This new Soulgrass album, *Nobody Knows*, brings back great memories and music that Debra is happy to share!





David Gilbert Foster is a singer, songwriter and multi-instrumentalist from Galax, Virginia. David has lived in Horse Cave, Kentucky for the past 30 years. David co-founded Soulgrass with singer/bassist Debbie Heavers (now known as Debra Lyn) around 1999 and began playing festivals along with Curtis Burch on dobro, Joel Whittinghill on fiddle and Joe Larsen on banjo. After the first CD, Joe was replaced by Billy Ray Lathum on banjo, and Mike Schroeder began playing mandolin for the band. The 2002 Soulgrass release received airplay on more than 300 radio stations throughout the U.S. Australia, France, England and the Netherlands. The band headlined the Mayberry Days festival in Mount Airy, North Carolina and performed in venues such as Nashville's Station Inn and Johnson City's Down Home Pickin' Parlor.

In 2022, David released his solo album *American Dream* which features 9 original songs and showcases David's songwriting and singing. The album, includes the single "We Are One" which was released in April 2020 honoring the essential workers during the Covid-19 pandemic, which also features John Cowan on bass and vocals.

American Dream is David's first solo release since *Nylon Highway* in 1981. *Nylon Highway* is an album of original songs about caves and cave exploring commissioned by the Richmond Area Speleological Society. Three of these songs won first, second and third in the National Speleological Society's ballad competition in 1978.

David's cave exploring hobby led to a career working for the American Cave Conservation Association. He is currently the President/CEO of the nonprofit organization. David led restoration efforts to clean up Hidden River Cave, one of the most polluted caves in America. David directed the creation of the American Cave Museum and the reopening of Hidden River Cave in 1993 as well as a recent expansion of the cave tour. To learn more about this remarkable conservation success story in the town of Horse Cave, please visit the Hidden River Cave website (www.hiddenrivercave.com).

David's first foray into recording original music was in 1981. David entered his song "Love Is All Around You" in Bristol, Tennessee radio station WQUT's Best of '81 contest, a radio contest sponsored by John Anderson. "Love Is All Around You" was one of the 10 finalists out of hundreds of entries and was included on the *WQUT Best of '81* album.

David's Celtic group, Barrenhart, with mandolinist Hazel Johnson, bass player/bagpiper Greg Cutcliff and fiddler Masako Jeffers has been a fixture at Scottish music events through Kentucky for the past decade. Barrenhart released a CD of traditional Celtic tunes, folk songs, and the song "Tumbling Down," one of David's originals. To hear Barrenhart visit their website at www.barrenhart.com.

