

CANNED HEAT BIOGRAPHY

Canned Heat rose to fame because their knowledge and love of blues music was both wide and deep. Emerging in 1966, Canned Heat was founded by blues historians and record collectors Alan “Blind Owl” Wilson and Bob “The Bear” Hite. Hite took the name “Canned Heat” from a 1928 recording by Tommy Johnson. They were joined by Henry “The Sunflower” Vestine, another ardent record collector who was a former member of Frank Zappa’s Mothers of Invention. Rounding out the band in 1967 were Larry “The Mole” Taylor on bass, an experienced session musician who had played with Jerry Lee Lewis and The Monkees and Adolfo “Fito” de la Parra on drums who had played in two of the biggest Latin American bands, Los Sinners and Los Hooligans.

The band attained three worldwide hits, “On The Road Again” in 1968, “Let’s Work Together” in 1970 and “Going Up The Country” in 1969 became rock anthems throughout the world with the later being adopted as the unofficial theme song for the film Woodstock and the “Woodstock Generation.”

They secured their niche in the pages of rock ‘n’ roll history with their performances at the 1967 Monterey Pop Festival (along with Jimi Hendrix, Janis Joplin and The Who) and the headlining slot at the original Woodstock Festival in 1969. The band can boast of collaborations with John Mayall and Little Richard and later with blues icon, John Lee Hooker, the musician that they initially got much of their musical inspiration from in the first place. This union produced the spirited and revered album, “Hooker ‘n Heat.” The band is also credited with bringing a number of other forgotten bluesmen to the forefront of modern blues including Sunnyland Slim, who they found driving a taxi in Chicago, Skip James, who they found in a hospital in Tunica, Mississippi and took to the Newport Festival, Memphis Slim and Clarence “Gatemouth” Brown with whom they recorded in France and Albert Collins.

On September 3rd, 1970, the band was shattered by the suicide of Alan Wilson. His death sparked reconstruction within the group and member changes have continued throughout the past three decades. On April 5th, 1981, at the Palamino in Los Angeles, gargantuan vocalist, Bob Hite, collapsed and died of a heart attack and on October 20th, 1997, Henry Vestine died in Paris, France following the final gig of a European tour. In 2008, singer/harmonica frontman Robert Lucas passed away from a drug overdose.

Despite these untimely deaths and assorted musical trends, Canned Heat has survived. They have performed at world-renowned venues such as Paris’ Olympia, both Fillmore Auditoriums, The Kaleidoscope, Carnegie Hall (with John Lee Hooker), Madison Square Garden and even Royal Albert Hall and have played more biker festivals and charity events than any other band in the world. They and/or their music have been featured on television (In Concert, David Frost, Merv Griffin, Midnight Special, Playboy After Dark, etc.), and in films (“Woodstock,” “Flashback,” and “Forrest Gump”) etc. Their legend has recently been heard and felt in various television commercials (“On The Road Again” for Miller Beer, “Goin’ Up The Country” for Pepsi, Chevrolet and McDonalds, “Let’s Work Together” for Lloyd’s Bank, England’s Electric Company and for Target

Stores along with other songs for 7-Up, Levi's and Heineken Beer).

Now, more than forty-five years later and with thirty-eight albums to their credit, Canned Heat is still going strong. They have been anchored throughout the past forty years by the steady hand of drummer/band leader Adolfo "Fito" de la Parra. Joining "Fito" is original bassist Larry "The Mole" Taylor and New Orleans legend, Dale Spalding on harmonica, guitar and lead vocals. Chicago great Harvey Mandel is the regular guitarist but has been temporarily replaced by John "JP" Paulus while "The Snake" deals with serious health issues.

Fito's book, "LIVING THE BLUES" tells the complete and outrageous Canned Heat story of "Music, Drugs, Death, Sex and Survival" along with over 100 captivating pictures from their past and is available through the band's website at cannedheatmusic.com and at most popular book outlets.

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CANNED HEAT INDIVIDUAL BIOGRAPHIES

ADOLFO "FITO" DE LA PARRA

DRUMS - PERCUSSION - VOCALS

Fito de la Parra began playing drums professionally from the age of 14. In 1958 he was a member of a Mexican rock band called Los Sparks. Later he played with some of Mexico's most famous rock bands, Los Sinners, Los Hooligans and with Javier Batiz.

In 1966 he moved to Los Angeles and became a member of Sotweed Factor and then left them to join Bluesberry Jam. He also backed The Platters, Etta James, The Rivingtons, Mary Wells and the Shirelles. He replaced Canned Heat's original drummer, Frank Cook and played his first gig with the band on December 1, 1967. He joined in time for their second album, Boogie with Canned Heat, and has played on every subsequent album up to present day. During his 40+ years with Canned Heat, Fito has also played with some of the greatest blues singers of our time including, Big Joe Turner, T-Bone Walker, Albert Collins, and George "Harmonica" Smith. His solid, basic drumming and fantastic solos have led to recording sessions with John Lee Hooker, Memphis Slim, and Clarence "Gatemouth" Brown. Fito has also written a book "LIVING THE BLUES" with his personal story and Canned Heat's, now available on the band's website cannedheatmusic.com and alibris.com. As "Keeper of the Flame" he has remained the band leader, rhythmic and spiritual force behind Canned Heat's music for over four decades. He has also produced three DVDs, "Boogie with Canned Heat", "Rock Made in Mexico", and "Fito de la Parra Drum Solos" and countless CDs for Canned Heat and other artists. He became a US citizen in 1984.

Fito is an avid motorcyclist and an animal lover, currently living in Ventura county, CA. In recent years he was the only member of the 1960s Canned Heat line-up that toured with the group, although in 2010 (and for most shows in 2009) Larry Taylor and Harvey Mandel rejoined the group and together with Fito are currently touring worldwide.

DALE SPALDING

LEAD VOCALS - SLIDE GUITAR - HARMONICA

Dale Spalding began playing harmonica and guitar as a young teen in Southern California. Recordings of Muddy Waters, BB King, Charlie Musselwhite, Sonny Terry and Brownie McGee, Little Walter, Sonny Boy Williamson, James Cotton, Jr Wells, John Lee Hooker as well as contemporary local bands like Canned Heat, Taj Mahal and George 'Harmonica' Smith were a steady musical diet. In the LA area many of the legendary bluesmen passed through to play live at places like The Ashgrove and The Golden Bear, and Spalding was there to take it all in.

In 1969 Dale moved to San Francisco where he studied harmonica under the guidance of the great Sonny Terry who brought his young student around and introduced him to Brownie McGee, Willie Dixon, Johnny Shines, Lafayette Leake, Big Walter 'shakey' Horton, and many other real bluesmen. After years of traveling and playing Spalding developed into a unique musician. In the early 90's Dale and long time friend Tomas Gargano formed a band that explored a variety of musical styles.

For a decade, the Dale Spalding Band worked in California and featured some of LA's finest musicians including the legendary drummer James Gadson, Texas saxophone ace Lon Price and the soulful Bruce Malament "Funky Mal" on piano. In 2000, the Grammy-winning latin conguero and band leader Poncho Sanchez heard Dale and his band, and they immediately became fast friends and musical brothers. Poncho featured Dale's vocals and funky harmonica on his "Latin Spirits" cd, and in 2003, on a recording of "MaryAnn" with Ray Charles on vocal.

Dale moved to New Orleans and established himself in the local music scene when Hurricane Katrina forced a relocation, this time to Austin, Tx. Where he regularly works with the musicians who define the Texas blues scene. He tours and records regularly, and has appeared with Dave Alvin, James Cotton, Marcia Ball, Ruthie Foster, Papa Mali, Otis Rush, Pinetop Perkins and Redd Volkaert, and is presently a member of Austin's premier blues band "Little Elmore Reed".

In 2007, Spalding met the great blues drummer, Fito de la Parra, and after playing numerous gigs together, Fito invited him to join his legendary blues rock band "Canned Heat", and as their newest member is on the road in the US and Europe. Keeping a busy schedule, he still appears with Poncho Sanchez, with his own band, and also as a solo performer

LARRY "THE MOLE" TAYLOR BASS GUITAR

born Samuel Taylor, June 26, 1942, New York, New York is an American bass guitarist, best known for his work as a member of Canned Heat from 1967. Before joining Canned Heat he had been a session bassist for The Monkees and Jerry Lee Lewis.[1] He is the younger brother of Mel Taylor, long-time drummer for The Ventures. Taylor played with Canned Heat from 1967 to 1970, and appeared with them at various festivals including the Monterey International Pop Festival and Woodstock. His band nickname was "The Mole." In addition to playing bass, he also played lead guitar on occasion. An example can be heard on the track "Down In the Gutter, But Free," on the album Hallelujah. In 1969, due to a dispute with Taylor, Henry Vestine left the band. Guitarist Harvey Mandel filled the void as the band's lead guitarist. In 1970, when John Mayall moved to Los Angeles, Taylor and Mandel quit Canned Heat to join him in the Bluesbreakers. After the Bluesbreakers tours, Taylor played briefly with the Sugarcane Harris Band (later called Pure Food and Drug Act). In 1974, Taylor became part of The Hollywood Fats Band led by Mike "Hollywood Fats" Mann.

In 1974, Taylor became part of The Hollywood Fats Band led by Mike "Hollywood Fats" Mann. The two of them joined Canned Heat for a King Biscuit Flower Hour concert in 1979. Taylor recorded Reheated in 1988, again with Canned Heat. He toured and recorded with his former band a few more times until 1999. In 2007, Taylor and Harvey Mandel reunited with Fito de la Parra and the rest of the current Canned Heat line-up to perform certain shows. Taylor, Mandel, and Fito were all in the line-up that played Woodstock.

Recently, Larry Taylor has become a leading exponent and practitioner of the acoustic upright bass in the contemporary blues scene. He is quite prominently seen with his upright bass in the live blues film, Lightning in a Bottle. Taylor has played on numerous Tom Waits albums and is the bass player in his touring band.

HARVEY MANDEL

LEAD GUITAR

Mandel was born in Detroit, Michigan but grew up in Morton Grove, Illinois, a suburb of Chicago and his first record was the album *Stand Back! Here Comes Charley Musselwhite's Southside Band* in 1966 with Charlie Musselwhite. Described in 1997's *Legends of Rock Guitar* as a "legendary" album, it was influential in bridging the gap between blues and rock and roll, with Mandel's "relentless fuzztone, feedback-edged solos, and unusual syncopated phrasing." He relocated to the San Francisco Bay Area, performing often at a club called *The Matrix*, where local favorites like Jerry Garcia or Elvin Bishop would sit in and jam. He then met up with pioneering San Francisco disc jockey and producer Abe 'Voco' Kesh (Abe Keshishian), who signed Mandel to Philips Records and produced his first solo album, *Cristo Redentor* in 1968. In retrospect, *Cristo Redentor* bears some resemblance to cuts and songs that were on Wes Montgomery's albums. Mandel recorded with Barry Goldberg on a bootleg from Cherry Records and recorded with Graham Bond. He cut two more solo LPs for Philips, *Righteous* (1969) and *Games Guitars Play* (1970), followed by three more solo albums for independent label Janus in the early '70s which include *Baby Batter*.

On the night that Henry Vestine quit *Canned Heat*, Mandel was in their dressing room at the Fillmore West. Mike Bloomfield joined them for the first set, and Mandel came in for the second set. His third performance with the band was the Woodstock Festival in 1969. During this same period, with *Canned Heat* bandmates Larry Taylor and Fito de la Parra, Mandel contributed to the "Music From Free Creek super session project." Mandel stayed with *Canned Heat* for a year, touring and recording material which appeared on three albums. *Let's Work Together*, a song by Wilbert Harrison which was included in the album *Future Blues* which became an international hit. He is also on the *Live in Europe* album prior to Alan Wilson's death. With *Canned Heat* bassist Larry Taylor, Mandel joined John Mayall's band for the next two years. He is heard playing on the two albums of that period *USA Union* and *Back to the Roots*. Freddie Roulette played with Mayall on *Jazz Blues Fusion*. In 1972, he teamed up with Don "Sugarcane" Harris (who had played violin for Mayall), Randy Resnick on guitar, Victor Conte on bass, and Paul Lagos on drums (who also played with Howard Wales, famous for a Wales and Garcia album) and formed the band *Pure Food and Drug Act*, which released one album, *Choice Cuts*.

JOHN PAULUS

LEAD GUITAR

John was born on April 8, 1953 in Bethlehem, PA. He soon moved to Florida and began playing guitar when he was just 10 years old. He added playing electric bass when he was 15 and soon became attracted to Blues and R&B as well as the rock music of the late 60's. JP, as he is known, became part of the South Florida R&B scene and began working and recording with the legendary Willie George Hale aka "Little Beaver" so called because of his teeth. JP played with other TK Records' artists including Betty Wright Benny Latimore, KC of the Sunshine Band and Bobby Caldwell. He also played guitar and bass on reggae artist Bob Andy's album "Friends" and on various tracks for King Sporty. It was during these recording sessions that he became friends and studied with bassist Jaco Pastorius. John also studied Jazz at the University of Miami in the early 70's before moving to Los Angeles in 1976.

In L.A., he became part of the “Angel City Rhythm Band” and played gigs with some of the Blues giants that came through town including Albert Collins, Lowell Fulson and Big Mama Thornton. He also played bass for bi-lingual, vocal legend, Andy Russell, who had big hits in the 40’s. In 1995, JP joined John Mayall’s Bluesbreakers on five-string bass and toured the world for five years and recorded two LPs, “Blues For The Lost Days” and “Padlock On The Blues.”

In 2000, JP joined Canned Heat and toured with them for five years and played on one of their best albums of the modern era, “Friends In The Can.” As Canned Heat’s Harvey Mandel deals with some major health issues, John Paulus has rejoined the band on both bass and guitar and is again part of the Canned Heat family.