

UNCLE BILL Short Bio

Originally formed in 1996, Uncle Bill re-introduced Australians to music they were already familiar with, as well as old-style traditional tunes, with instruments many had not seen played live in pubs before. Hale chose songs he had enjoyed playing with well-known local writers: Colin Hay, Paul Kelly, Broderick Smith, Paul Norton & Steve Boyd.

Paul Kelly and Renee Geyer saw the band play at a small hotel, and both used Uncle Bill as their backing band in 1997 on the fine country compilation CD from W. Minc, *Where Joy Kills Sorrow*.

Early in 1999, Paul Kelly collaborated with the band to work on a CD of his songs entitled *SMOKE*, some old gems, and some new ones, all given the special treatment of Uncle Bill's Bluegrass instrumentation and harmonies. The album scoring three industry awards from the Victorian Country Music Association, Best Group (open), Best Group (Victorian), and Album Of The Year.

The band disbanded in 2001, but an itch within Gerry caused him to reform it but with an entirely new line-up, a surprise to many on both counts. *"I am really excited by the new line-up, the chemistry of the band is exhilarating. There have been several versions of UB, but my new band is most definitely the best combination so far. I wouldn't have done it again any other way,"* quote by Gerry Hale.

The band's new album *Blue Mule* has just been released.