

Bill Heffernan  
***The Horses are  
Loose***

Bill Heffernan was born in the old Mt. Sinai Hospital at 100 Yorkville Ave., Toronto.

From Cape Breton parentage, and adopted at birth, young Billy grew up in Islington Ontario at the Six Points, nowadays the centre of modern Etobicoke. During his high

school years in the 60's he picked up a guitar, wrote a few original songs and performed at Hootenanny's in the west end with musical sidekick Greg Wallace, in a folk duo known as *Heff and Wally*.



The 70's saw Heffernan bounce around as a University drop out; factory labourer, mutual clerk on the Ontario Jockey Club Racetrack circuit, hockey arenas all over Ontario as an assistant coach in the old Ontario Provincial Jr. A league and as a talent scout for a prominent US College. Intermittent returns to University during this decade garnered him a degree in Theology and a Teachers degree.

Upon returning to school, now as a teacher, Heffernan dusted off his guitar and began telling his road stories to his students and singing with them. Swinging into the 80's he continued to moonlight as a professional hockey scout with the Winnipeg Jets putting in 7 years with the NHL club. He bowed out of hockey altogether to become the Head of a Guidance Department in Brampton, Ontario.

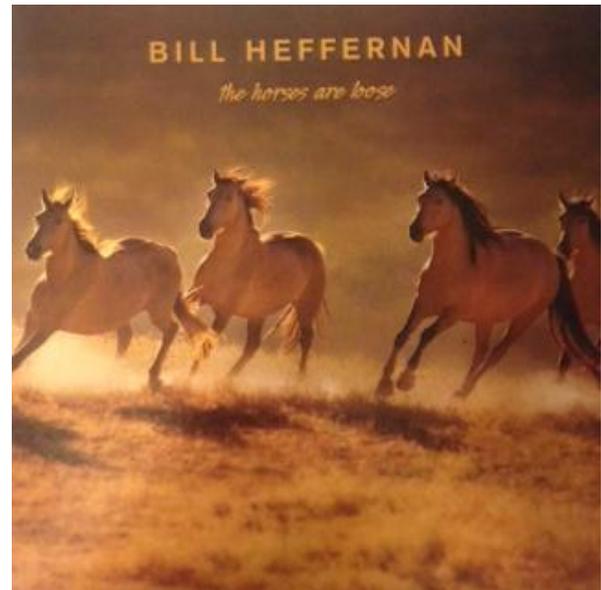
However the road kept calling: this time the shouts were from war torn Nicaragua and El Salvador, from refugees arriving in Toronto, and from the Days of Action protests to the International Solidarity Union movement. By 1988 he had helped co-found the Alive Poets Society, a monthly spoken word and music gathering at the iconic Cafe May, by 1990, the Trucks To Nicaragua Solidarity Project, and by 1992, the Casa Canadiense Community Development Centre, in Managua, Nicaragua, spending his summers in Central America. Throughout the 90's Heffernan continued to integrate music and spoken word with social justice endeavours and he began to perform more often around town, as a singer-songwriter, MC, host, and auctioneer, including as Festival Director of the Casa Folkfest, a one day Live Music festival that ran out of Rancho Relaxo for 10 years .

Already an award winning classroom teacher, in 2014 Heffernan received a prestigious award and a lifetime membership from OECTA, his teacher union for his work as a teacher/counsellor and his social justice activism. He continues to work part time with youth and young adults who do not have a high school diploma, and as a founding steering committee member of the Shine Music Bursary for youth. Of late, Heffernan has toured with multi award winning singer- songwriters Jon Brooks and Julian Fauth and fronts the Bill Heffernan Homeland Security Roadhouse Band (fighting terrorism since 1492! ). After decades of urging from friends, fans and family Heffernan has finally decided to chronicle his lifetime of songs and stories of the road. He has teamed up with the multi award-winning producer Alec Fraser, and at the age of 65 has released his first album: *The Horses Are Loose*.

You can always see and hear Heffernan each and every Saturday in Toronto, at the Gate 403 Saturday Sessions, now in its 12 season, presenting the finest of singer-songwriter/ roots- troubadours in a matinee format that runs every Saturday from Labour Day until Canada Day.

### *The Horses Are Loose*

1. 1492 (3:08)
2. Walls of Woodbridge (3:20)
3. Hide Out Refugee (4:30)
4. Sunstop and Sheep (4:58)
5. The Horses Are Loose (4:24)
6. Angelique (5:53)
7. Hey Mr. Dylan (3:59)
8. Glenn and the Geese (4:49)
9. Heart Full of Hank (1:43)
10. Day Turned to Night (4:32)
11. Guelph (3:30)
12. There'll Be No Walmarts Here (2:18)
13. Pass the Brandy Alison (2:57)
14. I've Got the All Expenses In, Pamela Wallin Blues (3:49)
15. I Saw Pete at 89 (2:18)
16. I Am Just a Singer/Thirsty Boots (6:28)



*\* All songs written by Bill Heffernan except Guelph written by Heffernan/Wallace and Thirsty Boots written by Eric Andersen*

#### **CD Release:**

Lula Lounge  
1585 Dundas St W, Toronto, ON  
For Reservations call: 416-588-0307  
April 17, 2016 • Doors: 6:30PM • Show: 7:30PM

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*"Bill Heffernan is a brilliant and versatile songwriter in the tradition of a Woody Guthrie or a Bob Dylan. His songs straddle the boundaries between folk, blues and country. Many are based on actual historical events (e.g. the hanging of Angelique) or address injustices of their time (e.g. the plight of El Salvadorean refugees). While some of his songs are more personal or whimsical (e.g., 'Pass the Brandy Allison'), many exhibit a strong commitment to social justice, as does Bill Heffernan's poetry. His lyrics are compelling and his tunes memorable. He presents his music with a charismatic, energetic, engaging and completely natural manner. Having had the opportunity to listen to him over the years, I have always thought that he belongs in the category of great Canadian songsters, among the Gordon Lightfoots, Stompin' Toms and Bob Snyders."*

- Julian Fauth, Juno Award Winning Blues Artist