

The Kilborn Alley Blues Band

One guy who was there said people were *running*, that he himself shot straight up out of the lawn chair he had parked in front of the main stage and *ran* to the blues festival tent where Kilborn Alley was playing. Two standing ovations later, Kilborn Alley laid down their instruments, champions of the gritty Chicago blues.

A long time pro on the blues scene came out of the Bossman Blues Center in Chicago well after 2 a.m. shaking his head in awe over Kilborn Alley; that night was the first time in he couldn't even remember how long he had stayed to hear a band's last set.

A blues and jazz club owner is blown away by the crowd response to Kilborn Alley. People are still coming up to him at Saturday breakfast, asking when he is having those guys back. Could he book them every month?

The Kilborn Alley Blues Band is special.

Did you know editors won't let writers use exclamation marks in newspaper stories? The *Kankakee Sunday Journal* blues reviewer has said Andrew Duncanson is "a natural at singing the blues!" Andrew's voice just keeps drawing stunning comparisons. Joe Asselin will almost certainly become one of the signature harp players of his generation. Duncanson is a killer guitarist. Ed O'Hara, the wise elder and percussion maniac, is one of the shrinking handful of drummers you can't take your eyes off. Chris Breen weaves the magical, seductive bass groove; funky Josh Stimmel on guitar, the master of the soul riff, rounds out the five-some. Tight. They have to be tight; they play *constantly*.

The last year has been an amazing time in the life of Kilborn Alley. Their self-titled 2003 album was used extensively in the sound track of the independent film *Envyng Alice*. They played a part in one public television special, and were the subject of another public television mini-documentary. Of course, they were tapped for several excellent blues festivals, including the inaugural Luther Allison Memorial Festival. The band took off most of the fall 2005 from performing to work on their new album, produced by Chicago guitar legend Nick Moss and set to be released on Blue Bella in the spring of 2006. With a median age of twenty-five, Kilborn Alley seems to be on the path to a bright blues future. But Kilborn Alley is, right *now*, the band you want to hear, the band that is going right straight ahead at the audience, pouring its energy into communicating with the crowd, not into musical chrome, buffing up their egos, diagnosing the state of the blues, or grubbing up some invisible career ladder. This is a real *band*, and they are blazing.

Kilborn Alley has opened for Kenny Wayne Shepherd, T-Model Ford, Tommy Castro, and Artie "Blues Boy" White. They have been on the bill with the late Little Milton on three occasions, plus Sam Lay, Elvin Bishop, Lonnie Brooks, Rod Piazza and the Mighty Flyers, Delbert McClinton, the late Willie Kent, Michael Burks, Jody Williams, Denise LaSalle, Reneé Austin, Rita Chiarelli, Jimmy Burns, E.C. Scott, Roy Hytower, Cash McCall, Floyd Taylor, Mofro, and many others. They have accompanied and jammed with the likes of David "Honeyboy" Edwards, the Bobby Rush Band, Joyce Lawson, Billy "Soul" Bonds, the late Percy Strother, Nick Moss on the stage at Buddy Guy's, Taildragger Jones, Mississippi Bill Abel, Frankie Lee, Pee Wee Hayes, Harmonica Khan, Shirley King, and Arizona's Bad News Blues Band. The guys in Kilborn Alley often play with Abraham Johnson and with saxophonist Dave Fauble, and they have a special relationship with W.C. Handy winner, Johnny "Yard Dog" Jones, who joins them for special events.

Adventurers in the blues, Kilborn Alley never plays a song the same way twice. Only now, they do their exploring with over six hundred shows under their belt, a whole bunch of new friends, and the lead-pipe certainty they can bring great blues pleasure to audiences everywhere.