

= Cliff Williams =

Clifford ' Cliff ' Williams (born 14 December 1949) is a British musician who was a member of the Australian hard rock band AC / DC as their bassist and backing vocalist from 1977 until his retirement in 2016 . He had started his professional music career in 1967 and was previously in the British groups Home and Bandit . His first studio album with AC / DC was Powerage in 1978 . The band , including Williams , was inducted into the American Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 2003 . Williams 's playing style is noted for basic bass lines which follow the rhythm guitar . Williams ' side projects , while a member of AC / DC , include benefit concerts and playing with Emir & Frozen Camels on their album San (2002) and a European tour . In 2016 , Williams announced he would be retiring from the music industry after AC / DC 's Rock or Bust World Tour .

= = Early career = =

Clifford Williams was born on 14 December 1949 in Romford , Essex , on the outskirts of London . The Williams family moved to Hoylake , near Liverpool , in 1961 , where he was influenced by the local Merseybeat movement and decided to become a rock musician . At the age of 13 , he and some friends formed a band . Williams has listed The Rolling Stones , The Kinks and blues musicians such as Bo Diddley as influences for his style . He mostly learned to play bass guitar by " listening to records and picking out notes " , with formal training limited to some lessons from a professional Liverpool bassist . Williams left school when he was 16 years old , becoming an engineer by day and musician by night .

In 1966 , Williams became a professional musician and moved back to London , where he worked at a demolition site and in supermarkets , and played in short @-@ lived bands . Williams met guitarist Laurie Wisefield (later a member of Wishbone Ash) , and the two became members of a band , Sugar , which soon broke up .

In 1970 , Williams and Wisefield joined with singer Mick Stubbs , keyboardist Clive John and drummer Mick Cook to form the progressive rock group Home . The band signed a recording deal with Epic Records and issued their debut LP , Pause for a Hoarse Horse , in 1971 . Home was a supporting act for Jeff Beck , Mott the Hoople , The Faces and Led Zeppelin . In 1972 , Jim Anderson replaced John on keyboards and Home released a self @-@ titled album , featuring their only hit single , " Dreamer " , which peaked at No. 41 in the UK album charts . Their next album , The Alchemist , followed in 1973 , but did not gain chart success . When British folk singer @-@ songwriter Al Stewart suggested that Home back him on his first American tour in March 1974 , Mick Stubbs left the group . The rest of the members became the Al Stewart Band , but split up after the tour .

Williams briefly played with the American band Stars before forming Bandit in 1974 . Bandit 's line @-@ up included vocalist Jim Diamond and drummer Graham Broad (later in Bucks Fizz and Roger Waters 's band) . The group signed with Arista Records and released a self @-@ titled album in 1977 . Bandit also performed as Alexis Korner 's backing band on 1977 's The Lost Album before disbanding later that year .

= = AC / DC = =

In 1977 , Williams considered retiring from music when Bandit disbanded , but one of the group 's guitarists , Jimmy Litherland , convinced him to audition for Australian heavy rockers AC / DC . They were looking for a bassist as Mark Evans had been fired shortly after recording the 1977 studio album Let There Be Rock . AC / DC had formed in Australia in 1973 and by mid @-@ 1977 the line @-@ up was Malcolm Young on rhythm guitar and backing vocals alongside his brother Angus Young on lead guitar , Phil Rudd on drums and Bon Scott on vocals . Williams said shortly after being told about AC / DC 's auditions , he saw the band on Top of the Pops and reacted positively , describing them as " outrageous " .

For his audition , Williams played four jam sessions with the band , and on 27 May 1977 , he was

asked to join AC / DC . Angus declared it was partly motivated because he thought the bassist 's good looks would attract more women to their concerts . Given Williams was replacing an Australian musician , he initially had difficulties obtaining a work permit to enter the country . His first performances with AC / DC were on the tour there supporting Let There Be Rock , with two secret gigs at Sydney 's Lifesaver . The album Powerage (1978) , produced by Vanda & Young , marked Williams 's studio debut . Williams has remained in AC / DC ever since , with only a temporary departure in 1991 as he suffered a kidney infection , during which Paul Greg had to play bass for some North American concerts in the Razors Edge World Tour . The only current member who has been with the band longer is Angus Young . Along with playing bass , Williams also sings backing vocals . His favourite albums with the band are Powerage and Back in Black .

Since Williams ' introduction to the band , AC / DC has been inducted to the Australian Recording Industry Association 's Hall of Fame (in 1988) , and the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame (in 2003) . In 1982 , Kerrang ! readers voted him as Best Bassist of the year .

On July 8th , 2016 , Williams announced his plans to retire following the Rock or Bust World Tour . He cited the recent departures of other band members - Malcolm could not record the album due to dementia , Phil Rudd could not tour following a house arrest , and singer Brian Johnson only performed in half the concerts before a medical leave - as a reason for his decision , feeling AC / DC " it 's a changed animal " .

= = Personal life = =

Williams ' wife , Georganne , is from the US state of Louisiana (north shore) . After they married in 1980 , he moved permanently to the United States . Initially the couple lived in Hawaii , but Williams found the islands too isolated and the school system lacking . In 1986 , they moved to Fort Myers , Florida , following a suggestion from AC / DC bandmate Brian Johnson (Bon Scott 's replacement) , who lived in Fort Myers Beach at the time , but has since moved to nearby Sarasota . Cliff has been known to spend time in Aix @-@ en @-@ Provence among distant relatives , including local French guitar player Noah Tchenio . The couple have two children : Erin (born 1985) who is a model @-@ actress under the name Erin Lucas , and Luke (born 1986) . His hobbies include fishing and amateur flying .

= = Side projects = =

In 1984 , Williams played bass and backing vocals on Adam Bomb 's song " I Want My Heavy Metal " , for the album Fatal Attraction . During AC / DC 's hiatus in the 2000s , Williams joined Bosnian musician Emir Bukovica 's band Emir & Frozen Camels . The group recorded the album San in 2002 and played in some European clubs . In 2005 , Williams and AC / DC singer Johnson played in a hurricane relief event in Florida , promoted by the John Entwistle Foundation . There Williams met drummer Steve Luongo , president of the foundation and former member of the John Entwistle band . Luongo later brought Williams , Johnson , and guitarist Mark Hitt for the Classic Rock Cares charity project . The quartet composed and recorded ten tracks in the studio in 2007 , and followed that with a tour to raise funds for the foundation . In 2011 , Williams played on a benefit concert organized by Mark Farner . Williams said he also occasionally plays with a rhythm and blues band from Fort Myers called The Juice .

= = Style = =

Williams 's role in AC / DC is to provide steady but basic bass lines which follow the rhythm guitar of Malcolm Young , consisting mostly of eighth notes . His bass lines are sometimes written by Malcolm and Angus Young during composition , and at other times Williams develops them based on the other instrumental tracks . Williams said he plays " the same thing in every song , for the most part . In AC / DC 's music , the song is more important than any individual 's bit in it . " He added that " complex [bass] lines wouldn 't add anything to a guitar @-@ oriented band like ours ,

so I try to create a bottom layer that drives what our guys are doing on top . " Williams has no difficulty keeping his low profile within the band , declaring that " I don 't have any problem doing this , because I enjoy playing simply . I never feel angry or prisoner . " His playing technique is mostly centred around downpicking , with occasional use of plucking to mute the strings , which he says " adds more definition and tightens up the notes , and it gives the sound less sustain " .

= = Equipment = =

In his first appearance in 1977 , he used a Gibson ripper only for the " Let There Be Rock " music video . Cliff Williams ' trademark instrument is the StingRay and other basses by Music Man , strung with D 'Addario (.045 , .065 , .085 , .105) flatwounds in the studio and roundwound XLs in concert . Williams states that despite trying other basses over the years , he always goes back to Music Man 's instruments , which he described as " a tremendous work horse of a bass " . Other basses used include the Fender Precision Bass , a Gibson Thunderbird non @-@ reverse , Fender Jazz Bass , the Steinberger L @-@ series , a Gibson EB @-@ 3 and at least two LAG Custom basses . Williams has used 3 Ampeg SVT @-@ 810E cabinets with 2 SVT @-@ 4PRO Heads . If there was any interference with the wireless systems , he has used cables in his live performances .