

# Billy's Big Adventure (or "Free Billy!")



*Drawing: Mrs. Penny Clifford*

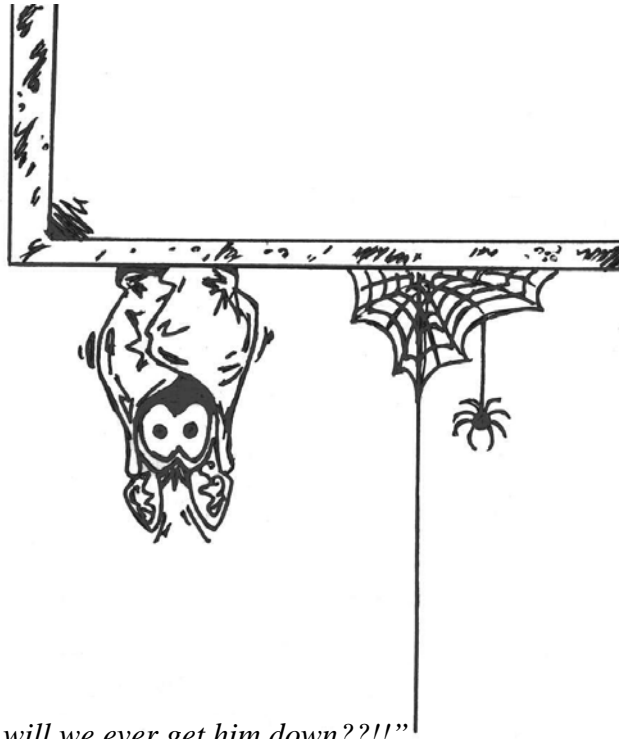
Billy was waiting—waiting for his chance to fly free. Ever since the day he fainted in the garden, people had been taking care of him. The people looked like giants to Billy, but he was not afraid of them. They were trying to be kind. The food they fed him was yummy, but not as good as mosquitoes and bugs.

Billy had lived in an attic in North Side, and was used to flying all over Grand Cayman. Sitting in a box all day was no fun for a bat. The people tried to make him fly in a room inside their house, but Billy knew he needed more space. Everyone thought he couldn't fly, but Billy was waiting!

The kind people took Billy to visit children at schools around the island so that they could touch and see a real live bat. Billy liked the children and enjoyed these trips.

Finally, the big day came. Billy went with his people to visit the students at First Baptist School. Since so many students wanted to meet Billy, everyone gathered in the big new church. Billy saw the huge room. He echolocated and knew that here was plenty of space. Zoom! Billy took off! Round and round the church he flew. The students clapped and cheered. Billy could fly after all!

Billy flew into a speaker on the ceiling of the church. “This looks like a cozy place to sleep!” he thought. Into the speaker he went. Billy’s people were worried. How would they get him down again? They tried playing loud music to make his speaker more uncomfortable, but only the teachers down the hall were upset by that. Billy slept on and on.



*“How will we ever get him down??!”*

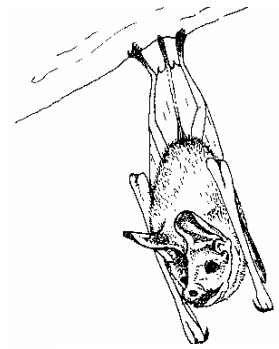
*Drawing: Billy Bryan*

The people came back that night, and the next, and next. Billy liked to fly out and visit them, but he did not like to land on the benches or the floor. He hung from the ceiling and watched them holding up his food dish, but Billy was not hungry. He had plenty of fat to live on. He had been guzzling food and sleeping in his box for three months!

Finally, late Saturday night, Billy noticed the people putting up something strange in the church. It was a long thin curtain of netting. They were also playing loud music about a phantom in an opera house. Billy’s speaker box shook with the loud music. Billy flew around the net and looked at it. “Hmm” he thought. “Maybe I’ll just rest on that until this music stops.” Billy landed on the net. “Oops! My feet are tangled in this thing! Oh look! There is one of my giant people! She is untangling me now. Good!”

The people were whooping and laughing. They ran into a very small room (too small for flying!) and fed Billy some of his second-favourite food. Remember that his very favourite food was bugs!

Now the people knew that Billy could fly. “We can set him free!” they said.



*Drawing: Mrs. Penny Clifford*



*Drawing: Mr. Chris Mann*

Billy’s people and all the students of Grand Cayman will miss Billy, but it is good to know that he is back with his family; flying free and eating mosquitoes, moths and beetles.

The good people at First Baptist Church are happy too. Now their church is bat-free. And, because of them, Billy is a free bat!

*Billy is happy now, and that makes us happy too!*



*Billy and his friends are flying free in the night!*

*Drawing: Mr. Chris Mann*