

# Grafton duo Cedarail has Timeless release

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GRAFTON — David Hayes and Wendy Bellan of Cedarail announce their third all-original release, which they consider some of their best work to date.

*Just Timeless* has its share of good old love songs (like the title track, *Like A Winter's Day*, *Falling In Love*, *I May Not Love Again*), with forays into folk (*We Can't See The Scars*) and blues (*Living With The Blues*). But Cedarail always includes some very enjoyable playful tracks as well.

Rico Rico is based on their recent trip to Cuba, where they enjoyed the music and mojitos along with the beautiful scenery and lovely people — though there's always the danger of whiplash, watching the girls in postage-stamp-size bikinis.

The track includes steel drums (an example of the unusual instruments one can hear on the CD), and Hayes said the title was a phrase they heard often. Loosely translated, it means, "Is everybody happy?"

*Whitehouse Hotel* is the name of an actual Peterborough hotel, and the song is about some girls having fun there while their men are out moose hunting, drinking and dancing and enjoying the country music.

"It's based on a real gig we had playing there," Bellan said.

The Squirrel Song is about their own on-going trouble with red squirrels and chipmunks, the most memorable example of which is the \$500 in damages to Bellan's truck after the little creatures built a nest in its air filter (which had been shredded for nesting material). Mechanic Steve Mayhew (who gets his own line in the song) said he was surprised she could drive it to his shop.

Bellan estimates they have trapped and relocated more than 50 red squirrels and chipmunks.

In Memory of Paris November 2015 is an instrumental inspired by the terrible events there last year.

"We didn't feel we had a right to talk about it, because we weren't there," he said.

They used to write songs of different genres, Hayes added.

"Now we write songs and we let them evolve."

Though they compose and record locally, it surprises Hayes and Bellan that people are downloading their music all over the world. They printed out a list from April to demonstrate — 160 countries where their music is playing, from Albania to Zimbabwe. There are countries where, as far as they know, people would find it difficult (if not impossible) to obtain downloading devices, as well as countries they have never heard of before.

Hayes noted their popularity in Europe, where they seem to gravitate to folk-soft rock-acoustic music. And they seem to be getting more downloads from China as well. He wonders if people just surf the playlist and look for interesting names.

The list proves one sad fact, he said.

"It's much easier for us to get airplay for our music all over the world, including the States, than Canada. If you ask, radio stations all over Canada will just say, 'You have to talk to the mother station. If they put you on list, we can play you.'"

That's even true for the CBC, he added, where aspiring artists are told they have to be picked up by the CBC library to obtain airplay — though Hayes is pleased to say that *Just Timeless* has been picked up by the CBC, a first for Cedarail.

Things have changed in the music business, he said, and the changes just keep coming.

Going to a system where they got a few cents royalty on downloads instead of on records sold morphed into the ability for people to download without paying. Now the last couple of years have brought Spotify.



CECILIA NASMITH/NORTHUMBERLAND TODAY Wendy Bellan is enjoying her new compact bass, David Hayes loves his old rockabilly guitar, and both continue to delight in a life of music as Cedarail. Their third all-original CD *Just Timeless* is getting downloads around the world.

"People can listen to our music endlessly, so why would you need to download it," he said.

Hayes has noticed a difference their live performances as well. Because there are so few of them, bands are undercutting each other just to play. They see it for themselves when they name what they consider a reasonable price for a Cedarail gig and are told the venue can get a whole band for that price.

Any professional charges for his or her time, Bellan pointed out, and for musicians it's not just the few hours of the gig — it's rehearsing and preparation, transportation to and from the scene, set-up and tear-down.

A lot of municipalities and other organizations are slashing their entertainment budgets for big events and cannot afford to pay a musical act, which means they have to obtain sponsorship somewhere.

"If you have a day job, you don't care so much. But not if you're trying to make a living at it," Hayes

said.

Even his music students are decreasing in number, partly because people are tightening their belts and partly because of the conviction of young people today that you can go on-line and teach yourself anything.

Once his students would have had the goal of becoming studio musicians, and all of them could read music. Now he gets fewer aspiring professional musicians, and not that many of his students read music.

It's almost a necessity to read music for some instruments (like piano), but less so for others (like ukulele and guitar).

"If you want to sit around the campfire and play four or five Neil Young songs, it's not so important," he allowed.

Gigs and students may not be as easy to come by as they once were, but one thing Hayes and Bellan have been enjoying is a community project they began a couple of years ago. They got the sponsorship of the Rotary Club to offer classes to the students at Cobourg's St. Michael Elementary School, and are delighted to share the gift of music with the students.

And it has been transformative to teach the other end of the spectrum, as they volunteer their time to offer free seniors' instruction at the Colborne Public Library. Bellan takes on the beginners who, once they achieve some proficiency, advance to Hayes's classes.

It's been especially rewarding to see the excitement happen as these senior students begin to play in concerts.

"A lot of them are in their 70s and 80s, and it's the first time they have ever been on stage," Hayes said.

As a life-long professional musician, he finds their excitement brings to mind the joy of his first appearances, where whatever money he earned was secondary to the chance to play to an audience.

"We forget that, as we do it for a living and get into the rat race," he said.

"Then you see that and think, 'That's how it used to be for me. There's more to music than all the politics and craziness.'"

They expect to continue ukulele lessons in the fall, and to carry on their weekly radio show *It's All About The Music* on Northumberland 89.7 FM. They originally focused on local artists but, with fewer and fewer young people getting into music, have expanded to put on shows about professional artists and different genres. Sometimes they even play their own music.

At this point, 62 of their shows are in podcast format and free to download. As they are available internationally, they find themselves receiving e-mail that has messages like, "We are from Ireland, and we love your show."

They love the truly local nature of the station, which is in contrast to the trend for stations to get bought up and become part of big conglomerates.

Even the CBC has done this, Hayes said, consolidating their stations in little towns into centralized facilities in Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver. It's sad, he added, considering how much local radio meant to him when he was growing up in Nova Scotia. And the support of these little stations was key in helping legendary singer Anne Murray get her career into high gear.

"Stations like (89.7 FM) are helping keep the local concerns alive," he said.

"They even have a new show about Aboriginal situations and concerns, something that probably wouldn't happen otherwise." *It's All About The Music* can be heard in podcasts, and live on Wednesdays at 7 p.m.

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**HOBART, Jane Catherine**  
Suddenly at the Northumberland Hills Hospital on Tuesday, July 19, 2016 in her 75th year. Beloved wife of David Hobart. Loving mother of John Paul (Rhonda), Brian (Angela), Dennis (Tina) and Greg (Lisa). Dear grandmother of Ryan, Ainsley (Bradley), Jack, Harry, Justin (Kristin), Michael (Amber), Bailee and Rayleigh. Cherished daughter of Earl and Jenny Boyle, and Harold and Catherine Lawless. Sister of Tom Boyle (Betty), Pauline Ireland (Bob), Bill Lawless (Karen) and the late Leo, Frank and Eugene Boyle. Fondly remembered by her sisters-in-law Marg, Donna and Joanne. Friends are invited to call at the **MACCOUBREY FUNERAL HOME**, 30 King St. E., Cobourg on Thursday from 6-9 pm. A funeral mass will be held in St. Michael's Catholic Church on Friday, July 22, 2016 at 10 am. Interment in St. Mary's Cemetery, Grafton at 1:30 pm. If desired donations may be made to the Heart & Stroke Foundation. Condolences received at [www.MacCoubrey.com](http://www.MacCoubrey.com)

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