

Fans, musicians rallying around injured folk singer

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Correct. Stringband was the proudly Canadian folk group that toured festivals and church basements across the land and beyond and cut six albums from 1971-86.

"We were too political," Ms. Hammond said. "We were anti-nuclear, anti-Vietnam. And we were writing intentionally about Canada before there was CanCon (Canadian content rules). We were troublemakers."

'TROUBLEMAKERS'

Ms Hammond toured and released CDs as a solo artist before settling into a career in publishing. And there were Stringband reunion tours in 1991 and 2003.

She wrote plays and toured with one of them. She wrote for Chatelaine on the death of her parents and sister in quick succession.

She hosted CBC radio shows Summershift and Musical Friends in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

But, like the Stouffville coffee house audience member, the folk fans and colleagues have not forgotten.

Fellow Stringbander Bob Bossin has organized benefit concerts in Ms Hammond's name for Sunday and Monday at Hugh's Room in Toronto. All but sold out, the shows will feature an all-star lineup of roots talent, including Stuart McLean, Garnet Rogers, Sylvia Tyson, Nancy White, Don Ross, Ron Nigrini, Moxxy Fruvous, Mike Ford and Jian



MARIE-LYNN HAMMOND: Former Stringband member amazed by response from folk community.

Gomesi and a re-united Stringband.

Ironic, since Ms. Hammond once penned a song

called Oh No, Not Another Benefit. But there are expensive chiropractic and eye massage treatments and no paid sick leave, extended medical insurance or disability coverage to pay the bills.

"I can't believe the response; it's overwhelming," she said this week. "People find out and write or phone you. They send \$30 or \$40. One person said, 'I saw you guys in Sault Ste. Marie in 1973 and you changed my life. You sang about Canada.'"

"It's amazing to hear that now. You don't know. You stand up on stage, do your thing and go home. But you don't have to be Madonna or Celine Dion to have an effect on people and that's really gratifying." She can drive during day

light hours and the eyepatch can come off as vision returns to the damaged eye. But the effects linger.

LOCALLY INVOLVED

"It's like being stoned all the time. It's a '60s flashback," she said.

"But I'm just going on the assumption the healing will

continue."

The same goes for her interrupted introduction to Stouffville.

"I came to this town to get involved and make this my life," she said. "I'm still going to."

For more information, go to marilynhammond.com

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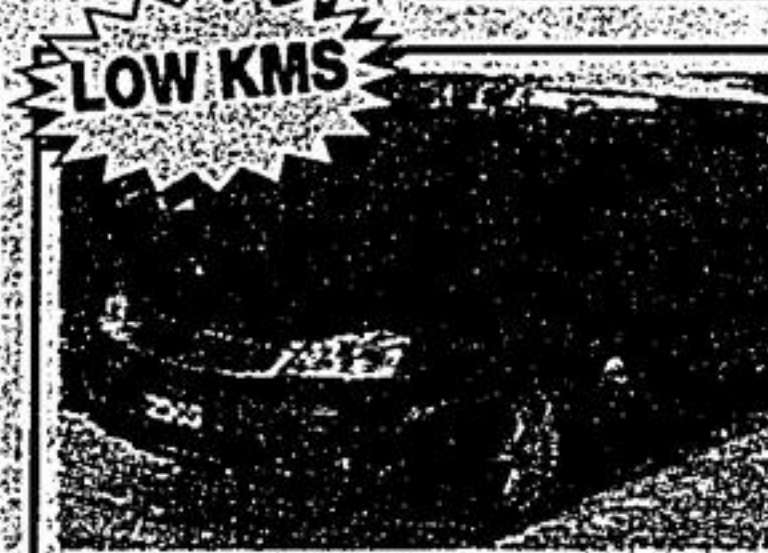
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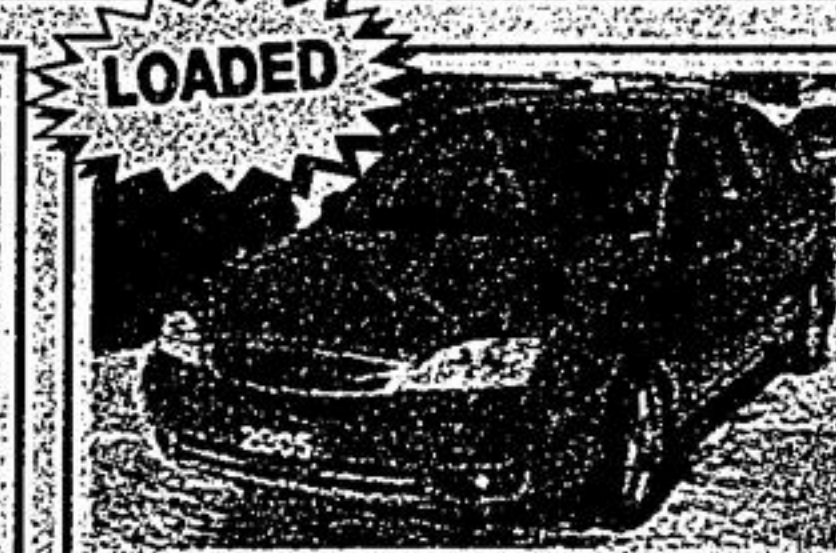
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