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COMING UP: Big band tunes at Thanksgiving weekend show



The Good Times Orchestra has become almost the house band at the Cedar Beach Pavilion on Musselman's Lake. They play their fourth show of the year Saturday night.

'We're not a rock band. We're all grey-haired.'

Ted Richardson Good Times Orchestra

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Good Times quaranteed during lake dance party

BY SANDRA BOLAN sbolan@yrmg.com

Three years ago, Ted Richardson received a call from well-known music lover Fred Foster who requested they meet at his house.

Little did the trumpet player know two other musicians were also called to the meeting. Its purpose? To revive the big band era of music.

All of the men assembled at the Foster home were part of swing bands that used to regularly play Toronto's Palais Royale.

With Mr. Foster as the promoter, a six-piece band was assembled and they called themselves the Good Times Orchestra.

"It was the music of good times years back," Mr. Richardson said of the band name.

Between 2007 and 2009, the band, whose youngest member is just the other side of 70, has played 60 shows.

"We get a lot of repeat work. People want us back," Mr. Richardson said.

The Good Times Orchestra has played the Cedar Beach Pavilion in Musselman's Lake three times this year and has a fourth show scheduled for Saturday.

"We play what the people want to hear," Mr. Richardson said.

And what people want to listen to are the oldies but the goodies such as Stardust, Moonlight Serenade, Spanish Eyes, Hello Dolly and I'll Be Seeing You.

"We're not a rock band," Mr. Richardson said. "We're all grey-haired."

Not only did Mr. Foster, who died this past June, want to keep swing music alive, he wanted to also bring back ballroom dancing.

BALLROOM DANCING

Mr. Foster and his wife spent years dancing six nights a week at the Palais Royale until it closed in the 1990s, according to Mr. Richardson. That's where he met the musicians in the Good Times Orchestra.

The lakeside spot has since reopened but as a private club.

"There are some very fine dancers," Mr. Richardson said of the television show So You Think You Can Dance Canada. "They just don't know how to do a foxtrot."

Tickets for the Oct. 9 show, which runs from 8:30 to 11 p.m., are \$10. There is a cash bar, grill and spot prizes. The Cedar Beach Pavilion is at 155 Cedarvale Blvd. Musselman's Lake, just east of Ninth Line, south of Aurora Road.