**Pat O’Kane Bio**

Pat O’Kane was born in Pembroke, Ontario, and moved to Oshawa at the young age of two. In his twelfth year, he moved to North Bay with his family which became his permanent home.

Pat was involved in music early in his life, growing up to the sounds of Simon & Garfunkel, Gordon Lightfoot and a host of country and folk singers. His parents bought him his first acoustic guitar at age seven but it wasn’t until his teenage years when he really began honing his guitar skills. While classic rock stoked the musical fires within him, his true love of music was rooted in folk, in particular, finger picking style guitar. Musicians, to name a few, which influenced this love were Paul Simon, James Taylor, Jim Croce and Peter, Paul and Mary.

His first public performance was at a bar in North Bay called the Lion’s Heart where he was the first to introduce live music to that pub. Encouraged by friends and his future wife, he performed there every Saturday night for three years until moving into a banking career. Numerous relocations in his newfound role pulled him away from the music he loved for about a four year period. He returned to music after arriving back in North Bay in 1991 where he connected with an old friend who, together, started up a duo called Guys Without Ties. This popular duo performed regularly at bars in North Bay along with various shows throughout Muskoka and northern Ontario.

During this time, Pat also co-founded a classic rock band called MLC which performed regularly in the North Bay area and parts of Northern Ontario.

Pat later formed a new, vocally driven band called Maple Hill Project which also performed in the north for an eleven year period.

After retiring as a branch manager with TD after 32 years, he continued to perform with these various groups while starting up a wood craftsman business called, Birch Haven Wood ‘n Craft, designing and creating numerous hand crafted projects including everything from dog dishes to epoxy river dining room tables.

Today, he continues his wood business, volunteers in North Bay with various groups and, along with his wife of 39 years, enjoys spending his summers in the Ottawa area with his two children and granddaughter. Musically, Pat still plays with MLC, a smattering of other musicians and shows, and has recently turned to Bluegrass playing in a group called Simply Blu, performing at various festivals in Ontario.

Pat was honoured when approached by Stan French to perform on his song alongside a solid list of accomplished North Bay musicians. Being a boomer himself, Pat can certainly relate to the story told in Stan’s ‘Being a Boomer Ain’t Bad’.