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Concert honouring Gordon Lightfoot coming to Fiddle Park

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The songs of legendary Canadian singer/songwriter Gordon Lightfoot have been heard across the country for more than five decades and will continue to be heard in the Shelburne community this coming summer.

Leisa Way and her Wayward Band will bring their ?Early Morning Rain? concert to Fiddle Park in Shelburne on August 13 at 7:30 p.m.

?It's a joy to be in our hometown area, so that the hometown crowds can come see the concert. We love coming here, the audiences are always so warm and friendly. We look forward to every show, but to be in Shelburne will be special,? said Way.

Written, produced, and performed by Leisa Way herself, ?Early Morning Rain' celebrates Gordon Lightfoot's legendary career through a comprehensive tour of his life and music told through stories and performance.

?Musical storytelling is how I define my concerts. We sing the songs of these wonderful artists and tell the stories behind the songs,? explained Way. ?The audience learns something that perhaps they hadn't known about the artist through these wonderful stories that we link the songs together with.?

Way and her band originally debuted the ?Early Morning Rain' concert in February 2020, with a three-week sold-out run at Theatre Orangeville. Their plan was to tour the concert in 26 theatres throughout 2020, but those plans were delayed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Reworking the concert for reopening, Way chose to delve deeper into her own personal reasons for producing ?Early Morning Rain,' specifically speaking about her dad, who died in 1999 and was a Gordon Lightfoot fan.

?My dad couldn't carry a tune in a bucket, but when he was in his workshop he'd sing Gordon Lightfoot,? said Way.

She also recalled a memory of driving to her family's camp in Northern Ontario and her dad slipping an 8-track tape into the stereo of his truck, where she'd stand between the seats and sing to Lightfoot's songs.

?It was something I wanted to do for myself, to honour my father by singing and presenting a concert he would love so much,? said Way.

Way and her band reopened ?Early Morning Rain' on stage at the Orillia Opera House, in Lightfoot's hometown of Orillia, on May 6. The concert was held just days after news broke of Lightfoot's death at Sunnybrook Hospital in Toronto at the age of 84.

?It was overwhelming and powerful in many ways. We were more nervous than we've ever been because we knew the responsibility of giving Gord's fans a great send off for him,? said Way.

Way also addressed how Lightfoot's death has changed the concert.

?We feel even more of a responsibility to deliver the best concert we can musically, to honor him ? we carry that with us,? said Way. ?I hope that our concert will be a healing event for folks who come see us.?

Audience members will have an opportunity to hear some of Lightfoot's greatest hits and fan favourites, including ?Sundown,? ?If

You Could Read My Mind,? and ?Early Morning Rain? ? the title song of the concert.

Some other songs that Way noted as looking forward to performing include; ?Black Day in July,? which will be performed by new band member Brant Garrett; ?Home From the Forest,? where the band moves closer to allow the audience a look at the instruments; and ?Whispers of the North,? the inspiration for the concert's set design.

?You'll hear a lot of your favourites,? said Way. ?He wrote over 400 songs so we'll try to get as many as we can in, in the two-hour time we have together.?

The summer concert will mark the third performance that Way and her band have done with the Rotary Club of Shelburne as a fundraiser for the local chapter. In 2021, Way brought her show ?Rhinestone Cowgirl, A Tribute to Dolly Parton? to the community, and last year her smash hit concert ?Rock n' Roll is Here to Stay? kicked off the 2022 Heritage Music Festival.

?We're happy to have Leisa back again. Her shows are always highly entertaining and draw an enthusiastic crowd. To be able to celebrate the songs of a true legendary Canadian, Gordon Lightfoot, it's something that can't be missed,? said Shelburne Rotary co-president Bobbi Ferguson.

The Rotary Club of Shelburne will use the funds raised through the event to help with food insecurity initiatives, specifically those geared toward youth and seniors.

Tickets for ?Early Morning Rain' are now available for purchase and range from $15 to $65. Tickets can be purchased through the link: https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/early-morning-rain-celebrating-the-legend-of-gordon-lightfoot-tickets-630193835727.