



Photographs: courtesy of Men in Suits

Lead vocalist and Lake of Bays cottager Gerry Throop jams with bass player Stewart Borden. Both are with the band Men in Suits.

Bay Street rhythm

Article by Sandy Lockhart

After a hard week on Bay Street, the members of Men in Suits have been known to unwind by jamming at a boathouse on Lake of Bays where a few of the musicians cottage.

“Humbly, I say it’s pretty good music, on par with bar bands and pretty much professional,” Gerry Throop, lead vocalist and guitarist, says of the band’s music. “We play pure dance music. Sometimes we play non-stop without a break.”

Men in Suits is a band made up primarily of Bay Street executives who occasionally entertain crowds of several hundred people. They label themselves as “the Bay street band that you can dance to.” Their play list contains everything from Echo Beach and Blondie’s Call Me to some old Beatles tunes.

In August, the band will be performing in Muskoka and helping a local charity in the process. Along with the Strung-Out Troubadours, the Men in Suits are set to perform at Hospice Muskoka’s Summer Sizzler fundraiser on Friday, Aug. 21 at The Rosseau, a J.W. Marriott Resort and Spa in Minett.

“If you want to have a party and the best barbecue of the season, why not have it at The Rosseau,” says

JoAnne Korten, who heads up Hospice Muskoka’s philanthropy and community outreach.

At Hospice Muskoka’s Summer Sizzle event, the Strung-Out Troubadours will open and then will join Men in Suits later for a few more songs. The Troubadours are a renowned jazz duo made up of Rik Emmett, formerly of Triumph, and Dave Dunlop.

What makes the Men in Suits, comprised of Gerry Throop, Jim Hardy, Stewart Borden, Vince Mazza, Don Tapscott and Niki Tapscott, different than many bands is that they don’t charge for their time and only ask for expenses to be covered.

Throop was in an informal band with Hardy when he met Tapscott. He invited Tapscott to come out and jam with the band after the two got to know each other through their kids’ hockey. Throop packed a guitar for a hockey tournament and the rest is history.

“Since we all decided not to pursue music as a career, we jammed just for fun,” he says. Then they played a fundraiser at Throop’s son’s school and their philanthropic music career got rolling. Borden, who



Don Tapscott often invites the band members to jam in his new boathouse.

had played with Throop in the past, joined them at the school event. “The harmony and quality of our music was good; it worked very well,” Throop says.

Next came Baystock, a battle of the bands for Bay Street musicians.

“It just pushed us to a higher level. We grew more serious,” says Throop.

More than just a hobby, they utilize the band as an avenue to support charitable causes they believe in.

“Thankfully, we don’t have to rely on music for a living,” Throop says.

Currently, Men in Suits plays five or six events per year. “It gives us an audience and a reason to play. We are getting a following,” says Throop.

For years, Men in Suits have jammed in the boathouse of Tapscott’s Lake of Bays cottage. He’s had a cottage in Muskoka for 26 years and recently moved to a new one.

“In the new cottage, the garage has been turned into the band concert theatre and dance hall with a whole sound system and full set up of theatrical lights.”

As for his cottage neighbours, Tapscott says, “We find the delivery of a bottle of wine in advance is best for neighbourly relations. If it’s going really late, we invite them to take part.”

Tapscott’s daughter Niki Tapscott joined the band a few years ago.

“Niki used to join us in jam session in Don’s boathouse. She fit nicely and has now really emerged as a performer,” says Throop.

Tapscott says having his daughter Niki play in the band is “one of the coolest things in my life.” He is



Photograph: courtesy of Men in Suits

Men in Suits actually has one woman in the band. Jim Hardy, lead guitar, with Niki Tapscott, vocals, Vince Mazza, drums and Gerry Troop perform for charity events.

thrilled to be able to spend time with his daughter while sharing his love of music with her. “The two combined is over the moon,” he confesses.

Throop also has a Muskoka connection. He has had his Lake of Bays cottage for about 10 years but has been visiting friends in the area for years. He estimates he has attended 40 or 50 shows at the Kee to Bala, including years ago when Emmett was there with Triumph. Borden has had a family cottage in the area for years.

Men in Suits have performed in the Lake of Bays area over the years, including an event in which they

played with musicians Marc Jordan and Amy Sky. “That’s another little thrill for us,” says Throop. “As a charity band, when we get to play with real musicians.”

As for the upcoming Summer Sizzler, the band is looking forward to the event and hopes people come out to support Hospice Muskoka, a not-for-profit volunteer-based organization that assists people who are dealing with life-threatening illness.

“We want people to come,” says Tapscott. “When people come to our events, they say it was the best party ever.” 



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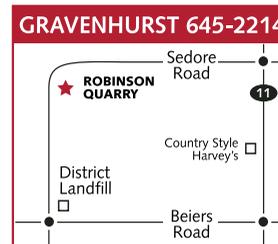
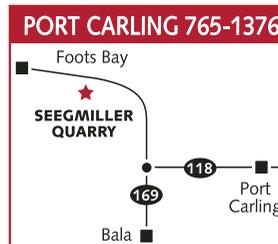
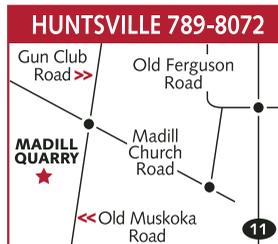
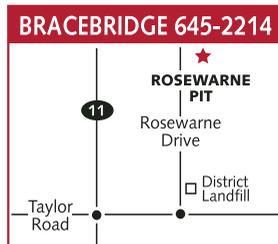
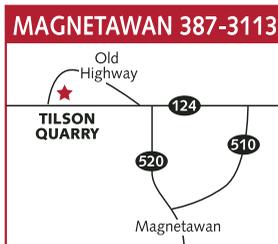


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