



*As the Years Go By ... Conversations with Canada's Folk, Pop & Rock Pioneers.* By Mark Kearney and Randy Ray.

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Since moving from Germany to Canada I acquired a number of Canadian customs: a tendency to apologize and a fondness for Tim Hortons' Double-Double, to give two examples. Each day I dive deeper into Canadian culture and history. Reviewing *As the Years Go By ... Conversations with Canada's Folk, Pop & Rock Pioneers*, by Mark Kearney and Randy Ray gave me a wonderful

opportunity to learn more about Canadian pop/rock music and its history. The book focuses on musicians who had achieved popularity between the 1950s and the 1980s, and subsequently slipped out of the limelight. *As the Years Go By* is based on articles originally published as a newspaper feature between the mid-1980s and the early 1990s. They are compiled here with updated information on the artists' stories. Among the nine chapters are those featuring the careers of "Early Pioneers," such as Terry Black, Bobby Gimby, and Adam Timoon; R'n'B and soul artists, such as Bush, Jay Jackson, and The Silhouettes; Montreal musicians, such as Offenbach, The Bells, The Haunted; and artists described as "More Rock than Pop," among them Christmas, Steppenwolf, and Leigh Ashford. The authors purposely excluded well-known Canadian artists such as Neil Young or Joni Mitchell due to the fact that "their stories have been told in countless other books and compilations" (p. 11).

Each chapter contains a collection of two-to-three page articles that generally provide a historical overview followed by information on the musician's development after their greatest musical success. The entry for the singer Shawne Jackson, for instance, discusses the 1974 hit "Just as Bad as You," and her later career as a jingle recording artist and actress, which also included a Juno Award nomination. Another example is the entry for the band Mashmakhan. The group had a No. 1 hit in Canada with "As the Years Go By," which according to the authors' interview with Pierre Sénécal, the keyboard player of the band, took only 15 minutes to write. The band was never able to repeat this success and singer Brian Edwards currently owns a trucking company in Saskatoon.



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The book is filled with other wonderful stories of fame and its inevitable aftermath. While some careers did fade, others built upon their early music success. The 13-piece rock band Lighthouse, for example, turned down an opportunity to play at Woodstock in 1969 due to fears that the water supply was possibly spiked with drugs. Former band member Howard Shore became one of the elite Hollywood composers, writing the music for Peter Jackson's *Lord of the Rings* film trilogy and many other films.

Among the other well-known musicians covered in this book is Rich Dodson, a member of the famous Stampeders. In 1971 the band took home Juno awards in several categories for their song "Sweet City Woman." In the 1980s Dodson turned from performing and became a music producer, but returned to the stage with the Stampeders in 2016. One of the other famous bands profiled in the book is Steppenwolf. According to the group's bass player Nick St. Nicholas, the band was "more or less just existing" when their most famous song "Born to be Wild" was released and entered the charts. St. Nicholas recounts that band member Dennis Edmonton wrote the song after a motorcycle ride that involved a stranger making fun of his long hair. This altercation led to Edmonton knocking the stranger out and stuffing him into a telephone booth.

The book contains many other quirky anecdotes. Country singer Colleen Peterson, a Juno Award winner who died in 1996, told the authors the story of, at the age of 16, chauffeuring Joni Mitchell to a party in Ottawa thrown by Jimi Hendrix. Canadian producer Jack Richardson, who was, according to Kearney and Ray, known as the "Grand Daddy of Canadian Music," recalled "The Godfather of Shock Rock" Alice Cooper's appearance after working with him: "He was great. I'd say I'd take him home to see my mother" (p. 376).

*As the Years Go By* works if approached as a non-academic reference book on the history of Canadian pop/rock music. It is filled with rich and valuable information of musicians and their careers primarily after the discussed artists struck gold with a release and its ensuing aftermath. The information compiled by the authors can probably be found online, however the personal stories that were compiled through the authors' interviews with the artists are unique to this publication. The quirky, funny, and sometimes tragic stories uncovered through this personal approach make the book enjoyable to read and browse through.