

Dougal

Dougal, a Gaelic name that means “dark stranger”, and not easy to live up to, has been creating music all his life, sometimes just in his imagination. The songs are sometimes topical, sometimes universal, always interesting and entertaining.

He was born in Regina, yes, really, Regina, but didn't stay there long, and grew up all over the place, spending some early time on a houseboat on the Athabasca River, in Calgary, Collingwood, four years in Lusaka, Northern Rhodesia, (as it was called at the time), three years in various Newfoundland outposts, Baie Verte, Pilley's Island and Tilt Cove, before landing in Toronto at age 12. He has been there ever since, although moved around to various neighbourhoods, one house to another.

His early musical education included: his father playing the harmonica while the dogs howled along, his mother teaching him the recorder, being inspired by a one-man-band in Africa, with guitar, rack harmonica, and a jiggling skeleton attached to the bass drum pedal, requisite piano lessons, learning bagpipes to play in the school band and avoid having to carry a rifle, playing tenor sax in a jazz group, **The Quintet**, switching to bass to play with a rock band his brother formed, subsequently called the **Vacant Lot**, helping start the **Grub Street Banana Band** (it was the 60s after all), went on to form **Rockwood**, then went underground for a while.

He has worked at a number of jobs in the communication field, producer, director, and photographer. All that crashed and burned in early 2000s, and he realized that only his life long pursuit of music could save him.

He then surfaced to bring together a free-improvisational group called **bitchin'**, playing violin, bamboo flute, harmonica, keyboard, and vocalizing. They played regularly at the Gladstone Hotel, Art Bar, and a number of festivals, including the Distillery Jazz Festival, The 416 Festival of Creative Improvisers at the Tranzac Club, Gord Monahan's Electric Eclectics Festival at the Funny Farm near Meaford ON, and the Contact Music Festival in Dundas Square, Toronto.

Dougal currently concentrates on songwriting, guitar playing and finding appreciative audiences.