

Growing up in the heart of the Ottawa Valley, it is no surprise that singer/songwriter Kent Hodgin found his niche in Country Music. Born in Pembroke, Ontario, Hodgin was a late bloomer, musically. He remembers being one of the worst students in his grade seven music class, and quitting guitar lessons after only a month of playing. Some of his early memories of music were at a family holiday taken every year at Ferguson Farm campground, near Calabogie. “Late night campfires and marshmallow roasts were always accompanied by friends playing and singing country tunes”, Hodgin remembers.

Hodgin first began singing country music much like the rest of die hard country fans – by chiming in along to the radio. Kent found that he was able to hit the harmonies and melodies of many of his favorite Clint Black and Alan Jackson songs during long drives to work. During his time at Lakehead University, in Thunder Bay, Ontario, Hodgin began singing at a local church, and at open stage nights on campus. Encouraged by friends, he began learning to play the guitar after requesting one for his 19th birthday.

Hodgin was a fast learner – eagerly taking any opportunity to play and sing, and began playing at provincial park campfires, family functions, and at church. Kent remembers his early experiences singing and playing guitar with a worship team at Thunder Bay Christian Fellowship. “I was too nervous and shy to play my guitar at Sunday services, but I brought it to every practice. The worship director encouraged me to keep working at it, and I was always eager to sing any chance I could get”. Hodgin fondly remembers singing at the Thunder Bay Community Auditorium during a city wide Easter service. “I sang a solo country gospel tune with a full choir and orchestra backup. There must have been over three thousand people there...I was nervous, but everything went off without a hitch. The crowd even had me back for an encore at the end of the service! It was one of the best musical events I have ever taken part in”.

After University, Kents’ music opportunities were hit and miss – but his songwriting ability began to grow, starting with a song he wrote for his wife Allison, “Forever More”- which is featured on his new CD, Wood and Stone. Hodgin began writing more songs, and continued to work at his guitar playing, and also started learning to play the mandolin.

Working for the Ministry of Natural Resources in Provincial Parks, and briefly as a National Park Warden, gave Kent opportunity to travel and work in some of Ontario’s most beautiful parks and natural areas. He continued to play and sing at park events, at church, and various private functions.

Eventually, Kent secured employment as a Conservation Officer – a job he had always dreamed of doing, and settled down with his wife and two children in Bancroft, Ontario. At this time in his life, Hodgin never thought that his music career would take a new jump forward. Things began to take off after one of his songs gained a spot on a local Radio Station charity CD (The Moose FM, CHMS 97.7) played regularly on the air. Opportunities to sing at local community events and churches began to grow, and with encouragement and help from friends and family, Kent took many of his songs and put them together on a professional CD titled “Wood and Stone”.

Most recently, Hodgin has been asked to perform live at “COUNTRY MUSIC WEEK” in Calgary, Alberta, hosted by the Canadian Country Music Association, in the coveted Songwriters’ Café, which features some of the nations’ best artists and new songwriters. As part of the week that culminates with the Canadian Country Music Awards, Hodgin will perform three of his original tunes live, in front of music industry executives, artists and fans, as part of the week long celebration of Canadian Country music this September.

Hodgin credits his music and abilities as gifts from God. “I really believe that with God in your life, you can accomplish anything. Every single dream I have given to Him has come true. I really believe nothing in life is by chance – we all have the opportunity to live an amazing life, and I’m looking forward to see what dream will come true next!”.

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