

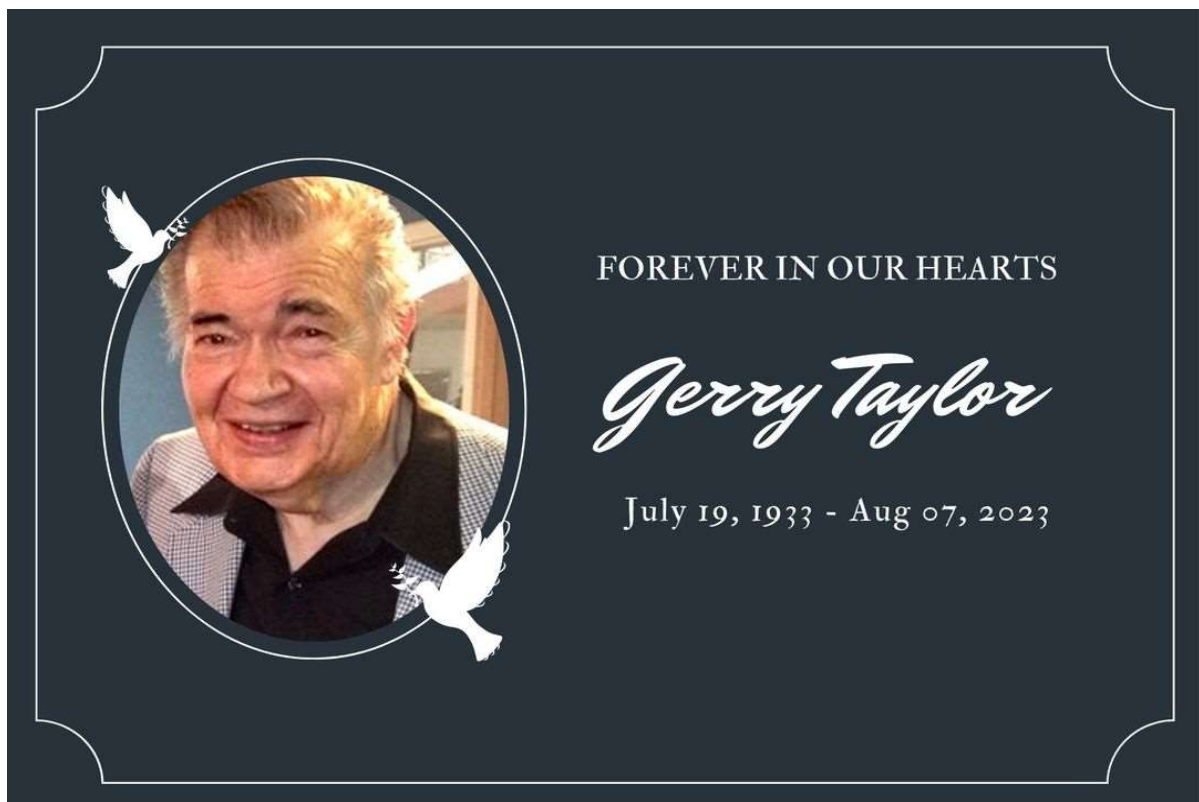


August 2023

Issue 7.5

# Remembering Gerry Taylor

*"It's not what you take when you leave this world behind you  
It's what you leave behind you when you go"*  
- Three Wooden Crosses, Randy Travis



And so it is with the life and legacy of Gerry Taylor, well known and much loved husband, father, columnist, music promoter, and of course our long-standing Vice-President of the New Brunswick Country Music Hall of Fame. As we mourn his passing let's look back on the wonderful life, legacy and contributions of Gerry to music in New Brunswick and the creation of the Hall.

Gerry was actively promoting music in the province until the time of his death and was instrumental in the creation of the New Brunswick Country Music Hall Of Fame with long time friend Aubrey Hanson (founder). When Aubrey pitched the idea to Gerry he was on board from the get go and the rest as they say is history.

Gerry was a staunch supporter of local music and whenever anyone was putting on a show or appearing somewhere we knew we would have a place in his column. Words cannot express how we appreciated his efforts to include us as an important part of the fabric of the New Brunswick, and indeed the Maritime, music scene.

There are so many artists and musical acts that have appeared in Gerry's column and you can go to this link: <http://rockshoreidyll.ca/gerrytaylor/about-gerry-taylor/> to read through the columns in the archives to get a feel for just how many musicians Gerry helped to promote.

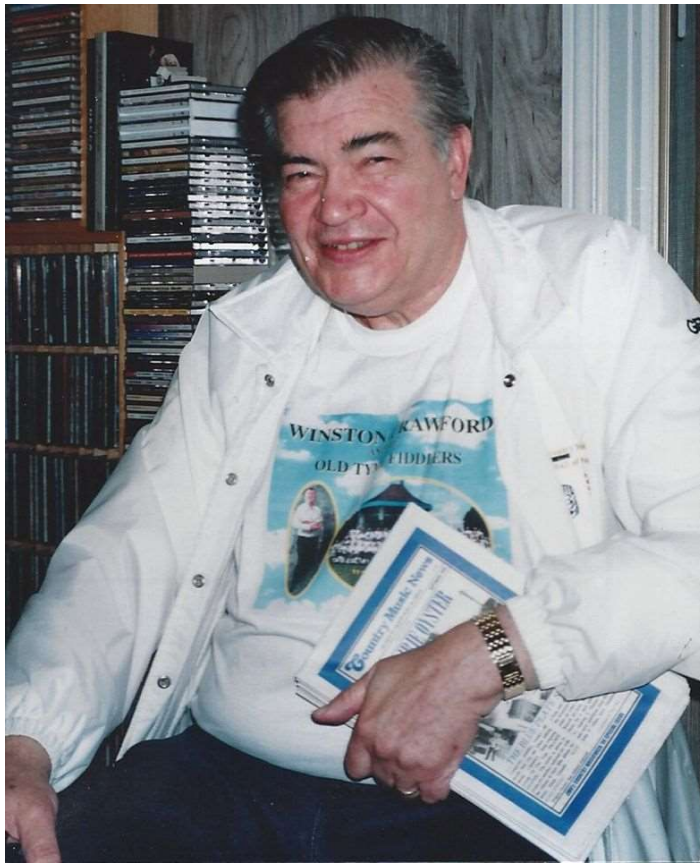
Gerry may never know how much he was really appreciated, sure we all sent our thanks and words of encouragement for the column but it seemed a small thing compared to the value of his friendship, guidance, and encouragement. His efforts were always stellar and with the help of his wife Carol they put together a column that became a much-anticipated form of news to the many fans of the column for the forty years it ran. If you wanted to know what was going on around town or in the province you read Gerry's column to get the latest on what was happening.

When Gerry's last column appeared on December 24, 2020, we all knew it was the end of an era and we were all saddened to see this happen but he remained active and stayed in touch with what was going on despite his declining health.

Gerry's knowledge of music and his vast collection of music (one of the largest LP collections I have ever seen), is one of the main reasons you didn't often match wits with him when it came to the history of the music or the artist he simply knew.



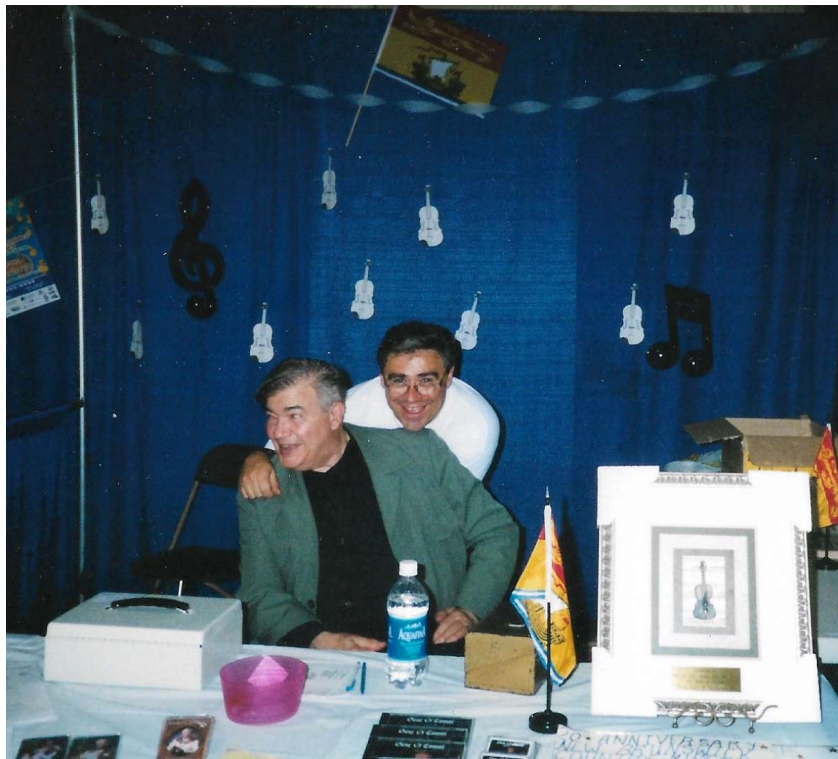
Gerry standing in one corner of his vast LP collection



Gerry with a portion of his vast CD collection



Gerry preparing to reveal my frame at the 2009 Induction Gala



Gerry and myself at the Saint John Exhibition



One of Gerry's last official acts as Vice-President was at the ribbon cutting ceremony in April for the grand opening of the new home of the Hall of Fame and I wish I had been able to talk to him and shake his hand one last time. Two days later I was in surgery and stuck in the hospital until mid-May then convalescing at home for another month and I never got the chance to speak with him and for that I am truly sad.



Below is Gerry's biography written in his own words:

I was born July 19, 1933 on the Taylor Road, (renamed now for his grandfather) near Newtown, New Brunswick. I graduated and matriculated from Sussex Consolidated School, ten miles away, in 1950. I had won four provincial high school writing contests, a national Canadian second and third and two provincial poster art prizes during my high school years. I was offered employment with the Telegraph-Journal's newsroom in Saint John before graduation but declined, because I had worked night most of my years in high school, and that is where I had to start if I accepted their offer. My varied work experience includes two summers of farm labour and haying, another at a lumber yard and sawmill, followed by summers at the Sussex Cheese & Butter and Ice Cream Creamery, the Sussex Ginger Ale plant, construction gangs and logging truck operations. I attended the Saint John Vocational School's Commercial Art Course from 1950-51. Moving to Saint John I worked for J & A McMillan printers and stationers, Thorne's Hardware's accounting department. And eventually in March 1953 went to work as an artist at The Telegraph-Journal/Evening Times- Globe. My assimilation into their advertising sales department three years later, brought me in contact with people from all walks of life including musicians, singers and touring bands.

My collection of 35,000 long playing sound recordings (vinyl discs, 8-tracks and cassettes, and several thousand 'singles') has given me the background knowledge and appreciation for many kinds of music. If it's well done — it's worth listening to; from American popular to Russian folk artists; from Irish, Scottish to Hawaiian and Calypso; from Caruso, Al Jolson, Bing Crosby, Frank Sinatra, Burl Ives, Woody Guthrie to Wilf Carter, Hank Snow, Stan Rogers, The Carter Family, Tom Russell and hundreds more.

My love of movies led to a conversation with Charlie Pride in April 2011 resulted in him confiding to me, before any other media person, that Dwayne 'The Rock' Johnson had just signed to play him in an upcoming bi-op. My breaking news story on it was picked up by nearly 400 internet and media sites around the globe when Rocklands, Charley's Canadian management agency, stopped counting. They all quoted the article, with my name sometimes, but sourced from the "Canadian newspaper the Telegraph-Journal" every time.

My writing for the newspaper on upcoming concert and jamboree events began in 1958 but without a by-line column until 1978 when I was among the first five to be given a by-line with writer's picture by the Telegraph-Journal who still

carry a half page I write every Thursday weekly. Since then I have covered all genres of what I consider folk song and music from barbershop to pop folk, from American traditional and old country, English music hall to modern country, from choral groups to gospel to the Three Tenors. For the first 18 years it was called Gerry Taylor's Folk & Country World in the past 17 Down Home Music. I have never been able to rationalize why that change — there was no consultation.

I have written articles for the Atlantic Advocate, Canadian Bluegrass Review, Canadian Folk Bulletin and have written about Atlantic Canadian Music for the Christian Science Monitor; many reviews of CD's, long plays and cassettes for Canadian and US performers, designed many local record covers and wrote liner notes for them. I have, also, written prefaces for a number of music books and biographies over the years, including three recently. I have been a judge twice for the ECMA's and once for the Juno's. Have judged many local talent contests including the 200 plus vocal contestant competitions in Fredericton in the late 1980's and was head judge and announcer on the televised talent contests organized by a popular TV entrepreneur Dick Stacey and televised on Channel 7, Bangor, Maine TV in the mid-1980's

For five years in the late 1980's I had my own traditional music show Sunday evening called Fundy Folk Night over CFBC-FM, now C-98. The popular two-hour show, broadcast simultaneously over facilities in Saint John and Halifax, used tracks from my music collection featuring Irish one Sunday, Calypso the next, the following weeks American and Canadian folk, bluegrass, early country, and so on, alternating. I also supplied all the old radio soundtracks, 1930's to 1950's, for their late night Golden Age of Radio series on CFBC Radio, a program that ran for over a decade, and songs for CBC Radio when needed. In 2006 a series of CCMA promos I did for CBC Radio, developed by their programmer Marc Tunney, spotlighting in story and song early Canadian Maritime born country stars, was broadcast across Canada, advertising the CCMA Awards weekend taking place in Saint John that year. Also with CBC, I was part of an entertainment panel on Friday afternoons for five years in the early 1990's and did a series of rare records half hour programs for them bi-weekly for two years after the curtain dropped on the panel.

I acted as supervisor on Southern New Brunswick talent searches for ATV's Up Home Tonight, New Faces and Bangor, Maine's Dick Stacey's Jamboree.

I was inducted into the New Brunswick Country Music Hall Of Fame in 1989, the first non-musical person to achieve that honour. I was one of the five to be involved with the start-up of that non-profit venture in 1983 under the leadership of Fredericton band leader, Aubrey Hanson. I am the last of those five still living and have been its vice-president for the past ten years. We just had our annual Gala, banquet, induction ceremonies and concert, and three days of lead-in personal appearances by inductees, October 10-14, that ended with a church service Sunday.

I have been involved as a volunteer arranger of music acts for the Saint John Exhibition Association for the past eight years, using for the most part, local traditional country and folk acts, giving them a chance to perform for a different and larger audience than they usually do, although such acts seem to be proliferating here in the far Canadian east.

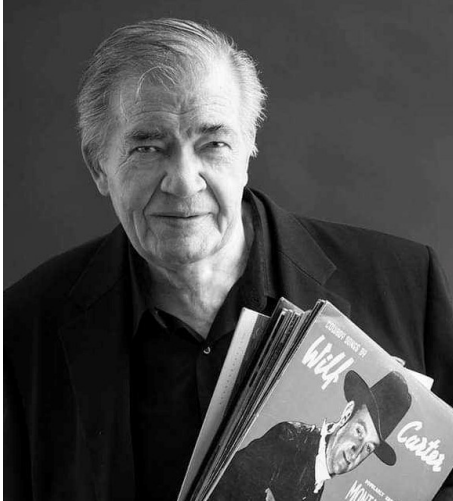
Gerry Taylor



The reason I included Gerry's biography as written by Gerry himself is so we may all know how much he was involved in the music and it is really just the tip of the iceberg. I know Gerry being Gerry he kept it short and sweet.

Below is the obituary and funeral arrangements for Gerry from Fundy Funeral Home:





## **Gerald Alexander Taylor**

July 19, 1933 – August 7, 2023

90 Years Old

On Monday, August 7, 2023 at about 11:00 AM in the Church of St. John and St. Stephen Nursing Home, Gerald (Gerry) Alexander Taylor passed away peacefully, surrounded by family. He had recently celebrated his 90th birthday.

Gerry was the son of Edgar and Sarah (Turnbull) Taylor of Sussex, NB, and the grandson of David Mark and Mabel (Appleby) Taylor of Taylor Road, Newtown. He is survived by: wife Carolann (Carol) (Watters) Taylor, and daughter Laura (Grant Totten), sons David (Tanya) and Keir (Viki); and five grand-children, Rebecca (Dane Breckenridge), Calista, Kyrie; Cordilia, and Alexander, and; one great-grandchild, Dahlia.

Gerry was known for his involvement in the Maritime music community. Some of the notable projects he has been involved in include: helping the late John Murphy start the Saint John Folk Club; working with Aubrey Hanson to create the New Brunswick Country Music Hall Of Fame; helping fund the Bi-Capitol Project for the Imperial Theatre by arranging a concert.

In more recent years, he headed the music selection for the live acts at the Saint John Exhibition; and received Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal (nominated by Senator John Wallace), the Atlantic Canada's Unsung Hero of Folk Music award (nominated by Brent Mason, musician), and numerous other awards by organisations, bands and singers.

Gerry wrote the Folk and Country Music World column for forty years in the Telegraph-Journal (which may be the longest running column in Canada by a journalist) and later in the Kings County Record. His writings on music appeared in many other newspapers and journals over the years. He was also a radio host on CFBC's Fundy Folk Night with Gerry Taylor and part of CBC Radio Mainstreet's Entertainment Panel.

Gerry was involved in the programming of the Up Home Tonight and New Faces shows on ASN.

Gerry's knowledge of folk and country music brought him to the attention of many professionals over the years and led him to friendships and long acquaintances with such entertainers as: Charlie Pride, Tommy Hunter, Gordon Bok, Stan and Garnet Rogers, and especially, George Hamilton IV.

Arrangements have been entrusted to the care and direction of the Fundy Funeral Home, 230 Westmorland Road, Saint John, NB (506-646-2424). Friends will be received on Monday, August 14th, from 1-3 & 5-7 p.m. and Tuesday, August 15th, from 1-3 & 5-7 p.m. A Celebration of Life will be held at the Fundy Funeral Home Chapel on Wednesday, August 16th, at 3:00 p.m. Interment Kirkhill Cemetery on Thursday, August 17th, at 1:00 p.m. In memory of Gerry donations to the Alzheimer's Society of New Brunswick would be greatly appreciated.

## Services

Visitations: Monday August 14 and Tuesday August 15, 2023  
1:00PM to 3:00 PM and 5:00PM to 7:00PM  
Fundy Funeral Home  
230 Westmorland Road  
Saint John, NB E2J 2G3

Celebration of Life: Wednesday August 16, 2023  
3:00 PM  
Fundy Funeral Home  
230 Westmorland Road  
Saint John, NB E2J 2G3

Interment: Thursday August 17, 2023  
1:00 PM  
Kirkhill Cemetery  
5 Sunnyside Drive  
Sussex, NB

[https://www.fundyfuneralhome.com/obituary/Gerald-Taylor?fbclid=IwAR28QTWV4rCrC\\_21EIpurEyyv4jFCUAcfOY1ek-Tv-Q1zMpTztfDjy4Wn\\_wE](https://www.fundyfuneralhome.com/obituary/Gerald-Taylor?fbclid=IwAR28QTWV4rCrC_21EIpurEyyv4jFCUAcfOY1ek-Tv-Q1zMpTztfDjy4Wn_wE)

Finally, here is a CBC article written by Jacob Moore about Gerry:

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/new-brunswick/nb-country-music-community-remembers-gerry-taylor-1.6931613>

I know I haven't even begun to scratch the surface of just how important Gerry was to music in New Brunswick, it's impossible to fully convey just how loved and appreciated he is, there is so much to say about Gerry that it's hard to even know where to begin. But I do hope that I have been able to express a fraction of mine and every Hall members' respect and gratitude, we have lost a New Brunswick icon and he will not be replaced or forgotten but his legacy will carry on.

To Carol and the family our sincerest condolences, we wish you strength, peace and happy memories to support you through your grief.

Gerry you gave us much, so go and rest high and in peace on that mountain, you will always be loved and remembered.

Reg Gallant  
NBCMHF (2009)

