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# IAN JOHNSTONE

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## Biography

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Ian grew up in Chilliwack, B.C. He began his theatre training at Chilliwack Junior High School. He continued in Chilliwack with Chilliwack Players Guild, where he not only gained experience both backstage and onstage for several years, he helped build their performance space, *The Charles Laughton Theatre*. (More recently, Ian played *The Dame* in British Pantos in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, and Ladysmith, on Vancouver Island.)

In 1964, one of these productions led to the formation of a very popular folk group known as *The Oleanna Folk Singers* which did numerous performances for local and regional events and organizations. They even did concerts in the Regional Correction Facilities in the Lower Mainland.

The highlight for many of the members was being asked to perform at the very first Variety Club Telethon in Vancouver. (After doing their performance spot, they were also asked to provide background music for a deaf and mute magician.)



With *The Oleanna Folk Singers*, again, Ian helped to build another performance space, *The Lonely Guitar* located just outside Chilliwack in beautiful, downtown Popkum.

Ian eventually decided to go full-time with his music while living in Prince George, B.C. in 1970. Many folks still remember him from his days of doing sing-a-longs in Shakey's Pizza Parlour, World Championship Snowgolf, Mardi Gras, Shriner's Prince George Telethon, First Night, and so many more events in the area.

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It was here also, Ian did his first elementary school concerts. And, it was from here he *pioneered* elementary school educational concert touring in B.C. He knew of no other musicians doing this, but that's what he loved and wanted to do, ...so he did it.

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Very early on he realized the teaching potential these school concerts held. Not satisfied to just entertain the kids, he soon developed a style of 'teaching-by-not-teaching' in his educational concerts. This included such positive things as: self-empowerment and validation; working together to accomplish things; rhythmic, tonal and interval skills; listening skills; how to be involved as an audience, without being disruptive; paying it forward; try to make things win-win when you can; ...and many more.



Ian began writing songs to use in teaching his positive philosophies and they now are an integral part of his presentations, be they in schools, festivals or fairs.

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Over the decades, Ian has performed over 2,000 educational concerts in Canada, the U.S., Britain, and even Saudi Arabia. He has performed and hosted more than 50 Telethons and had dozens of appearances on local, regional, national and international television and radio. Plus, countless performances at fairs, exhibitions and various events and promotions.



Ian has recorded two very popular children's albums/CDs titled "Dear Mr. Johnstone..." and "Love & Warm Fuzzies...".



From 2001 to 2011 Ian taught ESL in Saudi Arabia, returning to Canada in March of 2011 in order to return to the career he feels he was *meant* to do. He is now back to giving kids a joyful, positive (and educational, but don't tell *them* that) musical experience.

"...good stuff to grow on..."

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