

## Mp3 Greg Bond - Funny Day Saturday



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Folk rock, and a hint of Broadway...Canada style. Greg played Rum Tum Tugger in CATS for a year in Toronto, and some of his songs would work well on the stage. He was an environmentalist and a romantic and his music reflects both. 13 MP3 Songs FOLK: Folk Pop, POP: Quirky Details: Greg Bond was a performer in the Canadian musical theatre scene for 10 years, most notably in CATS during its Toronto run. He was a prolific writer and composer for 25 years. Greg died at the age of 35 years on April 10, 1989 following a brief illness with brain cancer. Greg was loved by many fans and members of the musical theatre community, and is fondly remembered by those who worked with him as a highly dedicated professional with a wonderfully positive attitude towards the theatre and towards life. One of his passions and concerns was the environment. His song "Fixing Up This World" reflects the urgency he felt in taking responsibility towards saving the environment. To this end we feel that this song needs to be heard. Greg's family has produced a CD of his music which reflects his 25 years' of development and growth as a lyricist and composer. His music output ranges from the folk songs of his teenage years, like the title song "Funny Day Saturday," to the later songs written for his one-man show "Heroes," which included "Fixing Up This World" and "Spellbound." He performed this show two months before his death. He has left us with a wonderful legacy of music, which we would love to share with you. We hope you enjoy his music, as do we. -Ruth and Ken Bond GREG BOND--BIOGRAPHY \* Greg was born on January 31, 1954 in Calgary, Alberta, Canada. \* He attended Spruce Cliff Elementary School, Vincent Massey Junior High School and Ernest Manning High School. \* His earliest performances were lip-synching to The Beatles' "She Loves You" and "I Wanna Hold Your Hand" with his sister, Beverly, followed by several years of piano lessons and recitals. \* In his early teens, Greg began to learn the guitar, as well as the recorder and the saxophone. With Beverly singing back-up harmonies, the basement of the Bond home

became a mini-recording studio. They practiced endlessly, learning the current hits of the day, by artists such as Peter, Paul & Mary; Joni Mitchell; Crosby, Stills & Nash; Simon & Garfunkel; and Gordon Lightfoot. \* It was during this time that Greg began composing his own songs. Through all his years as a performer, his signature song was one that he wrote while daydreaming in class, "Funny Day Saturday." He played it at every gig. \* Greg soon coerced his closest friends Ian Hemphill, Don Jones and Bill McCormick into acquiring their own instruments...bass guitar, flute and drums. Along with Beverly, and later another back-up singer, Bonnie Hall, they started the group "Piper." After Beverly and Bonnie moved on, the band became known as "Walter." \* This was the era of coffee houses and gigs at school. Greg had a lot to learn about having a large enough original repertoire to fill an evening, as well as the ups and downs of transporting sound equipment and instruments in borrowed cars. \* While in high school, he also got his first taste of musical theatre, starring in a 1971 Ernest Manning production of "Anything Goes." \* In 1972 he started at the University of Calgary in the Faculty of Music, studying Voice with Paulina Szavredi. Ian Hemphill also attended U of C, majoring in Flute. Greg started the "London Fog Philharmonic" with Barb Hankins (who has since gone on to Philharmonic-level performance), Keith Hunter and other talented musicians. \* In 1973, Greg followed his high school sweetheart to Sidney, Australia, where he lived for three years, taking drama at the University of Sydney, performing in the "Cosmic Ensemble," and touring with Jeannie Lewis. \* After he returned to Canada, Greg auditioned with the Calgary Theatre Singers, winning the part of "Curly" in "Oklahoma," and performing in several other musicals, such as "Jacques Brel is Alive and Well." \* In 1979 he attended the Banff School of Fine Arts in the music theatre department. The main production was "Carousel," and he also workshopped "Neighbours," a David Warrick production. \* In the fall of 1979 Greg made the move to Toronto and worked in many productions there, returning to Banff Centre briefly in the summer of 1980 as the first recipient of the Warrick Award (in memory of David's mother). \* In 1980 he met the love of his life, Irene Drazumerich; they were married in 1982. \* Also in 1982, he won the audition for Charlottetown Festival, where he appeared in "Anne of Green Gables-The Musical" and "Singin' Dancin' TONIGHT," contributing an original song to the latter. Greg returned to P.E.I. for two more years, adding "Johnny Belinda" and several other productions to his repertoire. \* His biggest part was that of the "rock-and-roll" cat, Rum Tum Tugger in "CATS" (1985 to 1987), where he was a huge hit, but his popularity really soared when he starred in the "Polka Dot Door" television series. \* Throughout all his years in musical theatre, Greg continued to write songs, hoping to

someday produce his own full-length show. His dream finally came true on February 18, 1989, when he performed his completely original one-man showcase, "Heroes," at the Factory Theatre in Toronto. Tragically, only three weeks before the show, Greg had been diagnosed with an inoperable brain tumour, and the successful "Heroes" would be his last production. \* Less than two months later, on April 10, 1989, his family and friends were stunned when Greg lost his short battle with brain cancer. He faced his death the same way he lived...with grace and courage. \* Greg's last wish was that his music would be remembered, and his mother, Ruth, was determined to make that happen. She enlisted the help of Greg's old friend, Keith Hunter, who produced an enhanced master from Greg's original recordings at Keith's Breakthrough Studios in Kelowna, B.C. (We owe him a big debt of gratitude; it was no easy task, as many of the originals were recorded in Greg's home and needed a lot of work!) \* The resulting CD, entitled "Funny Day Saturday" was released in September, 1999, in honour of a beloved husband, son, brother, uncle, nephew, cousin, friend and castmate. "Good on ya, Greg...we promise we'll never forget!"

THE GREG BOND MUSICAL THEATRE FUND When Greg died, we asked that donations be made to the Greg Bond Musical Theatre Fund. The response from his fellow performers, stagehands, musicians and others was overwhelming. A couple who had become friends and fans of Greg assisted us with managing these funds. Grant Burton enabled us to set up the Fund with the Toronto Community Foundation. Awards are given to individuals who best exemplify the integrity and dedication to excellence which Greg represented. Recipients must be involved in musical theatre and must be the type of person who is respected and works well with all the people involved with a show, including musicians, stage hands, designers and cast. They must provide a cheerful positive attitude and must continue to improve their skills with continued study. 1) Sheridan College, Faculty of Musical Theatre with Rod Maxwell, established the first scholarship of \$1000.00 in 1991. All the winners of this award have been acting for a few years after graduation. Each winner is added to the committee to choose the winner for the next year. The winners are: 1991 - David Connolly: David is a dancer/choreographer. He was born with no feet but hasn't let that hold him back from a successful stage career. 1992 - Susan Greenfield: Susan was a nurse who was attracted to the theatre in Red Deer. She used the money to buy a piano and found the encouragement very helpful. 1993 - Catherine O'Brien: Skilled in all aspects of the musical theatre 1994 - Michelle Berting: Studied for many years before entering Sheridan. Used the money to make a demo tape which furthered her career. 1995 - Deanna Overland: Felt very rewarded to receive recognition after

many years from early childhood of diligent struggle. 1996 - Ryan Kelly 1997 - Stephen Patterson: A hard working performer who used the money to continue with lessons. 1999 - Brian Elliot and Jackie Hadley: A husband and wife team. 2000 - Tammy Sutherland 2) Timmins Concert Singers with Rosanne Simunovic, leader and conductor. Greg and Larry Herbert had performed twice with the Singers and made a big impression. The winners of \$250.00 are: 1996 - J.P.Thibodeau 1997 - Ginette Hebert 1997 - Matthew Humphreys 1998 - Sylvain Boissonneault 1998 - Jessica Hince 1998 - Aileen Roy 1999 - Aileen Roy 1999 - Beaugart Humphreys This award continues but the names of the recipients are not available at present. 3) Parent-Child Mother Goose. This was a one-time only award to an organisation that focuses on the pleasure of using rhymes, songs, and stories for disadvantaged parents and their children. The award was \$500.00. 4) Actors' Equity established the "Betty Mitchell Awards" in Calgary in 1998 to honour Betty Mitchell, a woman who personified the qualities of excitement, respect, co-operation and hard work that are intrinsic in the Greg Bond Award. Betty was an inspired teacher of drama and musical theatre in Calgary. Students who did not attend Western Canada High School, where she taught, always wished they could study with her. She went on to obtain her Doctor of Music and Drama and made a huge contribution to Calgary in the performing arts. The winners of \$1000.00 are: 1998 - Tom Doyle: Teacher, composer, performer and playwright. 1999 - Margo McDermott: Director, choreographer, and performer. She was instrumental in making The Calgary Young Canadians an organisation that is world-renowned. 2000 - Bob Foster: Musical Director, performer, and composer. (More to come on recent award winners!)

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