

SERGE PLOTNIKOFF (deceased September 05, 2023) STORY

It seems that I am writing more and more chronicles about my friends that have passed on. I keep reminding myself that our presence on this planet is temporary and I need to visit someone that I have not seen in a while. Marilyn and I had arranged to see Serge with Nellie Keriaff on the morning he died.

These notes are a tribute to a great friend, The photo is dated about the first time I met him in the early 1970s.

In 1966, we built a house in the Oglow Subdivision, Castlegar, B.C., and soon became friends with Nick and Nellie Keriaff who lived just a block away.

We soon realized that there was a musical fraternity in which Nick was involved in his stage name "Buddy Marr" with his band "Versatiles" as in this photo (L to R):



George Keraiff – Guitar; Dick McLeod – Drums; Serge Plotnikoff – Bass; Buddy Marr – Lead Guitar. Other members (not shown) John Phillikoff – Bass and Paul Samsonoff – Bass, taken in the early 1960s.

This is where we met Serge and all the band members for a series of "band parties" and many social events besides dances where the band was very popular.

".....Serge Plotnikoff, a Doukhobor singer from Kinnaird, British Columbia moved to Castlegar, BC in 1959 with his wife Violet, author of the book *Head Cook at Weddings and Funerals* (she passed away in 2008). In Castlegar, Serge joined a local band, playing bass with Buddy Marr and the Versatiles from 1958 through 1966.

Serge and his wife were active in their community and were members of The Doukhobor Cultural Association. Serge was also a part-owner of Castlegar radio station CKQR until 1991. He composed an official song to commemorate the 1971 British Columbia Centennial, but lost official adoption of his song to Bobby Gimby's "Go, British Columbia Go".

In 1972, Serge Plotnikoff recorded the album "Beautiful British Columbia" on his own label, which he named after his hometown region (Kinnaird, Castlegar). Listening to Serge's tributes to British Columbia, we find many references to the Boundary country and its close neighbours, east and west. Here are a few tracks from "Beautiful British Columbia": All of the songs on this album are Plotnikoff originals, some co-written with his wife, but all reflecting the way Serge feels about people and "Life In Our World."



Canadian musicologist Robert Williston, of Alberta....."

".....Cover notes on "GRAND FORKS COUNTRY":

While this song was dedicated to the Grand Forks Diamond Jubilee (1897-1972), the words are equally true for Greenwood and the rest of Boundary Country:

"There isn't enough room on this album cover to do justice to Grand Forks in terms of its history, its people, its beauty.

Like many communities in this magnificent

MIKE SHAINLINE - CKGF, Grand Forks....."



LIFE IN OUR WORLD

Gaining rapid recognition on the music industry scene is Canadian-born Serge Plotnikoff. This writer-composer-singer-recording artist has been involved in music since early childhood. Born and raised in the Nelson area of British Columbia, he wrote, produced and recorded numerous selections while still in his teens. Recently, more determined than ever, he began to write again, creating a new, distinctive style in the Folk-Country field, and making a strong bid for recognition on the current music market. Serge is now a Broadcast Music Incorporation-affiliated writer and publisher, and many of his compositions are listed with BMI. An appearance at the Jubilee of Canadians of Russian Descent, held in Saskatchewan in July, 1969, was an overwhelming success, and a turning point for Serge, where the response to his songs was fantastic. The Canadian National Library has asked Serge to have his songs and future recordings placed in the National Library of Canada in Ottawa for purposes of research, study or entertainment, along with other Canadian artists. The injustices of our society, as seen by Serge, prompted him to write the title song, "Life In Our World". From here he went on to pen "Ballad of the Doukhobors", tracing briefly the history of this small religious group who migrated to Canada in 1899, suffering from many outside prejudices when they rebelled against society for the right to live as they chose. The historic flight of the Apollo Eleven astronauts provided the incentive for the number "Footsteps On The Moon". "Canada Song" is written and dedicated to all the people who are a part of the mosaic of this vast country. All of the songs on this album are Plotnikoff originals, some co-written with his wife, but all reflecting the way Serge feels about people and "Life In Our World".

DOUKHOBOR COMMUNITY CENTRE AND MUSEUM AT VERIGIN, SASKATCHEWAN, SITE OF FIRST DOUKHOBOR SETTLEMENT IN CANADA.

Produced By: Serge Plotnikoff
Lead Guitar and Harmonica — Buddy Marr
Mandolin — Gale MacKinnon
Bass — Paul Sampsonoff Jr.
Spanish Guitar — Serge Plotnikoff
Vocal Accomp. — Mike Vioraloff
Cover and Liner Photos — Mike Gorkoff

TRUE STEREO
RECORDED IN U.S.A.
PRESSED IN CANADA — PRINTED IN CANADA

KIN-GAR
KGSLP001
SONG & RECORD PRODUCTIONS
BOX 6, KINNAIRD, BRITISH COLUMBIA

SIDE 1
LIFE IN OUR WORLD (Serge Plotnikoff) KIN-GAR, (BMI)
EVER CHANGING TIMES (Serge Plotnikoff) KIN-GAR, (BMI)
WIND AND RAIN (Serge Plotnikoff) KIN-GAR, (BMI)
FOOTSTEPS ON THE MOON (Serge Plotnikoff, Lary and Serge Plotnikoff) KIN-GAR, (BMI)
LOVE GOES ON LIVING (Serge Plotnikoff) KIN-GAR, (BMI)

SIDE 2
BALLAD OF THE DOUKHOBORS (Serge Plotnikoff) KIN-GAR, (BMI)
TOWER OF PEACE (Serge Plotnikoff) KIN-GAR, (BMI)
YOU CAN'T STOP TIME (Serge and Vi Plotnikoff) KIN-GAR, (BMI)
THE CANADA SONG (Serge and Vi Plotnikoff) KIN-GAR, (BMI)
SONG OF THE SEA (Serge Plotnikoff) KIN-GAR, (BMI)
PEOPLE OF OUR WORLD (Serge Plotnikoff) KIN-GAR, (BMI)

".....Apr 14, 2018 — **GREENWOOD, BC (BG)** Among the many Canadian folksingers whose music will go down in history as a celebration of the people and places of British Columbia, Doukhobor singer-songwriter Serge Plotnikoff will be remembered as one of the best.

The cover notes on his first album, "Life In Our World", released in 1970, tell us something about this minstrel, who wrote several songs mentioning our beautiful Boundary country:

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“.....Serge Plotnikoff, president of Kin -Gar Records & Publications (BMI) is currently readying an album of his own original material to be produced, arranged and performed by himself. "Songs Of The Land, Life, People", the working title of the proposed new LP contains several of Plotnikoff's compositions that have become local favourites and include: "The Doukhobor Story", which tells of the struggle of this small religious group who migrated to Canada in 1899 and who have suffered from many outside prejudices and made international news

LP and ORIGINALS when they rebelled against society for the right to live as they choose; "The Canada Song", which Plotnikoff received an assist from his wife, tells the story of the growth of Canada including the ethnic contribution; "People Of Our World", a sing -along type of song depicting true happenings in everyday affairs from newspaper headlines and radio news, and told the way it is. There are six other Plotnikoff compositions on the LP which is planned for release by the fall of this year.

Singing and writing since the age of nine, Serge Plotnikoff has gathered together a large collection of pop, folk and country selections which he has made available to other recording artists. He makes appearances throughout the province of British Columbia as well as the prairie provinces and just recently attracted a large and appreciative audience at the Association of Canadians of Russian Descent Jubilee in Saskatchewan where he sang several of his songs at the youth rally.....”



These are some of the many recordings published by Serge and his associates. All were very popular.

A search on Google will access most of these recordings and may still be available for purchase from some agencies.



Serge and Vi Plotnikoff resided on 4th Avenue, Kinnaird (later incorporated into a city with Castlegar), B.C. Their friends Russel and Tillie Verigin as well as Mike and Kate Varabioff lived nearby. There was always a reason to get together. Here Serge is on the left with Russel and Mike, dressed in their “costumes” as they perform as “Southside Plowboys. Their repertoire included:



“You Are My Sunshine” and “Tennessee Number Nine” as well as many other dated singalong songs of that era. They were definitely a hit at every social gathering and gave a special honorary performance at the Whatshan Music Festival.



The group of friends frequented excursions to the infamous Green City and participated in the annual “Dodge City Days”. There were meetings and many discussions as to how to revive Green City into its former glory. Serge was always front and center in these deliberations.

Everyone stayed calm during these occasions as can be appreciated by this photo.

They were times that British Columbia was inundated with protests that precipitated “road closures”.

This photo demonstrates that the ladies were prepared to take action to achieve their philosophies and goals in life. Vi Plotnikoff and Kate Varabioff are front and center in leading this citizen revolt some 19 miles into the wilderness. It appears they were on the “wrong side” of this group effort as all the Green City “citizens” were already on the other side of the road closure and enjoying their “expensive” campsite rentals.



The Protestors were manageable, and a drink was usually all that was required to pacify them.

They were not to “fussy” either.

Most of the others were obviously searching for nickels or quarters in the gravel as they were not really concerned.



Saturday nights at Green City were always a “formal affair.” Serge was always ready to offer his talent and do a “gig” with his fellow Musicians. The “dance floor” was naturally sloping and those that did rise to dance drifted downhill to the creek.

CKQR Castlegar Radio Station would do “remotes” at Green City as Serge and

his partner Gordon Brady, interview the Mayor of Green City, Elmer Verigin.



There were times when the weather was just too hot and uncomfortable and so the natural jacuzzi in the creek was very soothing for Serge and his neighbor

Russel Verigin.



Oh, how everyone suffered at Green City in all that natural environment.

It was incredible that Serge was able to withstand all the deprivations.

This was very likely due to his upbringing in rural Proctor with his friends Gordon Brady.

There is much more to the story!

Serge participated in many events.

Here he is in a “Slavic toast” with the Doukhobor Artist, Volodiya from Krasnadar, Russia as part ensuring that the Shishliki developed the entire taste.

He was always ready to do his part to make the occasion a success.



Then there were the Doukhobour Sports Days that were held at Campbell Field in South Slokan and organized by the Doukhobor Cultural Association (DCA).

Serge was an experienced Chef in “Sergios Fried Potatoes”, a franchise that he just never got around to establishing.

His coworker Jim Laktin maybe exercising his role as “Quality Control Expert”. These sold at least two (2) 100 pound bags of potatoes in that fundraiser.



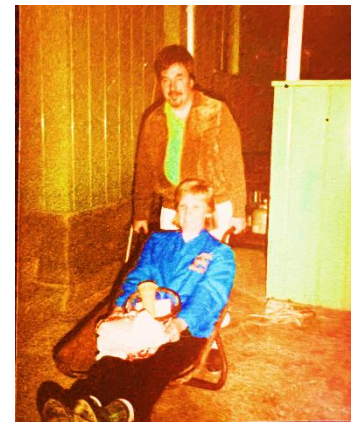
The DCA organized yearly Christmas Parties at which the fifteen (15) couples would conduct original drama skits. Here Serge is a “chicken” and would act out a description of his abilities as his partner Violet read out the original script that she had developed.

Of course, Serge could easily imitate Red Skelton if he was put to task.

Violet and serge were always ready for any opportunity to create a laugh. Violet used to stay up late at night thinking of another practical joke.

Russel and Tillie Verigin invited the Plornikoffs over for dinner one Saturday.

Since it was to be a “potluck” event, Violet was bringing over her contribution. Her idea was “Abeyt Na Tachkee” (Dinner on a Wheelbarrow) to parallel “Meals pm Wheels”.



Serge was after all a proficient sampler of all foods as he stands contemplating the choices, he might make at a DCA Party Smorg.



This family photo is identified (L to R):

Larry; Serge; Violet and Ron

The Plotnikoff Family.

Rest in peace my friend. We had great times together and there will be many more when we get together again.



This draught by Elmer Verigin was developed using articles posted in Google and photographs taken by another DCA member Lawrence Popoff.

First draught (September 10, 2023) was sent to Serge's sons Ron and Larry Plotnikoff for concept approval prior to posting in Elmer Verigin Blog. Corrections as suggested by Ron have been inserted as well as a family photo.

Posted 2020 hours, September 10, 2023 by Elmer Verigin

Added photo "Abeyt Na Tachkee" September 11. 2023 0930 hours.