

Caledon Concert Band celebrating 40 years in 2015

When the members of the Caledon Concert Band present their spring concert at the end of the month, it won't be just a fun musical afternoon.

It will be a celebration of four decades of volunteer community music.

The community-based concert band will celebrate their accomplishments with a concert entitled Springtime Around the World, to be held at the Albion-Bolton Community Centre auditorium May 31 at 3 p.m.

The band was formed in 1974 by a handful of local musicians looking for a place to play. Over the 40 years since, hundreds of musicians ranging in age from eight to over 80 have rehearsed weekly, learned new music and new skills, developed their playing ability and found new friends as they share music together each week.

Along the way, the band has performed as many as a dozen concerts per year, both in the Caledon area and around southern Ontario in places such as Niagara-on-the-Lake, Stratford and Burlington. The band has also competed in many prestigious competitions, including invitations to the National Finals of MusicFest Canada which earned the band Gold and Silver awards in 2006, 2008, 2009 and 2012.

It's not just the band celebrating an anniversary, though. The band's conductor, Rob Kinnear, is celebrating 30 years in his role as well. Kinnear joined the band originally as an instrumentalist but was quickly given the baton and has been conducting ever since. A retired high school music teacher, he enjoys the chance to conduct and to teach music every week to a group of fellow musicians, some of whom have been performing under his baton for the entire 30 years he has been the band's musical director.

"Music is a part of life," he said. "It doesn't matter where you come from, or how old you are. You can learn to play and to enjoy making music with your friends."

It's a family affair, too. His wife plays flute in the band, his son plays baritone and his daughter plays bassoon. Several other families also call the band home, including one husband and wife team who met in the band, later married, and now their teenage son plays with them as well. They're not the only "band families" either. As well as being a place to perform music, the band is a social group and many of the musicians have been fast friends for decades.

The band's members are all volunteers from the Caledon area and neighbouring regions. The musicians range in age from high school students to retirees. Some have been playing music all their lives, and others have just begun their musical education. In addition to providing a place to rehearse, develop and perform, the band also raises funds to support music education. A series of scholarships are awarded to graduating high school students pursuing post-secondary music education, and an annual concert raises funds to help support the music programs at local public schools, along with providing a venue for the public school students to showcase their talents in front of a wider audience.

Tickets for the May 31 concert will be available at the door, or may be reserved in advance by calling Andy at 416-276-7852. Adult tickets are \$12, while students and seniors are admitted for \$10. As always, children aged 12 and under are free of charge.

The band invites the community to come out and help them celebrate decades of music in Caledon.