

# Special birthday gift is unique but appropriate

by Nancy Powers

Peter Hamley, of Marmora, received the most unique birthday gift from his wife Gabriella but by the same token it was certainly most appropriate.

For his 52nd birthday, celebrated July 10, 1993, Peter received a musical composition, composed by David Farmer and performed by a talented group of his friends, including Gabriella.

Titled, "Nightfall In Woods", this piece of music is a string serenade featuring the sweet sounds of the violin, viola, cello and string bass, explained Farmer, of Belleville.

With the aid of a computer and keyboard, Farmer spent about 100 hours writing the song which he feels "is very appropriate for Peter (and Gabriella)" because they live in a heavy wooded area.

"This piece has a European flavour to it, which I deliberately did because Peter is Finnish," noted Farmer adding, "it also features a viola solo because Gabriella is teaching Peter to play the viola."

Although Farmer had heard the piece played on his keyboard it was not until July 28 that he conducted the first "live" version. Prior to the presentation he admitted to being a little nervous.

"You write a piece of music with an image of what it should sound like but when you add the human touch with the actual instruments it sometimes comes out differently," said Farmer, with a smile.

The orchestra consisted of Larry Laframboise on bass; Ardythe Allen and Linda Minty on cello; Marie Laframboise and Val Porter on viola and Grace Taylor, Jeanette Sanderson, Christine Kirsi, Andrew Farmer and Gabriella Hamley on violin.

Farmer had never met most of those playing in front of him but he did manage to direct them through the piece, which was then video taped after being polished to perfection.

Commissioned to write a piece of music was a new experience for Farmer, but he is no novice to the music writing business. He just recently finished writing all the music for the Pinnacle Playhouse production of the Hunchback of Notre Dame.

"Nightfall In Woods" was written for Peter, but Farmer has retained the rights to it and may add lyrics at some point.

Gabriella was extremely pleased with the creativity of Farmer and would like to encourage others to give gifts of this nature.

"We need to encourage artists to create beautiful pieces of music and most will not unless they have a reason," explained Gabriella, adding, "this was the case for David, who had the music in head, but never put on paper."

For Peter bringing such a talented group of people together to play was a delight. Members were from Peterborough, Marmora, Belleville, Stoney Lake, Havelock and Eldorado.

"It was delightful to find such a talented group of people

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*Part of the orchestra... On cello, in the foreground, are Ardythe Allen and Linda Minty, followed by Val Porter and Marie Laframboise on viola and Grace Taylor on the violin.*



*More violins... Providing violin sound are: (left to right) Gabriella Hamley, Andrew Farmer, Christine Kirsi and Jeanette Sanderson.*