



Musicians of the Midnight Sun

Thank you for visiting the Musicians of the Midnight Sun website. Even though these blogs are being posted many weeks after the launch of the Musicians of the Midnight Sun website, my hope is that they will remain as a document along with the website itself with the intention to give a little bit more of a personal story of my relationships with these featured artists.

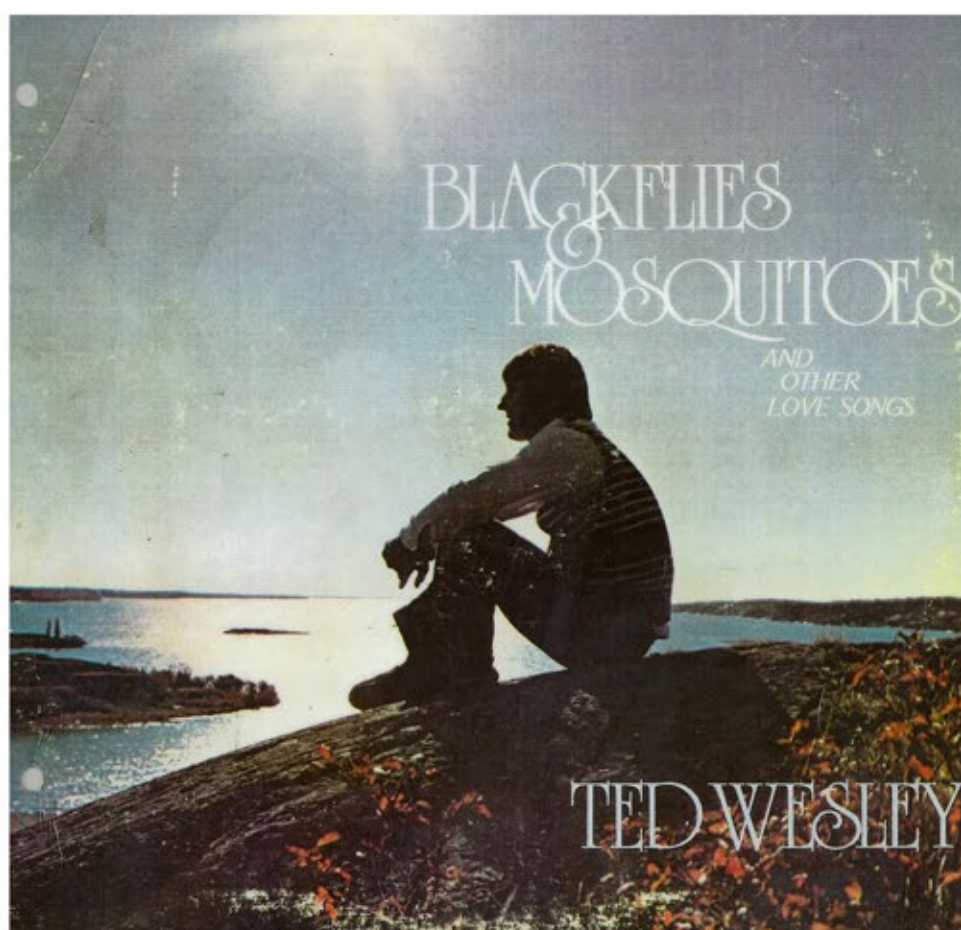
Ted Wesley

I was all of about 12 years old when Ted Wesley's star was rising in the Canadian folk music scene in 1973. A few short years later, I was sneaking into the Saturday afternoon jam sessions in the various saloons in town when one time, this guy walked into the Trapline, dressed in full buck skins and a broad hat pulled low over his eyes, walked up to the stage, strapped on his acoustic guitar and just killed "The Great Canadian Railroad Trilogy" by Gordon Lightfoot. That was Ted. All through the 70s, CBC radio would spin Ted's songs and they sort of became the soundtrack of my youth.



Ted Wesley, Yellowknife, 1972-73 (photo © 2018 Ted Wesley)

Fast forward many years, to 2010 or so. Ted came back to Yellowknife to play some music and I backed him up on the Bass. I can still recall the moment when we were rehearsing and he played "I Remember" in the Explorer hotel room. The hairs on my arms stood straight up and I was getting all choked up. It took me awhile to figure out why. In that song, he paints so many vivid pictures and mentions many names from my youth. The experience re-affirmed to me, the power of song.



Ted Wesley 'Black Flies and Mosquitoes' released Nov. 1973. (photo © 2018 Ted Wesley)

I interviewed Ted and Leslie about 2012 but could not use the audio because we met in a Whitespot restaurant in Edmonton and the background noise was impossible to work with. I re-interviewed them in October of 2018 at their home in Enderby, BC. I got the whole story and even more of those early years Ted and Leslie spent in Yellowknife; as musical ambassadors on the Centennial barge with "Tundra Folk" in 1967, to recording certified gold records with Gordon Lightfoot's band, to raising money for a local charity (Abe Miller) to starting "Folk on the Rocks", a music festival with a tenure of almost 40 years that has become the highlight of the summer here in Yellowknife. A very impressive legacy they have left here in the north.