

daily life as well.

"It was hard to miss them," says Amatucci. "Through the '60s, they were the '60s. They dominated the popular culture. They were also a seminal part of my musical development."

Although the accordion was also prevalent in his life during that time, Amatucci was soon to set it down and rarely looked back for the better part of two decades.

By 1972, he had joined a 42-piece accordion orchestra, playing classical music such as the "William Tell Overture". Set to open for the Vienna Boys Choir during a four-week European tour, the 13-year-old spent hours every day in practice alone and with his ensemble for weeks in advance.

Then he heard the laughing voices of his neighbourhood friends playing football outside while he was studying his

music inside.

It was the exact moment he decided to quit playing, he recalls.

Although it was years before he picked up his Bellini again, he didn't stray too far away from the music scene. He went on to learn to play guitar, keyboards, drums, harmonica and trumpet. During the 1980s, he spent five years on the road as a lighting director and roadie for a number of bands.

A member of Society of Composers, Authors and Music Publishers of Canada (SOCAN) since 1990, he has also composed and recorded a number of his original works. Not restricting his talents to playing and writing, he has also chalked up a win for vocals in his age classification at the

Frontenac Old Time Country Music Championship.

But while an undergraduate at Queen's University (Amatucci later returned to earn an MBA degree that led to a management consulting practice), the non-practicing accordionist met up with former Cowboy Junkies keyboardist Spencer Evans. They later re-connected in Toronto and played together in a band.

After Evans picked up Amatucci's accordion during a visit and played a dazzling version of "In My Life", Amatucci was re-inspired and decided to learn the entire Beatles repertoire on the Bellini.

In addition to playing traditional polkas, waltzes, and tangos, he is now more interested in zydeco, blues and rock – especially the Beatles.

His Accordion Beatles tribute performances have enhanced weddings, the Toronto Transit Commission's Subway Musician Program, the Kingston Buskers' Rendezvous and, now the Orillia Beatles Celebration.

He's looking forward to returning to the area his father enjoyed taking him to on day trips.

"I'll be bringing my fishing gear," he promises.

More information about Accordion Beatles can be found at www.fab-4.com. **OBC**

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