

# Camilleri was musical 'go-to guy' in the '60s, '70s

*Five new members were inducted into the Mississauga Music Walk of Fame Sun. Sept. 8 during the Southside Shuffle. Lakeview's Charlie Camilleri is one of the architects of the modern music industry in Canada.*

By JOHN STEWART  
Staff

Trust and the music business are too often mutually exclusive things. Many bitter artists would say that the concept of "trust in the music business" is an oxymoron — like truth in advertising.

Yet a longtime Lakeview resident built a long and fruitful career based

on that enduring concept.

Charlie Camilleri was a pivotal figure in the Canadian music business during his exemplary 30-year career at CBS Records.

Rejecting a chance to manage American pop star Gene Pitney in the 1960s, Camilleri stayed home with his young family in Mississauga and, instead, paved the way for several generations of performers to make their marks in this country.

From Ronnie Hawkins, to Bob Dylan, Roy Orbison, Tony Bennett, rock group Chicago, Tom Jones, Kris Kristofferson and Bruce Springsteen — on to Celine Dion who he helped introduce to an English Canadian audi-

ence through one of the many Variety Club telethons he helped organize — Camilleri was a key go-to guy if you wanted a music career in this country.

He knew everyone in the business and he respected and worked with them to foster their careers.

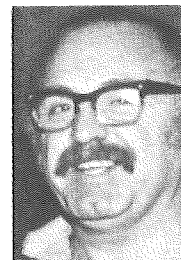
When the extraordinarily talented and extraordinarily eccentric Glenn Gould was on CBS, there was only one man at the record company he would regularly talk to. As happened with so many of the artists he handled, Charlie's business relationship turned into a personal one.

Every Christmas, a call would come into the Camilleri household from Gould and there would be a

long conversation about everything under the sun.

Many of the artists dropped into the Camilleri household to have supper, often before they worked the CNE summer shows. His son Ron remembers Johnny Cash and Bobby Vinton staying for supper.

And Camilleri's personal service often included hitting the road with the artists. He travelled the Canadian circuit with Johnny Cash, one of



**Charlie  
Camilleri**

many who became a close friend.

But it wasn't just the big-name international stars Camilleri promoted. He helped build home-grown careers for artists like Kelly Jay and Crowbar, Larry Gowan and Burton Cummings.

When you think about the giants of the Canadian music business, Charlie Camilleri's name won't be the first you come up with. Or the second or the third.

But his name belongs among the elite. He used his talent for promotion and friendship to foster a fledgling industry and help build it into the powerhouse it became in his time.

Camilleri died Dec. 23, 2011.