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## 50 years in, Gordon Lightfoot still loves performing

Singer-songwriter will offer old, newer songs in concert Friday.

By James Grant of The News-Sentinel  
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OK, pop music fans, it's quiz time.

What performer was born in Canada, had the same manager as Bob Dylan and titled his first greatest hits album "Gord's Gold"?

Whose long musical career has included writing and performing the hits "Sundown," "Carefree Highway" and "If You Could Read My Mind"? What famous singer-songwriter will appear at 8 p.m. Friday at the Embassy Theatre?

The answer to all of the above is, of course: Gordon Lightfoot.

Lightfoot began his career in his homeland of Canada in the 1950s. His first brush with success came as a songwriter in 1965 when Peter, Paul and Mary recorded his songs "For Lovin' Me" and "Early Morning Rain." Many other famous artists have covered his songs, including Elvis Presley, Barbra Streisand, Johnny Cash and fellow Canadian Sarah McLachlan, to name but a few.

In the United States, certainly, he'll best be remembered for the songs he wrote and performed himself in the 1970s, including the immortal "The Wreck of The Edmund Fitzgerald."

"It was a song that I wrote right around the time that the Edmund Fitzgerald went down," Lightfoot said in a phone interview. "It was an almost overlooked thing and I was on a roll writing songs at the time, and I decided to take a shot at that one and see if I could write something about it. The result was a folk song for an album that rose up and became a hit record."

### He's a survivor

In the decades since, Lightfoot has not only survived a changing music industry, but has also survived nearly dying from an abdominal aneurysm in 2002, which left him in a coma for six weeks. Through the ups and downs of life and the music business, Lightfoot remains rooted through his passion for performing.

"I really enjoy performing," he said. "I've been performing for almost 50 years now, since I was very young. Started when I was about 21 professionally. I was a choral singer in a television series here (Canada).

"The achievement is being able to last that long," he continued. "To be able to keep the energy level up, to keep up the desire, to keep up the passion, to love the fans - we've got a very loyal fan base. We've got lots of friends out there, and we're always happy to meet them again."

For fans who go to see him at the Embassy Theatre, Lightfoot promised a two-hour show with a 20-minute intermission and no opening act.

He said it's been 15 years or so since he's played Fort Wayne, and he feels he has a lot to offer.

"We do a lot of good up-tempo stuff, too, you know," Lightfoot added. "We're not limited to doing ballads and all folk music all night. We have quite a variety of material in the show. It's kind of exciting and it goes by very quickly. It certainly does for me, anyway."

### More Information

#### Master of folk

**What:** Gordon Lightfoot in concert

**When:** 8 p.m. Friday

**Where:** Embassy Theatre, 121 W. Jefferson Blvd.

**Cost:** \$60, \$50, \$40; at Embassy box office, Ticketmaster locations and [www.ticketmaster.com](http://www.ticketmaster.com)

#### Audio online

To hear audio excerpts from our interview with Gordon Lightfoot, go to [www.news-sentinel.com](http://www.news-sentinel.com) and click Entertainment in the left-hand list of links.