



*Pictured left to right ( Doug Dillon (bassist), Sue Baker, Roger Wooller (drums) and Alan Ogborne (keyboardist).*

# LET'S FALL IN LOVE with Sue Baker and the 1000 Islands Jazz Trio

By Brenda Visser

**B**rockville has a new quality Jazz group that is worth seeking out. Sue Baker left the region at the age of 18 to pursue a musical career. After many years of performing on the top 40 circuit, her innate passion for jazz and blues, lead her home to start a new journey which has earned her a dedicated fan base.

Singing legendary tunes from jazz greats such as Duke Ellington, Fats Waller, and Count Basie, Baker's rich voice is surrounded by the warm sound of keyboardist, Alan Ogborne, double bassist, Doug Dillon, and drummer, Roger Wooller. The chemistry in this group is magnetic and evident in their music, even though they have only been together for two years.

Regularly playing to a full house at the Grindstone Tapas Lounge in Brockville or Calamity Jane's Dining Lounge in Addison, Baker and the Jazz Trio performed to sold-out crowds at recent Thousand Island Jazz and Blues Festivals. Look for them at the Jazz Festival this year! To familiarize yourself with their music, you can also head to their website, [www.sue-baker.com](http://www.sue-baker.com), and listen to some music clips. It is worth your time!

Baker has broad experience in the music world. She grew up in a household where music was always playing, and was influenced by the likes of Ella Fitzgerald, Barbra Streisand, Diana Krall, Shirley Bassey, and many more. As a young woman, she toured through Ontario and the East Coast with an A-circuit cover

band, and throughout the 1980s and '90s she fronted contemporary bands Rumour's Out, The Motive, On the Rox, the All Girls Band, and the Children's Entertainment Group H & S Express.

She co-wrote and recorded an original album "On the Rox" and then released "Back to School" featuring classic children's songs with H & S Express. In 2007, however, Baker finally had the opportunity to get "back to her roots" and pursue her love for jazz and blues when she started performing with the Brian Downey Jazz Band. It even felt comfortable physically, as she had more stamina, and her vocal chords were not as strained.

As many, and perhaps most, people with artistic abilities will tell you, it is not easy making a living with music or any creative art. Baker maintains a part-time job to supplement her musical income, and ironically, her job at The Canadian Hearing Society began to play an integral part in her music several years ago.

Beginning with a high-pitched ringing in her ears, Baker gradually developed moderate hearing loss. She noticed it was becoming difficult to talk with people in small groups, on the telephone, or in crowded areas. Exposed to high decibels of music for most of her life, Baker was now experiencing a disability that could have seriously affected her career. Instead, she was pro-active and well aware of the consequences of not hearing well and chose to get her hearing tested. She now has two behind-the-ear hearing aids and is able to maintain her life and her singing. She advocates that all musicians invest in musician's ear plugs so the same does not happen to them.

Sue Baker and the 1000 Islands Jazz Trio love to be involved in the community. In addition to playing at local venues, they have performed at many charity events, such as for the United Way of Leeds and Grenville and the Brockville Community Foundation. They are available for private events including weddings, cocktail parties, and the like. They would love to hear from you! Please contact them at [www.sue-baker.com](http://www.sue-baker.com), or email [info@sue-baker.com](mailto:info@sue-baker.com). You will find that the warmth in their music is also part of their personality. I highly recommend them! You just might fall in love... **LH**