A real 1958 Fender Stratocaster and a fake Cello (Part 1)

Pictured here are two very special musical instruments. One is a 1958 Fender Stratocaster the other a beautiful Ceramic Cello. Their stories began when I was a trumpet player going to High School in Transcona when Elvis hit! Forget about the trumpet now I gotta be a Guitar God! Hey trumpet players don't get the chicks Man!. I knew very little about guitars and had no idea what kind I wanted until I saw Buddy Holly on the Ed Sullivan show. Wow! His guitar looked so cool and I knew I had to have one just like it. The only question was, how do I pull all this off. I knew for certain my folks weren't going to help finance their son becoming a guitar man like the evil Elvis.

My father had originally purchased my Olds Trumpet from the same place I took music lessons from called Winnipeg Piano. I figured I might as well go there first to see if they knew what kind of a Guitar Buddy played. They informed me it was called a Fender Stratocaster and I told them I had to have it. When it finally arrived I was so excited I could hardly breathe for two reasons, the Guitar's beauty and it's sticker price of $473.00. Thats a hell of a lot of money in those days for a teenager to come up with so I used my Trumpet as the down payment and they put me on a $14.00 a month payment plan. I pumped gas on the weekends plus did a few odd jobs to come up with the payment each month. I spent many a long hour in the basement of my parents house along with my friend Pete Proskurnik just learning how to play this beauty. Peter was and still is a great sax player and to this day I still give him the credit for turning me on to music in general. Before too long I knew a few chords and was invited to sing with Shayne and the Devines. I think they asked me to join them because I had an amp that Shayne could also plug his Guitar into but I didn't really care, all I knew was I was in a group man! It was soon apparent that I wasn't really cut out to be a singer so I started recruiting Pete and a bunch of his musician friends to join us and we became the Rebel Raiders. I was the lead guitar of the Raiders and thought I looked very cool on stage what with my black Strat and my cheap sunglasses. As fate would have it one day at a music review which featured a bunch of local groups I noticed a kid in a band who not only could play better than me but could also sing all those great Chuck Berry tunes. This was a no brainer I moved over to rhythm guitar and by doing so stumbled onto something that would serve me well for my whole career. What I had unknowingly figured out was if you hire people better and/or smarter than you, you become the smartest person in the room. When Perry Waksvic joined the band as our new lead Guitar player we became the Phantoms which at one time was one of the best bands in Winnipeg but unfortunately we had a reputation as being the best party band too. Right Termite (-: The only way to fix it was by becoming the Jury and in no time my '58 Strat was soon making hit records and opening for a lot of big groups which included the likes of music legends Roy Orbison and Johnny Cash. What a thrill that was and over the years my Stratocaster has

provided me with more than my fair share of thrilling moments, but in 1967 when my Daughter Candis was born I put her down never to play her again. My Radio career had only just begun at that time but it soon picked up steam as we started climbing the ladder rather quickly which necessitated moving from one city to another bigger one quite often. I continued to drag my Strat along for purely sentimental reasons I guess. A couple of days ago I thought about her again as one tends to do now and then about former lovers, but by doing so I realized I hadn't even looked at her for at least 15 years let alone play her. There's an old rule somewhere that says if you haven't used something for 6 months it's time to move on. My 1958 Fender Stratocaster is way beyond that schedule so it's time to find her a new home. I'm pretty sure she has at least a couple of more hits in her but I'm no longer interested in getting them out. Randy Bachman (BTO) recently told me when he was opening for Neil Young a few months ago, Neil had mentioned to him that he thought I had one of the early great Guitars in Winnipeg. I'm sure Neil is right so If you're a stud with a slow hand who also has some cash and you promise to treat her right you may have a shot at owning my sweet Lady. You better hurry though 'cause I've got a feeling Randy is lusting after her. She gave me a hell of a ride in my early years and jump started what turned out to be a very exciting life for me. Hey maybe you deserve one too! (to be continued)