

It's chord family pride

His background set Tony Zemaitis up for a life surrounded by guitars. **Laura Patrick** reports

THE Zemaitis family have played their part in helping some of music's legends sell their soul for rock'n'roll at The Crossroads for years.

Spitfire 4 guitarist Tony Zemaitis was brought up around musical icons of the 1960s and 1970s and became used to either popping around famous people's houses or seeing them at his family home.

His father, Tony, was the respected guitar-maker, who made instruments for the likes of George Harrison, Jimi Hendrix, Keith Richards, Ronnie Wood, Bob Dylan, Marc Bolan, Eric Clapton and Dave Gilmore.

This evening, Friday 11, Tony will perform at The Command House, Chatham, with his blues garage band Spitfire 4, which has been influenced by his musical upbringing.

"I was always surrounded by music, guitars and musicians," Tony said.

"This certainly gave me a love of a wide range of music from an early age and there was always a guitar to play.



■ Sean McDonough, Tony Zemaitis and Ian Smith of Spitfire 4 - performing at The Command House, Chatham, tonight

Picture: Tony Zemaitis

"I was 12 when I picked up the guitar. My father always encouraged me, but never pushed me. Having said that, being surrounded by guitars, I think I was always going to play the guitar one day and history has repeated itself as my son now plays, too."

The members of Spitfire 4 are no strangers to the Medway music scene.

Worth the wait

Tony has played in Johnny Gash and The Sweet Smell of Success and The Heroes, while drummer Ian Smith played with

Medway's legendary band, The Dentists, and also toured America for two years with Armitage Shanks. Bass player Sean McDonough, who has known Tony and Ian only recently, performed with The Drunken Popes, Somersault and Gin.

The band has taken a few years

to get off the ground, but Tony said it had been worth the wait.

"I've known Ian from school and we both played in the same places. For the last few years Ian and I would meet and have a few beers and say, 'We must get a band together.' Finally, we did.

Doors open at 8pm tonight.

■ Music

Festival will support a worthy cause

FESTIVALS seem to be a bit like buses this summer.

Following the announcement that Glastonbury would take a holiday in 2006, music-lovers were worried their summer might be tuneless.

But so far, Kent has played host to two festivals in the past month, Lounge on the Farm and Electric Gardens.

And a Medway musician is hoping this weekend that people will put their money where his heart is and support his first foray into the world of festivals and gigs.

Antmonkey, who plays bass in the Godless Reds and The Sunshine Bus, is in the final throes of ensuring this Sunday's Antfest goes without a hitch.

Bands lined up to play the one-day festival at The Command House, Chatham, include One Day Elliott, Battleska Galactica, Kingskin and 3DBsDown.

The charity fund-raiser was organised in memory of a family friend who died of a heart attack. All money will be donated to The British Heart Foundation.

Ant said: "My friend's dad, Gerard D'Souza, died just before Christmas and I wanted to do something to raise money in his memory."

Comedian Dave Bailey is competing. Music from 2pm to 2am.

■ Visit www.myspace.com/antfest for more details

■ Music

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