

Caledon Central's library renamed after Alex Raeburn

By Bill Rea

The late Alex Raeburn spent much of his long life contributing to the Caledon community.

Many of those contributions were recalled last week as the library at Caledon Central Public School was renamed in his honour. Widely known as 'Caledon's Senior Statesman,' Mr. Raeburn died in November 2012, the day after his 100th birthday. A fourth generation resident of Caledon village, he was involved in many projects in the community, including service on the local school board, a charter member of Caledon Town and Peel Regional councils and serving two terms on the Niagara Escarpment Commission.

He was part of the successful effort to get Caledon Central School built, and former Ontario premier Bill Davis (also former Minister of education) was on hand to recognize that.

'It's not often that we recognize people who made contributions,' he commented about his friend.

'We didn't always agree,' Davis added, but he did stress Mr. Raeburn's great commitment to education.'

'He believed in it,' he added.

'Alex was very committed to his community,' Davis declared. 'This building is here because of his leadership and guidance.'

'This is an exciting change for Caledon Central Public School,' commented Peel District School Board Trustee Stan Cameron, who recalled that Mr. Raeburn secured the land for the school. He was a trustee and school board chair at a time of dramatic changes to education.

'When you met Alex, you came away with so much more than you started with,' Dufferin-Caledon MPP Sylvia Jones observed.

'He was an incredible resource.'

Councillor Doug Beffort, who was also vice-principal at the school, agreed that Mr. Raeburn fought to get it built.

'We all know what Alex was like. He had a story all the time,' Beffort added. 'He had more stories than Planters had peanuts.'

'He had a love of stories, a love of people, a love of nature and a love of things he did,' Beffort remarked,

Mr. Raeburn's son John recalled his father was working at a high stress job during his time on the school board. He remembered seeing him at his drafting table working out school bus routes.



Alex Raeburn's son John, sister Isabel Bospoort and daughter Lynn Baker were flanked by Joan Kadoke and Fay McCrea, the organizers of last week's event, in front of the mural on the wall of the newly renamed library at Caledon Central Public School.



Former premier Bill Davis spoke of Alex Raeburn's commitment to education and the community.