

Scottish poet Robert Burns celebrated at Seniors Centre lunch]

Haggis, bagpipes, and poetry featured at event

By Zachary Roman

Caledon residents toasted the life of Scottish poet Robert Burns at a special luncheon on Wednesday.

Burns, who's widely regarded as Scotland's national poet, was born on January 25 in the year 1759. Each year on January 25 ?Burns suppers? are celebrated around the world. A main feature of these suppers is the piping in and cutting of the haggis, as well as the reading of Burns' famous poem, ?Address to a Haggis.?

All of these things happened at the Caledon Seniors Centre's Burns lunch on January 25, and following the reading of the poem, a toast was made to Burns and people dug into their meals. It was a great turnout for the lunch, with over 70 people in attendance and even more picking up lunch to go. It was a great chance for volunteers at the Seniors' Centre to use the newly-renovated commercial kitchen to its full potential.

Isabel Neubert, Treasurer of the Caledon Seniors Centre Board, and was born and raised in Scotland before moving to Canada 41 years ago. She was the one who read ?Address to a Haggis? to all those in attendance at the Burns Lunch, and made the ceremonial first cut into the haggis. Neubert and the bagpiper led the crowd in a toast with Scotch whisky.

Neubert said that a traditional Burns lunch features haggis, turnips, and potatoes. While haggis was served at the Burns lunch, there was also steak and ale pie for those who weren't quite ready to try haggis.

?Not everyone likes it? It's an acquired taste,? she said.

Neubert explained that Burns was a working man and a farmer, and that much of his poetry had to do with the nature he saw, and everyday life. She said another of Burns' most famous poems is about a man who's walking home drunk through a cemetery.