

PHYLLIS WHEATON
NEWS RELEASE

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Local singer heads to Scotland to tell tales of Calgary

Calgary -- Schoolchildren on the Isle of Mull in Scotland will soon be learning more about their ancestors and about the city of Calgary which took its name from a bay on their island thanks to the initiative of local folk singer Phyllis Wheaton.

Wheaton will travel to Scotland in September with a lively interactive presentation about the pioneer Scots who left their homeland to build a new life in Canada and in the process helped to build a country. The school children, aged nine to 12 years, will encounter the hardships the pioneers faced such as shipwreck, foraging for food, and winter as they walk across a large 15 by 10 foot map of Canada spread at their feet on the floor of their classroom.

Wheaton, who has no Scottish ancestry, says her interest in the role of the pioneering Scots was sparked when she began researching the story behind The Stones of Signal Hill which is now a landmark in southwest Calgary. As a result, the Museum of the Regiments asked her to archive letters from a Scots-born Canadian, David Argo who trained at Sarcee Camp at the base of Signal Hill in preparation for the first world war.

“David Argo’s letters to his wife Mae and other relatives spawned my interest in the contributions so many Scots made in the forming of Canada and I realized that there was an important story to be told about our history,” says Wheaton.

Many of the songs she has penned about Signal Hill and the Argo’s have received airplay locally as well as CBC Newsworld.

While in Scotland, Wheaton will meet with the 90 year old nephew of David Argo to present him with a memento of his clansman’s life in Canada.

“There are so many wonderful stories of quiet lives bravely lived by the Scots pioneers and I want to share them with schoolchildren in Calgary here and Calgary there and elsewhere in both countries. Their stories are similar to so many who came here to settle from other nations,” says Wheaton.

The Scottish-Canadian Connection Tour kicks off in Tobermory, Scotland September 11. A journal of the tour and more information can be viewed at www.phylliswheaton.ca
A fundraiser will be held at T.A.Verns, August 27, 7:30. Tickets \$10 at the door or call 714-5054.

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