

Students spellbound by poet

By JEFF CARNEY

Wandering the halls of Stouffville District Secondary School can be quite a fashionable experience. Every style of clothing, from punk to prep, can be seen garishly displayed. Yet on Thursday, April 30, Stouffville High saw a different style.

Strolling through the halls, I happened to spot a gentleman sporting a dignified and respectable suit. Now this wasn't just any suit—it appeared to be a "period costume" from the 1930's. Intrigued, I followed the gentleman into a filled-to-capacity Theatre Arts room, where, after a brief introduction by English Department Head, Mr. Hodgson, he addressed the audience with a rich Scottish accent.

"I wanted the gold . . . and I sought it . . ."

From Charles Hayter's opening lines of verse to his closing remarks, the audience of 112 students was spellbound. Performing his popular "A Touch of Robert Service" presentation, Mr. Hayter dazzled the assembled enthusiasts with biographical information, anecdotes and dramatic recitations of one of Canada's most celebrated authors, Robert Service. With the grace and style of a trained professional, the British-born Hayter delighted the audience for well over an hour—continuing his non-stop monologue with scarcely a pause for breath. Adopting the guise of the "resurrected" Robert Service, Mr. Hayter treated the students with a different method of teaching; by the end of the presentation, students had memorized lines of verse, important dates, and other information about Service. A radically new concept in education—don't you agree Mr. Bowes?

After a well-deserved round of applause, Mr. Hayter was open for questions. That's when his story unfolded.

Professional actor Charles Hayter was a member of an acting company when he was required to memorize a verse of one of Service's poems. "It grew from there," he explained. "The more I read, the more I liked his brand of poetry." Branching out on his own, Mr. Hayter has performed this presentation for 17 years. "At first (the presentation) wasn't in the first person. I merely told people about Robert Service and recited his poetry. Eventually the idea of impersonating Service took hold, and I've been perfecting it ever since."

And he has done an excellent job. Mr. Hayter's presentation provided students with a long overdue respite from the routine and boredom of daily classroom learning. Educational, inspirational and most of all, fun, Charles Hayter's presentation reminds us all about the art of teaching.

Town has a rich heritage

By RUTH BURKHOLDER

For the past several months, a steering committee has been discussing the formation of an Historical Group for the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville.

A meeting is planned for Wed., May 27 at 8 p.m., in Latcham Gallery of the Public Library. Interested residents are invited.

Many changes have occurred in the last 100 years. These are seen through the following items.

SCHOOLS WERE BUILT
Ringwood Public School was built in 1887. A debenture was required for \$1,000.

The school in S.S. No. 11 was built in 1891 with a loan of \$400. In 1898, debentures for \$1,600 were issued on behalf of S.S. No. 10.

Armitage School was built in 1911.

In 1913, a petition was circulated to establish S.S. No. 7, Whitchurch and S.S. No. 4, Markham into a Union Section.

In 1918, debentures for Stouffville Public School were purchased out of a Clergy Reserve Fund.

Pine Orchard School was built in 1924.

TOWNS FORMED FROM TOWNSHIP

In 1858, Newmarket was incorporated as a town. In 1878, Stouffville was incorporated as a village.

Remember the Historical Group meeting, May 27 at 8 p.m., in Latcham Gallery, (Public Library). Discover more about your heritage.

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