

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 26, 2010

THIS YEAR'S INDUCTEE: JAMES B. DOUGLAS
CALEDON'S WALK OF FAME HONOURS TOWN'S FAMOUS RESIDENTS



Since 1999, Caledon has been honouring current or past Caledon residents who have made significant contributions locally, nationally and internationally. Shown above is the unveiling of the Conn Smythe stone from last year's ceremony.

Plan to attend the Caledon Walk of Fame Ceremony and trail event on Sunday, June 6, 2010. The day starts at 11 a.m. with the unveiling of the James Douglas stone and new donor panels for the Trans Canada Trail Pavilion. A free lunch in the park follows, with a guided trail walk at 1:00. A Trails Open Ontario participating event, the walk will focus on the history of the railways in Caledon, the Caledon Railway and the Trans Canada Trail. There will be displays of photos and railroad memorabilia, and information on Caledon's trails will be available.

Presented posthumously, this year's Walk of Fame honoree is James B. Douglas. Actor, producer, director, writer and theatre activist, Douglas was also a committed heritage activist known for his efforts in preserving the rural, cultural and environmental integrity of his home communities. Professionally, Douglas was renowned as one of Canada's veteran actors. His varied and distinguished acting career included the following:

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- Colonel Merrill in the motion picture M*A*S*H;
- starring role in the Academy-Award nominated CBC documentary After the Axe;
- lead roles with the Stratford Shakespearean Festival;
- guest appearances with Faye Dunaway in the Road to Avonlea series;
- co-starred with Peter O'Toole in Present Laughter at the Royal Alex Theatre.

Douglas also built an exciting and strong theatre community, founded on his passion for Canadian plays and musicals. His contributions included:

- created the musical adaptation of Gordon Pinsent's A Gift to Last;
- produced War Brides, The Musical;
- wrote, directed, produced and acted in the acclaimed Sunshine and Shadows: An Evening with Stephen Leacock.

Douglas was a founding member of Toronto's Tarragon Theatre, artistic director of Barrie's Gryphon Theatre, member of the Advisory Board of the Ryerson Theatre School, founding member and board member of the Canadian Actors Equity Association and mentored several Canadian actors, including Cynthia Dale and Michael Burgess.

Beyond his professional life, Douglas had a keen interest in local history and preservation. His efforts led to the creation of Toronto's Beaconsfield Village, a heritage-designated area which is home to the restored Gladstone and Drake hotels and the vibrant art galleries along Queen Street West. Douglas was also a tireless advocate for heritage preservation in Belfountain. He is considered one of the primary advocates for having the ownership of the Melville Church transferred to the Town of Caledon. Douglas served as President and Chair of the Belfountain Heritage Society and often shared his expertise with school children, visitors to the area and community groups. He worked with the Belfountain Community Organization and the Belfountain Community Planning Organization to encourage others to participate in heritage preservation.

The "Walk of Fame" honours current or past Caledon residents who have made significant contributions locally, nationally and internationally. Past honorees include sports entrepreneur Conn Smythe, art collectors Robert and Signe McMichael, writer Farley Mowat, and film director Norman Jewison.

The Trans Canada Trail Pavilion Park is located on the west side of Airport Road in Caledon East, just south of Emma Street and Old Church Road. There is parking available on Emma Street, and east on Old Church Road at Caledon East Park; a five minute walk down the Trailway. For information on this event, visit www.caledon.ca or call 905-584-2272.

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