

Don Haggart at WENTWORTH FIDDLE DO



Country singer and composer, Don Haggart, and his wife, Diane, greet fans at the recent Music Afternoon at the Wentworth Recreation Centre. (Hope Bridgewater Photo)

By Hope Bridgewater

Once again a great time was celebrated at the Wentworth Fiddle Do, also called Music Afternoon, at the Wentworth Recreation Centre on March 27th. Led by talented old-time fiddlers, the musicians on stage also include experts on the piano, accordion, drums, banjo, and singing. We welcomed one of the best country singers in Nova Scotia and Canada, Don Haggart, to sing on stage.

Don and his wife Diane were at a table welcoming and talking to people as they came into the Centre. Many in Wentworth remembered hearing Don and Jim Haggart sing traditional, classic country songs on radio, and, since the passing of his brother Jim in September, 2006, Don has continued his performances on radio and on stage, as well as continuing to compose. Don brought with him a compact disc called Classic: Jim & Don Haggart, containing such songs as "Hard Times in The Maritimes" and "Liverpool." Don told me that he and his brother, Jim, had performed at the Grand Ole Opry, at the Wheeling West Virginia Show, on Countrytime (with Tommy Hunter, Ian Tyson, and George Hamilton IV) and before Queen Elizabeth II in P.E.I.

The brothers had best selling LP's with three number one hits and ten top hits. In 2006, they were inducted into the Nova Scotia Country Music Hall of Fame and were recognized by New Glasgow as "Ambassadors Extraordinaire" for their contribution to the music legacy of Nova Scotia internationally. Don continues to live in New Glasgow, owns his own production company called Rainy Day Productions, recently produced a CD of his original gospel songs called Prayers and Promises and another CD will soon be out called A Man and His Music. Don is an enthusiastic supporter of Vionetta's Museum Centre in Millvale where many concerts are being held to foster the promotion of country music.

On stage at Wentworth,

Don Haggart sang with conviction and sincerity in a strong mesmerizing voice, capturing his tradition of being true to his deep roots in Maritime country soul music. In the singing of his sad songs, Don Haggart's lonesome, soulful sounds reflect a spirituality that is heartfelt and recognized by his audience as truthful and honest. His performance was riveting and added to the joy of the afternoon.

Wentworth Music Afternoon or Fiddle Do takes part in keeping alive and well in Nova Scotia old-time fiddle music. Some people come just to spend the afternoon listening to the music while most people are up on the hardwood floors dancing to the music of waltzes, polkas, hop-polkas, reels, jigs, fox-trots, and singing. At 4 p.m. Master of Ceremony, Charles Patriquin, announces a brief break for a snack of sandwiches, sweets and drinks. This time Co-Chair of the Wentworth Recreation Centre and pianist at this event, Betty Curry, made an announcement on stage: "Remember, folks, in April we show respect for Easter Sunday, the last Sunday in April, by changing our Music Afternoon to Sunday, May 1, at 1:30 p.m."

Having celebrated the talents of Don Haggart, we take time to salute the musician volunteers who came to the recent Music Afternoon to share their talents with all present: Dave Bagnell, Gordon Canning, Budd Cave, Jewel Coulter, Betty Curry, Wayne Elliott, Gerard Fougere, Arden Hayman, Cathy MacDonald, Larry MacLellan, Gerald McKenzie, Al McVicar, Nick Nicholson, Charley Patriquin, Robert Taylor, Vivian Taylor, Willett Stevenson, and Angus Quinn. We also salute volunteers Claire Patriquin and Marion Gower who worked diligently in the kitchen preparing the snack and doing the clean-up on this particular Sunday.

Having celebrated another happy occasion of old-time music and dancing, we invite people to come again on May 1.

WENDY ROBINSON CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

SLJ: In the last federal election only 59% of eligible voters voted. Many claim, voters have become cynical, because they do not believe their elected representatives are serving their needs and act unprofessional in the House of Commons during question period.

At all levels of government, there are perceptions of wrong doing; investigations, and criminal charges have been laid. Voters are upset and have not voted because they perceive petty games are being played; politicians not addressing the issues which voters consider most important. Voters are demanding things be "CLEANED UP".

In consideration of the foregoing, please provide only a YES or NO answer.

Will you be visibly vocal advocating all elected representatives, regardless of party lines, be professional and put forth the wishes of constituents? YES, I WILL

Are you willing to put constituent's needs / wishes ahead of the party line and vote accordingly with the exception of a 'Non-Confidence' or "Budget" vote? In principle yes, but I would be reluctant to commit to the hypothetical nature of the question, without knowing the context of what was being discussed. But again, in principle an MP attempts to represent the wishes of his/her constituents.

If you do not demonstrate you have accomplished the two previous activities in the first year, would you resign as their representative? No, I would let voters evaluate my voting behaviour, doing so in an election.

In what way will your representation and actions help reduce the cynical attitude of voters?

I would attempt to meet with constituents in their homes and halls to keep them informed about events in Ottawa and learn about the ever-changing issues affecting their lives.

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What do you consider to be the most important issue facing residents of this constituency?

Two issues: the health of our publicly-funded health care system and the economy. We need to explore ways to decrease the costs of our system, such as, by using nurse practitioners as front line health professionals and assist aging people so that they can, if they want, remain in their own homes. Regarding the economy, we need to develop more green jobs in renewable energy and attempt to attract more businesses to industrial parks at Debert, Amherst, Truro and the like.

What can you accomplish to help the working poor with regard to rising food prices, higher energy and gasoline prices?

On Monday April 18 we organized a demonstration against poverty at my campaign headquarters, 550 Prince St. Truro. All media were informed on the preceding Friday about this event; none showed up. About 120 people peacefully demonstrated on both sides of Prince St. shouting slogans such as Make Poverty History and Poor No More. The NDP is the only party that has consistently fought against poverty and I this is also one of my main goals. I have experienced lean years and this makes me appreciate those struggling to make ends meet.

Having said this, food and fuels prices will be rising over the next few years. There are a number of planks in the NDP platform that address this issue: doubling pensions, upgrading homes to be more energy efficient, developing various green technologies, and more.

What will you do to be a catalyst to increase the volumes of locally produced food products sold in nationally owned supermarkets and big box stores? How will you achieve this?

I am afraid that both the federal and provincial governments need to lean on big box stores to carry more locally produced items. Further, people need to be educated about the health and economic impacts of buying locally.

Even though healthcare is a provincial responsibility what will you do to assist to deliver healthcare quicker and more economically without a substantial increase in cost?

The NDP platform plans to train more doctors and nurses over the next decade. As said above, we also need to be using nurse practitioners as front line health professionals.

Prevention is preferred to spending money to correct a problem. The same holds true in healthcare. What will your party do to encourage a healthier lifestyle to prevent health problems rather than waiting to make sick people well?

All parties in this election want to get Canadians, particularly young Canadians off the couch. This can be done through tax rebates on minor sports and gyms and by greater education on the impacts of a healthy lifestyle.

How will you use your expertise to assist the province establish programs to ensure a higher rate of youth finish high school and continue with secondary education?

We need to change the way society views post secondary education, giving equal status to those learning skilled trades in community colleges and those attending university. Skilled carpenters and electricians are in high demand in many areas, yet young people are not always aware of that good futures await those obtaining skilled training.

When the economy tanks, many people are displaced when companies down-size or close. What results can you deliver to provide programs so displaced workers can be re-trained and re-enter the workforce quickly?

As said in No. 8, we need more skilled workers. Re-training those displaced from the work place may require relocation to centres where trades are taught and those doing so should be supported during their training.

Many voters suggest HST should not apply to electricity and furnace fuel for residential purposes, for low income families. How do you plan to address these matters?

I agree with removing the HST for low income families but also think we need federal programs that insulate our homes to reduce energy consumed.

Why should voters support you in this election?

I am the only woman running in this election, and the House of Commons might be a bit less raucous if there were more women. My experience as deputy mayor of Stewiacke, plus my time on the council, gives me some idea of the workings of municipal government. I will listen to your concerns and do the best I can to serve you.



Wendy Robinson

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