



Minister James Moore Celebrates Sir John A. Day at Pitt Meadows High School

Quiz, Cake, Card and Historian All Part of Dominion Institute Party for our First Prime Minister

Pitt Meadows (BC) – January 12, 2009 – The Dominion Institute marked Sir John A. Macdonald Day with a special birthday celebration with the Honourable James Moore, Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages, and history students from Pitt Meadows High School.

This Sir John A. Day celebration brought students and Minister Moore together to sign a giant birthday card and share a birthday cake in celebration of Canada's first Prime Minister. Minister Moore hosted a pop quiz to test students' knowledge of Sir John A. Macdonald. Students who answered the most questions correctly won Sir John A.-themed prizes. Canadian historian Christopher Moore, winner of the Governor General's Award for Non-fiction, was also present to provide students with an overview of the life and legacy of Sir John A. Macdonald.

"Young Canadians should be aware of and appreciate the people and events that have shaped our great country. I can think of no better time to revisit our country's history than on the birth date of our first Prime Minister," said Minister Moore. "On behalf of Prime Minister Stephen Harper, I am pleased to celebrate Sir John A. Macdonald Day with young history students who are destined to become tomorrow's leaders."

"A recent Dominion Institute survey found that four in ten Canadians could not identify John A. Macdonald as our country's first Prime Minister," said Marc Chalifoux, the Institute's Executive Director. "It is our hope that events like today will inspire more Canadians, especially young Canadians, to learn more about one of our greatest nation-builders."

In 2002, the Parliament of Canada adopted a bill recognizing January 11th as Sir John A. Macdonald Day, as well as November 20th as Sir Wilfrid Laurier Day.

This Sir John A. Macdonald Day celebration was part of the Dominion Institute's latest project, *the Macdonald-Laurier Days*, which celebrates the birthdays of these former Prime Ministers and aims to increase knowledge and appreciation of their life and legacy. The centerpiece of the *Macdonald-Laurier Days* project is a bilingual website www.macdonald-laurier.ca. Visitors can learn more about these former prime ministers, which features information on Macdonald and Laurier, as well as an interactive quiz. Participants in the quiz (over 18 years old) can win a piece of history: portraits and original signatures from Macdonald and Laurier. Those aged 13 to 18 and under can win a trip to Ottawa for themselves and a guardian.

The Dominion Institute acknowledges the financial support of the Government of Canada, which has provided \$82,500 in funding to support initiatives surrounding the celebration of Macdonald-Laurier Days through the Celebration, Commemoration and Learning Program of the Department of Canadian Heritage.

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