



MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### ***RAISING (AT TOAST TO) THE BARD***

**NEWPORT, OR** - A cultural icon in Scotland and among the millions of people of Scots around the globe, the influence of Robert Burns resonates even today. In a 2009 Scottish television poll, Burns was voted as "*the Greatest Scot in history*," topping a list of famous warriors, kings, inventors and others.

Since his passing in 1796, a Scottish tradition of commemorating the bard have become known as *Robert Burns Suppers* which are hosted on or near his birthday - January 25<sup>th</sup>. Burns lovers gather to celebrate the famous poet, the spirit of his lusty life and literary works, and to embrace Scottish customs and culture.

To the uninitiated, this annual social gathering is a rollercoaster of participatory tongue-tying verse steeped in "auld Scots" language, sheep-innards and whisky swilling, but in truth, this literary soiree is actually a celebration of the life and works of Robert Burns. Hosts hold a raucous evening to celebrate with guests outfit themselves in their kilts and jackets, while ladies wear their gowns and tartan best. All consider it an honor to attend this enchanted evening.

The unlikely guest of honor; the mighty haggis, makes its entrance on its fine silver platter, led by a piper and presented by the chef to the humbled host who pays homage through reciting Burns' famous "Ode to a Haggis," who then bathes the sausage in a fine single malt Scotch, slices it open with a ceremonial dirk and serves it to awaiting partygoers.

This traditional Scottish delicacy is, of course, only one of the many tasty temptations presented to accompany a virtual feast of Scotch Eggs, garden salad, "cock-a-leekie" soup, stuffed chicken breast, seasonal vegetables, "neeps and tatties" (turnips and potatoes), with a delectable *Drambuie* trifle, shortbread and truffles for dessert.

Between courses, whisky connoisseurs will enjoy five exceptional tastings of fine single malt Scotches.

Having enjoyed this wonderful feast, the guests then partake and participate in an evening of verse and song, fanciful readings, and now (feeling a bit more brave), the lads offer a "Toast to the Lassies", where they lampoon the shortcomings of the fairer sex. This is usually met with great hilarity from the crowd and a witty "Reply from the Lassies" as a charming assault on the crude ways of Burns and the lads' in general, but all in good fun. Guests are then invited to share selected readings from Burns' poetry such as "A Red, Red Rose," and "Ode to a Mouse." Then, the evening concludes with the singing of "Auld Lang Syne".

In celebration of friendship, Scottish culture, and the legacy of Robert Burns, the Celtic Heritage Alliance invites you to attend their 3rd Annual Robert Burns Supper set for Saturday January 25, 2014, 6:30 to 10 p.m. at the Shilo Inn ballroom at 536 SW Elizabeth Street in Newport, Oregon. Seating is limited to 60 persons.

Tickets to this fundraiser for the Celtic Heritage Alliance are \$35 per person for the supper with an additional \$20 per person for the optional Whisky Tasting. Tickets are available online at [www.newportcelticfestival.com](http://www.newportcelticfestival.com) until January 10<sup>th</sup>, 2014, or by calling 541-574-9366.

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## **PHOTOS:**



Stock photos (online)





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Shilo's "Chef Terry" proudly presents the guest of honor - The Haggis!



Toledo's "Men in Kilts" join the fray with the ladies sporting their lovely tartan sashes.