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MEDIA RELEASE

“Scotching of B.C.” talk, haggis procession to mark Burns Day in Surrey

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Photo: <http://at.sfu.ca/SnKEpX>

Simon Fraser University’s Surrey campus will host its annual Robbie Burns Day on the Scottish bard’s birthday, Jan. 25. This year’s event will feature a piper-led procession of the haggis, to be carried by a kilted campus Executive Director Stephen Dooley, and a traditional “address to the haggis” by Jennifer Marchbank, an associate professor at the Surrey campus. A chance to sample the Scottish fare will follow. The event starts at 11 a.m. in the mezzanine or if weather permits, outside in the Central City Plaza.

Before the festivities begin, Katie McCullough, the University’s new director of the Centre for Scottish Studies, will give a talk (10 a.m., room 2995) on the *Scotching of B.C.: Cultural Blending in the Pacific Northwest*.

McCullough joined SFU in May as an assistant professor and began as director in September. Originally from Victoria, she earned her graduate degrees at the University of Guelph (UG), where she was involved with UG’s Centre for Scottish Studies.

An avid researcher of Scottish history, McCullough spent her first few months at SFU developing the history department’s first Scottish history courses: History 237—Scotland 1707 to the present, and History 448—Scots in North America.

Now, she’s turning her attention to the centre. “I’d say there’s a large appetite in B.C. for Scottish history,” she says. “Scots in B.C. have a long history, dating back to the days of the Hudson’s Bay Company (HBC).”

Nanaimo’s first white settlers were from Scotland, recruited by HBC to work in the coal mines. And many of Vancouver’s first business people hailed from Scotland, as well as the city’s first mayor.

“What’s missing is the historical recognition of all this,” she says. “Historians have neglected the history of Scots in B.C.” As part of her work for the centre she has created a new research blog, scotsinbritishcolumbia.com and is encouraging her students to undertake research in Lower Mainland archives on B.C.’s Scots.

She also plans to publish academic papers on the early history of Scots in B.C.

As well, she is arranging for renowned Scottish history scholars to speak at the University, and plans to hold activities at all three campuses.

Watch for **her Tartan Day event, on April 9 at the Surrey campus**, featuring speaker Graeme Morton, professor of modern history and director of the Centre for Scottish Culture at the University of Dundee.

As Canada’s engaged university, SFU is defined by its dynamic integration of innovative education, cutting-edge research and far-reaching community engagement. SFU was founded 50 years ago with a mission to be a different kind of university—to bring an interdisciplinary approach to learning, embrace bold initiatives, and engage with communities near and

far. Today, SFU is Canada's leading comprehensive research university and is ranked one of the top universities in the world. With campuses in British Columbia's three largest cities – Vancouver, Burnaby and Surrey – SFU has eight faculties, delivers almost 150 programs to over 35,000 students, and boasts more than 135,000 alumni in 130 countries around the world.

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