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# NEWHOMES

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in the news

## Home builder, entrepreneur, philanthropist – Hugh Heron honoured at Celtic Ceilidh



Hugh Heron (left) and PMA's Andy Brethour (right) kilted for the occasion

**O**n Wednesday, February 6, nearly 900 builders, politicians and celebrities, family and friends gathered at Toronto's Fairmont Royal York Hotel to celebrate the accomplishments of Ontario home builder and philanthropist Hugh Heron. Heron is a principal and partner in The Heron Group of Companies and President of Heathwood Homes in Toronto. To honour his Scottish roots, the event was themed as a Celtic "Ceilidh" (pronounced K-lee) – a traditional Highlands-style gathering with music and storytelling.

The Toronto Fire Services Pipes & Drums and Toronto Emergency Medical Services Honour Guard escorted Heron and his party into the Canadiana ballroom with pomp and circumstance. Steve Paikin, TVO's host of "The Agenda," served as emcee. Congratulatory videos

by Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty, the Ontario Home Builders' Association (OHBA) and The Heron Group of Companies paid tribute to Heron's 40+ years of dedication and hard work in advancing the new-home building industry in Canada and his tireless efforts to give back to the greater community.

Speakers included Karen Kinsley, President of Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC); Alan Heron, President of Alan Heron Homes and OHBA President Mark Basciano. The Ceilidh was topped off with performances by popular tenor John McDermott and Bobby Watts, two of Canada's most-loved traditional Scottish/Canadian singers, and a special performance by "The Blues Brothers," OHBA members Rick Carvaggio and Pete Williams.

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Toronto's EMS provided the Honour Guard



Committee Co-Chairs (left to right) Alan Heron (Alan Heron Homes), Dr. Alvin Curling and Peter Smith (Andrin Homes)



BILD Past President and Hugh's partner, Bob Finnigan, with Nicky Finnigan



World-renowned tenor John McDermott (right) entertained Hugh and nearly 900 celebrants



MHC's President Karen Kinsley and Board Chairman Dino Chiasa

Over the years, Heron has served as President of the Greater Toronto Home Builders' Association (now BILD) and OHBA, chair of the Ontario New Home Warranty Program (now Tarion) and on the board of CMHC. He credited the generosity of his partners with allowing him to take time out from their business to fulfill his duties in these positions.

In true Hugh Heron fashion, he recounted his immigration to Canada and subsequent career with humour and reaffirmed his feelings about living here. "My involvement in these organizations has strength-

ened my love for Canada," he said. "I've worked with people from different nationalities, cultures and religions and when you think of the problems in other countries around the world, it's remarkable how well we all get along. It's like family on a large scale – the same feeling we have at The Heron Group."

A donation from the evening's proceeds will be made to The Mikey Network – the non-profit charitable organization founded by Heron and his partners to honour their former partner, Mike Salem, who experienced sudden cardiac arrest and

died on a golf course in 2002. The Network places public-access defibrillators called MIKEYS in high-risk locations in Ontario.

At the podium, Heron expressed his thanks and delight with the evening's success, and summed up the tribute with, "Not bad for a wee boy from Glasgow!"

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