



Fall 2014



2014

Schedule of Events

Nov. 27 OBS Decorating for Christmas

Dec. 14 Christmas Open House

Feb. 14 Heritage Brampton

School Visits

During the month of October 188 children spent a day at the schoolhouse.

This newsletter

is published by *The Friends of the Schoolhouse* every Fall, Winter, Spring and Summer to inform members and the teachers of the Peel District School Board of activities and events organized by The Friends.

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Need more information?

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www.britanniaschoolhousefriends.org

Doors Open 2014

Cathy Harper

On Saturday, September 27, Friends of the Schoolhouse took part once again in Mississauga's Doors Open from 10 -4 pm. Forty-six visitors experienced what it was like to be a child of the early 1900's in a one room schoolhouse. The children were presented with opportunities to use a slate; to try their hand at using a straight pen and ink and to check their addition skills while playing a marble game. Copies of Ben Madill's book and pencils were offered for sale.

To quote one visitor, "It's the best one room school in operation in Ontario". The Friends were very pleased with the interest shown in our precious gem. Watch for next year's notice for Doors Open 2015.

Ben's Corner

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his is a poem Ben wrote found in Volume 1 of his memoirs.

Life is like a hilly road
It has its ups and downs
But what makes life worth living
Is our giving and forgiving.
It's those very busy folks
Who always have a smile
And then, some how, they have the grace
To go the extra mile.

B. A. Madill

Message from the Chair

Margaret Storey

"I am so glad I live in a world where there are Octobers!"
L. M. Montgomery, 'Anne of Green Gables'

S

think we would all agree with Anne that October is a beautiful month. Many of us look forward to the fall, the change in the seasons, the rich autumn colours and perhaps even the cooler weather. I hope you have been able to view our beautiful trees in all their splendour whether in Muskoka, Parry Sound, your local area or here at the schoolhouse! As Anne goes on to tell Marilla as she looks at the maple branches, "Don't they give you a thrill - several thrills?" Yes, indeed they do!

Our schoolhouse has been busy with various events in September and October. School classes have been excited about their visits and the various roleplaying activities that Schoolmistress Chapel and Schoolmaster Campbell have ready for them.

The Friends had a variety of toys as well as photo displays at the Brampton Fall Fair. The children love to play with these wooden toys from an earlier era. For adults, too, they bring back many fond memories! Some of the vegetables that the students had helped plant, look after and then harvest were entered at the fair.

The Friends also opened the schoolhouse as part of Doors Open Mississauga. We were very pleased to have almost 50 visitors. For many this was the first time they had been inside the schoolhouse and were very interested in its history and looking at all of our artifacts. Several had visited years ago with their Grade Three class and we were able to find their class autograph page in our many binders. They are thrilled to see what their signature looked like many years ago.

We also have had an engagement photo session and a wedding photo shoot at the schoolhouse! Our schoolhouse is becoming well known for providing a unique backdrop for brides, grooms and their wedding attendants.

Open Sunday, the second Sunday of each month, again provides an opportunity to come to the schoolhouse. Unfortunately our two volunteers were both ill on the October Open Sunday. We apologize to anyone who came and found the schoolhouse closed. We can't think of another time this has happened.

In November we will be remembering our brave men and women of our Armed Forces and our December Open Sunday will include the sale of our various toys, decorations and beeswax candles. Come and join us at either of these events. Don't forget to check our website for lots of articles, history and photos.

www.britanniaschoolhousefriends.org

The Garden

Karen Simmons

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any fine weather days in October have spurred the garden committee to give the gardens a good clean up and preparation for winter. They are looking better than they have for a while, even though the bloom season is over. We had two Saturday work sessions, when we had valuable help from three students from Mississauga Secondary School, and several members of our families. The extra hands make a big difference. The walkways through the perennial and rose gardens have been cleaned out and realigned, the large shrub roses trimmed back, and some peonies relocated. A young grandson hauled 16 wheelbarrow loads of mulch! Thanks to everyone.



Meanwhile, the work on the newest addition to the garden has been completed. Its story is elsewhere in this newsletter. It's worth your time to stop by the schoolhouse to see the conversation area for yourself.

For two summers now, we have battled with a weed that had previously not appeared at all, but suddenly popped up everywhere. In trying to find out what it is I eventually came across a hundred year old book in our archives called "Weeds of Ontario". In it there were drawings of plants, flowers and seeds of the weeds that plagued the farmers of the time, along with instructions about how to deal with them. I think I have identified our intruder as perennial sow thistle, which the book labeled as the worst weed in Ontario! Unfortunately, the instructions for getting rid of it were about how deep to plow the fields. I guess we will have to continue hand digging. For now we will take a well earned rest, and make plans for next season.

Have you renewed your membership for 2015?

Renewal forms are on our website.

Please consider renewing your membership. Many thanks to those who have already renewed. Your continued support is much appreciated and enables the Friends of the Schoolhouse to carry on their valuable work in preserving and expanding the programs for the students who visit. We welcome new members. Membership forms can be downloaded from our website:

www.britanniaschoolhousefriends.org

Simply choose 'About The Friends' from the menu bar then click on 'Membership Form'.

Brampton Fair

Eva Ardiel

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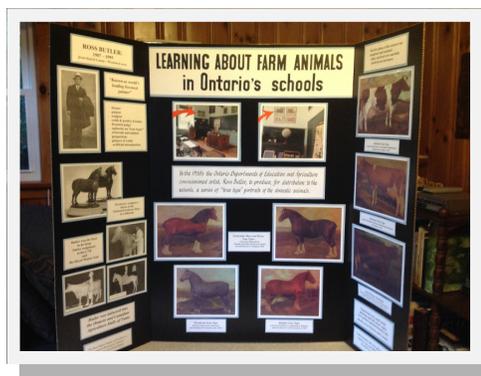
riends of the Schoolhouse had a successful and enjoyable three days at Brampton Fall Fair again this year. Although we no longer have as large an assortment of old fashioned toys for sale as in previous years, we did have our usual huge collection of "no battery, no plastic" toys, puzzles and games for young and old to try. Our site is always very popular and has many return visits by several youngsters. One boy said it was his favourite part of the fair. Sales of the items we did offer were rewarding. Thanks to Julie Dippelhofer, our new Sales Convener, the sugar cookies, fudge, lavender sachets and hand made lavender soaps she made were popular items. (schoolhouse garden lavender of course)

In the 1930's the Departments of Agriculture and Education commissioned artist Ross Butler to produce for distribution to the schools a series of "true type" portraits of the domestic animals. Four of these prints are on the wall at the schoolhouse. As we are located at the fair in the livestock building and as the theme of this year's fair was "horses", we thought it would be interesting to take these prints for our display and present some information about them and the artist.

Ross Butler, 1907 to 1995, from the Woodstock area, "was known as the world's leading livestock artist" and was a really interesting person, - painter, sculptor, farmer, cattle and poultry breeder, authority on "true types" of breeds and on animal proportions and was a pioneer of cattle artificial insemination. The first phase of Butler's commission was completed and included the dairy and beef cows and bulls as well as the draft horses and mares. Engravings were made of his paintings and full colour copies were printed and distributed, along with information about each breed, to the schools across Ontario and Canada. Unfortunately the next phase of his contract had to be cancelled because of World War II restraints.

Many of the older fair goers in particular were very interested and remembered his animal pictures from their own school days, or remembered seeing Ross Butler carving large butter sculptures at the CNE or Royal Winter Fair.

Our display panel with pictures of former schools in Chinguacousey Township was of interest especially to long time residents of the area.



Ready to go to Brampton Fair

Brampton Fair (cont'd)

It is always a pleasure to share information about The Old Britannia Schoolhouse and its programme with the fair goers. Quite a few young people tell us they have visited with their class and are eager to share stories about their day there. Many people, of course, know about the schoolhouse already but others we talk to have never heard about the schoolhouse or its program and are fascinated.



1930's prints of cattle
at the Schoolhouse

We could not take part in the fair without the help of many volunteers. Special thanks go to Karen Simmons, Julie Dipplehofer and Jean Robinson who delivered material and set up, etc. and especially to Karen who was on duty for the entire three days. Thanks are also extended to Earl Bonner, Bob Bowman, Linda Bowman, Marg Carson, George Christian, Joan Command, Gail Cumberland, Cathy Harper, Shirley Hoad, Kathleen Jay, Mary Light, Eva Norman, Steve Norman, Jennie Roberts, Amy Smith, Olga Stevenson, Dennis Taylor and Ruth Taylor.

We appreciate the welcome and assistance we received from the Brampton Fair Board and particularly Brenda Bebbington and Bill Ewles.

Decorating the Schoolroom for Christmas **Thursday November 27 2:30 pm**



We decorate the schoolroom in the Victorian tradition with streamers, pine boughs and a tree laden with handmade ornaments and strings of "fake" cranberries and popcorn. For a few years we used the real thing until the mice got wise and enjoyed a feast! It's a fun afternoon followed by a supper of chili, salad and dessert. You are welcome to join us. Just let Jean Robinson know you are coming so we can add extra beans to the chili. [**jkrob@rogers.com**](mailto:jkrob@rogers.com)

E-mailed Newsletters

If you are not already doing so, why not consider receiving your newsletters by email. This helps us save the cost of paper, printing and postage and is kinder to the environment. Contact dlcook@rogers.com and put "Emailed newsletter" in the subject box to make this arrangement.

Check out our website often for the latest information
www.britanniaschoolhousefriends.org

Fall 2014



Annual
Christmas Open House
at
The Old Britannia Schoolhouse
5576 Hurontario Street (at Matheson Blvd) Mississauga
on
Sunday, December 14th, 2014
1:00 to 4:00 p.m.

See the schoolhouse festively decorated with evergreens and a Victorian Christmas tree

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Enjoy delicious home-made goodies and a cup of apple cider

*

Pick up a stocking stuffer or two reminiscent of times gone by



Parking in the H.J.A. Brown Education Centre lot. Enter off Matheson Blvd, W. and continue to the back of the schoolhouse.

The Mysterious S.S. 13 Caledon

Daryl Cook

As we have been working through the vast amount of information that Joan Reid collected about the early one room schools of Peel, we have discovered that there were inconsistencies and missing information that needed further research. The files at the Peel Archives in Brampton have been of great help. Joan spent hours here sorting through documents but unfortunately did not have time to complete all the schools. Even those she did finish had very little information available other than copies of items printed in local newspapers. One of these schools was S.S.13 Caledon.

On our exploration road find the location of almost all private homes, others have erty and in one or two cases However, S.S.13 apparently fied only by its school section where the school section was but not exactly where within

Here is what we did know. office. In 1880 there was a cuss a union with the Erin any union taking place. If this



been a school built in the section since the students would have attended the Erin school. In 1901 there was a newspaper item about a retirement party for a teacher at the school so we knew one had existed. In 1916 it was noted that there were 14 boys and 9 girls listed on the register. In the 1920's there were stories about Arbour Days and School Fairs. Between 1939 and 1945 the newspaper published stories of student involvement in the war effort. In 1946 the school was insulated and a couch provided for sick students. In 1962 trustees voted to close the school.

So we had evidence that a school existed, but where was it? Finally while on a drive through north Peel in October, Jean and Ken Robinson found it. This was an exciting find since the school had never appeared on any of the early Peel maps. It is still in good condition with its bell tower in place and seems to be a private home. Solving mysteries like this has made the task of editing Joan's material fun and rewarding.

trips this summer we were able to of the early schools. Some are now modern homes built on the prop- the property is vacant or farmland. never had a name and was identi- number. From early maps we knew – the far northwest corner of Peel – the section the school was located. The school used Alton as its post public notice of a meeting to dis- school but no further mention of had occurred there would not have

Thank You

Friends of the Schoolhouse is a non-profit organization of concerned citizens dedicated to assisting the Peel District School Board in the support of the Old Britannia Schoolhouse and its programs. Your donations are much appreciated.

The Conversation Area in the Old Britannia Schoolhouse Garden

Jean Robinson

Early in the spring of 2014, Friends of The Schoolhouse decided to create a Conversation Area in the garden at The Schoolhouse as an outdoor extension of the indoor classroom where the staff could gather visiting children to share nature stories and tales of long ago schooling. It would also be a way of honouring Ben Madill for all his support of the Schoolhouse during his long life. A conversation area seemed a fitting tribute to Ben's love of story telling.



The Garden Committee, consisting of Karen Simmons, Margaret Carson and Jean Robinson set about to make this area a reality. With some input from a landscape designer and the knowledge of a landscape contractor, they worked out a plan for the area. It was to have a flagstone path winding through the area, flat rocks to sit upon, and native shrubs with colourful foliage and seasonal blossoms to help block the view of the Board

parking lot and make this area a quiet cozy spot.

In late July, Karen, Margaret, Jean and Jean's husband Ken cleared a spot for the Conversation Area of weeds, tree limbs and stones, marked the area with stakes and string, put down cardboard pieces to represent the "sitting" stones to see the effects and drew up a plan for planting the native shrubs they had acquired on sale over the summer.



With the approval of the Peel District School area finally began on October 17th. The area flagstone path laid. The first large stone was ber 27th followed by the other nine stones, stones and the soil for the planting bed.



Board, work on the was graded and the put in place on Octo- the mulch around the

From October 28th to Nov.1st , Karen, Marg and Jean planted the shrubs and some daffodil bulbs and mulched the planting bed.



The Conversation Area looks great and is ready for the first class to use as a place to enjoy the garden, the outdoor classroom and the opportunity to listen to and to tell stories. We hope that Ben would have approved.

Next spring we will have a plaque honouring Ben, affixed to a rock near the path in the Conversation Area. Details will be forthcoming.



Donations to Friends of The Schoolhouse from generous Friends made this new garden area possible. Thank You