



Fall 2015



2015/16 Schedule of Events

Nov. 27 OBS Decorating for Christmas
Dec. 06 Christmas Open House
Feb. 13 Heritage Brampton
June 24 Strawberry Social
July 19 Lemonade on the Lawn
Sept. to June (2nd Sunday of each month) Open Sunday

School Visits

We are eagerly anticipating the return of students to the schoolhouse in the coming months.

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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The Garden

Karen Simmons

It has been a wonderful growing season, and now it's time to put the gardens to bed for the winter. We have planned two Saturday morning sessions for volunteers to help us with the fall clean up, October 17th and 24th. We always appreciate the help we get from students and family members to do this big job.



The plantings around Ben's Corner have matured nicely over the summer. This attractive section of the gardens looks even better than it did when established a year ago, and thankfully has required very little maintenance. We applied for a gift of 700 red and white tulip bulbs from Vesey's Bulbs and the Canadian Garden Council to establish a Friendship Garden. This is in recognition of the 70th anniversary of the gift to Canada from Holland of 100 000 tulip bulbs at the end of the Second World War. Unfortunately, we were not selected as one of the sites across Canada, but we did receive a smaller gift of bulbs, which we will plant this fall.

Many thanks for your help during the season to our regular gardeners, Marg, Cathy, Jean and Ken, to Chris and Gary for their work in the vegetable garden and orchard, and to the Field Centres staff for the work days at Britannia. It takes all of you to maintain such a large garden.

Message from the Chair

Margaret Storey



Enjoying Autumn!

As I write this, the days are getting shorter and the nights are drawing in but we have been able to enjoy some lovely warm September days. Autumn is such a colourful season from the red apples on the trees just waiting to be picked, orange pumpkins of all sizes being stacked up at Farmer's Markets, cornstalks turning golden yellow in the fields and, of course, some leaves are beginning to turn the lovely colours we expect at this time of year -red, gold, orange, russet or yellow! Even the goldenrod and purple asters growing on the side of country roads are a treat to see.

Autumn also means harvest time. Denis Waitley, an American motivational speaker, says that: "Autumn is the season for enjoying the fullness of life, partaking of the harvest, sharing the harvest with others and reinvesting and saving portions of the harvest for yet another season of growth." I couldn't agree more.

For the past two weeks I have been picking up, washing and peeling our pears, some for the freezer, some for Pear Crisp, Pear Ginger jam, Pear chutney or Brandied Pears. Even with all that I have picked up from the ground, the squirrels, chipmunks and wasps have still had a feast of their own.

This made me think of how the early settlers needed to preserve their fruits and vegetables for the winter. They would often pack their apples in hay to preserve them for as long as possible. Sometimes they might even dry apple slices over their fireplaces to be rehydrated when needed. Root Cellars, built underground, were used to store fruits, herbs, vegetables and other foods. That kept food from freeezing in the winter as well as keeping food cool in the summer.

Salting or curing meat, another method of preserving, has been used for hundreds of years. Besides drying various berries, settlers also knew to make jams and jellies by heating the fruit with sugar. Having foodstuffs ready for their families during the winter was a priority. Today, rather than for necessity, most of us make jams, jellies, relishes, chili sauce and so on because we enjoy doing so for our families and friends.

Carrying on the tradition of schoolhouse gardens, our schoolmistress and schoolmaster have the visiting students plant a number of vegetable seeds early in the spring and then plant the seedlings in the schoolhouse garden. This is a great experience for the students as for many it is the first time they have planted something that can later be eaten. In the fall the students are given the opportunity to harvest these vegetables. Some are also entered into the Brampton Fall Fair Vegetable Competition. Each year our schoolhouse veggies are awarded various ribbons from First Place to Honourable Mention.

So, I hope you are taking the time to enjoy this lovely fall season, whether it is by making jam, going for a drive to see the fall colours, walking the dog in the park, saving seeds for next year, attending a Fall Fair or just having that last lunch outside on the deck!

From the Schoolmistress

Chris Chapel

Now that the time has come to put the garden to bed, the Schoolmaster and I take time to reflect on this year's garden.

We were very pleased with the overall success of the garden this year. The large amounts of straw put into the garden last year greatly improved the soil's health, as Schoolmaster Campbell assured us it would. The vegetables including beans, potatoes, leeks and onions, carrots, tomatoes, beets, cabbage, squash and pumpkins grew beyond our expectations.

Something we tried this year was a Three Sisters garden. Corn, beans and squash, the Three Sisters, were named by the First Nations people living throughout North America long before European settlement. They planted these vegetables together, and in a rather strategic way, to take advantage of each of their special attributes. The vegetables were planted together in mounds. In the centre of the mound, the corn was planted, as it grew the tallest. Around the corn, the beans were planted. The corn offered a natural trellis as the beans grew and the beans put nitrogen, one of the important components of growth, back into the soil. Finally, after the corn and beans had a chance to germinate, the squash was planted. Its large leaves and ground hugging growth habit offered cooling shade to the roots and its prickly stems prevent animals from sneaking into the garden and eating tender shoots.

After doing a little research this year, we created 15 small mounds. Everything grew as we had hoped. The squash we entered in the Brampton Fall Fair earned second prize, we have beautiful scarlet runner bean seeds to start up next year and, we managed to pick the corn from the 8 foot stalks before the raccoons and chipmunks claimed it all.

The corn is beautiful! Known as Indian or Flint corn (*zea mays indurata*) each kernel has a "hard as flint" outer layer to protect the soft interior. When the husks are pulled back, a rainbow of colours are revealed; bright yellows, reds and purples. Our favourite has deep burgundy coloured kernels. The coloured corn, although not sweet like the corn on the cob we typically eat, can be dried and ground into flour. Today though, it is most often used in seasonal decorations.

It's quite awe inspiring to think that the corn that we see around the world today had its origins 10,000 years ago in Mexico. A form of wild grass called Teosinte was domesticated by the first farmers. Through years of trade, seeds made their way north. And here we are, in the year 2015, growing history with a new generation of young people.

The school room has been decorated with pumpkins and corn, this year's planting map has been drawn, we've made a list of what worked and what we'd like to improve upon next year in the garden and now we rest and wait, like all things in nature, for a new growing season - that is, right after we get the garlic planted in November!

Brampton Fair

Eva Ardiel

The beginning of Brampton Fair was in 1853 when the newly formed County of Peel Agricultural Society set up a small agricultural fair at the corner of Main and Queen streets in the centre of Brampton. Horses and cattle were lined up for show and grain, produce and dairy products were displayed for sale.



In 1871 the fair moved to Wellington and Mary streets (my house is actually on the old fair grounds property) and moved again in 1884 to Elliot Street, across the street from McHugh Public School, where it remained until September 1997. At that time it moved to the present Heart Lake Road and Old School Road location, on the 195 acres of land purchased by the Region of Peel Agricultural Society.



This is the 20th year that the Friends have promoted The Old Britannia Schoolhouse at Brampton Fair. The first 2 years we took part the fair was still being held at the old Brampton Fairgrounds on Elliot Street. At that time we set up our displays, old-fashioned toys, activities and sales items in Memorial Arena. Since the fair moved to the present site we have been located in the Livestock Show and Sales Building which, as well as live stock, has the produce entries and the 4H displays. It is a really appropriate place for us to be as it has the feeling of the old agricultural fairs and is far away from the midway, which only became a part of the fair in the 1970's.



Thanks to Schoolmistress Chapel and Schoolmaster Campbell produce from the schoolhouse gardens, which they plant and tend with the visiting students, won several prize ribbons again this year.

Taking part in Brampton Fall Fair each year is an important event for our group. School fairs and local agricultural fairs were significant events in the lives of rural children in the past. Our displays and old-fashioned toys are always popular and it is a great chance to talk to lots of people about the schoolhouse and its program.

It takes a large number of volunteers to cover the three days of the fair. Thanks are extended to Linda Bowman, Gary Campbell, Marg Carson, Chris Chapel, George Christian, Gail Cumberland, Rachel Elson, Kathleen Jay, Mary Light, Shirley Hoad, Eva Norman, Corina Proeller, Ashlyn Proeller, Jean Robinson, Amy Smith, Ruth and Dennis Taylor, Betty Wilson, Glenna Zdebiak and a special thanks to Julie Dippelhofer, Margaret Storey and Karen Simmons for setting up and covering extra shifts. Karen was on duty virtually the whole 3 days, as well as setting up the day before. Her dedication is truly appreciated.

Thanks to Wikipedia for some of the information about the history of Brampton Fair

Fall 2015

Doors Open 2015

Cathy Harper

On Saturday, September 26, Friends of the Schoolhouse took part in Mississauga's Doors Open from 10 – 4 pm. Sixty-nine visitors experienced what it was like to be a child of the early 1900's in a one-room schoolhouse. The children and adults were presented with opportunities to use a Slate; to try their hand at using a straight pen and ink and check out their addition skills while playing a marble game. The visitors were also able to purchase some of our Sales items. The Friends were very pleased with the interest shown in our precious gem. Watch for next year's notice for Doors Open 2016.

Have you renewed your membership for 2016?

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

Decorating the Schoolroom for Christmas

Friday November 27 2:30 pm

Join us for our annual Victorian Christmas Decorating on Friday, November 27th. Festivities will begin at 2:30pm as we decorate a real Fraser Fir Tree, make paper chains, hang pine and cedar swags. Our efforts will be rewarded with a yummy pot of chili, salads and desserts. Kindly RSVP to Jean Robinson (our resident chili maker) by Monday November 23rd (jkrob@rogers.com or 905 826 3475).

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 2015

Annual
Christmas Open House

at

The Old Britannia Schoolhouse

5576 Hurontario Street (at Matheson Blvd) Mississauga

on

Sunday, December 6th, 2015

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

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A wonderful array of vintage toy replicas, cards and books will be available

The Friends will play host to a variety of vendors



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

Christmas Open House

Julie Dippelhofer

Once again, Friends of the Schoolhouse will be hosting an Open House and Sale on Sunday, December 6, 2015 from 1-4pm. A wonderful array of vintage toy replicas, cards and books will be for sale. For the first time, the friends will also play host to a variety of vendors. A wonderful honey company will join us from Collingwood, Ontario with all natural, delicious, sweet treats to purchase. Grand Valley Fibre Company are thrilled to be a part of our sale. Not that long ago, Jean and Aldo Marascio sold their Mississauga home to begin a new farming journey. They have had great success and will bring a variety of products including their natural alpaca yarns, alpaca insoles and fabulous alpaca felt dryer balls that are so absorbent, drying time is reduced without the chemical laden dryer sheets. Tom Peterson of Barn Board Designs, has recovered century old barn board wood from original barns located in Southern, Ontario and re-purposed the materials into a one of a kind design just for your home. Wine racks, iPad docking stations, candle centerpieces, clocks, mason jar vase holders and so much more will be for sale.

Not only will visitors see the schoolhouse decorated for an old-fashioned Christmas but you will complete your Christmas shopping with our unique and beautiful gifts!!! Please join us on December 6th.

Fond Memories of Britannia

Cathy (Lawrence) Cameron

I remember fondly Mrs. Phyllis Edmunds being our music teacher. She also was our choir master at Britannia United Church where I attended with my family. My father, Cy Lawrence, was a trustee for the schoolhouse and my parents (Audrey Lawrence) were long standing members of the church. I fondly remember the schoolhouse Christmas concerts we would perform with a rope strung across the top of the school platform with sheets hiding the fun that was yet to be had. Those were wonderful days.

My brother, Brian Lawrence, attended the schoolhouse from Grade 1 thru 8 and I attended Grades 1 thru 5. I remember the first day of school when I was only 5 yrs. of age. My birthday wasn't until January but as Mrs. Appleton said, "Cathy is as tall as the other Grade 1 students so she can start today with her friends." I was not amused and caused a fuss but by the end of the day I was delighted to be in school. It also helped to have a big brother a few rows away for reassurance. My brother used to be a student custodian for the schoolhouse and arrived for school very early in the morning to stoke the coal or wood stove so it was cozy by the time the other students arrived. We lived at least 2 miles away on the Base Line now called Eglinton Avenue and walked or biked weather permitting.

Brian passed away in March and his long standing friend Don Dunton did the eulogy. I would like to know if I could contribute a rose bush in his honor next year for the gardens. Brian was very fond (as was I) of Ben Madill and I attended choir at the church with Bessie and Shirley.

We are continuing our efforts to organize Joan Reid's vast amount of research and make it available to the public. Since this is a much bigger job than we anticipated, we will print interesting excerpts in the newsletter.

Rockside White Church School



1890 Schoolhouse

As with most early schools, S. S. No. 5 Caledon began as a log building on the property of a local farmer. The log schoolhouse was on the East 1/2 of Lot 3, Concession 6 West. James Hunter



1890 Schoolhouse in 2015

sold the property to trustees for \$40.00 sometime before 1844. In 1844 a new structure was built but we know very little about it or of the activities at the school. The only information we have is that there were 69 pupils enrolled in 1879.

In 1890 a beautiful new limestone school was built on Concession 5 West across from the White Church on Mississauga Road. Both the White Church and the old limestone schoolhouse still survive.

Since no school had ever been built in Chinguacousy School Section 28, in 1914 a union school was created with School Section 5 Caledon to serve the children in that area. Caledon residents were to be assessed 95% and Chinguacousy 5% reflecting the number of pupils attending.

Improvements were made to the school over the years. In 1947 new inside toilets were installed. Electricity arrived in 1950. Enrolment tripled between 1945 and 1948 as people moved into the area from Galt, Oshawa and Toronto. In 1945 there were 5 children; in 1948 15. Imagine a school today being kept open with such a low enrolment.

December 28, 1960 was the last recorded minutes of the ratepayer/trustee meetings. By 1963 the school was closed and pupils sent to Belfountain.

Today the beautiful limestone school is a private home.

There are always wonderful tales to tell about these old schools.

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.