



Spring 2018



2018

Schedule of Events

June 20 Strawberry Social
July 17 Lemonade on the
Lawn

School Visits

In April there were 211 stu-
dents visiting from 5 different
schools over 11 days

This newsletter

is published by *The Friends
of the Schoolhouse* every
Fall, Winter, Spring and Sum-
mer to inform members and
the teachers of the Peel Dis-
trict School Board of activities
and events organized by The
Friends.

Co-editors:

Daryl Cook

dlcook@rogers.com

Katharine Moon-Craney

kmc@bell.net

Need more information?

The Old Britannia School-
house phone 905-890-1010
ext.2911

Website

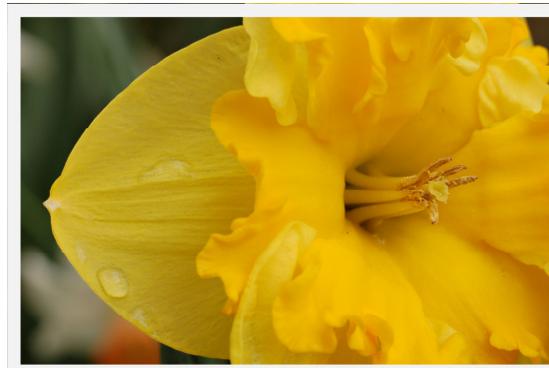
www.britanniaschoolhousefriends.org

The Schoolhouse Gardens

Karen Simmons

S

t's the end of April. Has Spring finally arrived? Although much of the garden is slow to show signs of life, the daffodils are blooming, and the tulips at the front door are growing quickly. The garden volunteers are eager to



get their hands dirty, and are making plans for when to have work sessions. Joanne and Kathleen will soon tackle the rose garden, to cut back the overgrown shrub roses, making

the rest of the roses more visible from the lawn. These older, heritage farm roses were the first planted. Their rapid, abundant growth requires strict control, even though everyone loves their beautiful, scented clumps of blossoms. The extensive perennial beds will soon be bursting with new growth. Of course, the weeds will be doing the same! It will take several hours every week to keep them under control. The volunteers work when it suits their schedules, but a few Saturday mornings are arranged for students to help out and earn some volunteer hours. Adult helpers usually come too. All help is welcome. Anyone wishing to be a Schoolhouse gardener, please get in touch at kar-sim@rogers.com.

Spring 2018

From The Chair

Karen Simmons

T

his is the final time for me to share my musings and memories with you in the Friends' Newsletter. My two years as Chair have gone by so quickly! It has been a busy, enjoyable time, sharing responsibilities with such a dedicated group. The eighteen or so members of the Executive Committee do the majority of the work, assisted from time to time by other volunteers. What a great bunch!

Looking back, some highlights come to mind. The successful completion of our history of the early schools of Peel, "Echoes of the Past", is certainly one of them. So far, almost half of the print run has been sold. The authors are continuing to visit community groups to give talks and make more sales.

Our monthly Open Sundays have been beautifully prepared by Margaret Storey, who has supplied a red box full of activities and information for each topic. We don't often get many visitors, but those who come are always impressed with what they find. We plan to share some of these materials in our display case in the atrium of HJA Brown Education Centre.

Hosting the SLATE conference last year took the efforts of our entire committee, and took two years of planning. Our visitors from around the province were suitably impressed.

We took a keen interest in the plans for the development of the farm property next door, and will continue to monitor what happens there. Although our main concern is the Schoolhouse and its property, we want all the heritage buildings to be preserved and protected. We are happy to support the Board's efforts to make better use of this wonderful asset.

My thanks to all the committee for your support, and particularly to Executive Director, Shirley Hoad, who takes on so many important tasks, Treasurer Lis Braun, Secretaries Linda Kenny and Cathy Harper, Past Chair Margaret Storey, and Vice Chair Ruth Taylor. Ruth will take over in July, after our annual planning meeting. This will be her second time as Chair, and I wish her all success.

Annual Planning Meeting of Friends of the Schoolhouse

Each year the Friends of the Schoolhouse gather to organize the next year's plans and activities. This year it will be held on Wednesday, July 4th beginning at approximately 9:30am. We will be meeting in the Albion Room on the third floor of the Board Office. The meeting will be followed by a Pot Luck lunch at the Schoolhouse. Any member of the Friends of the Schoolhouse is welcome to attend this meeting and take part in our planning.

From the Schoolmistress

Chris Chapel



Every year for the Spring newsletter I say that I'm going to write about something other than the garden. And then I look outside and see what's starting to grow and...I write about the garden.

This week, visiting students from Oscar Peterson P.S. enthusiastically spent their recess in the vegetable garden, pulling weeds planting onions and potting sunflowers that will be transplanted to the garden in a month or so (our new defense against chipmunks!). We're excited this year as well to plant a variety of grain, donated to the Schoolhouse by Sharpe Farm Supplies. We're going to plant a swath of it in the garden so children can really see and touch wheat and oats and barley. Harvest time should be fun!

Lisa and I would also like to introduce more herbs and medicinals to the garden. Herbs grown in the early settler garden usually served more than one purpose. For example: Sage (Salvia) - means "to heal" and although commonly used to season poultry was also used to decrease inflammations of the throat and mouth

Rosemary – said to improve concentration and memory and improve mood

Peppermint – not just a refreshing tea, it's believed to aid digestion

Parsley – freshens breath

Others that were commonly found in gardens were:

Chamomile - to quiet headaches

Lavender – to calm and relax

Echinacea (Coneflower) – to relax symptoms of cold and flu

Yarrow – acts as a coagulant to staunch bleeding and leaves are chewed to relieve toothache

Lemon Balm – used for a number of ailments including insomnia, anxiety and insect bites Interestingly both garlic mustard and purslane, "weeds" which grow in great profusion in our garden and were brought to North America on purpose by the settlers, also have therapeutic and medicinal qualities. We will however, continue to remove those from the garden as they are also very invasive!

The garden is so much more than just growing vegetables. We are always learning and trying new things. Children are being introduced to something that they perhaps have never experienced. It may be that just giving them an opportunity to get their hands in the soil and get "soiled" is the greatest benefit. We also try to extend the learning beyond their visit to the Schoolhouse. Classes go home with vegetables, samples of herbs and seeds that the students have harvested. Some have made a community pot of soup or decorated their classrooms with Schoolhouse pumpkins and corn. The garden has really grown to be an important aspect of our Spring and Fall programming.

And that is why I get so excited about gardening every Spring and feel compelled to write about it!

Another Way to Visit the Schoolhouse

Daryl Cook

The schoolhouse is open for visitors on the second Sunday afternoon of every month during the school year. It's always interesting and fun with something new to see and learn every time. Children can play with the old fashioned toys and usually there is an activity with something to make and take home.

If you aren't able to visit on a Sunday afternoon, you can now see a beautiful display case in the atrium of the Peel District School Board office just north of the schoolhouse near the entrance to



was originally at Lakeview Park School, is very old and was rescued and brought to the board office when the school closed.

In April we learned about early writing tools. We have included a quill pen, straight pens, a clay ink pot, ink bottle, an ink pad and stamp and slate pencils. There is also information about making ink from walnut shells.

Be sure to check the display often. We plan to keep updating it with Open Sunday information on a regular basis.

visit on a Sunday afternoon, play of what you missed in the atrium of the Peel office. The board office is house and the display case the cafeteria. This case

Think Summer and Lemonade!

Mark your calendars for July 17, our annual Lemonade on the Lawn event. At lunch time we provide lemonade and cookies for Peel board office staff and our Friends of the Schoolhouse members. It's our way of thanking you for all you do for us and for your ongoing support. Bring your lunch and enjoy an old fashioned picnic on the schoolhouse lawn.

Lemonade on the Lawn

A special event for Board Office staff and members of Friends of the Schoolhouse

Tuesday July 17

12 to 1:30

on the schoolhouse lawn.



Spider Plants for all of my Friends

Julie Dippelhofer



After visiting the school house one day in January, I noticed a beautiful spider plant on a windowsill. I had just read an article in the Toronto Star by Mark Cullen and his son Ben about plants that are good for our planet. The article mentioned spider plants (Chlorophytum Comosum "Vittatum") and their ability to remove formaldehyde, xylene, benzene and carbon monoxide. I asked Schoolmistress Chapel if I could take cuttings for my class. Mature spider plants will have

spider-like plants or spiderettes which dangle from the main plant like a spider on a web. I was able to make 25 cuttings from the main schoolhouse plant, enough for the students in my class.



We placed those cuttings in water and root growth take shape. Spider plants are easy to propagate, and after the roots appeared we



planted our Students were learn more



watched the easy to propagate purchased 25 them in Fair-colours, and spider babies! thrilled to about the

benefits of household plants, certainly added to our grade 6 biodiversity curriculum. After planting, we discovered they are very easy to take care of. The plants just need well-drained soil and bright, indirect light. The spider plants need to be watered, but never should become too soggy, since root rotting can occur. It is best to allow the plants to dry out a bit between waterings.

The photographs show the original mama spider, the painting class 604's final product. Consider adding a spider plant to your home, enjoy the beautiful green foliage and negative emission



show the original mama flower pot process, and product. Consider adding a spider plant to your home, enjoy the beautiful green foliage and reap the benefits of these plants.

Schoolhouse Artifact Spotlight:
Indian Clubs

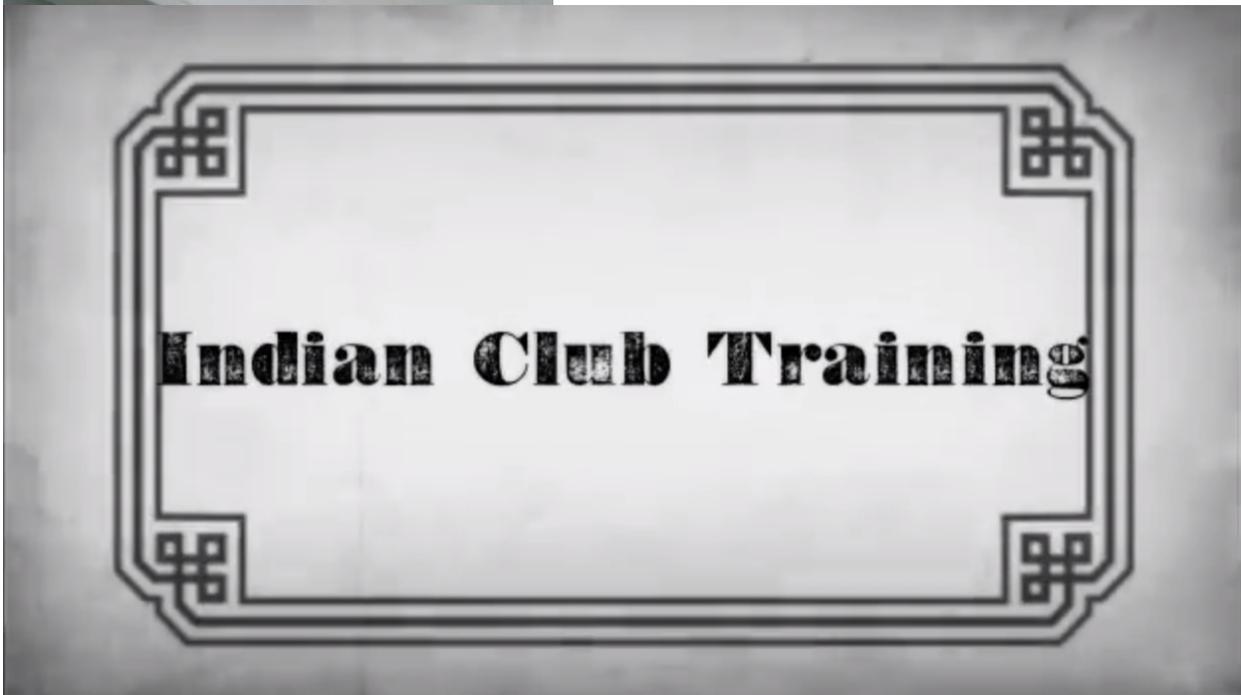


When most people visit the schoolhouse and look around at all the amazing artifacts they often say "Look at the old bowling pins". Although they look similar, they are actually talking about the Indian Clubs or Persian Meels. They are a 19th century form of exercise equipment used to present resistance in movement, and to develop strength and mobility. They were used in carefully choreographed routines in which the clubs were swung in unison by a group of exercisers, led by an instructor.

The Indian clubs were popular in the Victorian Era and even appeared as a gymnastic event in the 1904 and 1932 Olympics.

If you would like to learn some of the typical movements with the Indian clubs you can scan the picture below to see them in motion.

If you don't already have an HP Reveal account you can sign up for a free account and follow our "OBSH public auras " account to see our augmented reality clips in our schoolhouse news letter.



S.L.A.T.E. Conference and Workshop, April 16, 2018

Jean Robinson

T

his year's S.L.A.T.E. Conference (So Let's All Talk Education in a One Room Schoolhouse) was held in Markham at S.S.#5 (Buttonville) during one of the worst April ice storms in a long time.

The schoolhouse, once known as S.S.#5 Markham or the "Buttonville School", is a yellow brick one room schoolhouse built in 1872. It was closed almost 100 years later in 1971.

The building was moved back from the busy road and a basement was constructed beneath it to provide room for critical storage.

The schoolhouse was reopened as the Museum and Archives of the York Region District School Board and has recently been refitted to allow for digital access by the Schoolmistress and students for a learning experience using the "who, what, why, when, where" inquiry words for historical research.

The Museum staff are working with the Grade 10 History Consultants to provide a course that will encourage secondary students to take history as an important part of their education. Grade 4, 7 and 8 classes are also invited to attend the "Digital Classroom" in the old Schoolhouse. It was a fascinating learning experience for the attendees at S.L.A.T.E.

One instructional tool was particularly fascinating!

Working in small groups, each group was presented with a black plastic box fitted with four locks and a set of puzzles. The answer to each puzzle would unlock one of the locks. The final lock opened the box to reveal another locked box with another puzzle which we solved by using the internet. If we had been a group of Grade 10 students the prize inside the small box may have been anything. In our case, it was a folded piece of paper which read, "Congratulations! You won". The locks could be opened with either a letter or a number code. Part of the fun was deciding which lock the clue's answer would open. These boxes were called Breakout Edu and can be obtained on line, reset with any series of puzzles, the solutions of which would open the locks. It certainly took all our collective brainpower to solve the "out of the box" puzzles.

Even though there were only about eleven participants and four presenters, we had plenty of time to have a good discussion about the usual topics of funding, curriculum and permanence of the museums and facilities involved.

In spite of the nasty weather, the four Friends who managed to attend the conference came away inspired and energized knowing that dedicated professionals are still involved in making museum trips meaningful for today's students in a one room schoolhouse. Our thanks to Christina Blake, Jan Emonson, Michelle Johnson and Claudia Palermo for a great day!

Spring 2018

Come out and enjoy an old-fashioned
Strawberry Social

Wednesday, June 20, 2018

11:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

in the atrium of H.J.A. Brown Education Centre



BILL OF FARE

A generous helping of luscious
Ontario strawberries on a
delicious shortcake biscuit....
topped with genuine whipped
cream!

Tea • Coffee • Fruit Cordial
Mints

Come as you are -- or "dressed up" for an old-fashioned afternoon tea

\$8.00 tickets available from



Friends of the Schoolhouse

A fundraising project for The Old Britannia Schoolhouse
(Some tickets available at the door.)

You may also call Ruth at either 905 457 8804

or email

rtaylor914@sympatico.ca