



Fall 2011



2011-2012
Schedule of Events

Nov. 17,18 Christmas Sales,
Peel Board office atrium
Dec. 4 Christmas Open House
Feb. 11 Heritage Brampton
June 27 Strawberry Social
July 1 Canada Day City Hall
July 17 Lemonade on the Lawn

School Visits

2011—2012

3496 children spent a day at the schoolhouse last year. Already 300 have visited since September 2011.

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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A Special Day at OBS

Shirley Hoad

On a sunny day in early September before the classes had started, The Old Britannia Schoolhouse became the setting for the filming of a television movie by the CBC. They were making a film based on “The Sunshine Sketches of a Little Town” by Stephen Leacock using several locations in Southern Ontario as the site of the various stories told in this book.

The Old Britannia Schoolhouse was a beehive of activity from early in the morning of shooting to late into the night before production was complete. The schoolroom and the playground provided the setting but to make it happen, the whole place was filled with cameras, lights, boom microphones, and miles and miles of cable connecting everything to a parking lot full of trucks and trailers. Approximately 200 people doing a variety of jobs swarmed over the property. Our windows were covered on the outside with an opaque film so no evidence of the modern world would be seen by the cameras as the interior shots were done. They even constructed a privy on the south field, complete with a half-moon opening in the door.

There were several young actors and actresses dressed in costume, and accompanied by adults, as well as the major actors, portraying a schoolmistress, and young Stephen. Refreshments were available in a tent on the north lawn, and a catered lunch was provided for all over at the Dunton House.

Eva Ardiel and Shirley Hoad were at the schoolhouse for the day to be of any assistance to the director and crew. Not being too familiar with film production, we were intrigued by the time and detail it required to set up each scene. Everyone was most friendly, and when all was done, the crew returned everything to its original position. The windows received a good cleaning and the floor will be sanded and restained as some of the heavy equipment had scratched the floor.

We believe that the film will be completed over the winter months and should be aired next spring. If we hear more particulars about this, we will keep you informed. It will be interesting to see our schoolhouse in a national production.

From the Chair

Shirley Hoad

Again this year the fall term has started with a bang. Our presence at the Brampton Fair was worthwhile, and our other activities for the next few months are ready to go. There are details of all of these in this newsletter. At the Schoolhouse, the children have begun to arrive for a day of study with our new teachers, Christine Chapel and Marc Hogan. They have spent the summer becoming acquainted with the program and the property, and have already begun to put their personal touches on everything. As a result of the grant from the Retired Teachers of Ontario, District 39, to restore two more maps for our classroom, they are now hanging on the wall for our students and visitors to see. We will be at the meeting of RTO in October with a display to show them what their monies helped us to achieve. Also a large dictionary has been restored and sits proudly on the teachers' desk for the students to see.

In the next month there are several opportunities for you to visit the Schoolhouse. The Halloween event on Fri., October 28th is a fun experience for the children and their parents. The Christmas Sales at the Board Office and the Schoolhouse are always a great place to kick off your shopping for unique gifts and stocking stuffers. The Open Houses in November and December on the second Sunday of the month will have activities for you to participate in, as well as a chance to look around the schoolroom to see our latest acquisitions.

HO! HO! HO!

Eva Ardiel

That time of year is creeping up on us again! The Friends' Sales Committee is preparing for our two annual Christmas selling events. The first is on Thursday, November 17th and Friday, November 18th in the Atrium at H.J.A. Brown Education Centre and the second is at our annual Christmas Open House at The Old Britannia Schoolhouse on Sunday, December 4th.

All of our merchandise will be available at both events. We have lots of interesting new items this year, as well as our regular large selection of toys, games and other unusual items. There are lots of ideal stocking stuffers for \$5.00 and under, as well as great gifts you won't find anywhere else.

So, we hope to see you at H.J.A. Brown on November 17th or 18th, 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. or the schoolhouse on December 4th 1:00 to 4:00 p.m..

At our Christmas Open House on the 4th, as well as shopping, you will see the schoolhouse decorated in Victorian fashion for Christmas, enjoy mulled cider and goodies and be entertained with Christmas music. It is truly a lovely event.

Savouring the Harvest

Marg Carson

During the October Open Sunday visitors to the Schoolhouse were able to sample a variety of fall foods, and learn about techniques for preserving the harvest.

Dried herbs were on display along with preserving equipment, namely mason jars, ladles, an apple peeler, and a preserving kettle.

Visitors had an opportunity to taste a number of savoury and sweet treats - apple slices, apple butter, lavender cookies, relishes and pickles made from cucumbers, peppers and tomatoes. Recipes were also available.

Halloween at the Schoolhouse

Joan Reid

The weather was cool but clear as children scrambled for candy in the straw piles set up by Lady Bug, Chris Chappel. A debonair vampire, Marc Hogan, presided over the toasting of marshmallows in a dark and spooky corner of the schoolyard. Delicious apples for bobbing set up by Scary Cat, Lisa Farrows swung from the royal oak tree. "Bear" Bonnie Anderson kept the outside game area in line with humour and silly antics. A glamorous witch, Marg Carson, tempted many a visitor to dip their dainty hands in the beastly buckets prepared by Daryl Cook. The "piñata lady", Linda Kenny, organized the pinata bashes with hilarious results as little fists tried to crack open the skull and pumpkins. Through it all, Karen Simmons quietly went about the business of set up, supervision, and take down with cheerful efficiency and patience. Karen also procured the candy and apples for the event.

Meanwhile, in the eerily haunted schoolhouse, Glenna Zdediak and Joan Moon fed our student volunteers and then watched solicitously as children entered the frightful schoolhouse and exited by the back door where they received a certificate as proof of their visit. Joan and Glenna also sold tickets to those who strayed in from the parking lot. Corina Proeller recruited a group of forty student helpers. Student ingenuity, creativity, and costumes were valuable contributions to the success of the evening. Corina supervised them for the entire evening and stayed until the very last child left.

A colourful and exotic costume parade led by an "angel" occurred in the Atrium at 7:30. Over sixty children received a certificate and a prize for their participation. Ruth and Dennis Taylor organized this event as well as distributing "passports" to our many visitors.

In the Mississauga Room, Wartzilla, our resident fortune teller, a.k.a. Eva Ardiel, told the fortunes of many an eager patron. In her extravagantly beautiful hat and gorgeous costume she was the centre of devoted attention. Sandra Emerson, lovely in a starry cape and fashionable red hat, did triple duty patiently instructing and helping the student volunteers who demonstrated the games to young visitors. Lis Braun and Frances Kay conducted the sale of tickets and distribution of door prizes in a calm and orderly manner. At the end of the evening they gave each young visitor a bag of candy.

Behind the scenes, the work of Sandy McGowan of Alternative Programs was invaluable. She smoothed the way at every step helping with security, accommodations, caretaking, transportation, and publicity. The Friends of the Schoolhouse are also grateful for the help and support of the caretaking staff of the Peel District School Board.

Many thanks to each of the above for helping to create a memorable evening of Halloween Family Fun for the children of Peel.

P.S. by Wartzilla

This popular Hallowe'en event of family fun for the community is only possible because of the enthusiasm and the hundreds of hours of work of Joan Reid. Although Joan loves it all and is a self-confessed Hallowe'en Junkie, it is mind boggling the amount of thought and hard work she puts into organizing, preparing all the games and events and to packing, unpacking, sorting, toting, setting up and taking down everything that is required to make this such a fabulous evening. On behalf of all of us who took part in and enjoyed this event, - Friends of the Schoolhouse volunteers, Field Centre and Schoolhouse staff volunteers, student volunteers and the kids and their families who attended, - THANK YOU, JOAN!

Readin', Writin', and Orthography?
Joan Reid

Below is a facsimile of a hand-written report card for Minnie Sanderson who attended S.S. No. 12, Toronto Township, in 1886. The signature of her teacher, Eliza Lawson, is barely visible on the original report which is now in the Peel Archives in Brampton. Orthography is that part of language study which deals with letters and spelling. Orthoepy is the study of the pronunciation of a language.

There is no Sanderson family listed in the property ownership records for S.S. No. 12 prepared by Benson Madill. Minnie may have been the ward of another family in the School Section, or, she may have been an outsider for whom fees were paid, or, her family may have been tenant farmers. A brief reference in an article on Meadowvale refers to a Reverend Sanderson who was a junior pastor on the circuit which included Britannia. He may have been her father.

Minnie Sanderson was listed in the School Register for 1886. This fact, along with her report, form the only glimpse I have, at the present time, of her life. Eva Ardiel, a former Schoolmistress at The Old Britannia Schoolhouse and a teacher of art, speculates that Minnie may have been a right brained girl who was fabulous at drawing. In 1890 a brief note in *The Brampton Conservator* stated that M. Sanderson returned to the Canadian Business College, Hamilton, having spent her holidays at home.

One subject that is missing - and this surprised me -is natural science. It did not become part of the formal curriculum until 1900. Minnie received 30 marks out of 55 in reading and 10 out of 20 in writing. At this time it was quite common to list the total marks obtained by each pupil on a monthly basis in the local newspaper. Minnie would have been listed thus: Sanderson, Minnie 475 [out of a possible total of 755 marks].

Marks obtained by M. Sanderson

<i>Reading</i>	30	55	
<i>Drawing books</i>	25	25	
<i>Drawing</i>	25	25	
<i>Writing</i>	10	20	
<i>Orthography & Orthoepy</i>	49	55	
<i>Literature</i>	48	105	
<i>Arithmetic</i>	78	105	
<i>Grammar</i>	66	105	
<i>Geography</i>	40	80	
<i>Composition</i>	59	105	
<i>History</i>	44	80	
<i>Total</i>	475	755	63%

(signed) Eliza Lawson

**P.S. The report is reproduced exactly as it was written.
 Check the arithmetic.**

Brampton Fair

Eva Ardiel

Once again Friends of the Schoolhouse were active participants in the Brampton Fall Fair. Although Friday was a cold, windy day and attendance was small, Saturday and Sunday were beautiful sunny, warm days and drew huge crowds of fair-goers. We are fortunate to be in a popular location, backing onto the livestock ring and in the company of the cattle, sheep, fowl, rabbits, fruit, vegetables, giant pumpkins, and 4H displays. This year our building also included a general interest exhibit of a Clydesdale horse, Jersey cow, Holstein calves, goats, and sheep.



The Friends had five large tables this year. Our displays and activities, as well as the old fashioned toys, games and schoolhouse items we offer for sale were popular. The skittles, marble games and the large assortment of toys and games we sell got a good workout over the three days. Make-your-own sachet with lavender from the schoolhouse garden was popular again, as were the Hallowe'en clothes peg and felt ornament kits made by Joan Reid. The fair goers were fascinated with our collection and our sales this year were the best yet.

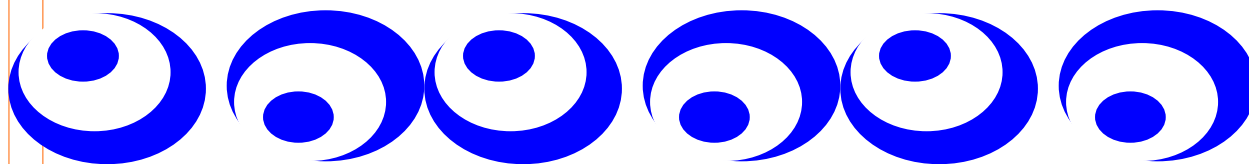
Our displays (thanks to Joan Reid) included A Day at the Schoolhouse, The Schoolhouse Gardens and Hallowe'en as well as handouts about the schoolhouse and the Friends' activities.



Thanks to Schoolmistress Chapel several ribbons were won again for vegetables from the schoolhouse gardens. This year, thanks to Joan Reid, the schoolhouse entered items in the Antique Section, including our photo of the Dionne Quintuplets in the Dionne Quintuplet Memorabilia Class. We won a ribbon for our entry of an antique embroidered handkerchief with lace.

We could not take part in this three day fair without a number of shifts of several volunteers each, - to look after our displays, demonstrate toys and games, chat with people about the schoolhouse and keep our five large tables organized. Everyone's help was truly appreciated. Special thanks goes to Karen Simmons, Joan Reid and Shirley Hoad for helping to transport, set up and pack up, as well as for preparing materials and working extra shifts. Thanks are also extended to the following for helping: Earl Bonner, Linda Bowman, Marg Carson, George Christian, Pam Frid, Joan Hamilton, Cathy Harper, Mary Light, Joan Moon, Eva Norman, Steve Norman, Ruth Page, Olga Stevenson, Dennis Taylor, Ruth Taylor and Glenna Zdebiak. We thank Corina Proeller for obtaining and organizing the volunteers.

We appreciate very much the welcome and assistance we receive from the Brampton Fair Board and particularly from Leah O'Sullivan who is in charge of our area.



Friends of the Schoolhouse

ANNUAL *CHRISTMAS* SALES EVENTS

Friends of the Schoolhouse
will have all of their merchandise available for sale
on

Thursday, November 17 and Friday, November 18, 2011
10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
in the atrium of H.J.A. Brown Education Centre
Huronario and Matheson Blvd., Mississauga
(enter off Matheson Blvd. West)

and at the

Annual Christmas Open House
on
Sunday, December 4, 2011
1:00 to 4:00 p.m.
at
The Old Britannia Schoolhouse
5576 Hurontario Street, Mississauga
Parking at H.J.A. Brown Education Centre
(Enter off Matheson Blvd. West)

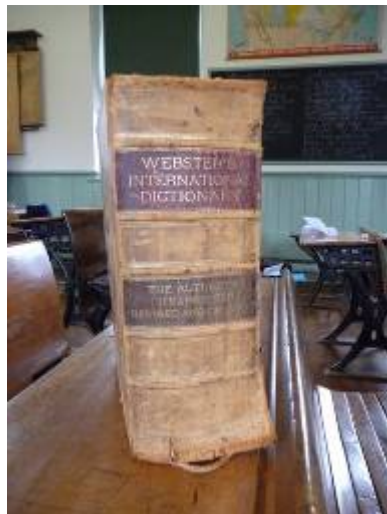
An extensive assortment of old fashioned toys and games
plus lots of other unusual items
(Great stocking stuffers)



Historic Dictionary Restored

Lis Braun

In the winter of 2010, our former schoolmaster, Dennis Patterson, put out a request for a "big old dictionary in decent shape" for use by the students in the schoolhouse programme. A few months later an oversized Webster's International Dictionary was donated to The Old Britannia Schoolhouse. This giant tome was published in 1893 by G. & C. Merriam Company of Springfield, Massachusetts. The inside cover describes it as "being the authentic edition of Webster's Unabridged Dictionary comprising the issues of 1864, 1879, and 1884 now thoroughly revised and enlarged.....with a voluminous appendix". This appendix consists of numerous charts, black and white sketches of plants and animals as well as some coloured illustrations. Schoolmaster Patterson was delighted to receive this treasure. The book is huge and very heavy. Some pages were loose and the spine and cover were showing the wear and tear to be expected in a book that is over a hundred years old. It needed to be handled with great care to avoid further damage.



Earlier this year, our Director of Education, Tony Pontes, made a very generous donation to the Friends of the Schoolhouse. In accordance with our mission statement, we spend donated funds on enhancement of the schoolhouse and its programme. Therefore, the "Before" Friends decided to have the old dictionary repaired. During the summer it was beautifully restored. Damaged corners were repaired and loose pages stitched in place. The spine was rebacked in leather. The old cover was enhanced and even the original gilded edging and lettering were renewed. The dictionary still looks old but it is now sturdy enough for careful use in the classroom. Bookbinding and restoration of this type is an art form and the work was superbly done by Felton Bookbinding Limited. This company in Georgetown, Ontario, is well known for creating bindings for limited editions, as well as for historic restorations of old books, heirlooms and family Bibles.

Now this impressive old dictionary sits on the teacher's desk at The Old Britannia Schoolhouse. It is no longer too fragile to use. Under the watchful eye of Schoolmistress Chris Chapel or Schoolmaster Marc Hogan students can once again find answers to questions in this 'Internet of 1893'.



"After"

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

Decorating the Schoolhouse

On Friday, December 2nd the Friends' Committee will meet at the Schoolhouse at 3:00 p.m. to decorate the classroom for the Sunday December 4th Christmas Open House and for the pleasure of classes visiting in December. There will be the fir tree to trim Victorian style, paper chains to make and the evergreen boughs and wreath to hang. Anyone is welcome to join in. A chili dinner is enjoyed at the end of our labours. If you wish to take part in this event you should let Jean Robinson know as she and Joan Moon prepare the food.

From the Schoolmaster

Marc Hogan

As autumn takes hold and the landscapes transform around us in preparation for winter we often find ourselves reflecting on things past. At the schoolhouse of course we're reflecting on the past all the time but we are often planning for the future too. Recognising so much has gone into developing the schoolhouse program we are thinking how we can maintain this wonderful experience for students and find ways to improve upon it so that it continues with vigour integrity.

We have attempted to maintain the gardens knowing full well we are not coming from the same kind of farming background as the previous Schoolmaster. Still we weeded and planted and weeded and watered and weeded some more and were ultimately able to enter some fine looking veggies in the Brampton fall fair. To our amazement we even walked away with some ribbons.

The hard work paid off in many others ways; but mostly with the opportunities afforded to our students who are learning first hand about heritage gardening. With this in mind we feel good about keeping the gardens going and putting in the long hours of work required and we are now exploring how to put the garden to bed in a way that best prepares us for next year. We want more ribbons! Surely we can rest assured that deeper knowledge and understanding will come in time if we stay committed – which we plan on doing.

The schoolhouse has been in full swing with lots of grade 3 classes coming from all over Peel. At the beginning of the school year the children are more like advanced grade 2's with of course their advanced levels of energy putting us to the test right away! With the help and guidance from so many people supporting this program we are growing into the role of Schoolmaster and Schoolmistress with increasing confidence. Still, there is much to learn in this new role. We are enjoying the newly varnished floor. It was dramatic seeing it for the first time as it was sanded right down to the wood. Initially this made the floor look much lighter in appearance but after being stained and varnished it looks really good and blends in very well with the desks.

We have newly restored maps and charts, a newly bound Webster's dictionary that can now be used by the students. I have a newly tailored jacket and Chris is well on her way to getting a new outfit which allows us to better step into our historic roles. Things are looking great as we prepare for the festive season ahead.

Membership Drive

As the year draws to a close, please consider renewing your membership. Your continued support is appreciated and enables the Friends of the Schoolhouse to carry on their valuable work in preserving and expanding the programmes for the students who visit. We welcome new members. Membership forms can be downloaded from our website: www.britanniaschoolhousefriends.org Unfortunately members who did not renew their membership since 2010 will be deleted from our membership list and will not receive the next newsletter. We regret losing them and hope they will reconsider.