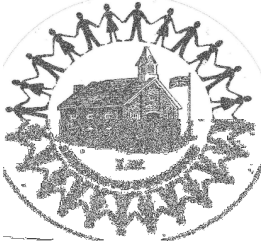




Summer/Early Fall 2012



2012-2013 Schedule of Events

Sept. 14,15,16: Brampton Fair
Sept. 29: Doors Open
Nov. 22,23: Christmas Sales,
Peel Board office atrium
Dec. 2: Christmas Open House
Feb. 16: Heritage Brampton
June 26: Strawberry Social
July 16: Lemonade on the Lawn
Sept. to June 2nd Sunday:
Open Sundays

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 Tribute to Stalwart Friends

From time to time the Friends of the Schoolhouse recognizes those members who have made significant contributions over a long period of time. A sundial is dedicated to Eva Ardiel and the Teachers' Arbour honours all the former teachers of S.S. #12. In June we dedicated an arbour bench to Joan Reid and the split rail fence to Ben and Marjorie Madill. All three have been long time advocates for the Old Britannia Schoolhouse and its program and have worked tirelessly to preserve the schoolhouse for future generations.

Ben attended S.S. #12 in the 1920's. He and his wife Marjorie lived and farmed in the Britannia community until moving to Fergus several years ago. His firsthand knowledge of local history is invaluable. Both Ben and Marjorie have been members of the Friends of the Schoolhouse committee since its formation. Even though they no longer live nearby, Ben and Marjorie continue to attend events when they can and contribute in many ways to the Friends of the Schoolhouse.



Joan Reid joined the Friends committee on her retirement from teaching. Her history teaching background and love of gardening were invaluable. Joan researched and published historical information about the one room schoolhouses in Peel. She also worked tirelessly to find proof of the correct date for the building of S.S. #12 which is in dispute. All of her detailed research points to 1852 as being the correct date. Joan's love of Hallowe'en led to one of our most successful events of the past few years – an evening of family "spooky" fun. The gardens surrounding the schoolhouse are entirely Joan's creation. Over the past 10 years she spent hours designing, documenting, and caring for these gardens. We were sad to learn that Joan passed away on August 6 after a short battle with lung cancer. She will be greatly missed.

We are pleased to recognize the contributions of Ben, Marjorie and Joan. When you visit the schoolhouse be sure to take a minute or two to sit in the arbour and to enjoy the roses growing on the split rail fence.

Summer/Early Fall 2012

Message from the Chair

Ruth Taylor

As summer draws to an end and is finally cooling off, things are “heating up” at the schoolhouse. In September we begin with Open Sunday on the 9th. Check our website for the theme of our monthly Open Sundays. We will be at the Brampton Fall Fair from the 14th to the 16th. Perhaps it is appropriate with the rural roots of the schoolhouse that we find ourselves keeping company with the cows and other farm critters. We will also have produce from the schoolhouse vegetable garden on display. Schoolmistress Chapel and Schoolmaster Hogan have been diligently tending the garden in hopes of producing some prize winning entries. On September 29th the schoolhouse will be open as we participate in Mississauga Doors Open from 10:00 until 4:00. You may be able to see an interview with one of our members relating to Doors Open on Rogers Cable TV.

Since the last newsletter we held our annual Strawberry Social in June and showed our appreciation for board staff with Lemonade on the Lawn in July.

Sadly, Joan Reid, who was a Past Chair and Executive Director until recently, passed away in early August. It was Joan’s initiative that established our marvelous flower gardens. The garden committee will now carry on with her work. It is partly because of the gardens that the schoolhouse is becoming an increasingly popular venue for wedding photos. Joan also published several volumes of research on the early schools in Peel County. We were in the process of recognizing her work with an arbour bench near her gardens and a plaque commemorating her contributions to the schoolhouse. Although Joan was not well enough to see the arbour bench and plaque in person, she did see photos of them. Joan’s legacy will live on.

Your New Executive

At the Annual Planning Meeting in July, Shirley Hoad’s two year term as Chair came to an end and Ruth Taylor took over the job. Shirley agreed to stay on the executive as Executive Director to replace Joan Reid who resigned a few months ago. Marg Storey has accepted the position of Vice Chair. All other positions remain the same. Here is the executive list.

The Core Executive

Chair:	Ruth Taylor
Past Chair:	Shirley Hoad
Vice Chair:	Marg Storey
Schoolmaster:	Marc Hogan
Schoolmistress:	Christine Chapel
Secretary:	Linda Kenny
Treasurer:	Liz Braun
Executive Director:	Shirley Hoad

Summer/Early Fall 2012

From the Schoolmistress

Christine Chapel

As we prepare for the beginning of another school year, I find myself reflecting on how things have changed over time.

Today, students look forward to September – a new grade, new teacher, new classroom or school, perhaps a new outfit or two and school supplies. Students of the past headed back to their one room school in mid August after a very brief break. Schools were generally open for eleven and a half months of the year. They were learning in a room with children from grade one to grade eight taught by one teacher. They would walk (or ride their horse, maybe) to school, several kilometres in some cases, a far cry from the car or bus ride that many students enjoy today. The same outfit was worn to school from day to day. They probably had another set of clothes for chores and a third for Sunday best.

Lunch (or dinner) was a simple affair. Everything brought for dinner in their pail or basket was a product of the family farm. Fresh or preserved produce, meat, eggs, cheese, and baked goods were common fare. Prepackaged, store bought food, Pizza lunches and breakfast programs were unheard of.

Today there are mandated limits on the number of students in a class. In the one room school of old there were no such limits. One of the artifacts on display at Britannia Schoolhouse is a school register from 1885 listing 62 students on the classroom roster! Of course, rarely would all of the students be present on any one day. It was not until 1871 that school became compulsory for all children aged 7 to 12 years but only for 4 months of the year. Being from a farming community, children were expected to help their families with the farm work. During harvest or planting time in particular, many children (especially boys) were kept out of school. This was accepted practice.

Modern day students have a great variety of media from which to learn and help them in their studies. Books, laptops, iPods, television, videos – modern means and methods are used at every turn. Students of long ago learned by rote, from books, if they were lucky enough to have them, and woe to the student who misbehaved or did not complete their work to the teacher's satisfaction. Students failed and were disciplined harshly, both unacceptable practices in modern times. The strap and sundry other humiliating punishments were meted out as a teacher saw fit.

Yes, times have changed, but in the past schools played just as important a role in the community as they do today, perhaps more so. I think that long ago, like today, most students would have looked forward to the beginning of school with anticipation and did enjoy their time in the one room Schoolhouse.



Summer/Early Fall 2012

Past Events

The Annual Planning Meeting

Each July the committee meets to review our year's activities and to plan for the year ahead. We consider our successes and those areas which need improvement. We were pleased to note that 2011-2012 had been a busy and successful year. We were sorry to see Schoolmaster Dennis Patterson leave in February for a new teaching position in Japan. Our new schoolmistress and schoolmaster Christine Chapel and Marc Hogan are sharing the duties and doing a great job. We are also sorry that Joan Reid had to give up her Executive Director responsibilities and her garden work. Others on the committee along with volunteers from the community worked hard to get the garden in shape for the season.



There will be few changes for 2012-2013. We have added one new event, participation in Mississauga's Doors Open program in September. The taking of wedding photos at the schoolhouse has proved to be popular and is a good fundraiser. We will continue to promote this. Since very few visitors come to the schoolhouse on Open Sundays in the

summer months we decided to have Open Sundays only during the school year.

Be sure to check the sidebar on page 1 for this year's events. Also check our website frequently for news and information. The Current News page of the website is updated monthly. The website address is: www.britanniaschoolhousefriends.org.

Lemonade on the Lawn

As we were preparing the lemonade and putting the cookies on plates we wondered if anyone would brave the intense heat of an already hot and dry July. To our surprise, there were a number of people who brought their lunches and sat at picnic tables in the shade of the old trees. It turned out there was a lovely breeze which moderated the temperature and made for a pleasant lunch hour in the schoolyard. More people than ever came for lemonade and cookies this year – 40 – including staff from the Peel Board and members of Friends of the Schoolhouse. It was especially exciting to have one of the teaching assistants bring her aunt who had attended the school in its last few years. There was a lot of reminiscing while looking at the aunt's class photo which hangs at the back of the classroom. It was another enjoyable couple of hours in the garden and a way of thanking so many people for their support of the Friends activities.



Our Open Sundays

Visitors to the schoolhouse on Open Sundays have participated in many fun activities. We have played games, walked on stilts, made Valentine and Mother's Day cards and learned how to preserve fruits and vegetables from the schoolhouse garden. More fun is planned for 2012-13. **See our schedule on Page 8.**

Summer/Early Fall 2012

Strawberry Social Ruth Taylor

A strawberry social would have marked the beginning of the summer season. It would have given the community a chance to come together and visit. Similarly many of our guests at the Strawberry Social look forward to this occasion and enjoy the chance to socialize with friends or colleagues. We were delighted to see Marjorie and Ben Madill along with some of their family members. Although we had a steady stream of guests, our attendance was lower than last year. Those who attended enjoyed a generous helping of juicy Ontario berries served with scrumptious biscuits from Kate's Town Talk Bakery in Streetsville, topped with real whipped cream supplied and prepared by the board cafeteria. Please plan on joining us next year on June 26.



Coming Events

Brampton Fall Fair September 14,15,16 Eva Ardiel



Friends of the Schoolhouse are looking forward to taking part in Brampton's 159th Fall Fair. As usual we will be set up in the Livestock Building which is the farthest west building. As we say, "You can just follow your nose to find us". We have a great location backing onto the ring where the cattle are shown. It is always especially interesting to watch the young 4H farmers proudly showing off their cattle. The fall fair, I'm sure was an exciting event in the lives the children who attended Britannia School and the other rural schools.

The garden produce is also located in our building. We hope the schoolhouse garden will have vegetables there vying for ribbons again this year, - if the rabbits and other critters have not feasted too heartily on the garden all summer.

The Friends will have displays, information pamphlets and our usual array of old fashioned toys and games for trying out, as well as many items for sale. Our tables are always a busy place.

The Fairgrounds is north of Brampton at 12,942 Heart Lake Road (at Old School Road) in Caledon.

Doors Open Mississauga Cathy Harper

Please join us at the Old Britannia Schoolhouse on **Saturday, September 29, 2012** for Doors Open between 10 am and 4 pm. Bring your friends to experience what it was like to be a child of the early 1900's in a one room schoolhouse. The architecture is typical of schools once found throughout Ontario. Only a few still exist. After your visit to the schoolhouse, take time to wander about the school grounds and enjoy the gardens.

Summer/Early Fall 2012

Remembering Joan Reid



Joan Reid passed away quietly at her home on August 6. We will miss her many contributions to the Friends of the Schoolhouse. She was indeed a good friend to all who knew her. Joan worked tirelessly to ensure that the history of early education in Peel was documented and not forgotten. She researched and wrote about all of the one room schoolhouses in Peel but her special love was for the Old Britannia Schoolhouse. The beautiful gardens she created and tended will remain as a reminder of her dedication to preserving the schoolhouse for future generations. In June an arbour bench was dedicated to Joan. More about this tribute is in the article *A Tribute to Stalwart Friends* on page 1.

A celebration of Joan's life will be held on Sunday September 23 from 2 to 4 pm in the atrium of the Peel District School Board building with refreshments to follow in the schoolhouse.

Queen Victoria's Journals

When she was 13 years old, Princess Victoria's mother gave her a journal so she could write about a visit to Wales. From then and throughout her 63 year reign, Queen Victoria faithfully wrote in her journal, documenting important events and family life. Her last entry is 10 days before her death. There are several references to Canada in her journals. In an 1838 entry she writes about asking Lord Melbourne "were any English living in Canada when we took it?" To which Lord Melbourne replied, "I believe none."

These journals are now available for anyone to read online. On Thursday, May 24, 2012 as part of her diamond jubilee celebrations Queen Elizabeth II officially launched the website. Use this address to access the site. <http://www.queenvictoriasjournals.org/home.do>



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 also is kinder to the environment. Contact dlcook@rogers.com and put "Emailed Newsletter" in the subject box to make this arrangement.

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.

Summer/Early Fall 2012

Heritage Gardens

Karen Simmons

The hot, dry summer had us a little concerned for the health of the gardens, but they have survived very well. Marc and Chris have rigged up a watering system with hoses and connectors to make it easier to reach all the gardens. Of course, even the weeds flourish!

In spite of all the hard work of our crews of volunteers, the weeds were winning the battle. We had a load of mulch delivered, and hired a couple of men to finish the weeding and mulching in the rose garden and blueberry patch. We are very pleased with the results. There was plenty of mulch left for Marc and Chris to treat the vegetable garden, the orchard trees, and all the maples. Thanks, guys.

Marg Carson has undertaken the job of rejuvenating the sun perennial garden. She has cleared out some unwanted goldenrod, and added several new plantings along the boardwalk and in other parts of that area.

Thanks to Ken Robinson's hard work, the Teachers' Arbour is looking like new. The new arbour bench, dedicated to Joan Reid, is an attractive addition to the landscape. It is very pleasant to sit there and admire the whole schoolyard.

We so appreciate the help of volunteers Sue and Laurie, who have undertaken to care for the rose garden and water the geranium planters during the summer. Sue has the expertise with roses lacking in the rest of us, and, as Laurie works next door, she is able to do some work during her lunch hour. Thanks to both of you.

Until this year, none of us ever realized or appreciated enough the huge contribution of Joan Reid in establishing and maintaining the gardens over the last ten years. We have missed her all summer, and will do our best to carry out her dreams.



Spring cleanup. Just a few of the many bags full of debris



The arbour bench dedicated to Joan Reid



Joan chose roses named for famous Canadians and Canadian explorers. We will continue to care for the heritage gardens she created and tended.

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

Summer/Early Fall 2012

Our Open Sundays

Here is our schedule for the coming year. Please note there are no Open Sundays in July and August.

DATE	WHAT'S HAPPENING
Sept 9	Discovery Day. We will have scavenger hunts inside the classroom and outside in the yard. A great way to learn about the history of the schoolhouse and what life was like at the turn of the 20 th century.
Oct 14	The Autumn Garden. One last tour through the garden before it goes to sleep for the winter. Learn how to preserve foods for the long winter days ahead.
Nov 11	Remembering those who have defended our country. Make a poppy.
Dec 9	See the schoolhouse decorated in Victorian Christmas style. Make a traditional tree ornament and enjoy tea and cookies.
Jan 13	Story Time. Spend a quiet winter afternoon reading and listening to stories. A collection of children's story books will be available for parents to read to children. A volunteer will be there to read to a group of children and parents.
Feb 10	Valentine's Day. See the display of old valentine cards. Make a card for your favourite person.
Mar 10	Family Games Day. We will get out all the old traditional games and toys for you to enjoy. Challenge family and friends to a game of Snakes and Ladders or Checkers. Try your hand at skittles.
April 14	Our gardens are waking up. Children will be provided with the materials to plant seeds. They can take these home and watch the plants grow.
May 12	Mothers' Day. Make mom a little corsage and a card to go with it then serve her tea and cookies.
June 9	Fathers' Day. Challenge dad to a game of horseshoes and let him win. Get him to try walking on stilts and don't laugh. His reward – juice and cookies.