



Summer/Early Fall 2010



2010-2011
Schedule of Events

- Sept. 17,18,19 Brampton Fair
- Oct. 29 Hallowe'en Family Fun
- Nov. 18,19 Christmas Sales,
Peel Board office atrium
- Nov. 28 Christmas Open House
- Feb. 12 Heritage Brampton
- June 22 Strawberry Social
- July 1 Canada Day City Hall
- July 19 Lemonade on the Lawn

School Visits

2009-2010

3311 children spent a day at the schoolhouse this past year. In addition many children visited with their parents on 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.

Co-editors:

Daryl Cook

dlcook@rogers.com

Katharine Moon-Craney

kmooncraney@rogers.com

Need more information?

The Old Britannia Schoolhouse

phone 905-890-1010 ext.2911

Website

www.britanniaschoolhousefriends.org

A New Year Begins



Although the Friends' year is officially from January to December, we tend to think of the real start to our year as September when the children return to the schoolhouse. The long quiet days of summer in the schoolhouse garden morph into the sounds of the school bell calling visiting students to class and the squeals of delight at lunch hour when they try out the stilts and the swings.

Our promotion and fundraising events begin in earnest with a booth at the Brampton Fair followed by Hallowe'en, Christmas events and all the other exciting activities planned throughout the year. (See sidebar for dates and events.)

Here to remind you of the fun to come this year are some photos from last year's events.



Hallowe'en



Christmas Sales



Christmas Open House



Open Sunday
Treasure Hunt
Fun



Strawberry
Social

From the Chair

Shirley Hoad

It is my pleasure to assume the position of Chair of the Friends of the Schoolhouse for the next two years. I have been active with the committee since I retired from teaching in 1994, but I feel I have had a connection with The Old Britannia Schoolhouse for much longer. When I started to trace my genealogy, I discovered that my maternal grandmother and grandfather had a connection with the small towns of Britannia and Streetsville. My grandmother, a Barnardo orphan, had come to the farm at the intersection of Hurontario and Britannia Sideroad in the early 1900's as a house servant to the Meight family. (The farm was later sold to the Madills who have been so active in helping to restore and preserve The Old Britannia Schoolhouse.) She attended the Britannia Church with the family, but did not attend the Britannia School. She was probably 12 or 13 years old when she first came, and stayed until she married. It seems a handsome young man came through looking for work as a farm hand, and landed in the Streetsville area. They met, and on December 23, 1908 they were married in the Streetsville Methodist Church on Queen Street. (now the United Church) They rented rooms over a store in Streetsville for a few years, and my mother and uncle were born there. Then it was into Toronto where they raised their family of four in the Bathurst/St.Clair area. Many years later when my mother and father were ready to move out to the suburbs, it was back to the area west of Toronto. We frequently visited the Streetsville and Meadowvale area on Sunday drives, and took my grandmother back to the area she once knew. Now I live in the area and find it satisfying that I am part of a group that is trying to restore some of our past so our children and students will have an opportunity to experience a slice of life from the past.

As the Chair of the Friends, I hope I can help to guide our growth into the new century. Plans are still indefinite but hopeful about the redevelopment of the farm property and its buildings. Hopefully more concrete plans will emerge while I am Chair, and I will see our valued property become even more of a historical treasure.

From the Past Chair:

Dennis Taylor

Previously when I have written it has been as the chair of the Friends Executive, but my tenure is over and in early July Shirley Hoad became the new Chair. I thoroughly enjoyed my time in the role of Chair and I am pleased with what has been done over the last two years. None if it would have taken place without the tremendous amount of effort and work on behalf of the other members of the executive who made my job easy. We have accomplished a great deal over the last two years.

Since I last wrote there have been four very successful events. Eco Fest was a board initiative and was well attended. We had our annual Strawberry Social in June in the Atrium of the Board Office and it was very busy. We are always very thrilled with the support that so many people especially those at the Board Office give for this our major fundraiser. We attended Canada Day Celebrations at Port Credit and our Lemonade on the Lawn in July is our way of saying thank you to all of those, particularly the employees of the board, who support us in so many ways.

Summer/Early Fall 2010

From the Schoolmaster

Dennis Patterson

Spring bookings have come to an end and the schoolhouse is largely booked for the 2010-2011 school year. There is space available for trips in September, January and February. A new plants and soils program has been introduced at the schoolhouse to compliment the ever expanding flower and vegetable gardens. Through hands on experiences in the gardens and experiments with soils and plants the grade 3 science curriculum will be brought to life. Plants and Soils programming is being offered in the fall so that students can enjoy tasting the ripe vegetables during their visit.



The vegetable garden
Learning about plants
and soils

A new cedar porch has replaced our well used but increasingly slanted original back porch. Thanks to Peel District School Board for quickly and expertly maintaining the Schoolhouse.

The repair and stabilization of eight beautiful 19th and early 20th century maps and charts that hang on the walls in Britannia have been completed. The final map that was completed and delivered in early July was a 1930's Neilson map of the world. For those unfamiliar with Neilson's maps, Neilson's Chocolate Bar company gave out maps to schools emblazoned with their chocolate bars and logos. Imagine a rural child trying to learn the nations of the world and their eyes gradually moving to a Neilson's Jersey Milk Chocolate Bar.



Viewing the gardens from the
new back porch

The following text is in the top right corner of the map, "This map is given to this school with the distinct understanding that it is to remain in the school and must not be taken away, and that the lettering on the map will not be removed or obliterated in any way. The secretary of the school board or teacher in charge accepts the map on the above understanding." If I can paraphrase, 'do not mess with our maps or we will find you.'

A big thanks to the Friends of the Schoolhouse for seeing the value in stabilizing these resources for the visiting students in the years to come.

See page 5 for an interesting article about Jayne Woods who has done our map preservation

Answer to "What is it?" on page 8

Don't peek until you've tried to guess.

This metal three fold item copyright 1912 shows how the three heraldic crosses of the countries of the United Kingdom make up the Union Jack flag. A red cross on a white background represents St. George, patron saint of England. The diagonal white cross on a blue background represents St. Andrew, patron saint of Scotland. The diagonal red cross on the white background is the cross of St. Patrick of Ireland. These three crosses when layered together form the Union Jack, the flag that flew at every school in the British Empire. These were distributed to schools in 1924 by the Department of Education. Paper versions were produced by Laura Secord Chocolates in the 1930's.

A Melding of Art and Science

Daryl Cook

Rescuing and stabilizing damaged paintings and maps requires great skill and a knowledge of both science and fine art. Jayne Woods, the conservator who has worked on our schoolhouse maps, grew up in a family with a radiologist father and a mother who worked as a curator of a gallery. Now her work carries on the traditions of both her parents. She has degrees in both chemistry and fine art. I recently spent a fascinating hour with her in her studio finding out more about her and what she does.

Jayne explained that there is a difference between restoration and conservation. She does not attempt to restore a work to its original condition but rather to stabilize and conserve it in its present state. Thus the maps she has done for the schoolhouse look as they did when given to her but now have new acid free backings and will be protected from further deterioration. When she receives a painting that has a tear or stain, she repairs the tear or removes the stain and may clean the painting but otherwise leaves it as it was.

There are more people working as conservators than I thought. All major galleries have at least one on staff and many have several. Jayne works independently in her own business and receives commissions from owners of fine art all over the world and also from galleries. When I visited she had several paintings in various states of damage that she was working on. One of her challenging and unusual tasks was to clean paintings from buildings which had been near the twin towers in 9/11 and had suffered dust damage.



The heat table

I asked Jayne how she stabilized our maps. It is a time consuming and delicate process. She places the map face down on her large heat table. The backing on old maps is usually fabric bonded to the paper with a flour and water glue. This is where her chemistry background is needed since she must know what the bonding agent is in order to remove the backing safely. In tiny strips she carefully lifts the backing, working in small areas until the entire backing is removed. Then any glue that remains on the paper must be removed without damaging the paper. When the back of the paper is clean, a very thin layer of film is spread over the paper, a new backing laid over that and the whole sandwich of paper, film and backing clamped and turned over. The table is heated and the bonding agent in the film glues the new backing to the paper. The old map is now stabilized and ready for future generations to enjoy. The whole process requires great skill and patience and hours to complete.

Thanks to Jayne for her generous hospitality and willingness to share not only her skills in conservation but her love of the fine art she works with.



Jayne Woods in her studio

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One of our stabilized maps

The Neilson School Maps

From the Bentley Museum website

Beginning in the 1030's every school in Canada could receive free maps. The COPP Clark Company of Toronto mailed letters with the following message: "A Map of Canada Absolutely Free" or "A Map of the World Absolutely Free". The maps were mailed prepaid by William Neilson Limited and had chocolate bars and the company name in the corner. A 1953 survey done by Neilson found that approximately 55,000 Neilson maps were sent to schools across Canada.

These maps could be replaced when worn or outdated. Twice during the period of distribution they had to be updated to illustrate the changing countries of the world. Rural teachers used these maps extensively. In some schools they were the only wall maps available to them at the time.

There were stories told of children who were distracted by the sight of chocolate bars when looking at the maps. Nicknames were common—chocolate flavoured map, sweet map, map with oceans filled with chocolate bars.

Come and Visit Us on Open Sundays

The second Sunday of every month is Family Day at the schoolhouse. From 1 to 4 in the afternoon there are interesting activities planned for all ages. All are designed to help you learn more about the Old Britannia Schoolhouse, the community it served and the history of the time. Join us for a fun afternoon and some refreshments. All activities are free. Here is the schedule for 2010-2011.

Sept. 12	Can you do it? Try arithmetic, spelling and history questions from Victorian times. Do some exercises.	Mar. 13	Family Games Day. We'll get out all the old traditional games for you to try. Play a game of skittles or marbles with your children.
Oct. 10	Celebrate the autumn harvest. See the pumpkin patch and the "Three Sisters". Make leaf rubbings of fall leaves.	Apr. 10	Play with Victorian toys and make a pinwheel.
Nov. 14	Remember those who have defended our country. Hear stories about our wartime past. Make a peace dove.	May 8	Plant a seed, grow a plant. Children will be provided with the materials to plant seeds and then take them home to watch them grow. Enjoy our spring garden of trilliums and Virginia bluebells.
Dec. 12	See the schoolhouse decorated for a Victorian Christmas. Make a Victorian tree ornament.	June 12	Play outdoor games—stilts, swings, Graces, hoops and more. Visit the gardens to see roses in bloom.
Jan. 9	Cozy quilts. Design your own quilt block. Enjoy a display of beautiful quilts.	July 10	Make a lavender sachet and sample raspberries from the garden.
Feb. 13	Celebrate Valentine's Day like the Victorians. See a display of Victorian era valentines and other vintage greetings cards then make a simple card for your favourite person.	Aug. 14	Savour our summer vegetables. Tomatoes and cucumbers taste best freshly picked. Make a sunbonnet.

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

Canada Day At Port Credit's 175th

Eva Ardiel

We enjoyed taking part in Port Credit's "Paint the Town Red" 175th anniversary celebration on Canada Day. Our tent was located in Heritage Row in the big open field at the north end of Memorial Park where the children's activities were located with blow up fire engine and slide, face painting, sack races, mini train rides and lots more. When we got there and saw the big open space in front of our tent Dennis Patterson went back to the schoolhouse and got stilts, the Graces game and skipping ropes. The stilts especially got a real workout! Although we seemed to be on the outskirts of the major goings-on, lots and lots of people from the huge crowds in attendance made their way to our end of the park. Several students from Mineola and Kenollie Public Schools in Port Credit, who had visited the schoolhouse with their classes, were excited to see us there, especially to see schoolmaster Patterson again.

As well as Joan Reid's interesting displays about "A Day at the Schoolhouse" and "The Schoolhouse Gardens", we had some toys and small items for sale and of course a full table of toys for trying out – and they did get tried out!

Out thanks are extended to Marg Carson, Margaret Draper, Dennis Patterson, Jennie Roberts and Muriel Walden for helping, for sharing information about the schoolhouse and for demonstrating toys and games. It was a very busy Day! We were not unhappy when asked to pack up an hour earlier than planned so that the area could be prepared for the evening fireworks!

We thank Heritage Mississauga for inviting us to attend and the City of Mississauga for providing our tent and tables.

Ecofest Extremely Successful

Dennis Patterson



As a part of the Peel EcoSchools program a large festival was held here at The Old Britannia Schoolhouse grounds June 19, 2010. The weather was grey and ominous but did not discourage over 1000 people from all over Peel region and beyond who came and enjoyed a fun filled day at EcoFest 2010. Participating groups and individuals went away with many new ideas and opportunities to make the world around them more ecologically sound. Many groups participated, from a local fly fishing group to a worm composting organization to local schools displaying their Ecoschool accomplishments. Major sponsors of the event were Peel District School Board, Dufferin-Peel Catholic School Board and The Region of Peel.

The Friends of the Schoolhouse played a major part in this day having the schoolhouse open all day, selling and demonstrating pioneer toys and leading a wide variety of outdoor games. The Friends also had the rope maker out and made in excess of 100 skipping ropes for the visiting children. Free live music filled the air in Britannia as schools accepted their EcoSchool awards. For the second consecutive year The Old Britannia Schoolhouse received a silver accreditation. The vast majority of the Friends volunteers came out to help and make the schoolhouse a highlight for visitors of every age.



Strawberry Social 2010

Ruth Taylor



Hulling strawberries the night before

The annual Strawberry Social took place on June 23, 2010. The sunlight streaming into the atrium set off the tables covered with crisp white linen tablecloths accented with gingham or pastel tablecloths. Each table also had vases of flowers sitting on quilted table toppers (with a strawberry theme, of course) prepared by Shirley Hoad. Over 200 people enjoyed a serving of delicious strawberry shortcake and their choice of beverage while listening to Shirley McFarlane entertain us on the piano. This year our biscuits were purchased from a local Streetsville bakery, Kate's Town Talk Bakery. We were pleased to be able to make use of a lovely silver tea service, which Henry VanderGriendt generously donated from his mother's estate. We appreciate the help we received from board personnel, especially from the cafeteria and maintenance staff. Thanks to all of our volunteers and guests we had another successful Strawberry Social. Even the nearby earthquake tremors didn't spoil the day!



Can't wait to get at those strawberries!

Lemonade on the Lawn

Daryl Cook



A picnic under the tree

Strawberry shortcake was followed in July with lemonade and cookies. Our annual appreciation event for board staff and our members was a success with a number of visitors bringing their lunches to eat under the trees, at the picnic tables or on the garden swing. Others enjoyed a glass of lemonade and cookies while wandering through the gardens. This is an opportunity for staff at the board office to see inside the schoolhouse, since during the school year it is a busy place with classes recreating a school day in Victorian times. Quite a few visitors were "first timers" and had many questions about the schoolhouse history and its programs. We appreciate the support everyone gives the Friends of the Schoolhouse and thank them sincerely.

Annual Planning Meeting

In early July the Friends committee met for our annual planning session. We reviewed all the activities of the past year, considering what had worked well and what changes needed to be made. We found our year had been very successful and our events well attended. Committees are already meeting to plan more exciting events for 2010-2011. Be sure to read the list of events on page 1 and the activities planned for Open Sundays described on page 5. This annual meeting marked the end of Dennis Taylor's term as Chair. We thank him for his effort, enthusiasm and commitment during the past two years. Shirley Hoad is our new Chair and we wish her well as she begins her two year term.



Hallowe'en Fun at the Schoolhouse

Joan Reid



On Friday October 29, house will hold an evening of 5:30 to 8:30 pm. Indoor bowling, Hallowe'en hockey, penny toss, Hallowe'en bingo the Mississauga Room of the building.

Outdoor activities such as what is in the Beastly Buck-hay bale candy scramble and on the grounds of the Old

Special activities include house, a walk in the scary woods, a visit to a fortune teller, a witch hunt and the breaking of piñatas.

There will be door prizes, prizes for best costumes and prizes for the two guessing games which ask you to guess the number of corn kernels or sunflower seeds.

Admission is \$5.00. Accompanying adults are free. Free parking is available in the H.J.A. Brown parking lot which is entered from Matheson Blvd. West.



Spooky Characters Big and Small

2010 the Friends of the School-Hallowe'en Family Fun from games such as skittles, ghost pin the tail on the cat, icy toes, and feed Dracula will be held in Peel District School Board

bobbing for apples, guessing ets, toasting marshmallows, a a scarecrow toss will be held Britannia Schoolhouse.

a tour of the haunted school-



What is it?



Here is this issue's puzzling artifact. Can you guess what it is and what it is used for? This one is made of metal but some are made of heavy paper.

The answer is on page 3.

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.

Don't forget to visit us at
www.britanniaschoolhousefriends.org