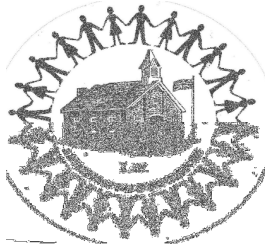




Winter 2018



Coming Events

Open Sundays:

March 11 Maple Sugar

April 8 Early Writing Tools

May 13 Our Spring Garden

School Visits

November 2017 357

December 2017 322

January 2018 302

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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We're Always Busy

But it's fun and rewarding!

Ever wonder what the "friends" really do? While we try to keep you updated on our website and in the newsletter about past and future events, there are many other activities that occupy our time. Our main focus is to advocate for and support the student program at the schoolhouse and the preservation of our historic building. It's not really "our" building, it is part of the 200 acre property that has belonged to the Peel District School Board and its predecessors for almost 200 years. It is held in trust for the education of the children of Peel. Nevertheless, we still think of it as "ours".

The Friends of the Schoolhouse organization has a core group of members who meet monthly except in August. We have a number of committees with various responsibilities. Here are some of the committees and what they do.

Archives: Keeps track of the valuable artefacts in the school. Currently they are sorting the textbook collection.

Open Sundays: Plans themes and activities for the Open Sundays each month during the school year.

Garden: Responsible for planning, planting, weeding and maintaining the historic gardens.

Communication: Maintains contact with members and the public by creating and maintaining a website and updating the Current News page each month. Produces four newsletters a year for members.

Sales: Searches out items to sell at schoolhouse events. Maintains a stock of supplies. Sets up displays of items for sale.

School Site: Keeps an eye on the condition of the building and grounds and works with the staff to report repairs and restoration needed. Recently the schoolmistress reported a problem with dogs running loose when children were in the playground. A sign is now posted that dogs must be on a leash.

We are always looking for new members to join the core group. We have lots of fun—and great snacks at our meetings. Just come to the schoolhouse at 4 pm the second Tuesday of the month. We'll welcome you.

From the Chair

Karen Simmons

As I write this during the January thaw, I know that there will be more winter to come, no matter what happens on Groundhog Day. I don't remember hearing anything about Groundhog Day when I was a child, perhaps because there were no groundhogs around, winter had no January thaw and would last until April. It was a legend that didn't make any sense.

We had a very successful Christmas Open House and Sale in December, thanks to the efforts of volunteers and staff. The Schoolhouse was beautifully adorned in Victorian fashion, and visitors enjoyed tasty refreshments and a wide variety of items to purchase for unusual Christmas gifts.

In February, we participated in the Brampton Heritage event at Bramalea City Centre. Along with information about Britannia School, there were displays about other rural schools in the Brampton area. The children enjoyed playing with our collection of old fashioned toys.

A seldom mentioned day in the year is Commonwealth Day, originally known as Empire Day and celebrated in May of each year along with Queen Victoria's birthday. Empire Day became a major event involving, among other things, thanksgiving services and school parades. In 1958, British Prime Minister Harold Macmillan announced the re-naming of Empire Day to Commonwealth Day. In 1973 the Commonwealth Secretariat selected the second Monday in March as the date on which Commonwealth Day is observed throughout all countries of the Commonwealth.

Back in the early 20th century, Governor-General Earl Grey, in a message to Canadians, suggested, " - - - it rests with each one of you individually to do your utmost by your own conduct and example to make Canada not only the most powerful, but the noblest of all the self-governing nations that are proud to owe allegiance to the King." More than a hundred years later, Empire has transformed into Commonwealth. I think we have managed to live up to the original ideals.

Jim Gollert

Eva Ardiel

Friends of the Schoolhouse were very sad to learn of Jim Gollert's death on February 4th, 2018. The Friends are forever grateful to Jim for finding a way to bring the Schoolhouse (and Field Centres, too) back to life.

In June of 1993, in spite of the best efforts of the Board and of the Friends groups, severe budget cuts caused the Schoolhouse, Farm and Field Centres to be closed. Jim Gollert, at Community Education (later Centre for Education and Training), however, was given the challenge to see what could be done to save the programs and open the sites again.

In September 1994, Jim managed to get the Schoolhouse, Farm and Field Centres re-opened to operate on a more cost recovery basis with a facilitator at each location. For the next decade, until the responsibility for these programs shifted to Alternative Programs at the Board Office, Friends of the Schoolhouse, the schoolhouse and its program relied completely on Jim Gollert, Kevin Doran and Sandy McGowan at CET. Jim's office door was always open to listen, to advise and to assist us. We truly appreciated Jim's help, his caring, his encouragement and his appreciation for what we were doing.

From the Schoolmistress

Christine Chapel

This 200 acre piece of property that the Schoolhouse lies on is truly an island of nature tucked away amidst the urban landscape. Because it is essentially an island, it supports a great deal of wildlife.

I'm reminded of this particularly on a winter morning after a fresh snowfall when I see the tracks and footprints of some of our wild neighbours. The goings-on of fox, coyote, squirrels and rabbits which are usually quite mysterious and mostly undetected are revealed in the fresh snow. It's a fun exercise for children at recess to follow the tracks and try to figure out who's been here.

I am often distracted by the bird life just outside the window of the office of the Schoolhouse. We maintain a small feeder and it is not unusual to see several species at the feeder at once. Chickadees, sparrows, finches, nuthatches, woodpeckers, blue jays and cardinals...all are residents that flock to the feeding station. In fact, we are often greeted in the morning by a flock in the nearby trees and shrubs waiting patiently for us to fill the feeder.

This year we've also set up what to most people looks like a child sized scarecrow. In fact, it is what I like to call a "don't be scared crow". Dressed like a student in winter, our "scarecrow" has a small metal tin attached to each hand and the top of its head. We fill these with bird seed and before long, the birds find their new feeding station. Because it looks like a person holding their hands out, when we then go outside with students and put seed in our hands, the birds come and eat right out of our hands! Chickadees are the bravest. Occasionally a little nuthatch or woodpecker will muster enough courage and trust us to land. The students of course are absolutely mesmerized by the experience. At Jack Smythe, where Lisa and I also work, feeding the chickadees is always part of the winter fun for visiting students. With a little luck and patience they may be able to experience that at the Schoolhouse as well!



Our Don't Be Scared Crow



Winter 2018

**SLATE – So Let’s All Talk Education
.....in the one room schoolhouse**

Eva Ardiel

The SLATE (So Let’s All Talk Education, - in the one room schoolhouse) Conference is being hosted by the York Region District School Board Museum and Archives Heritage Schoolhouse in Markham, Ontario on Monday, April 16th, 2018.

Several of the Friends are planning to attend. As we hosted the Conference in 2017, it will be a treat for us to just sit back and enjoy this year!

Presentations promise to include the use of digital tools at their Heritage Schoolhouse and work they are doing with York Region schools to develop heritage fairs that explore the multiple voices of history. There will also be an opportunity for roundtable discussions to share ideas and concerns. It promises to be another interesting day, as well as an opportunity to chat with our SLATE friends again.



Echoes of the Past

A presentation about the one room schools in Peel County
by

The Friends of the Schoolhouse

Thursday, May 17, 2018 7:00 p.m.

Heart Lake Community Presbyterian Church

25 Ruth Avenue, Brampton

(west of Kennedy Road between Bovaird and Sandalwood Parkway)

Presented by The Brampton Historical Society

Winter 2018

AUGMENTED REALITY IN THE SCHOOLHOUSE

Lisa Cafaro

The Schoolhouse is proud to announce that we are moving ahead in time. We will be showcasing something exciting at the schoolhouse each month using **augmented reality** with the HP Reveal app. The app brings photo's to life and is sure to amaze.

This month we would like to showcase a vintage optometrists lens case that Schoolmistress Cafaro received at Christmas time.

Follow the instructions below on how to download the app and join the "OBSH Public Auras" channel to see the newest release each month.

HOW TO USE HP Reveal (Formerly AURASMA)

1. Download the free HP Reveal app in the appstore. (Available on both Android and Apple)
2. Create a free HP Reveal account
3. Tap the triangle at the bottom of the screen.
4. Tap the magnifying glass icon to search for an Aurasma account.
5. Type the channel name "OBSH public auras" into the search bar and tap search.
6. When the results load look for the account. It will have a picture of the Schoolhouse
7. Tap the follow button on the right hand side of the screen.
8. Navigate back to the scanning screen by tapping the square at the bottom of the screen.
9. Scan the provided trigger images (The photo of Schoolmistress Cafaro) and watch it magically come to life!



Christmas Open House and Sale

Julie Dippelhofer

Our Schoolhouse Sale was the perfect way to kick off the holiday month. Families enjoyed browsing throughout the schoolhouse for handmade gifts, jams, honey, cards, soap and so much more. For the past three years, the Victorian Open House and Sale has enjoyed a variety of items from a few vendors: Osprey Honey from Collingwood, Grand Valley Fibre/Alpaca Central from Meaford, and Mrs. V's Preserves from Terra Cotta, On. All vendors were thrilled to join our sale for 2017.

High above Georgian Bay, in the Grey Highlands, is Osprey Bluff's Honey Company. The honey is collected by hand at the Osprey Bluff's honey house. Honey, along with lip balm, soaps and candles are sold each year at our sale. Jean and Aldo Marascio of the Grand Valley Fibre/Alpaca Central booth had a beautiful selection of colours and felted products. Grand Valley Fibre have created spectacular yarn that is produced from fabulous fibre all sheared from their Alpaca farm. Jean and Aldo are former Mississauga residents who gave up city life and love their new venture into Alpaca farming and fibre creations. Barb Vivian is the creative behind Mrs. V's Preserves. She continues to make real fruit and vegetable preserves, using fresh whole ingredients, that are locally sourced. The preserves are simple and uncomplicated but have unique flavours that have been a big hit with our schoolhouse shoppers. Our vintage toy replicas, cards, books, and homemade handcrafts continue to delight our customers.

Even though attendance was down slightly from 2016, the afternoon was still a profitable one for the Friends of the Schoolhouse. The success of the sale could not have happened without the help of our friends, and the countless hours they put in each year to make every event an enjoyable one. All profits from the sale of the items went 100% to the Friends of the Schoolhouse. We look forward to seeing you at our next Open House and Sale on Sunday, December 3, 2018.



Grade 6 Class Trip

Julie Dippelhofer

The 2017/2018 school year marks my 20th year teaching in Peel. During these past years, I have had numerous trips that have been varied from weekly overnights in Ottawa, the Haliburton Forest and Wildlife Reserve, ski trips, the Science Centre, Battlefield House Museum & Park, Harbourfront and so many others. Each trip was memorable, and enjoyable to all, but I have to say my most favourite school trip to date was this past December at the Britannia Schoolhouse. My teaching team at Fairwind Sr. P.S., was in agreement to bring all grade 6 classes to the Schoolhouse for a day of role play and inquiry! We did this over 9 days in late December and early January.

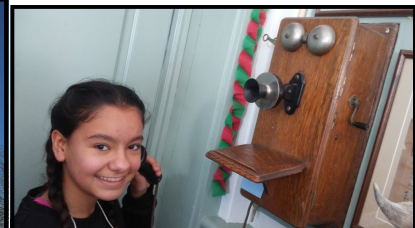
One of the reasons this trip was so special was the fact that we were able to walk to the school. According to our GPS it was a 22 minute walk but, with the snow and managing 24 eleven year olds, it was closer to 30 minutes, but we LOVED the freedom of not boarding a bus. The day we left it was minus 21C with the wind chill. Our Vice-Principal questioned whether we could go ahead with the day, given the cold temps, but we were dressed and prepared for our brisk but cool travel journey. Not one student complained and the walk seemed much quicker than the actual 30 minutes. Just prior to arriving, Schoolmistress Chapel had spotted our class crossing the field, making our way to our destination. She rang the school bell just like teachers had done many years ago. Some of my students jumped when they heard the sound and quickly began running towards the door. Girls lined up on one side and boys on the other.

When the students entered the building, they were in awe. Truly amazed at the set up, the desks and the artifacts. The morning gave all students a chance to role play and gain a deeper understanding of the settler community of Britannia. Students enjoyed the mental and abacus arithmetic lessons. Each student received their own abacus that was hand made by the field centre staff. Recitation and writing using cursive soon followed. After lunch they also enjoyed some time playing with the vintage toy replicas. The afternoon focused on inquiry. After Schoolmistress Chapel "set the stage" during the role plays, students now had a chance to conduct a series of guided inquiry investigations using primary sources found in the Schoolhouse. Through their discoveries they made broad inferences and connections between communities of the past and present.

It was a day Class 604 will never forget, and I know Fairwind Grade 6 class walking trips to the Britannia Schoolhouse will become an annual tradition!



Fairwind Grade 6 Class



What! No cell phone?

Bell's rung. Line up for school.

Winter 2018

Echoes of the Past

The Rural One Room Schools of Peel County

This book documents the history of all the one room schools that existed in Peel. It covers the period from the early 1800's until the mid-1960's. There are old photos of most of the schools and photos of what the sites look like today. Timelines trace the history of the schools and an interesting – sometimes humorous – “historical gem” is included for each one.

This book is a great gift for a teacher or anyone interested in the history of education.

Written and published by Friends of the Schoolhouse.

Soft cover, full colour, 208 pages.

\$30 plus \$10 shipping

Available at all schoolhouse events and from any member of Friends of the Schoolhouse.

Book Talks

Illustrated talks are available to historical societies and other interested groups. We tailor each presentation to suit the audience and the one room schools that were in their local area.

If your group would be interested in having a presentation, please contact Jean (905 826 3475) jkrob@rogers.com for further information.

**Have you renewed your membership for 2017
Renewal forms are on our website.
Membership forms can be downloaded from our website:**

www.britanniaschoolhousefriends.org

An Invitation

This is a special invitation for members to join the Friends of the Schoolhouse committee. We are always looking for new volunteers with new ideas to help us plan activities that will support and maintain the schoolhouse and its program. We meet on the second Tuesday of every month from 4 to 6 pm. We can offer you an interesting and rewarding experience along with great light refreshments at each meeting. **Please contact Shirley Hoad, shoad@bell.net,**

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.

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