

Fall, 2002

Some Figures and Facts:

- Pupils attending classes at The Old Britannia Schoolhouse during the last school year: 4073.
- Number of cancellations: 3.
- Number of rescheduled classes: 3.
- Number of Friends of The Old Britannia Schoolhouse: 194
- Members who volunteered their time at the Strawberry Social: 16
- Meals served at the Strawberry Social: 291
- Volunteers at The Old Britannia Schoolhouse booth at the Brampton Fair: 25



Secretary Linda Kenny and Chairperson Cathy Harper preside over a Friends of the Schoolhouse meeting at The Old Britannia Schoolhouse.



This newsletter is published by the Friends of the Schoolhouse every Fall, Winter and Spring, in an effort to inform its membership, and the teachers of the Peel District School Board of its activities and events.

Editor: Brian Holstein
briaahols@yahoo.com



From the Executive Director

It was ten years ago, in September 1992, that Friends of the Schoolhouse began to take form in response to fears that The Old Britannia Schoolhouse and its programme were in jeopardy. Already the staff had been cut back. At that time we lobbied the Board of Education and promised our support if the programme could be kept open. We received encouragement and support from teachers, parents' groups, community members and former S.S.#12 residents. Things, however, got worse before they got better! In June of 1993 the classroom was packed

up and the schoolhouse door was locked. The Friends did not give up on the cause, however, but worked closely with Community Education, whose challenge it was to see what could be done about the Schoolhouse, the Farm and the Field Study Centres. We were gratified to see the programme re-opened in September 1994 even though it was on a different and more cost recovery basis.

Since September 1994 a series of enthusiastic, talented and qualified young adults (young from my perspective) have played the role of schoolmistress or

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schoolmaster and have conducted Peel students into the magic of travelling back in time.

We are ever so pleased that Schoolmistress Megan Curtis is back in the schoolhouse for her third year. By June her schedule for visiting classes during the 2002/3 year was completely filled and a waiting list continues to lengthen. Megan is a willing helper and participant in the Friends of the Schoolhouse's events and is extremely tolerant of our invasions into her space. The Friends, as well as the Peel students, are fortunate to work with her.

Since its beginning, Friends of the Schoolhouse has evolved, stabilized and expanded. We have kept our early promise to help support the Schoolhouse and its programme.

Our Executive Committee is now 29 dedicated bodies strong, with the recent addition of five new members. We are also happy to have

Kay Robbins back after her year away. Jean Robinson gave the committee outstanding leadership as Chair for the past two years (Thank you, Jean!). We are thrilled that Cathy Harper has agreed to lead us through the next two years, with Linda Kenny taking on the duties of the secretary and Shirley Hoad still keeping our finances in order. Each and every member of the committee contributes tremendously to the success of the organization.

Friends of the Schoolhouse has a stable and supportive membership that renews year after year, as well as several new members who are continually joining our ranks. Without this backing we could not continue to

function. Thank you!

The events we organize and our various undertakings would be impossible without the help of a large number of willing volunteers, including (thanks to Daryl Cook's initiative) a large number of interested and enthusiastic students. Appreciation is also due to Paul Taylor and Lawrence Smith and their North Peel Secondary School students for their help with yard work and for making three beautiful new picnic tables.

2002 has been (and still is) a very special, busy, rewarding and also exhausting year for Friends of the Schoolhouse with many extra events including the 150th Anniversary and Reunion, the S.L.A.T.E. Conference, Arbour Day and the celebration of Jim Potter's life.



Donations received in memory of Jim Potter have been used to purchase a fine 1906 globe for the classroom. A plaque to Jim's memory has been attached to the globe.

We purchased an old white enamel water pail in the summer. Now we would really like to find a floor-standing abacus and a set of dry measures ("a bushel and a peck"). Another item on our search list is an old map case that once could be found hanging on schoolhouse walls.

The schoolhouse is looking great with its freshly varnished floors inside, its new driveway, its gardens and pumpkin patch outside.

Another busy school year is well underway. We hope to see you at one or more of our events this year.

Eva Ardiel

Charity BBQ

Weall and Cullen Nurseries invited the Old Britannia Schoolhouse to host the barbecue for the two days of their Fall Festival in September. In return, the schoolhouse received the proceeds. A number of student volunteers grilled hot dogs, boiled corn and talked to customers about the schoolhouse.

Both customers and Weall and Cullen staff were generous in supporting the barbecue and the schoolhouse was given \$115.00 at the end of the weekend.

Many thanks to Shirley Hoad, Ralph Eades, students Noora Abu-Etah, Dahlia Abou El-Hassan, Tina and Anju Taeput, Aaron Taylor, Nadia Sabessar, Sara Kershaw and especially the staff of Weall and Cullen.



Daryl Cook



Do You Remember?

Former Schoolmaster **Tom Veenstra**, now teaching with the Toronto School Board, was married in August to Cathy Inglis, a teacher at the same school. We wish Cathy and Tom every happiness!

Former Schoolmistress **Amy Wilson**, who has been teaching at the Toronto Island School, gave birth in July to Madeline Anne. Congratulations to Amy and her husband Jamie!

Former Schoolmistress **Nicole Irwin** and her husband John Wilkin have been living in England where John is doing post graduate work at Oxford. Bravo to Nicole and John!

Ebenezer School

Ebenezer School (S.S. # 10 Toronto Gore Township) was built on the northwest corner of The Gore Road and Ebenezer Sideroad in 1891. In keeping with the thinking of the day there were separate entrances for girls and boys to prevent "improper communication" between the sexes.



The Old Britannia Schoolhouse was asked to mount a display here during Brampton's Open Doors Tours on September 21 and 22, 2002. Our display was well-received. A steady stream of visitors stopped at the site on Sunday afternoon.

The school has an interesting plank ceiling, and some attractive wainscoting and carved window moldings. Several horse chestnuts and maples planted in 1905 still stand in the schoolyard.

We look forward to participating in any future open houses at the school.

Joan Reid



Arbour Day, 2002

On Friday, May 10 a native Canadian red oak donated by the Streetsville Horticultural Society was planted in the yard of the Old Britannia Schoolhouse. The weather was clear and sunny but a bit windy for the festive loons that decorated the tree.

Students from North Peel Secondary School dug a fine hole. Henry vander Griendt and Eva Ardiel were spotted wielding shovels with great enthusiasm during this hole digging. Ruth Thompson and Jim Gollert represented the Board of Trustees and Community Education, respectively. Dean Scully, president of the Streetsville Horticultural Society, supervised the actual planting. Students from Champlain

Trail, Erin Mills Senior Public, Britannia, and Port Credit Secondary School eagerly took turns putting in their ceremonial shovelfuls of earth.

Pupils from Britannia buried a special time capsule to be opened in 2052 on the 200th anniversary of the school. At this time the youngest participant will be 54 years old!

The tree commemorates the 150th anniversary of the school, the Golden Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II and the remarkable life of Elizabeth, the Queen Mother.

Special thanks to Joan Moon for refreshments and to Eva Ardiel, Daryl Cook, Cathy Harper, George Christian, Mary Corrigan, and Meagan Curtis.

Joan Reid



Wildlife at The Old Britannia Schoolhouse

Joan Reid has been keeping a tally on the wildlife found around the grounds of The Old Britannia Schoolhouse. Her tally, to date, is as follows:

7. many crows
8. one red-winged blackbird
9. one gull
10. many sparrows



1. one raccoon
2. one black squirrel
3. one grey mouse
4. one rabbit
5. three garter snakes
6. many robins



Executive Committee News

The 2002-03 year is well underway. We are pleased to welcome back Schoolmistress Ms. Curtis. She will have a very busy year as the school programme is fully booked with a number of classes on the waiting list. To date 280 Peel students have had a day at the schoolhouse. Forty student teachers from the T. L. Kennedy Campus of York University have been introduced to the programme offered at the schoolhouse and four students from University of Toronto will visit in October.

We are pleased to welcome Anna Brezden, Dennis and Ruth Taylor and Mary Wilkinson as new members to our executive committee. Our membership now stands at 194 friends.

Several events are planned for this year. To date our display at the Brampton Fall Fair was well received. Many children enjoyed our toy display, while several adults stopped to peruse the "Schools of Peel" display prepared by Joan Reid. Joan has put an excellent display together on a number of the rural schools from days gone by. She would be very pleased to hear from anyone who has attended one of these schools prior to 1959. Joan would also welcome pictures and stories of former students who attended any of these schools.

Preparations went smoothly for The Friends of the Schoolhouse to have the school open during the annual Britannia Fall Fair held on Thanksgiving Weekend. Our Sales Committee is preparing for their annual sale at the Board Office on the 14th of November, while our Christmas Open House is scheduled for December 1. We hope to see you there. Remember, the Schoolhouse is open every second Sunday of the month.

It is that time of year again to renew your membership. As soon as the form arrives, please take time to fill it out and return it with your cheque so that you will continue to be informed of the happenings at the Schoolhouse. Remember to check off the section on the back indicating how you would like to help. If you feel you have a few hours of free time to help us at our events, please call 905-279-5761 or anyone on the core executive.

Cathy Harper.

For Your Calendar:

November

- 12 At 4 p.m. Friends of the Schoolhouse Meeting at The Old Britannia Schoolhouse
- 10 The Old Britannia Schoolhouse is open to the public from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m.
- 14 Christmas Sale in the Atrium
- 29 Christmas Tree Trimming at The Old Britannia Schoolhouse

December

- 1 Christmas Open House
- 3 At 4 p.m. Friends of the Schoolhouse Meeting at The Old Britannia Schoolhouse
- 8 The Old Britannia Schoolhouse is open to the public from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m.

January

- 12 The Old Britannia Schoolhouse is open to the public from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m.
- 14 At 4 p.m. Friends of the Schoolhouse Meeting at The Old Britannia Schoolhouse



Cups and Saucers??

Judging by the comments overheard at the Strawberry Social, a highlight of this event is the drinking of tea from a real china cup and saucer, and the pleasure of choosing one's favourite from a varied assortment.



Friends of the Schoolhouse committee members have brought their china from home for events such as this. Now, however, we would like to build up a collection for the schoolhouse itself.

So ... if you have "never-used" or "lovingly used" but "too-nice-to-get-rid-of" fancy china cups and saucers taking up space in your cupboards, Friends of the Schoolhouse would love to put them to good use!

If you wish to donate them to The Old Britannia Schoolhouse, phone Eva Ardiel at 905 459 9158 to arrange for pick up.

Below: Joan Reid with the fruits of her extensive research at the Brampton Fall Fair.

Britannia Fall Fair

Britannia Schoolhouse was a very busy place over the Thanksgiving weekend. Each day we welcomed many visitors, truly there wasn't a dull moment.

Many of our visitors were surprised that S.S.#12 is still a "happening place" in her 150th year, surprised too that the site she sits on today is the original place where she was built. Again sincere thanks to the volunteers who were so actively involved with our guests, sharing with them our delight in a very cherished piece of our heritage. Memories of similar places from all over the world mingled with memories of past school days from all ages giving us all a common bond. Something to be truly thankful for...and made possible by the existence of a little red-brick schoolhouse that still brings people together in her 150th year.

Many thanks to Eva, Kay, Daryl, Hawley, June, Ben and Marjorie.

Margaret Draper and Margaret Storey

- with a "Heigh-ho, Come to the Fair"

The weather was fine and the people came in droves to the annual Brampton Fall Fair.

Friends of the Schoolhouse were set up in the Livestock Building amongst the cattle, poultry and rabbits – a prime location – heavy traffic and interesting activities!

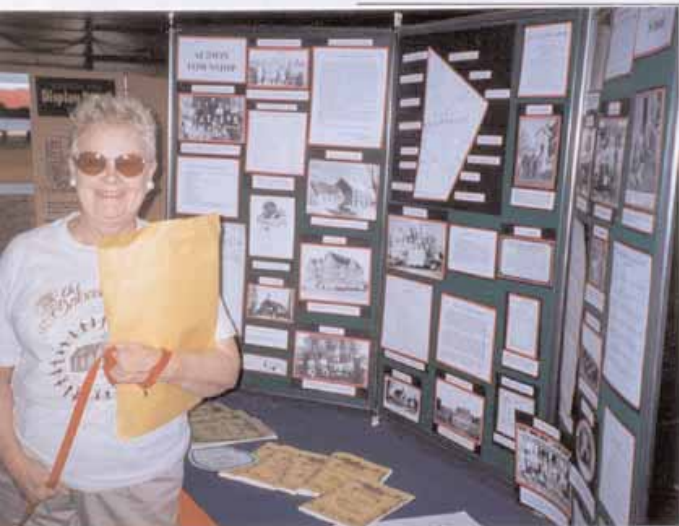
As usual our old-fashioned toys were a major attraction for both young and old. Joan Reid's display of school and student photos from the former school sections in Caledon and Albion Townships were equally popular. Comments were heard such as "There's my husband's aunt!" or, "Hey, there I am when I was a kid!" Several people left us their names so that we can contact them for more information about former schoolhouses or local history.

On the last day of the fair Mrs. Bernadine Milley presented us with two period costumes – for a child and for an adult – for any use we may have at The Old Britannia Schoolhouse. How thoughtful and generous! Thank you, Bernadine.

So many of our volunteers expressed how enjoyable and informative it was to chat with the Brampton Fair-goers. Our very sincere thanks goes to the twenty five people who each did a four hour shift at the fair.



"A bit too soon to take to the Fair."



A Christmas Giving Budget

Price of a pioneer toy from The Old Britannia Schoolhouse catalogue:

From \$5.00 to \$28.00

Batteries

Nil (These are toys to be used, not watched)

Wrapping

Varies with your taste

The joy of seeing a child or grandchild using a real toy, rather than just watching one as it drains yet another set of batteries:

Priceless!

Look for The Old Britannia Schoolhouse catalogue that has been distributed to each school, or phone Eva Ardiel at 905 459 9158 for additional information or with your order. Orders can be shipped by the courier to your school location.

These toys, and other items from our catalogue, will be on display at our sales table in the Atrium of H.J.A Brown Education Centre on November 14, and in The Old Britannia Schoolhouse at our Open House on December 1.

*Need to speak to the
Schoolmistress?*



The Old Britannia Schoolhouse can be contacted directly, by dialing
890 1010, ext. 2911

*We are on the web at
www.britanniaschoolhouse.org*

Heritage Mississauga

can be accessed on the internet at:

<http://www.city.mississauga.on.ca/heritage/>

Or by phoning 905 615 4415

The Friends of the Schoolhouse wish to thank the following for their support:

Debra Mitchell

Anonymous (in memory

Elisabeth Braun

Council

Daryl Cook

of Vic Crozier)

Freddie Appleton

Richard Cushing (A

Nancy Jones

Ben and Marjorie Madill

Eva Ardiel (in memory

donation of an old school

Luella Johnson

(in memory of James

of James Potter)

desk)

Corinna Proeller

Potter)

Ruth Bentley

Anna Brezden

Don Danton

Betty Ann Wolder

Forest Ave. P.S. School



Exclusive to
the web page

THESE ADDITIONAL PAGES ARE AVAILABLE ONLY TO THOSE WHO ACCESS OUR NEWSLETTER VIA THE WEB.

TWENTY FIVE FRIENDS OF THE SCHOOLHOUSE WERE ON HAND AT THE BRAMPTON FALL FAIR IN SEPTEMBER. THE FOLLOWING IS A RANDOM SAMPLING OF SOME PHOTOS TAKEN ON THAT WEEKEND.



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