



Spring 2012



**2011-2012
Schedule of Events**

June 27 Strawberry Social
July 1 Canada Day
City Hall
July 17 Lemonade
on the Lawn

**School Visits
2010-2011**

February: 403
March: 337
April: 453

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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Message From The Chair

Shirley Hoad

As the school year comes to an end, it is also the end of my term as Chair of The Friends of the Schoolhouse. It has been a busy and rewarding two years being the leader of a group of dedicated volunteers and to work with the energetic teachers that are in the classroom. Over this time there have been several successful events at the schoolhouse and off-site. More people have learned of the existence of the schoolhouse and its continuing vision of telling the history and the promotion of its continuation as a place for our modern day students to learn how things were different and yet in many ways the same for children of the past.

With the departure of Joan Reid as Executive Director of The Friends, the rest of the committee has stepped up and tried to fill her footprint. Under the guidance of Karen Simons and her committee, the Victorian Gardens have been weeded and cleaned of winter debris. An unprecedented number of student and adult volunteers worked for four Saturday mornings to make this a showpiece of our property. Hopefully some of these eager gardeners will continue over the spring and summer months to return from time to time to keep the beds weeded, and watered as needed. Some families in the area are considering "adopting" a part of the garden as a project for the summer. What a great way for a family to come together and give back to their community! When we hold our Planning Meeting in July, a new committee under the leadership of Ruth Taylor will continue to provide support to the staff of the Schoolhouse, and the students who come every day to see it. I hope I will see many of you at The Strawberry Social in June, and please feel free to drop in anytime in the summer to enjoy the gardens and to come into the schoolhouse on our Open Sundays.

Many Thanks To Joan Reid

Shirley Hoad

It is with regret that we report that Joan Reid has resigned as the Executive Director of The Friends of the Schoolhouse. She has served in the position for several years, and has contributed much to our organization. Her research and writings of the history of one room schoolhouses in Peel have provided a valuable resource. Her displays at our events of photos and papers give viewers a clear idea of what school life was in the past.

Joan's passion for gardening has created the Victorian Gardens that are located on the Schoolhouse property. Over the years she has planned and produced gardens filled with native and heritage plants for our enjoyment .

Joan's love of Hallowe'en resulted in an event on the property that brought many children and their families to The Schoolhouse to participate in games and activities associated with the holiday. The haunted Schoolhouse, bobbing for apples in the schoolyard and a costume parade in the Board Office were among the activities enjoyed by everyone.

Strawberry Social

Ruth Taylor

Preparations have begun for the annual Strawberry Social hosted by Friends of the Schoolhouse. It will be held in the atrium of the board office on Wednesday, June 27, 2012. Come and enjoy a scrumptious helping of juicy Ontario berries mounded on top of Streetsville's finest shortcake biscuits topped with a dollop of genuine whipped cream. Come on your own or with a friend. Relax with a cup of tea or coffee served in our lovely china cups. Raspberry cordial will also be available. Names are entered into a draw for a great variety of prizes. Sales items related to the schoolhouse will be available. This event is one of our major fundraisers for the year. The cost of a ticket is \$8.00. Tickets will be available at the door, but you can arrange for tickets to be held for you by contacting Ruth Taylor at 905-457-8804 or at rtaylor914@sympatico.ca.

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.

S.L.A.T.E. in The County

Jean Robinson

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riends of The Schoolhouse, including School Mistress Chapel and School Master Hogan, were well represented at this year's S.L.A.T.E (So Let's All Talk Education in a one-room schoolhouse) Conference held at the Ameliasburgh Historical Museum and Pioneer Village in Prince Edward County on April 15th and 16th.

The Museum Buildings include an 1810 log house, a maple sugar shack, a blacksmith shop, a Victorian Schoolhouse, a town hall and a tea room. The Quinte Educational Museum and Archives are housed in a state-of-the-art facility in the Town Hall, a newly restored building in situ at Roblin Lake Park, to which the other buildings of the complex have been relocated to form this interesting Pioneer Village.



Cathy's 75 and SLATE 2012

After a warm welcome and a "meet and greet" session on Sunday afternoon, the conference convened on Monday morning with a very full agenda, including an interesting presentation about the development of Education in The County from the early years in small one room log school houses to the consolidation of small local schools in the early 1960's, a session on ideas for fund raising for museum sites, and an illustrated talk given by a retired teacher outlining her first year of teaching in a one-room school on an island off the southern part of Prince Edward County. She must have thoroughly enjoyed the experience as she later married a County man and has spent the subsequent years teaching in The County. We toured the 1810 log cabin which is representative of the settlers' first house erected to prove their title to the land, the blacksmith shop where the village blacksmith demonstrated the making



of pot hooks for use in an open fireplace, and the Victorian Schoolhouse where a small group of children from the local school were learning about the first schools in the area in conjunction with their "Pioneer Studies" unit.

Betty Cronk and Eva Ardiel honoured with a Spire Pear Tree dedication

S.L.A.T.E in the County (continued)

Jean Robinson

Unlike The Old Britannia Schoolhouse which is operated by the Peel Board on a daily basis throughout the school year, this school is in a Pioneer Village setting and is operated as part of the museum experience during the spring, summer and autumn seasons. The organizing committee is to be congratulated for presenting a thoroughly enjoyable and educational experience in a delightful rural setting.



Betty Cronk member of the Quinte SLATE Planning Committee
Eva Ardiel - SLATE founder and participant since 1986

Chris Chapel in 1810 Log House

The Friends look forward to reconvening next April as S.L.A.T.E. is to be held at the Wilson Macdonald School in Selkirk on the shores of Lake Erie.

Frederica Appleton

Lis Braun

It is with sadness that the Friends learned of the passing of Frederica Appleton. Mrs. Appleton started teaching at the Britannia School in September 1952 when I was in grade 3. She was an excellent teacher and from my vantage point she handled grade one to eight in the one-room schoolhouse with experience. She left Britannia School some time during the year 1954 - 55 because she was pregnant. I know these dates because I still have my report cards signed by Mrs. G. F. Appleton. She also taught my sister and brother during those years. Being a student in a one-room schoolhouse was a very unique and effective way to learn. In addition to the work for your own grade you could not help but absorb some of what was taught to the other grades. Sometimes Mrs. Appleton would assign a senior student to help out one or two of the younger pupils. That too was a good learning opportunity.



Mrs. Appleton continued to take an interest in the Old Britannia Schoolhouse and her former pupils throughout the years.

Some of my special memories include the Christmas Concerts that required weeks of preparation. Every student had a role to play in those exciting and much anticipated events. At times, Mrs. Appleton would join in the schoolyard games during recess. I especially remember the baseball games.

I have many fond memories of those schooldays and was therefore very happy to see Mrs. Appleton again at the reunion held at Britannia School in May 2002.

Garden News

Daryl Cook

It's gardening time again busy Saturday mornings cleaning weeds and planting. With winter" and an early warm April, everything is growing mustard which we are ruth- April the trilliums and bluebells

We have an enthusiastic group of garden volunteers from schools in Peel and from the community. Two families – children and parents – have been working together. The students are earning community service credits and just enjoying themselves. The efforts of all are much appreciated.

Our heritage garden has

several different areas. On the west behind the north privy and near the parking lot is a **meadow garden** of native wildflower plants. This was the first area planted. On the south side of the entry path from the parking lot is the **shade garden**. Plants such as bloodroot, fern, mayapple, trout lily and trillium do well here. Our **Victorian garden** on the north side of the schoolyard is divided into two areas. On the west side of the arbour and path leading from the Board office to the schoolhouse is the perennial garden. Plants here would have been common in a cottage garden around farmhouses in the village of Britannia. Lavender, love lies bleeding, lupin, sweet william and geraniums are some of the plants found here. On the east side of the path is the rose garden. Here are rose bushes that are named for our early explorers and one modern one – space explorer Roberta Bondar. Near the road by the split rail fence are berry bushes – raspberries and blueberries.

In the Spring our Victorian garden is abloom with daffodils, bluebells and trilliums. In the Fall, asters and goldenrod predominate. Though goldenrod is a native Ontario plant, and when taken to England became a garden favourite there, it does tend to spread rapidly and we try to keep it under control.

We always welcome new garden volunteers. We would like to have some individuals or groups adopt a look after it during the growing season. We would like to have some individuals or groups adopt a look after it during the growing season. This would involve coming every week or two in the summer for a few hours and doing some dead-heading and weeding. If you are interested, contact Daryl Cook, dlcook@rogers.com.



Spectacular Gardens at Britannia Schoolhouse



Tending to the Gardens

Come out and enjoy an old-fashioned
Strawberry Social

Wednesday June 27, 2012

11:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

in the atrium of H.J.A. Brown Education Centre



BILL OF FARE

A generous helping of luscious Ontario strawberries on a delicious shortcake biscuit.... topped with genuine whipped cream!

Tea • Coffee • Fruit Cordial
Mints

Come as you are... or "dressed up" for an old-fashioned afternoon tea

\$8.00 tickets available until June 22nd from



Friends of the Schoolhouse

A fundraising project for The Old Britannia Schoolhouse
(Some tickets available at the door.)

Glazed Strawberry Rhubarb Tart

Ingredients

- 1/2 cup (125 mL) granulated sugar
- 2 tbsp (30 mL) water
- 2 cups (500 mL) chopped fresh rhubarb
- 3 cups (750 mL) halved strawberries
- 4 tsp (18 mL) cornstarch
- **Crust:**
- 1 cup (250 mL) graham wafer crumbs
- 1/2 cup (125 mL) finely chopped almonds
- 1/3 cup (75 mL) butter, melted
- **Filling:**
- 4 oz (113 g) cream cheese, softened
- 2 tbsp (30 mL) whipping cream
- 1 tbsp (15 mL) granulated sugar

Preparation

In top of double boiler, bring sugar and water to boil over direct heat. Place over saucepan of gently boiling water. Add rhubarb; cover and poach, without stirring, just until tender and shape still holds, 15 to 20 minutes. Remove from heat and let cool, without stirring.

Crust: Meanwhile, in bowl, toss together graham crumbs, almonds and butter until moistened. Press onto bottom and up side of 9-inch (23 cm) round tart pan with removable bottom. Bake in centre of 350°F (180°C) oven until crust is firm to the touch, about 12 minutes. Let cool on rack.

Filling: In bowl, beat together cream cheese, whipping cream and sugar until spreadable, about 3 minutes. Spread in tart shell and halfway up side. Refrigerate for 30 minutes. Meanwhile, place strawberries in large bowl; with slotted spoon, add rhubarb. Set aside. In small saucepan, bring liquid from rhubarb to boil. Whisk cornstarch with 1 tbsp (15 mL) cold water; whisk into liquid and boil until thickened, about 1 minute. Let cool at room temperature for 15 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add to fruit; stir very gently to coat. Spoon over filling. Refrigerate until set, about 2 hours. (*Make-ahead: Cover and refrigerate for up to 2 hours.*)

Source : Canadian Living Magazine: June 2006

Ruth Thompson

Eva Ardiel

Friends of the Schoolhouse were sad to learn of the death of Ruth Thompson on April 30th, 2012. Ruth served on the Peel District School Board for 36 years, 15 of those years as vice-chair. She was a strong advocate for public education, a recipient of the Order of Canada and an Education Champion award, as well as the proud namesake of the Ruth Thompson Middle School. Ruth has shown a genuine interest in The Old Britannia Schoolhouse over the years and has been a member and generous supporter of Friends of the Schoolhouse since its inception in 1992. Her support and her participation in several Friends' events has been greatly appreciated.

From the Schoolmistress

Christine Chapel

We are in the heart of the busy Spring season once again. As I was thinking about all of the events and activities that have taken place here over the last few months, I began reflecting on the important role the Schoolhouse plays in the community even after all of these years.

More than 600 students have visited the Schoolhouse since the beginning of April. The fact that S.S. #12 is still being used first and foremost by the children of Peel as a school and place for learning is exciting and encouraging. The roots of the Schoolhouse run very deep, and former students who attended while it was open in the 30's, 40's and 50's are still involved with the goings on. Our Friends of the Schoolhouse volunteers, who work tirelessly on behalf of the Schoolhouse, are mostly retired teachers of Peel who believe in the power and benefits of living history.

More and more we are seeing that adults who attended the Schoolhouse as children on a class trip are returning. Over the last month I have had two teachers, a firefighter and a young man making arrangements to have his wedding photos taken on site, reminisce fondly about their visit. In each case we were able to go back to our Registry binders and find their class lists where they had signed their names with pen and ink. Each of them left with a copy of the Registry and a smile on their face. The Schoolhouse continues to act as a meeting place and has played host to a number of community events this school term. Most recently the Schoolhouse was used as a venue for presentations during the Peel Heritage Fair held at the Central Board office. Students from across Peel displayed individual history projects that were judged, and took part in a number of interesting and engaging presentations. Schoolmaster Hogan and I facilitated two presentations in the afternoon after sitting in on a wonderful morning session about the Underground Railroad in Canada. The gardens have become a great draw. I'm so pleased when I see people on their lunch breaks meandering through the lovely perennial gardens. Over the last four weekends, the Friends have successfully brought together groups of volunteers from the community to be part of a gardening work bee. Families, students and individuals with a desire to learn and to help, volunteered hours to working in the garden. Some have even committed to a long term involvement. Much was achieved and the gardens look wonderful thanks to everyone's efforts. The vegetable gardens too have become true teaching gardens to our visiting students. For many, it is their first experience digging and planting, harvesting and eating and truly gaining a first hand understanding and appreciation of growing one's own food.

Just as it was an important fixture in the community so long ago, the Schoolhouse continues to play an invaluable role in the community with connections to the past, present and future.