

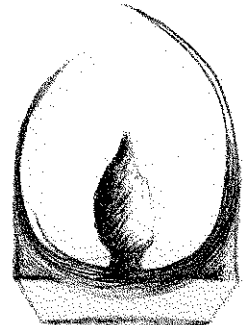


Edge Hill Country School

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519-369-3195

www.EdgeHill-School.com

NEWSLETTER: January 2009



A New Year's Thought:

"There is no task of greater importance than to give our children the very best preparation for the demands of an ominous future, a preparation that aims at the methodical cultivation of their spiritual and their moral gifts. As long as the exemplary work of the Waldorf School Movement continues to spread its influence as it has done over the past decades, we can all look forward with hope."

Bruno Walter, composer and conductor

Ben McIntosh at work on the Norse runes, Grade 4.



Edge Hill History: Reflections of School Section No. 3

"In 1916, a new slate blackboard 4 ½ ft. by 26 ft. was acquired. In 1918 the Ritches Bros. (masons) built new water closets, labour was ninety dollars, the materials extra. In 1923 a new platform was built and in 1926 a new stove was purchased. 1927 brought something different to the pupils with the introduction of hot lunches during the winter months. With an allotment of twenty dollars by the board, supplemented with food brought by pupils, a hot dish was served each day. A cupboard was constructed, in which were kept the food supplies and utensils.

In 1929 small desks were purchased for the junior pupils, and in 1944 the first desks, which often had accommodated three students in the early years, finally gave way to individual desks for all.

In 1936 the original porch was replaced with the present one, which was designed by John Firth. Chas. Moffat was hired to erect this structure at an hourly rate of thirty-five cents. The entire cost of this project was three hundred and thirty one dollars. About this time a portable platform was donated by the Young People of the community for use within the school. In 1940 swings were donated by Zion Women's Institute and erected on the playground.

Other improvements were the installation of toilets in the porch in 1947; a tile floor was laid in the school in 1956; and the old 'press', which had served for many years as a library, was replaced by cupboards, which were built under the blackboard. When in 1948 the community was being wired for the coming of electric power, the school was included, and hydro was turned on July 2, 1946."

Mark your calendar . . .

Friday, January 30
Family Toboggan Day
(alternative: February 6)

Sunday, February 1
Christian Community Service

Thursday, February 8
Board Meeting 7 p.m.

Tuesday, February 10
Teddy Bear Picnic and Pancake Breakfast

Sunday, March 8, 2009
Christian Community Service

Reminder to parents and users of the space:
Edge Hill is a peanut and tree-nut free school. Please be mindful in preparing lunches and take care to come to school with clean hands and face after a nutty breakfast. Please check snacks or crafts.

School Board of Directors

Diane Montgomery, Chair and Head of Fundraising
Deborah Parker-McGivern, Secretary
Diane Ferguson, Treasurer
Lise Gunby, Faculty Chair
Ken Bryson, Public Relations and Marketing
Simon Mellor, Building and Safety

Minutes of the AGM will be circulated to all members of the school separately.

CLASS NEWS

Firefly Kindergarten

Liza McIntosh

Happy New Year to the Firefly Class! We all enjoyed our holiday and are glad to be back at school. The new year has brought us a new classmate. Welcome to Thijs and his family. This term we are hoping to go skating once or twice. We are also anticipating the arrival of

our new toys. It will be very exciting to have new things to play with.

Our wish list is now smaller thanks to Marie-Eve and Marc. They have donated a beautiful new rug to our room. Thank you!

Griffin Class

Stephen Rogers

Congratulations to the wonderful performers of the Griffin Class - the Advent activities were a delight!



Grade 1

We have completed our work on the quality of the numbers 1 through 12, and more. The children were thirsty to learn the four processes so we did a little addition too. Their work and their main lesson books were very good. We shall be returning to number work after our current block and will introduce the processes through rhyme, verse and story.

We are currently working on vowels; their qualities of sound and movement precede the rendering of the letter form in the main lesson book. Verses and stories accompany the letter and I am considering using them in performance. In addition, and to quench their thirst for words, we have started a small book that has the letter and some words from the children's current vocabulary.

The legend of the *King of the Copper Mountains* has drawn to a close. The Wonder Doctor did arrive in time with the Golden Speedwell and the dwarf prophecy finally did come true . . . or did it? We shall move to a story of the gnome Puck for the Grade 1s and I am considering a longer tale for the whole class: *The Princess and the Goblin* by George MacDonald.



Griffin class nature table by Jennifer Clark

Grade 3

The year's main topic - the Israelites - continues with the need for some rules to govern the tribes of Israel, some of whom during the Exodus and perhaps even in Canaan still worshipped pagan gods. Moses is about to deliver the ten commandments and the students are working on what rules they might have to govern the tribes. (Sometimes I sit back and marvel at the relevance of the Waldorf curriculum!) After that we are moving into the Old Testament stories and their tales of noble heroes and heroines. We have also started a small book on the Hebrew alphabet and plan to write some Hebrew sentences at the end of the small block of work (writing right to left, of course!)

The 3s are also working on linear measurement as the first part of a larger block on measurement. I will continue the remaining two parts in spring when we are also involved with house-building and farming. We have made a "Griffin foot" and a "Griffin yard" as well as "standard" Imperial measurements and also some Egyptian measures that tied nicely into Joseph (son of Jacob) in Egypt.

We are currently also focussed on cursive writing. I am now being particular about the way the children form the letters and link them together, and also I am beginning to ask the children to write more in preparation for Grade 4.

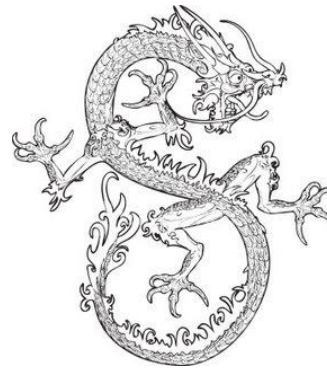
Men's Evening

Tuesday, February 24, 7:30pm

This is an open invitation to the men in the school community to attend a "sharing" dialogue about how we, as men, can support the education of the children at the school.

I will share some of the joys and some of the difficulties of being a "Waldorf inspired" class teacher at Edge Hill and seek to deepen my understanding of what it is to be a "Waldorf inspired" parent at Edge Hill.

Steve Rogers



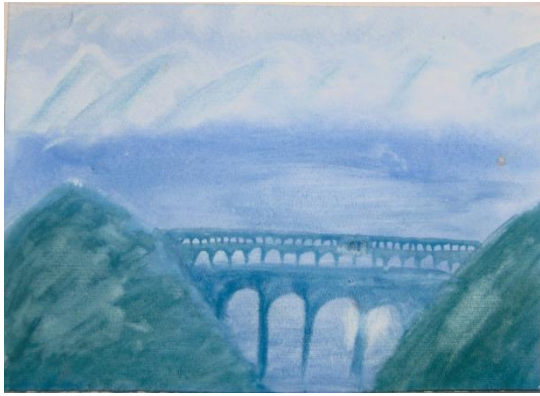
Dragon Class

Lise Gunby

Dragon Class students have "recovered" from their rousing Christmas play production of *The Death of Baldur*, but

spent the first weeks of January launching into speeches from the play prompted by bits of vocabulary or apropos events. The play gave the students a wonderful sense of accomplishment, which was definitely earned! We are also experiencing the absence of May Kelly, who returned to Thailand but who will visit again in June. May is now on a camping trip in the south of Thailand with her "other" class, which is studying the ecology of mangrove swamps. We are sorry she missed our frosty but fun skiing trip and we look forward to her return!

We are completing our block in history. The Grade 4s have been deeply engaged in the myths and culture of the Norse people, and the class as a whole was privileged to welcome Joshua Thornton for a morning of discussion about the significance and relevance of the



A Roman aqueduct, painted by Rory Thornton, Grade 6

runes as guides to thinking about our moral choices and personal wisdom. We also considered the runes in terms of the Viking culture and the ways of thinking and living that arise in a harsh climate. We have a set of yew runes in our classroom, and Ronan Bryson, a Dragon student, has made a beautiful set of his own, engraved on beautiful slices of apple wood. All of the students are at work on projects about their respective cultural studies, including the Greek Olympics and many aspects of Roman life. We are learning a speech from Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* and are in the process of booking seats at the Stratford production of the play this spring.



Grade 6 geometry: design based on the six-division of the circle.

Grade 4 students are studying fractions in their various manifestations in calculations of area, line, and sets. We will include some freehand geometry in our math work, a study which ties in with the form drawing of the early grades

and the formalized geometry of the upper grades. (Form drawing is a discipline that extends throughout the grades, and is a fascinating study for adults as well.) Grade 5 and 6 students have begun their study of geometry which, in the Waldorf tradition, draws from the discoveries made by the ancients. We began with the "string, straightedge and shadow," tools which fostered humankind's development over thousands of years of cross-cultural learning. Thus we approach geometry as an historical exploration and as something of a sacred science, with gorgeous artwork and many references to the geometrically arranged wonders of nature, from seashells and crystals to roses and on to spiralling galaxies. We learn about the six-division of the circle and how it lent itself to the compass and the clock, to our very concepts of direction and time. We also cover more conventional aspects of geometry and learn to deploy a beautiful precision in our efforts. To complement the refinement of our skills, students have been experimenting with making quill pens from peacock and goose feathers.

Four trips to Talisman for skiing and snowboarding are another highlight of our winter time together. It is delightful to watch the children exerting their beautiful energy and willpower and gaining in skill and confidence.

Notes from the Rainbow Room: French and Music

Gillian Inksetter

French Grade 1

Having mastered our colours before Christmas, we are now working on counting, the alphabet, and learning the days of the week. Our learning is done largely through songs with finger and hand movements to help us remember the words.

French Grade 3-4

We are working at learning new vocabulary this term. We've started identifying "things we

find at school,” learning the French words for most of our school supplies and other items around Edge Hill. We’ve begun learning how certain letter combinations sound in French, building on the skills the children learned last year. Most of the class can count reliably to 40, some can count to 69, and we are working at learning the numbers all the way to 100. We enjoy singing and learning tongue twisters in our time together.



Form drawing by Leigh Mellor, Rainbow Room

French Grade 5-6

We are working on sentence structure and some important French verbs, as well as frequently learning new vocabulary. We’ve begun to explore “le, la and les” with our new vocabulary words, and we are getting better at understanding how to conjugate and use verbs in French.

Music Grade 3-4

We are learning about melody and harmony, and how musical notes relate to each other both in sound and in written music. We are also exploring the uses of different rhythms and time signatures in our music. We sing and play some recorder in each class, with an emphasis on listening and understanding rather than performance.

Music Grade 5-6

We are exploring acoustics and the mechanics of sound. Having built a simple one-stringed instrument, a unichord, we learned about

relative pitch depending on the length of the instrument. We are starting to learn about solfege (do-re-mi, etc.), and have played with learning simple familiar songs on our unichords. We are working on a recorder piece for the next assembly, which we hope to perform in harmony.

Great Minds Think Alike:

Albert Schweitzer and Rudolf Steiner

A meeting as described by Schweitzer:

“One of us, I don’t remember which, began to speak of the spiritual decline of culture as the fundamental, unnoticed problem of our time. Thus we realized that we were both occupied with it. We had not expected it of each other.

A lively discussion resulted. We learned from each other that we had both taken on the life mission of working for the emergence of a true culture enlivened by the ideal of humanity and to encourage people to become truly thinking beings.

I have continually followed Rudolf Steiner’s life and activities with heartfelt participation. The successes until the First World War, the problems and hardships which accompanied them, the courageous efforts in the post-war confusion to create order through his teachings about the Threefold Social Organism, the founding of the Goetheanum in Dornach, where his thought-world found a home, the pain caused by its destruction by fire on New Year’s Eve 1922/23, the courage with which he went about its reconstruction, and finally the spiritual greatness which he retained in tireless teaching and activity during the suffering of the last months of his life on earth.”

For the children’s health and safety, please observe the following :

- no parking in front of the main entrance (this will help avoid children crossing the street between cars)
- no idling

Advent Fair 2008

Jennifer Clark

Our Advent Fair on December 13 was enjoyed by many in the community and helped to raise \$ 1857.95.

We would like to thank our many supporters from the community of Durham and Markdale. Specifically from Durham, thanks to **Sphereworks, Home Hardware, the Co-Op, Pharma Plus, At the Movies, The Parkhouse Spa, The Barber Shop, Dr. Greg Wilson, Strands and The Garafraxa Bookstore.** From Markdale, **PJ Knickerboxers Toystore.** Please let them know you appreciate their support in these challenging times!

Many thanks also to the **parents** who worked so generously to make it all happen! A big thank you to Deb McGivern for organizing the vendors, which helped to showcase many new business ventures in the community and helped to reduce the work involved in finding donations: a great job! Thank you to Millie Johnne and Aiyanna Hartan, Deb McGivern, Diane Montgomery and Liza McIntosh for being our vendors and for your 20 per cent contribution.

A huge thanks to May Tettero for the fantastic café, which was a big success. To Mark Fortin and Steve Rogers, thanks for the hard work at bringing in the tables. To George, thanks for the hard work in helping with set-up as well as Joshua Thornton and Robert Erickson for his cedar. For all the parents who made and helped to serve delicious food and helped in the clean-up: Rosemary Crick, Myke Dyer and Philly Markowitz, David Sugarman and Jen Clark, Leigh and Simon Mellor, May Tettero, Zoe Carter, Janice, Catherine Schafer, Natalie Litt, Liza McIntosh, the Schmidts and Catherine Osthaus. Thank you to Martin Tamlyn, Lucie Tsereteli and Heather Kelly for helping secure donations. Thank you Christina Schwarz for your handmade donation. To Elisa for her wonderful decorations and cedar, to Jennifer Clark for the Woodland

Pond, to D'elle and Dyan Jones for being our woodland faeries. Thanks also to Gordon and Gillian Mellor for their wonderful handmade donations and financial support, to the Stutskis for their donations and support, and to Lise Gunby and the alumnae girls, Emma, Miralia, Myelle and Kaila, for crafts for the children.

Please excuse any omissions from this list!

Support Edge Hill School!

We are grateful for the diversity and abundance of support that nourishes the school. People come forward to donate their time in many ways, volunteering in classrooms and helping to organize festivals and fundraisers and staffing these events. We appreciate the goods that make their way to the school and keep an up to date wish list ☺. We have been supported by monetary donations from people in the wider community and as a charitable organization we issue tax receipts. We are members of the Saugeen Trading Community and can also accept saubuck donations (member #159).

If you are able to donate any of the following items, willing Edge Hill to acquire these and have them available please contact the school: snowblower; musical instruments, lawnmower, weed whacker, office supplies (paper, pencils, pens, etc.), sports equipment (soccer balls and nets!). Note from Lise: many thanks to Bill Twaddle for the donation of a large exercise ball!

As an ongoing way to help the school and the local environment, consider signing up with **Escarpment Telecom** for your long distance calls at a very reasonable 6.9¢/min. The Escarpment Biosphere Conservancy donates a portion of its profits to partner charities. Call 1-888-815-9575 or e-mail rbarnett@escarpment.ca to register. It is essential to name Edge Hill as the charity you wish to support for us to get the percentage.

We are starting a *Subsidy Fund* to help families who cannot afford complete tuition. The goal is to make the education available to all children. If you would like to make a donation specifically to the Subsidy Fund, families qualifying for a subsidy could find a new way to send their children to Edge Hill.

Heads Up!

Astronomy news from Brian and Diane

January 2009 starts off the International Year of Astronomy, 400 years after Galileo made his first telescopic observations. Events are planned throughout the year and around the globe with the objective to expose as many people as possible to the night sky.

February brings us those cold but clear nights – something we've missed for a few months! For those brave enough, here are a few things to watch out for:

Venus reaches its maximum brightness in late February. If you're in a really dark location, you can see your shadow cast by Venus. On the evenings of February 26 to 29, about one hour after sunset in the western sky, Venus will be less than 2 degrees above a thin crescent moon.

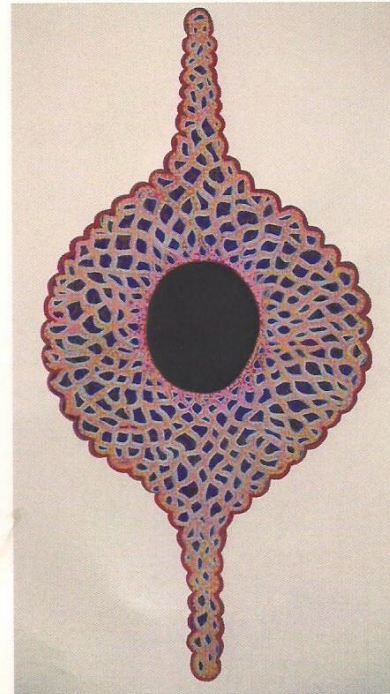
Saturn is rising in the constellation Leo around 8 or 9 p.m. at the beginning of the month and around 6 or 7 in the evening later in the month.

Watch for the zodiacal light from February to April. Look in the west, 80 to 120 minutes after sunset for a large cone of pearly light, extending from the horizon to almost overhead. This is the glow from the last remaining sunlight shining on microscopic debris from comets and asteroids. It's only visible at brief periods in the year so try your luck.

The moon will occult (pass in front of) some of the stars in the Pleiades in the evening of

February 3. And if you have binoculars on hand, take a look at Orion's belt and sword at any time. Orion is the most spectacular of the winter constellations with nebulae, star clusters and a wealth of double and multiple stars inside the belt and sword region. Clear skies!

Portal



**Past and present work
by Jennifer Clark**

at

The G. Spot

138 Garafraxa Street
Durham, Ontario

Opening: Saturday, January 17, 2009
1 to 4 p.m.

Show from: Saturday, January 17, 2009
to Sunday, February 8, 2009

Hours: Wednesday to Friday 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Saturday & Sunday 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

I will be present during show hours
working on my current series
