



WHAT'S THE BUZZ?

A MERA newsletter

FALL 2009



Web site: www.meraschoolhouse.org

Email address: MERASchoolhouse@bell.net

MISSISSIPPI RIVER HERITAGE FESTIVAL

What made the Mississippi River Heritage Festival special was the number of community groups that worked together. Although MERA applied for and received funding from the Department of Canadian Heritage to celebrate the 125 Anniversary of the end of the famous local loggers feud that resulted in the passage of the Rivers and Streams Act of 1884, it was the **McDonalds Corners Ag Hall** who hosted the dinner, the **Lanark Stewardship Council** that sponsored the Eco-River Tours on Voyageur Canoes, the **Dalhousie Lake Association** offering volunteers, **Mississippi Valley Conservation (MVC)** who donated money and organized kids games at the beach, local business owners such as the **Nature Lovers Bookshop** (providing incalculable support) & **Sylvania Lodge** who let us use their property, and the **Watson's Corners Hall** who changed the time of their dinner to accommodate the Festival. **TO ALL the many volunteers A BIG THANK YOU TO ALL who made this event the success that it was. It could not have happened without you!**

Loggers on a pointer boat. Many of you will have taken a ride on Pointer Boat at the Mississippi River Heritage Festival



Photo courtesy of the Duncans

Community Wood Burning Oven

Thanks to the **Ontario Trillium Foundation** many of you will have enjoyed pizza or freshly baked bread over the summer at the Farmers Market.

We want the oven to be well used by the community so there is no charge but we need to make sure it is used properly so it lasts a long time. You need to take a little **How-To Use the Oven** course offered occasionally. Call 613-278-0388 to get information on the next 'how-to' session or email MERASchoolhouse@bell.net



Marny McCook, regional representative of the Ontario Trillium Foundation, cuts the ribbon at the Grand Opening of the Community Oven this summer. **Darrin MacDonald**, left, was the project manager and **Mallory Beauchamp**, right, assisted in the construction of this wonderful new community asset.

'09 Fall Fare Workshops

Pre-Registration for all workshops is required.

To register, call 613-278-0388 or email us at meraschoolhouse@bellnet.ca then send a cheque made out to 'MERA' to Box 76, McDonald's Corners, ON K0G 1M0. VISA payment is available by calling MERA.

Note: Refunds cannot be given if a cancellation less than two weeks before the workshop date.

Six Watercolour Painting Classes

**Tuesdays from September 29 – November 3,
1:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.**

Cost: \$120 for MERA members and \$135 for non-members for all six art classes

Come and learn the steps to create a watercolour painting, the different types of paper used, use of colour & watercolour techniques, how to paint trees, skies, grass, etc. We will talk about framing and showing your paintings and printing paintings onto cards.

Instructor: Donna Naprstek from Carleton Place has been painting with watercolours for about 20 years. She shows her paintings in area galleries and fine art shops.

What to Buy: Watercolour paper of at least 140 pounds, watercolour tubes of paint; the small ones will last a long time. Get whatever colours you choose but at least blue, red, and yellow. Brushes of varying sizes; a fine tip, a medium round and a flat to start. A plastic pallet with little cups and if possible, a lid to keep paints wet. A water dish. A drawing pencil & eraser, masking tape, and a board to tape the paper to, a little sponge, an old tooth brush, a little package of salt. Bring your ideas of what you want to paint, photos. An easel is not necessary because with watercolours you paint on the flat.

Music for Young Children®

Aynsley Gabriel-Buchanan is returning to MERA this Fall to teach MYC®! Aynsley has been teaching this fabulous music program since 2002.

Classes are Age and Experience Appropriate.

PLEASE PLAN TO ATTEND A 'TRY-IT' CLASS on TUESDAY OCTOBER 6TH!

Cont'd....

Music for Young Children, Cont'd Classes will begin for the school year on **Tuesday, October 13th beginning at 5pm.** Visit www.myc.com or call Aynsley for more details. You must register for your class before-hand by calling Aynsley at 613-257-3552.

Singing with Your Whole Self

**Sunday, October 18th from 10 AM – 3 PM
Cost: \$35.00 for MERA members and \$50.00 for non-members**

Come to MERA to move and sing with the first instrument - your voice. Using Awareness Through Movement® to sense the strength and resonance that can come when you find ease in your self, we will sing together learning some vocal techniques and songs that will include improvisation with sound and a few pieces to sing in harmony to round out the day. Bring your lunch, a few folded bath towels, and wear layered clothing for comfort when lying on the floor. See www.christinegraves.com/gigs for more information.

Instructor: Christine Graves, Body & Mind FLEX®, has taught movement and music for over a decade teaching people to find their singing voice. Her background in mindfulness through her four-year training as a Certified Feldenkrais Teacher brings a potent somatics aspect to her voice and singing instruction. As a professional musician, Christine released four solo recordings and sang on two Malaika CD's from 2000-2005

Eight Ceramics Classes

**Three separate sessions to choose from starting:
Monday, September 21 from 1 p.m.. – 4 p.m.. OR
6 p.m. – 9 p.m. OR Thursday, September 24th
From 6 p.m. – 9 p.m.**

Cost: \$175 for MERA members, \$190 for non-members for all eight classes

Either for the beginner or intermediate level potter, students will receive instruction in all aspects of wheelwork, making functional and decorative pots. Students will learn a number of different decorating techniques, how glazes work and how to apply them. Students are also free to explore hand building and sculptural projects.

Instructor: A recent graduate from the Sheridan College Ceramics Program in Toronto, Melissa Jantunen has been working as a functional potter, focused on wheel throwing and decorating. She is full off many ideas and is very happy to share them. She is MERA's new official Potter in Residence.

Supplies: One bag of clay and glazes will be provided (included in cost of classes) Wear old clothes.

Willow Lantern Making Workshop

Sunday, November 15th

10 AM – 4PM

Cost: \$35.00 for MERA members and \$40.00 for non-members plus \$10 materials charge

Many of you will have seen the magical MERA lanterns when lit up at night. Come and make your own Christmas Willow Lantern Star that you can hang up for the Christmas season. We will use willow harvested from the labyrinth willow and provide instruction using waterproof tissue paper and making the candle holder. Instructors will be MERA members.

“New” Wii Bowling!

On Friday mornings from 10:00 a.m. until noon, the Active Seniors Coalition (A.S.K.) will be offering Wii bowling at MERA. This is a fun-filled exercise/game on the television screen that four people can play at once. Other games will be available as well while you wait your turn. You don't have to be in shape, but come prepared to laugh and enjoy yourselves! No experience required and you do not need to be a MERA member. As this is event co-sponsored by Active Seniors Coalition (ASK) activity, there will be a weekly \$3.00 charge. Call Linda Russell at 259-5447

ONGOING GROUPS

FITNESS CLASSES Mondays 9:30 - 10:30 a.m.

Sponsored by the North Lanark Community Health Centre (free) Call Kara at 259-2182

QIGONG Mondays 1:00 - 2.30 pm

TAI CHI Mondays 2:45 -3:45pm (Advanced only)
Call Sue Cavanagh at 259-5398 (charge).

QUILTING

Every Wednesday from 1 p.m. - 3 p.m.
Call Joan for more info: 278-2962

SPINNING & KNITTING GROUP

Every Thursday 10 a.m. - 12 noon
Call Mona for more info 278-0291

FIBERARTS

Every Thursday at 1:00 p.m.

For information or to be added to the Fibrearts email list, call Hilary at 278-0220



It is fitting that so many opportunities to learn new things happen at MERA. Here is a photo from the 1800s when the MERA Schoolhouse was a one room schoolhouse with as many as 60 students being taught by one teacher!

Fibre Arts Corner

Do you enjoy being creative and making something unique? Mid-week you will usually find MERA hopping with busy people spinning, quilting or taking part in a fibrearts workshop. If you work at home, on weekends or on a shift system this is a good opportunity to practise a craft, learn from others, and pass on your own knowledge in a casual and friendly atmosphere. **Quilters** meet on Wednesdays from 1 - 3 p.m.; **Spinners and Knitters** meet every Thursday morning from 10 a.m. Most Thursday afternoons from 1 – 4 p.m. **Fibrearts** workshops are given by and for MERA members. Here is this winter's line-up of topics (subject to change) Call Hilary at 278-0220 to be placed on the email list with detailed descriptions of these workshops and upcoming events.

NERA FIBRE ARTS PROGRAM, EARLY FALL 2009

Thursday, September 17 at 11.45 a.m. **Pot Luck Lunch and Planning**

We will be getting together for a potluck lunch at MERA and planning the new season. Bring a dish and some ideas for workshops during the coming months.

Thursday, September 24 1 - 4 p.m. **Introduction to Weaving**

To encourage new weavers, the weavers group is setting up three looms for MERA members:

- A large loom for rag rugs -- you will need to find your own rags
- A medium loom for tea towels (we have the materials)
- A small loom for making runners and other small items (we have materials)

This workshop will help you get started.

Did You Know...?

It costs approximately \$100 per day to keep MERA up and running. Although MERA receives an Operating Grant from the Ontario Arts Council to pay a part time administrator, we need to raise an additional \$10,000 each and every year to pay our heating, lighting and maintenance costs, and to continue to offer year-round programming. That is why we keep holding fundraisers. Support MERA!

BECOME A MERA MEMBER!

MERA is a community arts organization operating out of an 1850's Schoolhouse in McDonald's Corners. The price for memberships remains at **\$15/year for individuals** and **\$30/year for families**. (Membership fees will be increasing slightly starting January 2010). Membership entitles you to a vote at the AGM, a discount on all MERA workshops as well as regular email newsletters announcing MERA's upcoming events. Application forms are available on our Website at www.meraschoolhouse.org or call Hilary at 278-0388 or email MERASchoolhouse@bell.net. Cheques may be sent to 'MERA' at Box 76, McDonald's Corners, ON, K0G 1M0. Join us!

NEW ADMINISTRATOR! NEW E-MAIL ADDRESS!

Hilary Barrett has taken over from Marilyn Barnett as MERA Administrator with a new e-mail address: MERASchoolhouse@bell.net. Please update your address book. To contact Hilary by phone, please call the Schoolhouse at 613-278-0388 and leave a message. On Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays you can also call her at home between the hours of 8 a.m. and 4 p.m., and from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. on Mondays and Tuesdays. Her home phone number is 613-278-0220.

VANDALISM AT MERA

We have been saddened by several acts of vandalism taking place at MERA this year. Someone has been taking an exacto knife to our community painted Nordic mural in an attempt to ruin it. On Festival weekend, a hole was cut in a rented portable toilet at a cost of \$400 and some screens at MERA have been slashed that MERA has to pay for. The police have been notified about this ongoing vandalism and we are asking people who live in the area to keep their eyes open for the perpetrators of these mindless acts to call the Perth detachment of the OPP at 613-267-2626 and ask for Constable Wills.



Gloria Shoebridge stands behind an Exhibit of the 103 'postcards' we received in our *With Love From Lanark* project. The talent in the Highlands is amazing!





MERA CHRISTMAS SALE

December 12 - 13
10 AM – 4 PM

Always held the second weekend in December, this annual juried show is becoming well known for its variety and quality of art and fine crafts. Plan to shop for one of a kind Christmas gifts at the MERA Christmas sale this year. Items will be juried on Tuesday, October 6th at 7 p.m. Contact Marilyn for details at mvabarn@superaje.com