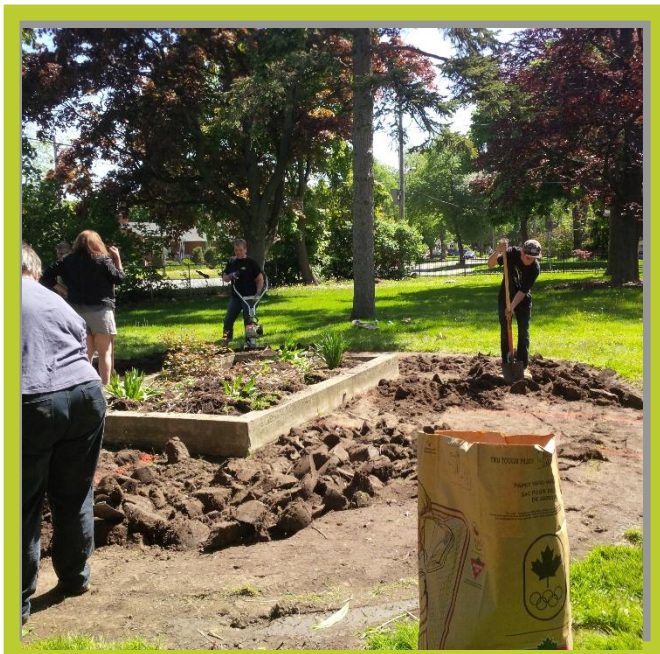




Roselawn Centre for the Living Arts



Members of the FoRC working hard at turning the Rose Garden bed in preparation for planting - May 2014
(photo by Michelle Grisbrook)

Chair Chat

Well, the summer weather is finally upon us! Sun, rain, humidity – just what the new gardens need to become established!

I want to thank the city of Port Colborne for issuing FoRC a Port Colborne Hydro Fund grant to assist in the garden restoration project. Thank you to the city Heritage Committee for their interest and approval of this project. The city has also contributed to the project in-kind by providing some work crews to help with the mulching, sod removal for the new bed, and all the mulch for the landscaping at Roselawn.

We are working on Phase 1 of the garden improvements and there will be more to come. Pat Bowman, Treasurer and a Niagara Master Gardener, has been the FoRC project manager, in conjunction with garden expert Karin Vermeer, and FoRC volunteers. Well done Pat!!! Garden committee: Lead - Pat Bowman, Nancy Misener, consultant Karin Vermeer, FoRC volunteers, and from the city – Harry Hakim, and the Parks crew. A special thanks to Jim Allen who has faithfully watered our new gardens!

Our Ontario Trillium Grant application will be submitted by the July 2nd deadline. This application is being made by FoRC in partnership with the Municipality. It is for financial support for the completion of the city art and cultural master plan, and the development of arts and culture in our community. We will report as news arrives! Grant committee: Lead - Kevin Rawlings, Pat Bowman, Nancy Misener, city rep. Harry Hakim.

New FoRC members' applications have been steadily coming in! We are pleased to see our member roster growing. We now have our membership cards printed and will be mailing them out, as promised. A huge thank you to the Port Colborne citizens who have also made donations to FoRC in support of our work.

Memberships: Lead - Kevin Rawlings, Judith Boroniec.

Please consider becoming a FoRC member! Your application can be dropped off at the box office. The form is provided at the end of this newsletter.

If you know of someone, perhaps friends and/or family who would be interested in hearing about our progress; maybe someone who grew up in Port who has moved away, a family member who doesn't receive our fan-out of the newsletter, etc., please feel free to forward it along! Newsletter: Lead - Carole Black-Brisley, Jeff Ballin, Michelle Grisbrook.

(Continued on page 2...)

Friends of Roselawn Centre
296 Fielden Avenue
Port Colborne, Ontario L3K 4T6
Website: www.friendsofroselawn.com
Facebook:
<https://www.facebook.com/Roselawnallofustotherescue?fref=ts>
E-mail: friendsofroselawn@gmail.com
Box Office: 905-834-7572

(...Chair Chat continued from page 1)

Keep November 1, 2014 open. There is a rumour afloat that our beloved thespian is coming to Roselawn! Yes, it's true, Rob Misener is bringing Henry VIII to Roselawn! More to come on that.

Keep November 14th open too! More to come! It's a surprise!

Event contacts: Arlene Lessard, Carole Black-Brisley.

Our historian, Carole Black-Brisley has been hard at work. Thanks Carole

Donna Abbott has come on board and agreed to head up our fund raising efforts. She is a dynamo! As a bonus – she loves gardening! Donna has all kinds of things in the planning stages, so we look forward to hearing from her!

Progress continues regarding the completion of a Port Colborne Art and Cultural master plan.

Master plan: Lead - Harry Hakim, Larry Rosnuk, Jeff Ballin, Sian Thomas.

Our plans to install a permanent ceramics/pottery studio at Roselawn are proceeding. We have been in consultation with world renowned potter Colleen O'Reilly. We will keep you posted! Start planning what you want to create! The sky is the limit!

Studio committee: Lead - Nancy Misener, Harry Hakim, Pat Bowman, consultant Colleen O'Reilly.

FoRC has invited several artists and NFP groups to form a community collaborative in order to begin developing Port Colborne's art and cultural offerings. This has been an exciting project to see come together, we are in our infancy stages of forming this collaborative and will certainly keep you up to date on its progress. Community Art and Culture Collaborative steering committee: Nancy Misener, Pat Bowman, Arlene Lessard, Doug Carter, Patti Sterling, Karen McCollum, Barb Butters, Harry Hakim, and Jennifer Bowman.

Your Board of Directors have developed a set of By-laws, which is required, and an electronic copy is available by contacting our hard working secretary, Arlene Lessard at: arlessard2225@gmail.com. Chair Chat will be a regular segment in our newsletter where you will be able to find updates from your Board Chair Nancy Misener.

As you can see we've had a busy first 6 months as FoRC and are excited as our projects are developing. Do you see a project which interests you? Please come along and join in the fun! We can always use more ideas, and help!

Cheers
Nancy Misener



The Fragrance Garden bed early planting - May 2014
(photo by Michelle Grisbrook)



The Woodland Garden bed early planting - May 2014
(photo by Pat Bowman)

Membership Drive

FoRC is starting a membership drive. Please join!! The annual fee (prices below) entitles members in good standing to:

- Receive minutes from any general members meetings
- Agendas in advance of meetings
- An invitation to and voting rights at the AGM
- The ability to put forth your name for election onto the board when vacancies arise
- A membership list
- Any other rights of general members as expressed in the by-laws

The membership funds will go toward the expenses incurred running the corporation. A membership form has been emailed to our existing data base, however if you know someone who would like to join, share your form!

The current Board of Directors includes: Nancy Misener (Chair); Arlene Lessard (Secretary, Events); Pat Bowman (Treasurer, Donations/Fund Raising, Garden Restorations); Siam Thomas (Research); Kevin Rawlings (Grants); Jeff Ballin (e-Communications); Carole Black-Brisley (Historian, Events); Pam Koudijs; Judith Boroniec; Harry Hakim (Municipal representative). If you want to assist in a specific area contact the board member who is heading up the committee, in parenthesis. These folks are a hard working Board. Thank you to all of them! Contact FoRC – friendsofroselawn@gmail.com

Membership fees are as follow:

Adults - \$15
Seniors over 65 - \$8
Youth under 19 - \$3

Membership form can be found on the last page of this newsletter. Please send/bring cash/cheques to:
Attn: Nancy Misener
The Roselawn Centre,
296 Fielden Avenue, Port Colborne
Cheques made payable to Friends of Roselawn, by April 30th please.
Membership cards will be mailed out to members.



Upcoming Events

• Rock Around The Clock! The Ultimate 1950's All Star Show! Bill Haley, Ritchie Valens, Connie Francis, Johnny Cash & Jerry Lee Lewis - Saturday July 26th at 8pm and Sunday July 27th at 2pm. Tickets \$28.00 Each. Call the Roselawn Box Office 905-834-7572

• Showboat Festival Theatre presents...

Test Drive - July 9th - 13th

Who's Under Where - August 6th -10th

Trying - August 27th - 31st

For more information about the plays see the website at www.showboattheatre.ca and for tickets call 905-834-0833

• As part of the Canal Days celebrations...

Roselawn Jazz on the Lawn Featuring Toronto All-star Big Band - Saturday, August 2nd, 2014 at 1pm on the lawn. The area will be fully licensed. Bring your lawn chairs. No pets please. There will also be an Open Mic Event on Sunday, August 3rd, 2014.

• As part of the Twilight Cafe Series, Saturday September 20, 2014 - Farewell Summer on Saturday September 20, 2014 at 7pm. Tickets \$28 Each (or for the full season \$100) Box office for this event 905-834-0833

Garden Glimpse

On a sunny Saturday morning in May, eleven eager members of FoRC arrived to begin the planting of the 6 new garden beds. Under the watchful guidance of horticulturalist Karin Vermeer the group prepared the beds and inserted the numerous plant materials. The fragrance and cutting gardens were completed along with the beginnings of the new rose garden. After almost a full day of "clod-hopping" (manually breaking apart the soil with spades and hoes) we were treated to coffee, soft drinks and pizza.

FoRC volunteers completed the woodland and children's corner gardens by first few weeks of June. The staff from the city's public works also pitched in by removing sod and providing protective dark mulch for the new beds.

The beds are a work in progress and with all the rain we've had they are off to a great start! If you would like to assist in the garden restoration please send your name and contact number to friendsofroselawn@gmail.com.

By Pat Bowman



Nancy Misener and Kevin Rawlings pruning back the heritage bush. - May 2014
(photo by Michelle Grisbrook)



Members of the FoRC working hard at turning the Fragrance Garden bed in preparation for planting - May 2014
(photo by Pat Bowman)

Our Roselawn

The First 10 Years

June 1, 1866 "Wild and Feverish Excitement"
In the first decade of Roselawn's existence, the residents of our mansion were witness to several monumental events, not the least of which were the American Civil War and Canadian Confederation. In 1866 however, our quiet little village of Port Colborne found itself in the centre of a frightening and dangerous military invasion. The Fenians were coming!

On May 31st, newspapers reported "wild and feverish excitement" in Toronto and other cities around the province. Crowds thronged the streets anxious to catch any news. Rumours of all kinds- some of the wildest and most improbable - were flying about. On June 1, some of the rumours proved to be true...a Fenian force under the command of one Col. O'Neill and estimated from 2,000-5,000 men crossed the Niagara River and took possession of Fort Erie meeting no opposition.

The Fenian Brotherhood had been formed in opposition to British rule in Ireland. Their mandate was to supply money and manpower for insurrection against the British and to demand republican rule for Ireland.

With the failure of the Irish potato crop and uprising of 1848, thousands had immigrated to the U.S. Many Irish fought in the American Civil War and were allowed to purchase their arms and equipment at the end of hostilities.

(continued on page 5...)

(...Our Roselawn continued from page 4)

Thus, many of the Fenians in 1866 were armed, trained and experienced soldiers.

With peculiarly Fenian logic, they thought that by capturing various positions in Canada, they could force the British government to release its hold on Ireland!!! On the very day of the raid, Thorold resident William Aikens was commanding a scow, which had just finished unloading wood on the American side. The boat was seized by the Fenians and used to ferry hundreds of their men across the river.

As events unfolded, Port Colborne became an important strategic position at the mouth of the Welland Canal, and also at the junction of the Welland Railroad and the Buffalo, Brantford and Lake Huron Railroad. The two railways crossed near the present Seaway Park.

Frightened citizens would have witnessed the arrival of troops such as the Queen's Own from Toronto, and the Welland Canal Field Battery. Also a division of Port Colborne residents had been formed. It is easy to imagine that a prominent citizen like our Mr. Carter would have been part of this group, possibly in a position of command. Other troops arrived continuously until there were about 1000 in total. No plans had been made to supply food, water, or lodging for the men thus causing great hardship for the citizens of the village.

A battle plan was formed. The troops from Welland boarded the tug W.T. Robb, which had arrived up the Feeder Canal from Dunnville. They were ordered to steam to the Niagara River to cut off a possible Fenian retreat. The remaining troops boarded a train and headed for Ridgeway.

Upon hearing train whistles and bugle calls, Col. O'Neill realized that the Canadian infantry had arrived. The intersection of Ridge and Bertie Roads was roughly at the centre of the defensive position he chose.

I will now turn my pen over to our secretary, Arlene Lessard, whose ancestors lived at that very intersection.....

by Carol Black Brisley

A Huffman Tale

As the troops were coming to Ridgeway from Port Colborne, the Huffman (Hoffmann) clan, (my Great, Great Grandfather and Uncles) were right in line with the Fenian raiders moving south on Ridge Road. George Huffman's home was located just north of Bertie Road and Fenian skirmishes took place on his property and then they marched right through.

At that time, his brother Michael owned and ran the tavern on the corner of Ridge and Garrison Roads and it was better known as "Smuggler's Home". There was a huge profit to be made in smuggling kerosene, tea, salt, whiskey and tobacco over the river. It was said George had the fastest horses and his barns and buildings had tunnels leading from the house and barn and out to the woodlot (the better for storing contraband, moving it or escaping!).

As the day of June 2, 1866 wore on, the tavern served as a field hospital, where the wounded soldiers were brought in for care. An unidentified journalist with the Toronto Leader caught up in the retreat of the Queen's Own Rifles was asked to assist with the wounded soldiers. Several Fenians burst in and demanded alcohol of which he obliged. A Fenian officer chased the soldiers out and then assigned someone to assist the journalist in giving aid! On a slight rise across the road from the tavern, a Fenian green flag was fluttering in the wind.

By Arlene Huffman Lessard

You Can Help.....

Roselawn has undoubtedly been an architectural landmark over the years, but more importantly, it was a family home, armoury, club and cultural centre. It is also associated with some prominent local families. I am hoping to collect your personal experiences and memories of Roselawn to share with the readers of our newsletter.

If you have special stories or pictures to help bring our mansion to life, please contact me.

Carole Black Brisley 905-834-4028 paul@brisley.ca

FRIENDS OF ROSELAWN CENTRE MEMBERSHIP FORM

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE _____

POSTAL CODE _____

E-MAIL _____

Please indicate the number of memberships desired:

\$15 adult _____ \$8 senior 65+ _____

\$3 Youth _____ (memberships will run Apr 1st to Mar 31st annually)

Would you like to volunteer? What area would you like to help? _____

SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____