

Happy 175th birthday, Sharon Temple

Illumination holds special significance in 175th year

BY SEAN PEARCE
Staff Writer

It's the Sharon Temple's 175th birthday this year and, with this fall's illumination coming up, there will be plenty of candles to help celebrate.

Director of organizational advancement with the Sharon Temple Historical Society, Donna McAlear, said the illumination at the temple is a special event done every year, but that this year's holds special significance because of the anniversary.

"At night it will be quite an amazing sight," she said. "It's something that the (Children of Peace) used to do."

The light will be provided by hundreds of brightly lit candles that will make the aged structure a sight to behold, but, as Ms McAlear points out, the Children of Peace began the illumination ceremony for more than just a little razzle dazzle.

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"Light had a special significance for the Quakers, because it recalled the inner light," Ms McAlear said.

"The light inside the temple became something of a metaphor for the light of God."

The illumination has been something of a mainstay at the Sharon Temple and, as always, will be held on the first Friday in September, which, this year is Sept. 7, Ms McAlear said.

Of course, what would a 175th birthday be without presents?

This year, the Sharon Temple has received lots of them.

Music at Sharon, programmed by Stephen Cera, brought life back to the Sharon Temple, once again, earlier this summer and a special gala was held June 3 to mark the anniversary.



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NEW BOOK

There is also a new book by Mark Fram, entitled *Rebuilding Hope: The Sharon Temple After 175 Years*. The book looks back at David Willson and the Children of the Peace and the history of the Sharon Temple.

In addition to the book, there will also be a new online exhibit produced by the Archives of Ontario, entitled *175 Years of Hope: A Celebration of the History of the Sharon Temple and The Children of Peace* that examines the role the temple and its founders played in the history of Ontario and Canada.

The project was sponsored by the Canadian Museums Association and written and curated by Dr. Albert Schrauwers, a professor of anthropology at York University.

Both the book and the archives will be launched with a celebration Aug. 18 complete with champagne and, of course, birthday cake.

Admission to this event is free.

WORDS ALIVE

Another event creating excite-

ment is the Words Alive writers festival Sept. 29 and 30.

The festival will feature York Region authors Marina Nemat, Roy McGregor, Barry Dempster and Eliza Clark, among others.

The Saturday festival is free for adults and will feature workshops, contests and prizes.

FAMILY DAY

Sunday is the Words Alive Family Day featuring children's authors, crafts, games and storytelling sessions for children of all ages. Admission to the Words Alive Family Day is \$10 per family.

FEAST CAKE

Tickets for the illumination are \$25 and will also include light refreshments and a piece of traditional feast cake from an original Children of Peace recipe. Music and melody will be provided by the acclaimed Marion Singers.

Tickets are on sale now and can be purchased by calling 905-478-2389.

For more information visit www.sharon temple.ca.

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