



22nd Anniversary Celebration

Join us at the Rockingham Church

Sunday, August 11, 2024

2:00 p.m.

The Friends of the Rockingham Church welcome you to our 22nd Anniversary Celebration at the Rockingham Church, 513 Rockingham Road. Mark your calendar for Sunday, August 11. We have a great program lined up and we hope you'll come and enjoy the afternoon with us!

Our guest speaker, Johanna Zomers, is a poet and playwright, well known in the Valley for her weekly column in the Eganville Leader, in which she thoughtfully – and often humourously – treats topical matters large and small. Johanna finds literary inspiration in her memories of growing up on the Opeongo Line. Those days were also her inspiration for writing the Stone Fence Theatre's 2024 production, *Miss Pringle's Mini-Skirt*, a light-hearted look at rapidly changing life in the 1960s, as seen from a one-room schoolhouse.

Johanna will talk about how her own one-room school education introduced her to the great world of books and learning – as well as the joy of writing – and how growing up on an isolated pioneer farm along the Opeongo has always shaped her writing and her life.

On the musical side, we welcome the Lyra Ensemble, a chamber choir project directed by Emily Adam. Amidst gardens, animals, homesteading, work and general Valley life, members of the ensemble gather to put together rich harmonies and sing in the company of many voices, and to prepare a project-specific repertoire.

On August 11, the current Lyra Ensemble will present works from and inspired by the Sacred Harp Tradition. Using clear-voice and open harmonies, this tradition aspires foremost to present the beauty of the "sacred harp" – the human voice.

Emily Adam has been singing polyphonic music since age 16, when she was swept off her feet at a concert. Inspired to join her voice with others in a big, full sound, Emily travelled to Georgia in 2003 and 2004 to study Georgian folk singing. She pursued this love in Toronto, singing with the ensemble Darbazi. Through her studies with American ensembles Village

Harmony and Northern Harmony, she has honed her love of polyphonic harmonies from across the globe. Emily has led choirs in the Ottawa Valley for the past 10 years.

After this inspiring program, we invite you, as always, to join us outside to meet our speaker and musicians and visit over refreshments.

In a more serious vein, we are now looking at the need for work on the church roof. At our outdoor clean-up day in early May, we found the bell didn't ring! A member brought ladders and climbed up to the bell tower, where he replaced the broken cable – and also had a good look at the roof and belfry from close up. The belfry (all original) definitely needs some reinforcement where it attaches to the roof and the shingles on the back side are starting to get spongy. The roof itself has a little sway in it. So, there is a lot to consider, including possibly a roofing material longer-lasting than cedar.

Finally, we remind history fans to visit the virtual Mission House Museum at www.combermereheritage.ca for a virtual tour of the museum displays as they were, and for many other pictures and stories about Combermere's past. New additions to the site are the historical pictures from the fundraising calendars created by the Combermere Heritage Society from 2005 through 2017. Look under Photos for the tab Calendars.

Dave Kelley also reports that he is working on three additional historical plaques for the area: one at Pastway Lumber, one at Halfway on the Old Barry's Bay Road, and a revised plaque at the boat ramp in Combermere featuring the *Ruby*, the boat that saved survivors of the *Mayflower's* sinking.

We hope to see you all on a sunny August 11th.

The Friends of the Rockingham Church Committee

Glenn Allen, President; Gordon Benner, Vice-President; Joyce Chyrski, Secretary; Peggy Bridgland, Treasurer; Members: Ann Hamilton, Dale Hamilton, David Kelley, Beth Kennedy, Paul Jorgensen, David Trafford, Ed Battiston, Emily Adam

***Friends of the Rockingham Church Inc., Box 271, Combermere, Ontario, K0J 1L0
www.rockinghamchurch.org***

P.S. Should you be kind enough to make a donation to the church, we remind you to include your street address and full name **with middle initial** for the charitable tax receipt. The Canada Revenue Agency requires these for valid receipts.