



Doors Open Peterborough 2009
Event Report and Evaluation



Sheryl Smith, Doors Open Consultant
October 13, 2009

Doors Open Peterborough 2009 Report to PACAC, Oct. 15, 2009

- **Very successful** Doors Open event held Oct. 3/09 - our 8th consecutive year!
- **Reported attendance 3113, 14 sites** (chart attached) - surely higher than that.
- Cool, cloudy weather, threat of rain probably affected numbers somewhat.
- **Clusters of sites very popular**, north of City Hall (4) and around East City (9) plus Canoe Museum as usual
- **Canoe Museum very happy** with their participation and attendance, they had an art exhibit and other events and have sent specific comments to us, suggesting we buy larger signage for certain sites like theirs.
- **All site participants very happy** with turnout and some have sent email replies thanking us for being on the tours. Some sites had outstanding displays and other information available to visitors. At least 2 city councillors toured with their families, which we appreciate very much.
- **Doors Open 2009 Committee** has worked tirelessly for the last 12 months to support the event and deserves special thanks from PACAC. **Fleming College student support** was outstanding this year and we will be thanking them all at a special event after Christmas. We also had some returning volunteers from other years. Jennifer Patterson and Andrew Nichols did a great job as volunteer coordinators, with help from Ben Dick.
- **2009 brochures were designed by Louis Taylor of George North Studio at no charge**, and 2500 were printed inexpensively in Toronto. Distribution was all over Peterborough.
- Signage was given free of charge by the PUC at the Zoo in the week ahead.
- Approx 120 surveys were returned. Trends noted:
 - **80 of 120 or 67% are from Peterborough City, 22 of 120 or 18% from area, rest from farther away e.g. Cornwall, London, Toronto, Whitby, Brantford, New York State (1)**
 - **Most planned to visit at least 4 or as many as 6 sites (a few said '10' or 'all')**
 - **58% heard about the event in Peterborough This Week exclusively, about 28% read it in the Ontario-wide guide or the Ontario website, 16% saw our brochure or website, 3% heard about it on the radio, 8% saw it featured on TV, and about 20% heard about the event by word of mouth or "other" (e.g. walking by, saw the zoo sign, etc.)**
 - **54 people or 45% were first time visitors! About half of respondents had visited in other years, and of those, most had been visitors between 3 and 5 previous years. About 25% had only visited one or two previous years. A few stalwarts said they visit every year.**
 - **74% had never attended other Doors Open events elsewhere either. Of the remaining 26%, events were attended in Toronto, City Of Kawartha Lakes, London, Whitby, Ottawa, Cornwall, Orillia, Brantford, Port Dover, Bobcaygeon, Barrie, Mississauga, Picton and Perth; a few said "many!"**
 - **55% were in small groups of 1 or 2, sometimes 3 or 4 people; only 3 survey respondents had children along [Note - the Police Station tour**

I took had 30 people including at least 12 children, which was not counted in the surveys]

- Comments were very encouraging and supportive BUT we had a lot of comments about lack of advertising (we knew this was an area not well met this year).
- Shuttle Bus was popular again, but we continue to have issues with when people can expect to be picked up to go to the next stop. Used two parking lots this year, one in TSW Headquarters and one at Canoe Museum. Transit staff have noted that it is hard to schedule this event on the same weekend as Head of Trent but my observation is that we serve two very different audiences.
- City-produced map of sites and route was complimented - GIS service is very good.
- Special events, handouts, hospitality at certain sites was appreciated e.g. Mark Street United, Harstone House, Harvey Cottage, George St. United, St. Luke's, Immaculate Conception
- Media-Kick-Off was 2 weeks ahead, and was well attended by sites and dignitaries (Ontario Heritage Trust, etc), also by PTW, our sponsor, CHEX TV, Snap Ptbo, and 2 radio stations.
- Budget breakdown from 2007, 2008, 2009 is attached.
- I have not calculated any of my hours yet as the DOP consultant.

Comments offered, including suggestions for next year:

- Advertise in "Quid Novis" and mention the website
- Great guide! Thanks!
- Very interesting!
- House at 155 Hunter St. doors leading places unknown
- Well done
- Great event, thanks!
- Very beautiful and good idea X 3
- Very well organized and warmly greeted
- Marvellous photo displays, great guides, thanks
- Excellent host / hostesses at George St. United
- TSW Archives - have opportunities for classroom tours, we enjoyed meeting and learning about a deep-sea diver. Love it! Pretty amazing info about Lift Lock
- Love the bus - great idea
- Terrific open doors. Loved the TSW Archives and Peterborough Museum!
- More! Make it two days!
- Didn't like the bus service, inefficient!
- Impressed with degree of knowledge at each location. Good organization.
- Harstone House - "beautiful". "it feels like a privilege to visit". Nice to have tour and background info. Great that office can operate in here and still retain style and original aspects. Missing suit of armour from Red Cross building - was here last time but not anymore. Very neat, it works. Great tour. "The best one on the tour". Love the Red Cross building; people are great! Very interesting tour, in-depth. Excellent cookies.
- Keep up the good work.
- More historically significant places - courthouse, Masonic temple, repeat popular places every year.

- Always enjoy - recommend to other people
- Need better advertising, Would never have known if hadn't stopped in to Parks Canada office
- More old houses!
- Had trouble getting in to the lift lock - wasn't open at 10:00. Needed more info earlier.
- This is wonderful to see antique family homes.
- The Armoury would have been nice to see.
- Like to see Comstock Funeral Home.
- Great idea, appreciation of history in our community. X 3
- Love this community event to see buildings that are a part of our heritage!
- We enjoy having these.
- For a 'local', a wonderful way to share our history with visitors and learn for myself the history of Peterborough.
- I really like the clustering of locations so I can walk between them.
- Advertising?! Usually I see this in the local papers ... did I miss it?
- Fabulous opportunity to learn.
- Longer hours.
- Theatre Guild was fascinating. Helix had nothing of interest but other sites in the area were interesting.
- A great chance to see what is in our city.
- Wonderful organ at Immaculate Conception.
- Great Canoe Museum!
- Thank you for offering this annual event. More PR this year - only saw this advertised in the paper.
- Not very visible, more advertising, put on notice boards.
- Mark St. is very welcoming, liked the events going on.
- Better advertising, especially for the shuttle bus. Put ads in the Examiner. Ads on classical FM radio (same demographic) would work, put it on local cable.
- Advertise more. Contact venues individually to see if there's anything else going that that they'd like to advertise.
- Going well so far, Bus schedule needs to be clear.
- Send info home with school children so parents will hear about it all. Teachers should design projects and assignments in conjunction with Doors Open.

Planning has begun for the 2010 event, which will be Saturday Oct. 2, 2010. We are looking for ideas for commercial and non-residential buildings west of downtown because the Hunter St. Bridge will be under repair.

Ontario makes special funding available for Festivals and Special Events but they must be at least 2 days duration. The DOP Committee has reviewed the information and would like to approach several townships to do a two-day event next year if funding can be obtained. The approach would be to do Peterborough City on Saturday, then towns or villages on Sunday. **Clearly, a full-time coordinator would be required** to run such an event.

I continue to have requests from City of Burlington and elsewhere to provide information on how our event is organized; also I will be submitting the participation survey to Ontario Heritage Trust.

Respectfully submitted,

Sheryl Smith,
Doors Open Consultant

Attach.

Budget breakdown by year, 2007 - 2010
Site attendance figures, 2009



Even the Trent Valley Archives' zombies enjoyed their tour!