

Peel Bldg
MADILL, Ben

Friend of schoolhouse recognized

By JOHN STEWART

Staff
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Ben Madill, who helped save the one-room Britannia schoolhouse that he attended classes in as a child, will receive a lifetime achievement award today from Ontario's Lieutenant-Governor.

Jayne Gaspar, executive director of Heritage Mississauga, which assisted in the preparation of the nomination for Madill, 94, says nobody is more deserving of the award.

"When it comes to heritage, Ben Madill has been phenomenal all of his life," Gaspar told *The News* after the award winner was announced today.

Madill attended the historic Britannia schoolhouse, located beside the Peel

District School Board at Hurontario St. and Matheson Blvd., on his first day of school in September 1921.

Later, when the school fell into disrepair in the 1960s and vandals tried to burn it down, Madill and another former student rescued the old school registers filled with the names of students.

They kept the registers for safekeeping and later returned them to the building after it was restored. Madill became a moving force in The Friends of the Britannia Schoolhouse, which supports the schoolhouse and the pioneer teaching program that still goes on there.

He and his wife, Marjorie, have volunteered at numerous Britannia schoolhouse events, showing off such skills as

rope-making.

He has also authored two heritage books on Britannia village and the schoolhouse.

Madill lived almost all of his life on the farm at the northwest corner of Hurontario St. and Hwy. 401. He and Marjorie moved following a devastating fire that destroyed their barn in July 2008.

Madill had rebuilt the barn himself, originally constructed in 1903, after an earlier fire in 1951.

The Madills now live in Stirling, Ontario, closer to their two daughters.



Ben Madill