

TEA BUDS; SEPTEMBER 

ONE-ROOM COUNTRY SCHOOL

A number of nursing home residents, sixty-five years of age and older, have attended one-room country school houses. Also, there may be individuals in their eighties who have taught in one-room schools. Sharing items and memories from this earlier era provides for a wonderful afternoon tea.

Set the table with a colorful cloth table cover and set out the china cups and saucers, sugar bowl with tongs, plates, and napkins.

MENU;

Madagascar Vanilla Red tea is a great choice. It is a Rooibos tea by Celestial Seasons.

Sandwiches popular in the school lunch pail included cheese, cold meat, and peanut butter and jelly. You can make up a variety of these and cut them into tea sandwiches (removing the crusts and cutting them into small squares or triangles).

The most common desserts packed in the pail included a homemade sugar cookie, lefse rolled with sugar, or a piece of kuchen, also called coffee cake.

ITEMS TO SHARE;

An old school hand bell is a wonderful item to have on the table as well as an old lunch pail or syrup pail. Old text books and readers can often be purchased at used book stores for very little and participants truly enjoy looking through the books and sharing the memories that they evoke. If you attended or, if you know someone who attended, a one room school, perhaps you can access some old report cards. These are the most fun for they include grades for such things as "deportment" and handwriting. There are a number of figurine series that include one "teacher" piece and finding some of these pieces at the second hand store is always fun. Using the books, the report cards, the bell, and the figurines, you can easily elicit stories from the schoolhouse.

If you have a limited variety of items to share, you can find some wonderful pictures and stories in the Reminisce magazine or the Good Old Days magazine. Three or four pictures, removed from the magazine and framed, make a good table decoration.

Since the month is September, there are still many flowering plants available in the garden. You may decide to pick a bouquet of late bloomers and use this as the "bud" portion of the tea party. Phlox are very pretty and would make a pretty bouquet as well as providing memories of participant's own

flower gardens. Phlox have been a staple of flower gardens for a hundred years. Annual Sunflowers bloom until it snows, Delphinium may still have some nice blossoms, and hostas might be ready to provide a pretty addition to another flower in a bouquet. Use whatever is in bloom or, use a potted plant. In the photo, the centerpiece is a bonsai tree.

Provide a little information on the plant or a lot. The tea party is meant to provide a comfortable, welcoming, warm experience for all who attend; informal, sometimes informative, always a good time.