

SUMMER 2017 Newsletter Edition Canada 150

Celebrating Canada 150 British Home Children Advocacy & Research Association

Making the Canadian Flag Ken Donovan



Feb. 15, the day in 1965, is the day when the modern George Stanley designed Canadian flag, bearing its familiar hallmark symbol, the Maple Leaf, was first raised on Parliament Hill. But that flag was a long time coming.

For much of its post Confederation history, Canada used both the Royal Union Flag (Union Jack) as its national flag and the Canadian Red Ensign, a popularly recognized and distinctive Canadian flag. In 1958, an extensive poll was taken in Canada which showed over 80% of Canadians wanted a national flag entirely different from that of any other nation, and 60% wanted their flag to bear the maple leaf.

In 1963, Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson, 96 years without Canada's own official flag said "I believe that today a flag

designed around the Maple Leaf, will symbolize and be a true reflection of the new Canada." Heated debates about a new Canadian flag had began. Dubbed "The Great Canadian Flag Debate" Pearson's office was flooded with support, laments and threats as the country debated the new flag.

After much debating in the House of Commons over the new flag, the debates spilled over into the House of Commons and finally Canadians were invited to submit their ideas for a flag. Over 5,000 design ideas were sent to Ottawa. A fifteen member, all-party committee was formed to review the suggestions and make a recommendation. The committee's deliberations were heated, lengthy and ugly, consuming thirty-seven sitting days. But by November of 1964, the selections were whittled down to just three designs. In the afternoon of 6 Nov 1964 Prime Minister Pearson, anxious to see what the designs looked like while flying, asked to be provided with flags for each of the three designs. He was to be at the Harrington Lake retreat the next day and wanted the flags deliver to 24 Sussex Drive that night.

That request landed on the desk of Ken Donovan, then an assistant purchasing director with the Canadian Government Exhibition Commission. Ken Donovan, was a British Home Child



In celebration of Canada 150 and the BHC's contributions to this great country, the BHCARA have produced a printed commemorative edition of our BHC Newsletter! Included are great articles written by Marjorie Kohli, Pat Skidmore, Beryl Young, Sarah Wise, Andrew Simpson and many more! Details on how to order your copy on page 6 who had come to Canada in 1929 through the Catholic Emigration Association. Ken was taken to their Ottawa receiving home, St. Georges, before being placed out. He had made a successful life for himself in Ottawa.

Despite the lateness of the day, that snowy November afternoon when the Prime Minister's request came in, Ken was able to secure the materials needed to make the prototypes. While the crew silk screened the material, Ken, at about 9 pm, not able to find a seamstress, contacted his young daughter, Joan, to enlist her help in sewing the material into flyable flags. Joan recounted her story during a ceremony celebrating the 30th anniversary of the flag:

"I really didn't realize what I was getting into when I got that phone call from my father in 1964. I was just doing my father a favour; not participating in history. Let me tell you, I don't think of myself as the Betsy Ross type. And sewing the flag was not easy. I was no professional - I had just sewn some of my own clothes before this. My sewing machine wasn't made for such heavy material. But eventually, the flag came together. At the time, it wasn't the best way I could think of, to spend a Friday night. In fact, my father was more excited than I was about the whole thing - he was the one who got to



Joan's sewing machine in the newly refurbished Canadian History Hall - Canadian Museum of History Photo credit: Judy Neville

deliver the prototypes to Mr. Pearson's house. Even though I may not have realized the importance of what I had been asked to do then, I felt good about sewing the prototypes for the flag. It was certainly not a request people got every day."

The flags were completed at about midnight, following which Ken personally delivered them to the Prime Minister. The red maple leaf fag, designed by George Stanley, was unanimously voted as the new flag of Canada by the House of Commons on 15 December 1964 and by the Senate on 17 December 1964, and proclaimed by H.M. Queen

Elizabeth II. It took effect on 15 February 1965, and was flown.

Sources

CBC - <u>The Great Flag Debate</u> <u>The Ireland Canadian Monument</u> <u>http://canadaflagdebate.weebly.com/how-it-all-started.html</u> <u>Awesome Canadian Flag Designs That Got Cut</u> <u>A Flag for Canada</u> Right Photo Credit: THE CANADIAN PRESS/ Patrick Doyle





BHCARA Canada 150 BHC Poster

To commemorate Canada 150 and our BHC as Nation Builders of Canada, we have created this beautiful mosaic of the 1908 flag, using hundreds of BHC photos collected over the past few years. You care invited to add your BHC's photo. Two ways, you can log onto the <u>mosaic's web site</u> with your Facebook account and enter the photo yourself or email us your photo at:

info@britishhomechildren.com.

Full instructions are on the site. This poster will be shown at our Canada 150 event in Kitchener, Ontario on July 23rd and will be used for our BHC Canada 150 cake for the event.

https://mosaically.com/photomosaic/df13baa2-aabe-4a27-8e1a-752b24e825bb

Histories of the Receiving Homes Guthrie House, London, Ontario: Middlemore



Bartholomew Swartz, a soldier of fortune, fought as a mercenary in the Polish Legion and then later as a soldier for Napoleon Bonaparte. He was recruited into Napoleon's army, as Napoleon disastrously attempted to crush the Russians to expand his empire. He survived, and following this, Swartz immigrated to Canada and served in the War of 1812. When this war ended, the Honorable Colonel Thomas Talbot, a prominent Irish-born Canadian soldier and politician from the London area, rewarded Swarts with land; Lot 22, Concession 1 of Westminster Township.



Colonel the Honourable Thomas Talbot

In 1822 Swartz built an inn and tavern on this **Parton** property, on one of the oldest roads running between Burlington and

Sandwich (Windsor). The road was eventually named Commissioners Road. The Mount Moriah Lodge used the building in 1830 as a meeting place. An 1840 document shows two Swartz families living there and the property no longer being used as a tavern. By the 1850's , it had been subdivided further and was occupied by three families.

On 9 June 1873, John Middlemore met with London, Ontario city councillors, to discuss establishing a receiving home in the area. In an overwhelming

show of support, London councillors donated rent free, the property in Westminster, now occupied by the Ross family. Included in this agreement was the homestead - the two story wooden home, farm building and 20 of its 63 acres. The Advisor newspaper in May of 1874 reported that supporters of John T. Middlemore visited Mr. Ross and ordered him out, stating the home was required for a group of children being brought from England to this area and arriving any day. The City Council supported this and Mr. Ross removed himself from the home. When Middlemore arrived in Canada with the home children, he was informed that the property was not ready and plans for the property were still not settled. He arranged alternate accommodations for the children and then proceeded to London to inspect the homestead. Middlemore requested repairs and renovations to the property, estimated to take six weeks to complete.

He opened his new receiving home in the beginning of 1875, naming it "Guthrie Home" after Reverend Thomas Guthrie, who had established the first boys Ragged School in Edinburgh, Scotland. In charge of the Guthrie home were a Birmingham couple, Henry and Ann Gibbons, brought over from Edinburgh by Middlemore. In about 1879, after some discord with the agreement with the London council, Middlemore purchased the Guthrie Home outright; including the full 63 acres. Guthrie Home operated until 1885, when it was deemed unsuitable for the current needs of the children, requiring extensive expansion and renovations. After attempts at fundraising failed, the renovations to the home were not possible and in early 1890, Guthrie Home closed. Middlemore children were received through the Annie Macpherson Homes until 1892 and Middlemore began bringing his children to Nova Scotia instead of Ontario. The property in London was rented out until Middlemore sold it in 1902.

Finally Frank Spettigue bought the house and property and it remained part of his family estate until the 1970's. Unfortunately, this rare example of a frame tavern with its wide, white front and double row of large windows, the oldest home in London at the time; was burned down by the city on 29 October 1975 as a training exercise for local firemen.

Sources: The Golden Bridge - Marjorie Kohli, Great Canadian Expectations- The Middlemore Experience -By Patricia Roberts-Pichette, <u>London and Port Stanley</u> <u>Railway, Vintage London, Ontario Facebook,</u>



The London And Port Stanley Railway line passed at the base of the hill Guthrie Home on Commissioners Road This was the Commissioners Road train stop. Top photo, view from the tracks of the Guthrie Home. Photo credits: http://lnps.msts.steam4me.net/m2_6.html



Park Lawn Monument Update

With many thanks to RJ Huggins for picking up our steel for the Park Lawn Cemetery in Toronto and huge thanks to Port Colborne's Marine Recycling's President Jordan Elliot and crew 'Richie" & "Walt" for their efforts in donating this treasure for the monument! Exciting progress, and we catch our first glimpse of the monument to come! We are hopeful the monument will be up in time for British Home Child Day in Ontario, September 28th.



Upcoming Documentary: www.orphanboyfilms.com





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July 2017, the newly renovated Canadian History Hall in the Canadian Museum of History opened to the public. The museum is located in Gatineau, Quebec, directly across the Ottawa River from Parliament Hill and attracts over 1.300.000 visitors a year! On this day, Canada's 150th birthday, our British Home Children officially took took their place in our national

museum of human history. There can not be a more fitting celebration of Canada's 150th for our BHC. Prince Charles and his wife, Camilla, Duchess of Cornwall, cut the ribbon, officially opening the new hall to the public. Line ups to view the new hall were so long, people waited two to three hours to get in!

About 4 years ago, Judy Neville, a long term and strong activist for the BHC, when thinking about what she could do to create a BHC museum in eastern Ontario, checked to see what our national museum was doing regarding this important part of Canadian history. Finding no mention of the over 100,000 children sent or brought to Canada, Judy contacted the museum and opened discussions on this. She referred the museum to the opening of the Canadian History Hall BHCARA for artifacts and more information.

In August of 2014, CEO Lori Oschefski and her Grandson Logan made the six hour trip to the Quebec museum to drop off artifacts pertaining to British Home Children Cecil Bennett and Winifred Paye. These two collections of information had just recently been acquired by the BHCARA, Winifred's found on e-Bay and Cecil's donated by Wilda Hay of Peterborough.

> Judy Neville and Lori Oschefski were honoured to attend the private official opening of the museum, a special reception

for partners and lenders of the Hall, held on 30 June 2017. They were proud to be among the first persons to view the new

Canadian History Hall and, of course, the first to see our new British Home Child exhibit! For those visiting the museum, the exhibit is located in the second section to the direct left of the Ukrainian Church. We are thrilled to finally have the BHC take their official place in our national human history museum! Our organization's name is proudly and prominently displayed so interested visitors will be able to contact us for more information. Also on display in the new Hall is the sewing machine used by a BHC descendant to sew the first Canadian flag - this months feature story.

Award Winning Exhibit opened again at Black Creek Pioneer Village, Toronto, Ontario

Awarded the Ontario Museum Association's Award of Excellence in exhibitions in November of 2016, our exhibit, created in partnership with Black Creek, opened for our fourth season in May. This one of a kind, comprehensive 450 sq foot exhibit, has received raving reviews and is worth the trip to the Village to view it! While their you will want to take in the outstanding period village.

Address: 1000 Murray Ross Pkwy, North York, ON M3J 2P3/Phone: (416) 736-1733 web site: www.blackcreek.ca



Seven year old Logan Oschefski brings

Cecil Bennett's trunk into the Museum. Cecil was 10 when he came to Canada.







HRH Prince Charles, and Camilla, Duchess of

Cornwall open the Canadian History Hall -

photo credit: The Milton Reporter





Our new Commemorative Canada 150 magazine!

SPECIAL FOR CANADA 150 - a printed commemorative edition of the BHCARA BHC Newsletter!

Featuring articles by Author Marjorie Kolhi, Sarah Wise, Lori Oschefski, Andrew Simpson and many more! This magazine was written to reflect on the contributions of our BHC over the last 148 years, beginning with Maria Rye. Read about her history and how the Orphan Trains of the United States influenced child migration into Canada! This edition is jammed packed full of informative and interesting articles. It is available in PRINTED COPY ONLY and is scheduled to be released on 23 July 2017 at our Canada 150 event in Kitchener, Ontario.

Pre-orders can be purchased for \$10 each plus shipping at:

BHCARA Canada 150 Commemorative Magazine

Or at our Canada 150 event on July 23 & upcoming scheduled events.

Join us on July 23rd to celebrate our British Home Children Canada 150 Family Reunion!

The Waterloo Region Museum/Doon Heritage Village

10 Huron Road, Kitchener, Ontario N2P 2R7

10 am to 5 pm

Co-hosts:

Lori Oschefski &

Donna Diebel

Sponsored by Libro Credit Union &

Kuntz Electroplating Inc (KEI)



Waterloo Region Museum and Doon Heritage Village 10 Huron Road, Kitchener, Ontario N2P 2R7 10 am to 5 pm

Sunday July 23 2017 Co-hosted by Lori Oschefski & Donna Diebel Info@BritishHomeChildren.com

British Home Children Advocacy & Research Association

Invite you to attend our British Home Children Family Reunion Celebrating Canada's 150th Anniversary & BHC 148th With

Special guest speakers British Author Sarah Wise, Waterloo's Author Marjorie Kohli Etobicoke's Author John Jefkins Special musical performance by Renfrew's Andrew Angus

Featuring a special performance of Quebec's Laura Teasdale's play "Home Child"

The British Home Child SIG Ontario Genealogical Society and the BHCARA exhibits will be in the foyer

Join us for a fun day celebrating Canada 150 and the contributions British Home Children made to Canada!

Admission: Adult - \$10 Children - \$5 Lunch will be available for purchase on site. www.BritishHomeChildren.com



SARAH WISE

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STREETS



recognized the BHC as an individual group of Canadians who served in the Wars. The enormous contribution of our BHC in the Wars continues to go unrecognized officially by our Government. Mr. Brassard, on June 2nd rose in the House of Commons and made a statement in support of the service of the BHC.

After attending the services for the Vimy Ridge's 100th anniversary in April, the Nantyr Shores, Alcona Beach Ontario students honoured our BHC with a special wreath laid at the Menin Gate Memorial in Ypres, Belgium. The Innisfil students, discovered, while researching the War dead from their locality, that several were British Home Children.





A Claude Nunney VC & Home Child Blue Plaque will be unveiled on 19.07.2017 @ 1.00 pm at 447 Bexhill Road, St Leonards on Sea, Hastings TN38 8AR Sussex, England.

Claude Nunney was a BHC who came to Canada with the Catholic Emigration Association. He was born in Hastings in 1892, the plaque is to be dedicated on the 125th Anniversary of his death outside his actual birth home. If your in the UK and can attend this event, please contact Peter Silk on <u>Facebook</u>.

You can read Claude's amazing story at: www.claudenunney.co.uk



BRITISH HOME CHILDREN TRYING TO MAKE SENSE OF IT ALL

By Author, Historian and Researcher Andrew Simpson

www.chorltonhistory.blogspot.ca

Now when you spend your professional time around the past, searching for answers to events, and digging deep into the lives of people long dead there is that abiding demand to stay objective, and judge the events, along with the causes and outcomes with a degree of detachment.

Of course there are some moments in history where suspending emotion and remaining impartial is impossible.

For me the Holocaust is one of those events and even as we march each year ever further away from that genocide I cannot forget the crime that was committed on my continent or the causes which led to it.

But the passage of time does make for some detachment, so while I may still be appalled at the institution of slavery and the slave trade practised by Europeans, Africans and Americans in the 19th century, the destruction of Carthage by the Romans, the Highland Clearances or the Irish Famine are just accounts on a page of a history book however harrowing they were.

And that of course brings me to how I approach the study of British Home Children which like all of us will be personal because it is about someone in our family and for some descendants will actually be about someone they knew, and held in great affection.

I won't be alone in being surprised at finding a relative who was migrated, and then beginning the search for why they were sent, tripping over all sorts of obstacles making it difficult to get to the truth of why they left Britain and what happened to them on arrival in Canada and their subsequent life.

All of us are on a journey and at times the absence of historical records can be cruel especially when compounded by the seemingly deliberate attempt by some agencies to obscure parts of the story.

Added to this is that over abiding anger at how some of those who were migrated suffered at the hands of employers who were at best unsympathetic and at worse cruel, neglectful and abusive.

Nor I suspect can most of us forget that these young people were from one of the richest countries on the planet which prided itself on being at the centre of an Empire upon which the sun never set, or that the policy of migration was regarded by some authorities as cheaper than maintaining those young people in British institutions.

If all that were not damming enough there is that sense that while Britain was seeking to export what it regarded as a problem, there were those in Canada who argued that there was a problem in accepting them

And all the while these "problems" were our grandparents and great grandparents, many of whom had had a pretty rubbish childhood even before they boarded a ship for the New World.

But as I often say, history is messy and there were those who genuinely believed that migration would offer a better life for young people trapped in a cycle of poverty and abuse. These ranged from the charities themselves to the parents who offered up their children for migration.

And the deeper I research into the history of the Manchester Children's charity the more I move away from the story of my own great uncle who was migrated by Middlemore on behalf of the Derby Union and into a world where there are no absolutes only lots of grey areas, where society was imperfectly grappling with and extending the role of state intervention by punching through the prevailing ideology of the "night watchman's state, where Government's restricted their actions to national defence and wiping away restricted practices which hampered the full flow of capitalistic enterprise.

Now I know that it was the system to blame but given that was the case there is still the difficult question of how we would cope and what would we have done.



18 Union St Boroughs Walk looking towards Castle St

And before anyone argues that this was a different time where they did things differently that is not actually the case. There were plenty of people from socialist members of the Chorlton Poor Law Union to social observers and the clergy who argued that there were alternatives to the migration of children and more fundamentally to the issues of poverty and inequality.

But while those campaigns were being fought ordinary decent people were faced with the choice of either keeping a child who they could not support or hand over to a children's charity in the expectation that things would be better.

I cannot even begin to know how I would have acted and while I am aware some charities played loose with the truth and allowed their own beliefs to cloud judgements I know that for some parents there seemed no alternative.

It is easy of course to fall back on hindsight but not so easy when the horizon was a back to back cottage in a closed court living as a single parent on a pittance and trying to bring up three children all under the age of seven.

Years ago I gave my students a simple question, if they were Jewish in Germany in 1936 would they have opted to stay or leave Nazi Germany? Hindsight is no help. During the Olympic Games the Nazis had appeared albeit briefly to relax their anti-semitic drive and so my students might reasonably have gambled that things might get better and so chanced staying. A choice made more certain for those with children, and little money, who were also well aware, that that most of the world wouldn't accept them even if they could escape. Likewise that single parent might also reason that the children's charity was a better bet.

I don't know.

I do know that our own BHC was no angel, along with his siblings he had spent almost all of his childhood in care and the alternatives offered to him in 1913 were a naval boot camp or migration which it was hoped would win him back from "being out of control.".

I suspect that the damage had been done long before he crossed the Atlantic, so that he found it difficult to settle on any of the three farms and equally difficult to conform to army life which was a pattern also evidenced from his behaviour in the schools he attended and the care homes he lived in.

All of which brings me back to the beginning and the mismatch between objectivity and personal history.

I do feel upset when I think of his early life, but I am also aware that both his parents were "damaged goods," and that just possibly had he stayed his life would have got no better.

So there is a balance to strike here between the two sides of my great uncle and that is also true for BHC studies because as it becomes a serious academic study, the debates based on the growing wealth of evidence and the conclusions reached will rumble on presenting a myriad of interpretations.

But we should never forget that this can still be personal.

*The Manchester and Salford Boys' and Girls ' Refuges, now the Together Trust

THE MIDDLEMORE HC ME
FAIRVIEW STATION, HALIFAX, N. S.
IN CONNECTION WITH
THE CHILDREN'S EMIGRATION HOMES
ST. LUKE'S ROAD, BIRMINGHAM ENGLAND
Letter Report on Child
Name of Child Roger J. Hall Age 17 Year sent to Canada 1914 -
Name of Union or Home from which child was emigrated Derly
Name of Employer (Was) Duncan Me Millan Occupation Farming
Post Office Whycocomagh County Innerness Province N.S.
How long with present Employer No. of previous places Date of Report
Reporter's Name Un S. Pay _ Date Aug 3/15-
Name Roger J. Hall. (Derby Union) Age 10 mm. Mary 15th 1914. Date sent out / 1914. Date off Register / 916
Address (1/ 1/ Crillitha Shallight, Learn humalia KB
Address Go S. V. Griffitho, Sheffield, Suntury Co., N.B. -14/5. Co Merg D. Molfatt. Box 552 North Lydren Cape Breton Co., M. A.
Enlisted (- Tebrian 1916)
Contracted (Seburan 1916)
Date Visited
1915. Jun 2314
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Recognition for our web sites and BHC Registry!



On Sale Now! We are thrilled to have received a large mention in the July 2017's edition of Who Do You Think You Are Magazine, naming our sites, including the organizations site britishhomechildren.com, our research site British Home Children in Canada and our BHC Registry site in their article on the best web sites for searching Canadian Roots. This is the second year in a row a major family history magazine has recognized our work and our web sites. Last year, Your Family Tree ranked our "impressive" BHC in Canada site as the number 2 online resource for researching your Canadian Roots!



Happening in our schools



Voting opened until July 7th!

S VOTE



Gracyn has done a project for the Durham Heritage Fair on the home children and her great grandpa (home boy) and she now has won the Young Citizen Award. Gracyn was asked to do a video which is now online on Canada's History for Kids web site. The children's videos are open for voting on, the winners will be going to Ottawa for the Canada's History Youth Forum. Gracyn used our web site: <u>www.Canadianbritishhomechildren.weebly.com</u> for her information in this project!



Arianna from Vancouver, British Columbia has also entered in her regional Heritage Fair with a project and video on the BHC. We don't know much about Arianna but are very pleased to see her very well done video and project. Stop by her page and vote for her as well!

Lowestoft, Suffolk England school stages Victorian Day with the help of a former Barnardo's orphan & the BHCARA Facebook Group!

The Victorian day was organized by Year 3 and 4 teachers Miss Mycock and Mrs Betts from the Lowestoft primary school. Children have been learning about the British Home Childen who were sent to Canada. Using the BHCARA organization and our Facebook group for information and contacts, the teachers were able to bring this story to life in a unique and interesting way for the children. Group member Ali Thompson was able to provide them with the contacts for a former Barnardo ward, Alan Pilgrim, 82, who shared with the students his experiences of being an orphan in care.

What a delight to see the children in their costumes mesmerized by the story of the BHC and listening to Mr. Pilgram tell his story!

Read the full story on line.





Free Books for Schools

Many schools and teachers have taken advantage of our Free Books for Schools offer. We are pleased that fifty free books were sent out to schools and teachers across Canada! This is the third year in a row the BHCARA has donated books to schools! We are grateful for donations which has made this possible, especially from Beryl Young, author of "Charlie: A Home Child's Life in Canada" and her publisher Ronsdale Press.