

The BHCARA celebrates the
4th anniversary of its creation!



John Henry Edward Bolton

By his Grandson Peter Bolton
Port Hope, Ontario

John Bolton was born on 02 June 1844 in Chalfont St. Peter and, like many of his brothers, moved to Middlesex where he worked as a baker. On 31 March 1867 he married Elizabeth Powell of Heston, second daughter of George and Elizabeth, in Hounslow. In the 1871 census they were recorded at Lancers Lane, Isleworth, both aged 26. Elizabeth was working as a laundress at this time. Their only child, John Henry Edward Bolton, was born on 12 Aug 1875.

Unfortunately John Sr. died at the young age of 32 on 05 April 1877 of "chronic phthisis", due, it appears, to his occupation as a baker. Although he died in Isleworth, his body was returned for burial in Chalfont St. Peter, which would have been an expensive process in those

days.

After her husband's death, Elizabeth married Samuel Veness, who mistreated her and young John. Both the Bolton and Powell families so strongly disapproved of her new husband, later described in the Barnardo report as a "lazy and drunken stepfather", that they had nothing further to do with her or John. His only correspondent during his years in Canada was his first cousin, Frances Thomas. [His only correspondent during his years in Canada was his first cousin, Frances Thomas. John married her in England in 1901 before returning to Canada.]

Years later, John claimed that when Elizabeth died of dropsy on 22 April 1888, word of her death was received by Samuel at a pub. John spoke little about his childhood, but often mentioned that for the rest of his life he was haunted by the memory of his mother being buried in a pauper's grave in Hanwell Cemetery. Eight days later, two of the neighbours, fearing for John's life at the hands of his stepfather - described as a labourer aged 45 - had him admitted to Dr. Barnardo's. Application was made in this case by Mrs. Milesen, of 50, St. Ann's Road, Notting Hill.

The Governor's Report includes: John Henry Edward Bolton. Admitted 30 April, 1888. Age - 12 years, 8 months. Born 12 August, 1875, at Isleworth. Height - 4 ft. 7 in. Color of Hair - Brown; Eyes - Brown. Complexion - Fair. If Vaccinated - 1 l.a. Ailment - Ringworm on head. Chest Measure - 26 in. Weight - 66 lbs. Marks - Scar over and below right eye.

On admission to Barnardo's, John stayed at the Receiving House in Stepney Causeway, East London, for the first three nights and was then transferred to Kinnaird House, another Barnardo's establishment, on 03 May 1888. He was to remain there for the next ten months.



John left England on 28 March 1889 aboard the SS Peruvian, arriving in Portland, Maine on 11 April 1889. On his arrival in Canada, he was placed with William Shearer, a farmer at Lang, Ontario. He died in Toronto in 1964, maintaining that Barnardo's had saved his life.

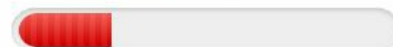
Barnardo's handed out Good Conduct Medals for length of service, such as John's medal shown here. Fegan's handed out Roll of Honour Medals for repayment of passage. Learn about these awards on page 4.

Dozens of 'British home children' lie forgotten in Etobicoke cemetery

PAGE THREE in the
Toronto Star,
Saturday February 27th
Read it on line here!!

Funds raised to date for our Park Lawn Monument. For details and to donate visit www.gofundme.com. Off line donations are gratefully accepted as well. Contact Lori at info@BritishHomeCHILDREN.com

\$3,775 of \$16k



Florence Edwards

A special member submitted story
by Kathy Dawson Page 6

The British Home Children Advocacy & Research Association begins our fifth year of operation!

Founder Lori Oschefski's passion for the British Home Children stems from the need to help her mom, a surviving child migrant; and then others as she found people desperately seeking help. In 2012 she created the British Home Children Advocacy & Research Association, which, in its fifth year now, quickly moved to the forefront of the British Home Child Awareness Movement in Canada. It is the first organization of its kind to use social media to function, and to promote the BHC story with

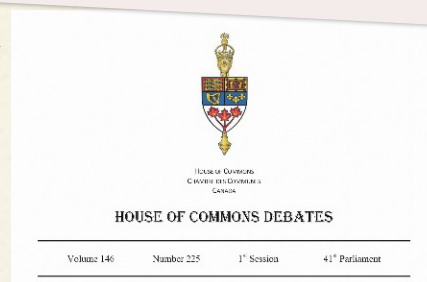
unprecedented and unparalleled success.

Through our leading work, with an outstanding group of researchers, the BHCARA has reunited dozens of fractured families. Our [Facebook Group](#) is an amazing group of dedicated individuals whose only motivation is to support others with BHC connections and those searching for information about this very important part of Canadian History.



Black Creek Pioneer Village Toronto, Ontario

The BHCARA in partnership with the unique and historic "Black Creek Pioneer Village", located in Toronto, Canada; opened the largest and most comprehensive long term running exhibit for the BHC in Canadian history. The opening was attended by BHC descendant - Don Cherry, who later that day, spoke at the BHCARA's First World War Commemoration Service. In our third year of partnership, our exhibit will reopen in May for the 2016 season.



Apology Petition

In 2011, Ms. Oschefski spearheaded the first Canadian apology petition. It is the belief of the BHCARA that obtaining a national apology will "overnight" educate and inform the citizens of Canada about the British Home Children. An apology will also set the record straight about who these children really were and where they came from. A statement by our Government would set the tone for future education in this country, ensuring that this vitally important aspect of Canadian history is taught.

Hundreds of people have signed our petition resulting in three readings in the House of Commons.



Your Family Tree Magazine Genealogy Advice you can trust

In their January 2016 edition, Your Family Tree Magazine ranked the BHCARA research site "British Home Children in Canada" as the number 2 source for Britain to Canada immigration records. Calling the site "impressive" and offering "a range of interesting and useful resources". Launched in December of 2011, this site has received almost half a million hits!

Events

In the past four years, the BHCARA has held an impressive number of presentations, events and displays, all focused on educating Canada about the British Home Children. 2016 has a growing [list of venues](#) to choose from Nova Scotia to Winnipeg!

Click here to visit our [Listing of Past events](#)



One of the things we are most proud of is, our [Facebook Group](#)! It is a community of like minded people who are there to share stories and to offer free advice and help to others. Many families have been reunited as a result of the work of many of our outstanding researchers, and at times, in breath taking record speed!



Visit our new Pinterest page to view highlights from our first four years - www.pinterest.com

British Home Children the view from Britain
By Author, Historian and Researcher
Andrew Simpson

Looking for the story of a British Home Child is not easy. Few of those who were migrated cared to talk about that other life before Canada and in some cases their memories of a British family or an orphanage were vague or too painful to bring out of the shadows.

And the passage of nearly a century means that much of the trail has gone cold.

If you are lucky you will have a date for the migration and the name of the agency or charity which brought your relative over and now with so much genealogical material online it is possible to piece some of the story together, discover the names of parents and siblings as well as places of birth. At which point we all turn to the organization which was responsible for the migration.

Some are more helpful than others. The archivist at the Together Trust which was formerly the Manchester and Salford Boys' & Girls Refuges will do her best to provide answers for the descendants of children the charity sent to Canada from 1870 to 1914.*

Others are perhaps shall we say a little slower while in some cases like Middlesmore the records can be fragmentary. Added to which these records are not online and involve emails and letters from Canada back to Britain and take time.

All of which I know will be familiar to anyone wanting to trace their relative, but the reverse is also true for those of us here in Europe trying to piece together the fragments of a life lived out across the Atlantic.

It starts with the glazed look on the faces of people you talk to about British Home Children. Some are familiar with those who were sent to Australia partly because of the work of Margaret Humphreys and because that sorry tale only finished in the 1970s.

But Canada and that migration of a 100,000 young people dating back to the last decades of the 19th century is almost unknown.

When I first started researching the story there was just one book which had been published in Britain. It was a good beginning, had an extensive list of contact organizations but was not enough. And so I was forced to go asking in Canada.

Like others I started with the Library and Archives Canada and went on to make the appeal through local newspapers for information on the places where my great uncles had been placed.**

These were fruitful sources and I am thankful to people who went out of their way to visit some of the farms he worked on taking pictures along with others who were related to the families he worked for.

Back then help groups were still in their infancy but as BHC became a serious area of study so the groups have blossomed aided by the development of social networking.

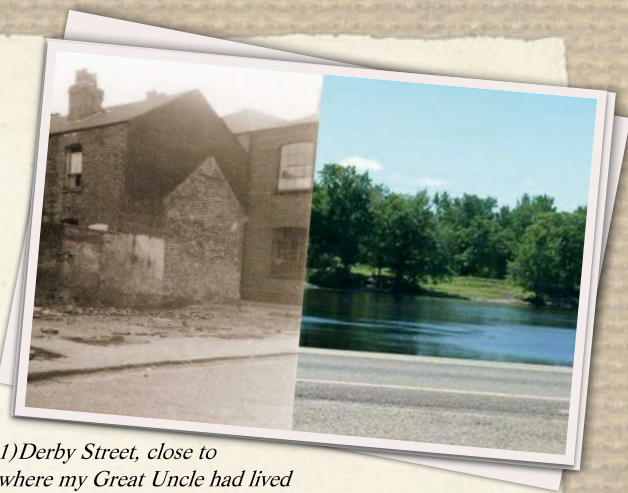
And it was there on Lori's site that I found the self help group I needed. Since then it has grown into the British Home Children Advocacy & Research Association but of course if you are reading this newsletter you will know that along with the fact that it has now reached its fourth anniversary.

In many ways BHC is still in its infancy but in the

**Visit Andrew's impressive
Blog at:**

www.chorltonhistory.blogspot.ca

Photo credits: Credits St John River, 2011, from the collection of Tammy Wood Union Street, Borough Walk, circa 1950 from the collection of Cynthia Wrigley



1) *Derby Street, close to where my Great Uncle had lived*
2) *The farm of Saye V Griffith, St John River, New Brunswick where my great uncle was placed*

**March 2016 showings of the BHC Documentary
"Forgotten"**

**"FORGOTTEN" Official Selection Toronto Irish Film Festival
2016 Toronto Saturday March 5th 4:00pm TIFF Bell Light-box**

**"FORGOTTEN" Official Selection Peace on Earth Film Festival
2016 Chicago Sunday March 6th 11:43am**

**"FORGOTTEN" Official Selection Toronto Short Film Festival
2016 Tuesday March 15th 6:15pm Carlton Cinema**

**For more information on "Forgotten" visit
<http://www.ardri.ca/forgotten/>**

Barnardo's Good Conduct Medal

On the front of each medal is a quote from the King James Bible, Matthew 18.5, "WHOSO SHALL RECEIVE ONE SUCH LITTLE CHILD IN MY NAME RECEIVETH ME." Inside this ring of words is a picture. Divide the face of the medal into two halves with a diagonal running from the upper left to the lower right. Above this constructed line are seven standing figures, one of whom is central to the whole design and wears classical garb, a toga-like wrap hanging loosely from one shoulder and flowing down to the ground. The



form of a breast evident behind her clothing and her long hair clearly identify her as a female. Those who stand at her sides or behind her are young people neatly and substantially clothed, are usually capped or hatted and with one exception are all facing in precisely the same direction, i.e. towards the viewer. Many show evidence that they have employment: a teenage boy holds a hammer and has a basket over his

shoulder that holds some tools or material of his trade; a boy in a sailor outfit complete with lanyards; a young girl wearing an overcoat with shoulder cape holds a handbag and umbrella; the head of a young woman behind the central Grace-figure has her hair up and contained in the cap of a housemaid or cook.

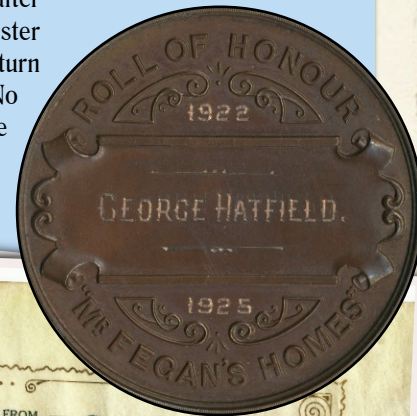
Beneath the imagined diagonal are 3 more figures, a man and woman and child, all thinly clad, bare-headed and tousle-haired. The woman and child sit or kneel apart on the ground at the feet of the Grace-figure, the woman clasping the Grace's hand; the child, his back to the viewer (of the ten in the picture he alone has no face visible) has arms and hands raised in a "Pick me up. Please." gesture. The man, though standing, is no taller than a child. Both adults of this trio have faces that are creased with age or care. This alone is enough to distinguish them from the youthful faces of the group of seven. Together these 3 figures below the diagonal, poorly dressed and begging, represent a family. The begging boy and his mother are pleading with the Grace-figure to "Please!" take the boy under her administration, to include him in the ranks of her cohorts, the sturdy, well-dressed, adequately-fed, employed young people at her sides. The father, though one hand is raised is pretty static. By far the most dynamic of the ten is the boy; second most is the mother, though her posture appears to be something she has grown weary of. The Grace-figure and her cohorts are all posed and still, with emotionless mask-like faces. On the reverse side of both medals is: "For good conduct and length of service." All though it stated that it was awarded for long service and good conduct, or some such thing, it was really given to the boys who stayed in their first placements for three full years. The medal was an instrument of the drilling into the children the disgrace of being returned to the Agency for any reason.

By the Late Brian Rolfe for the RootsWeb Mailing List, 2003

Fegan's Roll of Honour Medal

To help raise funds to bring boys to Canada, Fegan's offered a Roll of Honour award. Each boy who repaid their passage to Canada was awarded a medal and a scroll. By 1911, six hundred and six boys had received this award. Fifteen year old George Hatfield arrived in Canada in May of 1922. George was the son of Henry George Hatfield, who died in 1909, and his wife Maggie Nash. His sister, twenty year old Elsie, would arrive in Canada in September of 1923. An accomplished dress maker, perhaps she felt there were better opportunities in Canada. George qualified for his Roll of Honour Medal in 1925, it is unclear if he actually received this award. In October of that year, after reuniting with his sister Elsie, they would return together to England. No living descendants have been located.

I may say here that we always impress upon our boys when leaving, that the £10 laid out on their emigration is an extra boon, that we think every boy ought by degrees to repay. As each boy does so his name is put in the Roll of Honour, on the old schoolroom walls here (see photo zinco of the first panel) and every boy receives a large framed certificate to this effect.



The Owen McCarthy Trunk



The Hamilton Asylum

The Hamilton Asylum for the Insane began receiving patients in 1876. It began as an institution for drunks, but a growing need for the facilities use for the mentally disturbed dictated that would be its sole purpose. Well into the 20th century it was accessible by a dirt road only.

Owen McCarthy was born c1868 in London, England to Irish parents Owen and Anna McCarthy. In 1888 Barnardo's sent Owen to Canada. By 1901 Owen was admitted to the Hamilton Asylum. There he remained for the rest of his life, dying there from tuberculosis on December 21, 1904. His trunk, with his indentured contract glued to its lid was recovered and is in the custody of Peter Bolton.



Histories of the Receiving Homes Edith Atwood Cottage Fairbridge Farm Vancouver

Fairbridge Farm on Koksilah Road in Duncan was built in 1935, 11 years after Fairbridge's founder Kingsley Ogilvie Fairbridge's death. This new school was officially named the Prince of Wales Fairbridge Farm School, in honour of the Prince of Wales who had continued Kingsley's work after his death. The site for the farm was named "Pemberlea" because the land was once owned by Frederick B. Pemberton. Pemberlea boasted dairy herds, sheep, poultry and horse. Milk was shipped daily from Pemberlea to Victoria. The impoverished children brought to Fairbridge lived in cottages with "cottage mothers" in a village like setting. Edith Atwood Cottage, one of the first cottages built, was used as a girls dormitory at the farm school. The Fairbridge farm school in Vancouver struggled with finances. In 1948 the Canadian Pacific Railway leased the property and brought British Farm families there under the Department of Immigration and Colonization. The settlers had to agree to farm the Fairbridge property for three years. As result of the

precarious financial situation, no more children could be sent. The school finally closed in 1950 and the property was rented from the CPR to a BC dairy firm, Stevenson and McBryde. Donald and Colleen MacGregor eventually took over the Edith Atwood Cottage. The lovely cottages which made up this farm school now make a charming village. In 1992 EAC was refurbished with the view of preserving its historic character. What once was the cottage mothers' day room is now the MacGregor's dining room. Edith Atwood Cottage was part of the Cowichan Valley Heritage House Mother's Day tour in May of 2002.

Edith Atwood Cottage



BHC Muriel Oschefski (93) has made a remarkable recovery from a very serious illness over the Christmas Holidays. It is a complete miracle that she is doing this well! She's back to socializing, active and enjoys visiting her friends throughout the day or while having dinner in their fancy dining room! Here she is, on the left, at a fancy dress Oscar Party this past week! Well done Muriel!

FINDING FLORENCE

My maternal grandmother was Florence Edwards - a Barnardo Home Child. It's been a long journey to find Florence. I never knew her, nor did my mother, as my mother was given up for adoption privately when she was just 3 years old.

The story we knew was this: My mother was born in 1934 to Florence and William Windsor in Toronto Ontario and named Shirley Elizabeth. She was the third of four children. There were two older brothers, Harold (Ricky) and Robert, and a younger sister Lois. Times were tough - it was the depression and William wasn't able to work much due to a heart problem. When my mother was about three years old, William's sister asked some friends of hers if they could help the family by taking one of the children. The friends' names were Ernest and Nellie Helen. My mother went to live with them by mutual agreement and was eventually adopted and renamed Annabelle. The adoption was arranged privately, but was overseen by the Toronto Children's Aid Society. There was some contact over the years between the adoptive family and the birth family but it was not amicable. I don't remember when I became aware that my mother had been adopted. As was the custom of the times, it was not discussed. My adoptive grandparents were kind and caring people and my sisters and I have many wonderful memories of them. I am so lucky that I had them in my life. I feel that I have to say that because the rest of the story will overshadow their presence and their very great contribution to my family story.

I have always had a great interest in family history. My father's side of the family was fairly uncomplicated to research and I had some really great breakthroughs. I've researched my adoptive family's histories as I consider them my own. Easy sailing for the most part. Then I turned my eye towards my mother's biological family. My mother was at first reluctant to embark on this search as she had only been told negative information about her birth family. But I persisted and she finally consented. We first sent away to the Toronto Children's Aid for the "Non-Identifying" information. My mother knew a little about her bio family and combined with the info from the CAS, and some research into obituaries I found the deaths of her parents, which gave me their surnames and the first names of her siblings. In a move of great audacity, I started calling all the Robert Windsor's in the Toronto phone book. As luck would have it, the first one I called was my uncle. And yes he knew about my mother and no, he was not happy to hear from me. It was an emotional discussion. Uncle Bobby was quite upset as it brought back a lot of bad memories. He was older than my mother and remembered her disappearance. She simply wasn't there one day and his mother, Florence, would not speak about it. Shirley/Annabelle just went away. But the very next day, my dear uncle called me back and apologized for being so upset. He had had time to think things over and really wanted to reconnect with his sister. He was delighted to learn that he had 4 nieces and that my mother was alive and well. His brother Ricky had already passed away, but Lois was alive and well and living very near to him. He and my mother and my Aunt Lois finally met in March of 1999. From there, we went on to reunite as a family. Robert and Ricky never had children, but Lois had one daughter - Robin. Robin now had 4 first cousins! Imagine her surprise and eventual delight. It was a successful and loving reunion. It was just in time too. In 2002 my mother passed away, followed by Uncle Bobby in 2005 and finally Aunt Lois in 2007.

I had asked them about Florence being a Barnardo Home Child, but neither Bobby nor Lois knew anything about that. They assumed that Florence was born in Canada. They couldn't verify her maiden name. I made an attempt to find Florence around this time - sending away to Barnardo's with the outline of the info from the CAS (which stated she was born in 1900) and what Bobby and Lois thought was Florence's maiden name - Walker. There were no matches in the Barnardo records.

This year, 2015, I decided to pick up the threads of my research and try again. Lois's birth registration gave the maiden name of Florence as Walker and that the marriage of Florence and William took place on 10 Sept 1928 in Verdun Que. The non-identifying information had also stated that Florence was previously married and had left that marriage and had lived common law with William Windsor. Things weren't lining up well. Was Walker her married name (1st Marriage)? I sent away for the death records on William and Florence. This time, the death record for Florence gave me a new maiden name - Edwards. I sent away to Barnardo's in early 2015 for searches on both Florence Edwards and Florence Walker and again, they could find no matching records. I hired a genealogist to search for the marriage records in Verdun Que. No results for Florence and William. Florence really did not want to be found.

In a weird chain of events, I inadvertently sent away to Barnardo's again, looking for Florence Edwards. This time they got back to me right away and said that a second look through their records might have been successful. Did I have any more information on Florence. I emailed them with everything I had - including the non-identifying info from the CAS. They very kindly emailed me back the next day with the confirmation that they were 100% certain that the Florence Edwards in their files was my grandmother. I was stunned to say the least. And in a gesture of goodwill, they were willing to waive the normal wait period for records and would send them immediately once they had received payment. I received the records within the month. The birth date in the CAS records was wrong - 1900 instead of 1903.

As many of you know, the day the package arrived was overwhelming. I sat down quietly and read it through but it was very hard to read. But the treasures - a copy of a letter from Florence's father - written in his own hand, and of course the reports of the circumstances of her life in England, and her life in Canada, and a picture of Florence as a child.

There was also a letter written by Florence to Barnardo's in 1924(?) during the time of her first marriage. She writes about her two children. Big surprise there as we did not know about these children nor had the CAS informed my mother about her half siblings. Here is what the Barnardo's records told us:

Florence was born in March or September of 1903 (or 04) in Hackney London England. She was the youngest of several children and the family had fallen on hard times. Her parents, George Edwards and Emma (Walker) Edwards, had separated by the time Florence was about 10. Florence was living with her father in one room. Her father worked long hours and Florence was left to her own devices. She was apparently, spending a lot of time with the cabmen on Seymour Street. Her sister Elizabeth had had a child out of wedlock and had abandoned it at the workhouse and was believed to be working as a prostitute. It was felt that Florence was in moral danger and as such was admitted to Barnardo's on 14 March 1914, with the full consent of her parents including the Canada clause. She was emigrated to Canada in September of 1914 with Barnardo's. She was just 11 years old. Separated forever from her family and placed in multiple homes as a domestic servant.

Florence grew up in Ontario and in 1923, married Wilmot Vague. The had a son and a daughter. For reasons we don't fully know, she had a breakdown of sorts and left her infant daughter, son and husband in about 1925 and never returned to them. There are bits in the Barnardo file hinting at her distraught state but only bits. We will never know the full story. I am, however, very upset with the CAS that they did not disclose the information about the half siblings. The sister, Marion Jean or Jeannie, was still alive at the time of my mother's



reunion with Bobby and Lois. Whether they would have wanted contact or not wasn't up to the CAS. It was my mother's right to know and she was never afforded that opportunity. That information was wrongly withheld.

Once I had this information, it didn't take long to track down the half siblings. Ancestry had information on the brother, including his death registration in BC. An obituary for Jeannie was quickly found leading to the discovery of a gaggle of cousins. Jeannie had 4 children. And here's where it gets weird. My mother, married a Toronto police officer and had 4 children. Jeannie married a Toronto police officer and had 4 children. His last name was McAnsh. I went to high school with a Bruce McAnsh and am still in contact with him. On a whim, I messaged him to see if he was any relation to Jeannie. He and I are not related as such but we share cousins on his father's side of the family. All that time we were so close to one another and didn't know it.

My sister's and I have been in contact with some of the cousins. You can imagine that they will need some time to come to terms with all of this. Florence is after all, the woman that abandoned their mother/grandmother. Very little was known about her. Especially not that she went on to have 4 more children. I believe that Florence has over 40 descendants mostly in the Toronto area.

I've also managed to connect with other branches of Florence's family. They never did know what had happened to her and now know the story of her tragic and short life (she was just 50 when she died). I correspond with a cousin in England and a cousin in the USA and have a real connection to them. I feel that a missing part of my life has been put back into place. I also feel very strongly, that my adoptive grandparents are a part of my family history. They were very kind and caring people and the best grandparents ever! My grandfather's pictures and medals from the 1st World War hang proudly in my living room. I consider myself lucky that things worked out how they did. As my father's parents were both deceased by the time he was 19 and both William and Florence were deceased long before I was born, I would not have had grandparents growing up had my mother not been adopted.

I would like to say however, that there is a lot more information on Florence in the CAS files, but as the child of a deceased adopted person, I am not entitled to ever access those records. They have informed me that the only people who can access that file are the ones in it. The fact that they are all deceased does not matter. I can never have access to the file. Only certain "redacted" documents will be made available to me. This is something that must change. 3 generations of my family have been "overseen" by various child welfare agencies. Barnardo's has no issues with sharing all of their files with me. Library and Archives Canada has a wealth of information available publicly on the Home Children, but the Toronto CAS will not budge. This is wrong. It is my family's history and information not their's. I have more work cut out for me that's for sure. We still don't know much about William Windsor. No birth date, not the name of his sister, and we can't confirm whether he was born in Canada or England at this time. More mysteries. I wonder if that the fact that Florence was a home child played a big part in her treatment by William's family? William's sister and husband owned two homes in Toronto at the time of my mother's adoption and were fairly well off given the times. Her idea of helping was to take remove one of the children? I don't know what went on but it was not a happy time for all involved. Uncle Bobby could barely speak about those years. It was especially sad that after my mother was taken away, my aunt and uncles all ended up in foster care due to Florence's and Williams continuing poor health. They never knew her story.

But the story does not end there. Each year, myself, my sisters, Helen, Mary and Nancy and cousin Robin meet up for our annual retreat at a family cottage in Lions Head Ontario. We gather to celebrate life and to honour the contribution of Florence to our lives and the miracle of our reunion with Robin.

Like I said, it's a whopper of a story.
Kathy Dawson
Medicine Hat Alberta



*Florence's daughter Annabelle
about the time of her adoption*

BHCARA News for March

Memory Quilt: Our memory quilt is moving in to its final stages. JoAnn Clark, our quilter, is busy preparing the finished quilt for our 2016 event season. The squares have all been printed and stitched together in rows.

March 17, 2016 Lori Oschefska will be speaking at the Canadian Legion in the Village of Erin, Ontario, Canada - 12 Dundas St E. 9:30 am.

The BHCARA has created a new Pinterest board where we have pinned all back issues of our Newsletters. Visit our board at:
www.pinterest.com

