

British Home Children Advocacy & Research Association

Celebrating our Royal Visit and Barnardo's 150th Anniversary

May 2016 Newsletter



A Home Child's Brush with Royalty

By Beryl Young

I'm sure my father who was a Barnardo Home Child would ever have dreamt he would one day ride in the back seat of a limousine with a future queen!

Here's how it happened. My father, Charlie Harvey, was born in Southampton, England in 1897 and was sent to a Barnardo Home when his mother was left as a widow with eight children. When Charlie was taken by a neighbour to the Stepney Barnardo Home in London, the tram they were riding probably passed the mall leading to Buckingham Palace where King George V, grandson of Queen Victoria, was in residence.

Charlie was sent to Canada in 1911 when he was thirteen and worked in farms in southern Ontario with both bad and good conditions. He enlisted with the Canadian Expeditionary Force in WWI and was injured the last day of the disastrous Battle of the Somme. Returning to Canada he signed up with the RCMP and began a career working in almost every province across the country. He married in Saskatchewan where my brother and I were born, and just a few years before retirement was sent from Ottawa to a plum posting as Inspector in Victoria, B.C.

It was 1951 and Buckingham Palace had announced that twenty-five-year-old Princess Elizabeth and her husband Prince Philip would tour Canada in October. Their five week tour went from Newfoundland, across the country to Victoria on Vancouver Island where my father had responsibility for security. After a busy tour of Victoria, a well-earned private rest had been planned for the prince and princess at Eaglecrest, a resort two hours north of Victoria.
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Princess Diana

The late Diana Princess of Wales, was President of Barnardo's from 1984-1996, attending over 110 Barnardo events.

Before accepting the role as President of Barnardo's, Princess Diana, like the majority of people, associated Barnardo's only with orphans. By 1988, in her 50 visits, so far, to projects throughout the UK she had discovered this to be inaccurate.

The Princess was not just a figurehead President, she was a very active part of Barnardo's and throughout her Presidency, visited many homes of Barnardo wards. In one such visit, she dropped by, to visit the family of Bangie and Beryl Pringle in Tottenham, North London. The Pringle's had fostered children for five years. The Princess was visiting in an effort to better understand how underprivileged children could be helped. She had many questions for the Pringles on the subject of fostering, putting the Pringle family at ease immediately; so much so that during their chat, their daughter Kathleen, twiddled the rings on the Princess's fingers.

The three boys the Pringles were fostering at the time, fourteen, nineteen and twenty years old; were at one time considered unfosterable. The Princess remarked, "It's all about trust, because so often they've been let down."

Prior to her speech at the annual meeting, she had taken the opportunity to see the organization, then in it's 124th year, at work and to see the needs and problems faced by the people who used their services.

Dr. John Thomas Barnardo began his life's work in 1867 when he set up the "Ragged School" in the the east end of London, England. 1870 saw the opening of his



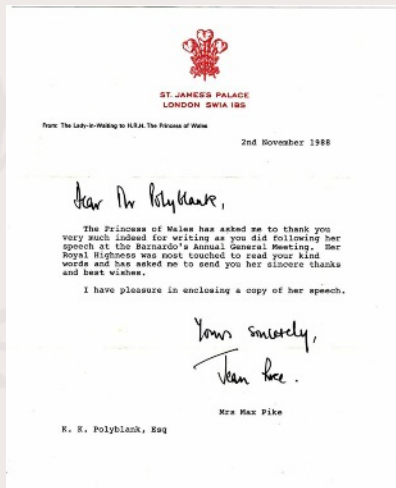
November 19, 1985: Princess Diana visited "Dr. Barnardo's Cafe" in Harrogate, North Yorkshire.

home for boys in Stepney Causeway and in 1879, the Girls Village Home in Barking. Their years of child care were marked by constant change as the needs of the children in society changed. By 1989 a huge chapter in Barnardo's child care policies came to an end with the closing of the last of their children's homes.

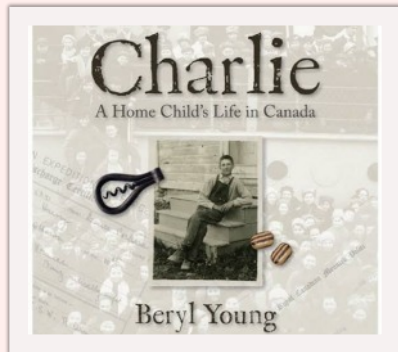
In her speech introducing the "new Barnardo's" at their annual general meeting, October 18, 1988, Princess Diana reflected on her many visits to Barnardo's families.

"One aspect which has remained constant is the enormous importance which Barnardo's attaches to family life" I have seen this both in efforts made to help families remain together and in the work undertaken to provide foster homes or personal residential care for those young people unable to live with their own families."

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"I have been asked today, to reveal to you all, Barnardo's new identity. I believe, and I hope you will agree with me, that it captures many of the elements which are important in family life - commitment, togetherness and building the way ahead to the future. With everyone's help, support and enthusiasm I know Barnardo's can look forward with confidence, and it therefore gives me enormous pleasure to say goodbye to the old and to reveal the new Barnardo's." - Princess Diana, 1988



I was in high school and I could hardly wait to hear my dad's report of the trip. He was to ride in the front seat beside a driver with the royals in the back seat of the black Cadillac convertible, but as we were about to leave, Prince Philip announced that he would like to drive.

The prince had a reputation for speeding, and my father said, "How do you say no to prince?" So Prince Philip drove up Vancouver Island with the man appointed as driver sitting beside him; the Princess and my father sitting together in the back seat. The trip was made even more memorable when a hitch-hiker attempted to hail the royal car from the side of the highway. The astounded young man watched as a black Cadillac, complete with the flapping royal flag, sped by him at over 160 kilometres an hour.

Of course I'd told all my friends at school that my father and Princess Elizabeth had travelled together, no doubt implying that the two had become good friends, but my father was a close-mouthed RCMP officer and all he'd told me was that the Princess was "a very nice person."

A short time after the royal couple returned to England, they left on another tour, this time to Kenya. It was here on February 6, 1952 they received the news that her father George VI had died and the princess became Queen of England. This was just four months after my father met her.

Many years later after my father died, I decided to write the story of his life. The book was published as *Charlie: a Home Child's Life in Canada* in 2009, and has been a best-seller, now into three printings.

I still marvel at this true Canadian immigrant story when a boy from a poor family in Southampton, England can make a success of his life in Canada and one day ride in a limousine beside a future Queen.

Princess Diana....continued

Princess Diana acknowledged, as a mother of two small boys, the importance of family life and of finding a more secure way of helping children in need.

Family life had changed over the years, with fewer children losing their parents to death. But children still experience a similar sense of loss through divorce and separation. At this time, one in eight children were living in single parent families. Barnardo's work began to focus more on these changing social needs.

Princess Diana gave up her position as President of Barnardo's in 1996, as her own family situation changed. In her twelve year tenure, Diana helped reposition Barnardo's as a modern support network for troubled children.

Barnardo's has had a Royal Patron since 1902 and Royal Presidents from 1923. Today Her Majesty the Queen serves as their patron with HRH The Duchess of Cornwall serving as President of Barnardo's.

There have been a variety of royal events over the centuries including 100 children attending George V's silver jubilee in 1935. Barnardo's are pleased to be celebrating their 150th Anniversary, on May 12, with a Royal Garden Party at Buckingham Palace in the presence of HRH The Duchess of Cornwall.

Sources:
Barnardo's and Royalty

BHCARA Vintage 1988 copy of Princess Diana's speech from St. James's Palace

The Daily Mail, Wednesday October 26, 1988

Afternoon Tea in Barkingside
Our members are welcome to attend a very special tea with Barnardo's at the Children's Church in the former Barkingside Village. The tea will be held on Friday May 13th at 2:30 in the afternoon. Please contact Lori at info@britishhomechildren.com to reserve your spot as seating is limited.



For more information on "Charlie" and author Beryl Young, please visit her site at: www.berlyyoung.com

Beryl will be speaking at Pier 21 in Halifax, Nova Scotia on Tuesday June 21, 2015. For more information visit the [BHCARA Events Page](#).

How we remember people is important

By Andrew Simpson, Author, historian, researcher
www.chorltonhistory.blogspot.ca



How we remember people is important from the Pantheon in Rome to a nasty little slum in Manchester

This is Umberto King of Italy and he stands on the edge of the municipal park facing the Town Hall in Varese.

I can't say I knew much about him but as the second King of Italy and the last to be buried in the Pantheon in Rome, I suppose he had to have a statue.

He was born in 1844, ascended the throne in 1870 and was assassinated in 1900.

He was by all accounts deeply conservative and supported the Bava-Beccaris massacre in 1898, when food riots in Milan led to the authorities using force in an effort to repress the demonstrations leading to the death of 80 demonstrators.

He was also in favour of the Triple Alliance with Germany and Austria Hungary before the Great War and supported Italy's policy of colonial expansion.

Needless to say there were more than a few who were not disposed to him and after surviving a number of assassination attempts he was killed in 1900.

And standing beside Umberto got me thinking about statues and memorials and all the ways that a life is recorded. After all how we remember people is important.

Once not that long ago history books were full of Kings and Queens, as well as the good and the great with the odd bad character thrown in for balance.

But none of them were my family or were drawn from my class. If I went looking for us, we were there just as walk on parts, captured in the picture of the King accepting the crown on a battlefield as the rather dirty foot soldier cheering in the background.

And in the same way the places that were home to some many of my family were pushed aside for new developments and some sad to say are now just car parks.

That said the history of the disposed, the poor and the not so lucky now features in books, in films and the on school curriculums. And like as not archaeologists are just as happy crawling over the site of a one up one down, back to back house from the early 19th century as the ruins of a palace.

These humble dwellings would have been the homes of our BHC and it occurs to me that the term one up one down, back to back house may need explaining. Many of us over here will have lived in a two up two down property with a back yard and outside lavatory.



There were two rooms upstairs and two downstairs and they were the basic building blocks for working class life across the industrial north and Midlands as well as south into London. The front door led directly off the street into the front room and the family lived in the back.

The variation which could be found in both towns and the country was the one up one down which for good measure was built directly onto the back of another such property thereby saving on land and maximizing the number of properties which could be plonked down on a site.

They were made of the cheapest materials and the floor was laid directly on the beaten earth. If the houses stretched to cellars these were also inhabited which meant that one property could be home to three families or more.

All of which brings me neatly to the Angel Meadow dig which uncovered the

remains of cellar dwellings in what had been one of our most notorious slums. Like Little Ireland made famous by Dr Kay and Frederick Engels, Angel Meadow was a place of little hope bounded by a railway viaduct the river and countless factories. In the big slum clearance programmes of the mid 20th century it was bulldozed away but for the sake of economy the remains were back filled into the cellars creating a time capsule which has offered up a priceless set of everyday objects.

And as you do on my visit I came away with a much corroded metal chamber pot and one of the handmade bricks.



Not perhaps the stuff of elegant drawing rooms but a powerful reminder of how my great uncle Roger and countless other British Home Children lived out their early years.

So while I can gaze on the back of Umberto's statue I know which bits of history I prefer to remember.





Celebrating British Home Child Day in Ontario

Black Creek Pioneer Village BHC Conference

*Sunday October 2, 2016 Black Creek Pioneer Village 1000 Murray Ross Parkway, Toronto, Ontario, Canada
Ticket information to be released soon. Check the Black Creek web site at www.blackcreek.ca*



Bob Huggins has began work on a new film he's developing - a docudrama based on his father's life as a British Home Child. We are thrilled to have Bob for our afternoon speaker at Black Creek Pioneer Village this October. He will also be on hand to speak to the descendants and filming for his new documentary!

Bob Huggins

Bob Huggins has more than 25 years experience as a professional in the newspaper publishing, web/content publishing and high technology sectors. He is the founder of Cold North Wind - the company that developed the technology to publish historical newspapers online. Called PaperofRecord.com, Google purchased it in 2006. Bob was a long time mentor for Invest Ottawa and now holds the same position with L-Spark incubator and accelerator for enterprise software.

Mr. Huggins began in Ottawa with a company called Digg Designs. The company was part of the General Assembly Productions who eventually began a film production house.

Wanting to be more artistically involved, Mr. Huggins formed Orphan Boy Films, named for his father, a Barnardo British Home Child.

His first film, released in 2015 was The Greatest Freedom Show on Earth, based on the life of Walter Perry. Mr. Perry had organized a four-day event called The Greatest Freedom Show on Earth which ran from 1934 to 1958 on the August long weekend, which marked Emancipation Day, commemorating the end of slavery in the British Empire in 1834. The event each year drew thousands of people into the Windsor, Ontario area and included participants such as Martin Luther King, Stevie Wonder and Diana Ross.

It had always been in the back of Mr. Huggins mind that he should one day do a film about the British Home Children, highlighting the experiences of his father, James Huggins. Fourteen year old James arrived in Canada, aboard the Duchess of Richmond, on March 30, 1930. He was received in the Jarvis Street Barnardo Home in Toronto. James would keep in touch with the Barnardo Homes over the years, writing to them often and even visiting their offices in Toronto and at Stepney Causeway while on active service in England during the Second World War.

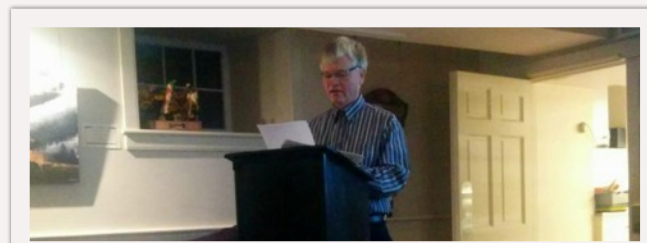
Marjorie Kohli

Author of "The Golden Bridge - Young Immigrants to Canada, 1833-1939, Marjorie Kohli is our Key note speaker for our October 2 BHC Conference at the Black Creek Pioneer Village. The most comprehensive resource of its kind, The Golden Bridge is an indispensable tool for family researchers with a "home child" ancestor, and of interest to those unfamiliar with this aspect of Canadian history. This extensively researched book incorporates background detail on agencies and key organizers such as Maria Rye, Annie Macpherson, Thomas Barnardo and William Quarrier, along with lesser knowns including Ellinor Close and Smyly Homes. Marjorie's presentation will focus on the lesser known organizations.



John Jefkins

First generation British Home Child descendant, John Jefkins, will host our mid day tea, light lunch and open mic. John has worked with the BHCARA as a speaker and co-speaker since early 2015. His family story was published in the break out article "[The century long family secret & the 30 minute unravelling](#)" published in the Toronto Star in June of 2015. John is a valued member of the BHCARA organization and hosted our 2015 open mic. His is currently writing his first book.



Marion Parsons

Folk singer Marion Parson's will be performing , once again, at the BHC Day Celebrations on October 2. Marion is the songwriter and singer who performs the ballad "Frederick Shortt's Lament" on our [You Tube tribute](#) video. This season, as our exhibit opens for our third year, a BHCARA group member, Roberta Vivian, loaned us her Grandfather's trunk. Roberta brought the trunk to Ms. Oschefski's home. It wasn't until she placed Frederick Shorts Barnardo photo on top of the trunk that they linked the two. Amazingly, Roberta had never heard the song before!





BHCARA News

A Royal Send off

The White Lions Tea House in Orillia, along with Rev. Carmen Agius hosted a wonderful afternoon fund raising tea on Sunday May 1, in support of Lori Oschefska's pending trip to England. Lori has been invited by Barnardo's to their 150th Anniversary Royal Garden Party being held on May 12.

Barnardo's is one of the UK's largest child care organizations, still active today after 150 years of working with children. In their earlier years, it was believed sending children away from their sometimes tragic lives, or impoverished lives, was thought to be in their best interests. With this in mind, Barnardo's sent some thirty thousand children to Canada, where they were to be given an opportunity to build a better life for themselves.

Today Barnardo's works within family units where ever possible, transforming the lives of children in need. Fostering and adoptions are also areas they work with when it is not possible to keep a child within their family unit. Barnardo's believe that every child deserves the best start in life and the chance to fulfil their potential, a belief which began with Dr. Barnardo's work 150 years ago.

Watch our CTV Television News coverage of the Tea Event

CTV News Barrie



Upcoming Events

Thursday May 5th at 7 pm
Beaverton branch of
Brock Township Public library
401 Simcoe St Beaverton, Ontario

Tuesday May 10th at 7pm
Speaking is John Jenkins at Palgrave United Church (just south of HWY 9 and HWY 50) - Quilt will be in England, so will not be at this event.

May 18 2016 - 7:30 pm
North York Historical Society
North York Central Library at 5120 Yonge Street (at Park Home Avenue)

Starting May 20
Kent and Essex counties- more details to follow. Our new 2016 Memorial quilt will be on display for two weeks. Check our [Facebook page](#) for details

Wednesday, 1 June 2016 - 6:30 PM
Enoch Turner Schoolhouse
106 Trinity Street,
Toronto, Ontario
This is a ticketed event, please visit their [event page for details](#).



Queen Victoria at the White Lions Tea House fundraising event held May 1st in Orillia. For an elegant British Tea experience visit the Tea House at: 33 Westmount Dr N, Orillia, ON L3V 6B9
Phone: (705) 259-0568

Visit their web site for hours of operation.
whitelionsteahouse.ca



ANNIE MACPHERSON AVON STREET HOUSE TOUR!!!

We are VERY excited to be taking part in this special event on Sunday June 5th as part of the Stratford Heritage Weekend: Annie MacPherson House - Luncheon, Speaker and House Tour - June 5th 2016, beginning at 11:30 am at the Revival House in Stratford, then moving on a bus to the Avon Street Annie MacPherson House for a RARE tour of this home!

For information on this event please visit:
<http://www.stratford-perthcountybranchaco.ca/index.php?page=Events>

This is a ticked event, tickets are limited. For direct ticket information visit:
<https://kiosk.eztix.co/kiosk-optimised/134423>