

Merry Christmas to all our members

BRITISH HOME CHILDREN ADVOCACY & RESEARCH ASSOCIATION DECEMBER 2016 NEWSLETTER



Our new Executive Director Canada pg 2

On-line Registry Release pg 2

We remember those who served pg 3

Bursary competition deadline pg 5

Andrew Simpson pg 6

Ellinor Close pg 7



FROM ADVERSITY TO
ACCOMPLISHMENT: THE LIFE
AND FAMILY HISTORY OF
HAROLD MAYS WENN by
Jennifer Wenn Pg 8

2016
ONTARIO
MUSEUM ASSOCIATION

Award
of Excellence
in Exhibitions

The BHCARA is thrilled to announce the exhibit "Breaking the Silence" created in 2014 in partnership with the Black Creek Pioneer Village, Toronto, Ontario; was awarded the 2016 Ontario Museum Association Award of Excellence in Exhibitions. The award was accepted by BCPV Curator Jennifer Harrington and BHCARA CEO Lori Oschefski, at a gala dinner in Mississauga.

The whole project is community driven, with many members of our community and the BHCARA organization pulling together for this exhibit. No item in the exhibit belongs to the BCPV collections, they relied completely on our BHC community and Ontario museums for the artifacts on display. We extend our warmest and deepest gratitude to BCPV and the contributors who made this exhibition a success. Visit the link below for more details and photos of the exhibit.

www.BritishHomeChildren.com



Arthur Funnell

Arthur James Funnell, born in Worthing, Sussex in 1891, was the son of John Edward Funnell and his wife Jane Wood. Sadly, his mother Jane passed away shortly after he was born. Arthur was a sibling to John Edward, Thomas Richard, Jane and Gladys Charlotte. After their father died in 1900, the orphaned children were cared for by their Grandparents. One day children services came around and found that Arthur's Grandfather had given him a pipe to smoke, deeming him unfit to care for Arthur, they took him to the Dr. Barnardo Homes. In the 1901 census, Arthur is listed as living in The National Incorporated Waifs Association, a Barnardo Home in Mile End Old Town, London, England. On the 17 of July 1902, Arthur, in a party of 395 children aboard the SS New England, was shipped to Canada to begin his new life as an indentured farm labourer. Later in life, Arthur could only recall two weeks of bawling on the trip over. Arthur, received in Toronto at the Barnardo's Farley Avenue Home, eventually made his way out to Alberta where he farmed in Oyen. Arthur officially applied for a Homestead on the 7 of January 1911. After fulfilling the requirements of the Dominions Land Act, Arthur was granted the patent for the property in 1915. Arthur's formal education only went to Grade 3. He was able to educate himself, learned to play the fiddle and became an agent for the Alberta Wheat Pool.

On the 27 of June, 1918, Arthur enlisted with the Canadian Army from Calgary, Alberta. His records state he had previously suffered a Pott's Fracture, which is fracture of the ankle. In July of 1918 Arthur was hospitalized in Manitoba for seven days with a nasal obstruction. When he recovered he returned to his unit. He was discharged on 10 January, 1919, upon demobilization and returned to Oyen. Arthur did not serve overseas.

In 1919, Maggie May Ostrander, was working in the newly opened Oyen Bank of Toronto, when she happened to glance out the window and saw the soldiers returning. Maggie, who was better known as Margaret, was born in 1898 in Dufferin County, Ontario. She was the daughter of Western Ostrander and his wife, British Home Child Fanny Petters.

Fanny and her two sisters, Harriett and Eliza were brought to Canada, also by Barnardo's, in July of 1883. Fanny had been treated well by her host family in Canada. She learned to sew and became quite adept. Following her 1895 marriage in Owen Sound, Ontario; she and Western had two children, Western Jr. and Maggie May and later the family relocated to western Canada. Daughter Leola was born in 1906 in Manitoba.

....Continued page 2



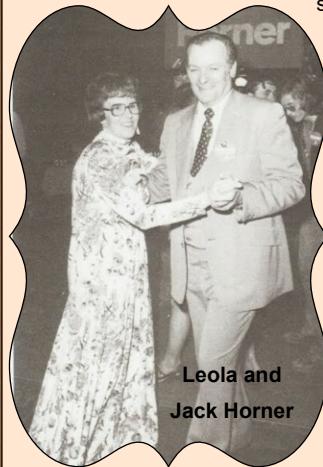
On 19 March, 1910, Western Sr successfully applied for a homestead property. In the 1911 census the family is listed as living in Winnipeg, Manitoba and is then later shown as having moved to Medicine Hat, Alberta, just a short distance from Oyen, in the 1921 census. Maggie May is shown working as a Bank Clerk. On 22 December, 1918 Western Jr enlisted in the First World War from Calgary Alberta. His family is noted as living in Oyen, Alberta.

It is sometime following this that tragedy struck the family. Western Jr, injured in a sledding accident, passed away and their daughter Leola also passed away from a burst appendix. In spite of the difficulties faced by the family, they were able to educate their daughter Maggie May, sending her to the Alberta Ladies College in Edmonton, Alberta. Maggie graduated with honours and chose then to return to Oyen to help the family.

Going back to that day in 1919, when Maggie, working at the Oyen Bank, glanced out the window to see the returning soldiers get off the train. One man stood out from the rest, maybe because of his pronounced limp. She was delighted when this soldier, Arthur Funnell, visited her bank one day shortly afterwards. The two struck up a friendship and as the family states, the rest is history.

Arthur and Maggie were married on Oyen. Together they raised a family of three children, including their middle daughter Leola. Arthur spoke very little about his life as a British Home Children, which sadly is typical of the BHC. Through the years Maggie learned of his terrifying journey across the ocean and his placements where he was treated little better than a slave. His final placement family brought him west with them. When war broke out, he had enlisted with the hope of returning to England to find his family. As things turned out, Arthur did not go overseas in the war. He was eventually reunited with his sister Gladys when he was in his seventies.

Author's daughter Leola was teaching at Rose Lynn, Alberta when she met a young man named Jack Horner. Jack was a was a Canadian rancher, former politician and Cabinet minister. Nicknamed "Cactus Jack", he was born in Saskatchewan, the fifth child in a family of six boys and three girls. He was a successful rancher in Alberta when he entered the political ring. Jack had a very colourful history in Canadian politics as evident in his self written autobiography "My Own Brand". Jack married Leola on 11 April 1950 after meeting at a local dance. Arthur Funnell led one of the local country dance bands. Jack passed away in 2004. Leola is doing very well in her 90's and collaborated with us on this story. She is thrilled that her parents story is being shared with our readers.



Leola and
Jack Horner



Fanny Petters

Release of our BHCARA BHC Registry

It was with our greatest pleasure that on British Home Child Day 2016, LeeAnn Beer, BHC Registry Administrator and Lori Oschefski, CEO BHCARA, released the first phase of the BHCARA BHC Registry, on-line! The British Home Children Registry was started by Perry Snow in 2000 in memory of his father BHC Frederick George Snow (1909 - 1994). In November 2013 Perry transferred his spreadsheet data of some 58,500 children to the BHCARA in order to carry on his work and make this information publicly available.

Norah Dennis, a descendant from the United States, had began a similar project and in 2014 Norah also transferred her data on 21,400 BHCs to the BHCARA. Since 2013, BHCARA and its volunteers have added approximately another 2,500 BHCs to Perry's list.

LeeAnn and her husband have spent considerable time over the last eighteen months building this unique and comprehensive database for the Registry, which combined contains details, to date, on 63,291 children.

So far, and working alphabetically, the first 11,495 children have been added. Work is ongoing to fill in any missing travel details and perform error & logic tests on the remaining entries. Children will continue to be added alphabetically and we hope to update the Registry at least weekly. The [online FAQ](#) should help with any questions you may have.

This registry is an enormous contribution to BHC research and we cannot thank it's originator Perry Snow enough for the trust, patience and faith he has shown us over the past few years; first by turning over his life's work and secondly, having the confidence in us and accepting our word that we would see this project through.

The Registry is proud to be Canadian based and owned. It is run by British Home Children descendants from BHCARA exclusively. There is no sign up, registration or fee required to access the information.

Executive Director, Canada Perry Snow

The BHCARA is excited to announce the appointment of our new Executive Director, Canada; Perry Snow. Mr. Snow is a retired Clinical Psychologist now living in Calgary, Alberta. Mr. Snow became involved with the British Home Children in 1993, searching for his BHC father's identity. He is the author of the widely read book "Neither Waif nor Stray: The Search for a Stolen Identity".

This book chronicles Mr. Snow's struggles to gain information on who his father was and the road blocks in obtaining this information which eluded his father all his life. We are sure many members are familiar with Mr. Snow's work and the research he personally provided to many people. He has now released his book on line for free. Visit our web site [British Home Children in Canada](#) for your copy!

In the year 2000, realizing the need for a common place on line for descendants to seek each other out and share information, Mr. Snow created the British Home Children Mail List. With his passion and desire to create a permanent legacy to his Father and all BHC, he also developed the [British Home Children Registry](#), which was published by BHCARA on September 28th 2016. Mr. Snow carefully collected information on the BHC for this registry over thirteen years, starting with his very first entry, his father Frederick Snow. Perry Snow is truly one of the pioneers in BHC research and awareness in Canada and we are thrilled to have him on our BHCARA team!

A combined 25 years of experience between Mr. Snow and Ms. Lori Oschefski, CEO BHCARA, in BHC research and study makes us a leading source of knowledge and BHC information. We look forward to combining forces to move this story forward in Canada.



Frederick Snow

**"No one should live their lives without knowing who they are and to whom they belong.
It is your birthright to know your heritage."**

Perry Snow BA (Hons) MA Clinical Psychologist (Retired)

2016 Remembrance of our BHC who served across Canada and the World



*British Home
Children of
Chatham
Kent.
Ontario, CA
Remembers*



Poppy Crosses placed in Ypres, including crosses for BHC Sgt. Harold Dickinson 1895 - 1918 and Pte. Albert Newman 1898 - 1918



Dawn Heuston's beautiful exhibit in Chatham Kent, Ontario, CA



*Nantyr Shores
Secondary
School
Innisfil,
Ontario
Remembers*



Forty five students and staff from Nantyr Shores Secondary School in Innisfil, Ontario, Canada are travelling to Europe this spring and will be part of the 100th Anniversary of the Battle of Vimy Ridge. As part of the preparation for the homage, students were each assigned to research one of the 61 soldiers from Innisfil who were killed during the First and Second World Wars. Three soldiers were found to be British Home Children. Private Anthony Mansfield Bailey (159021), Private Samuel Arthur Cross (142604) and Private Albert Edward Spragg (142636). These BHC were honoured in a special fund raising dinner held on November 10.



*Orillia,
Ontario
Public
Library
Remembers*



to research one of the 61 soldiers from Innisfil who were killed during the First and Second World Wars. Three soldiers were found to be British Home Children. Private Anthony Mansfield Bailey (159021), Private Samuel Arthur Cross (142604) and Private Albert Edward Spragg (142636). These BHC were honoured in a special fund raising dinner held on November 10.

The Orillia, Ontario Public Library invited the BHCARA to participate in their Remembrance Week Exhibit 2016, our third year. What is amazing about this event is that students from all over the area are invited to attend. The students are first seated in the cafe area where they learn about the Wars. The OPL then gave the BHCARA an opportunity to speak to the students about the BHC. During this event, 450 students plus their teachers learned about the BHC and their contribution to the wars. The BHCARA also donated BHC books to the teachers who showed an interest in taking this story back to their classrooms! Many thanks to Susan Hall and JoAnn Clark for hosting our tables and speaking to our students this year!



*Descendant
Bram Trout,
in France,
Remembers*

On the anniversary of his Great Uncle, Alfred William Sewell's, death (3 Nov 1916), 100 years after he was killed in the trenches at Vimy Ridge; group member Bram Trout honoured his memory by visiting his grave and the Vimy Memorial in France. Through our group, he was also able to arrange to have a poppy placed on the war memorial in Ontario on the same day.



2016 Remembrance of our BHC who served across Canada and the World



The Ontario
East British
Home Child
Family,
Ottawa,
Ontario
Remembers



On behalf of all the groups and descendants across Canada and the world, the OEBHCF laid a wreath during the National Remembrance Day Ceremony. Wreath bearer was high school student Lauren Jones



Kamloops,
BC
Remembers

Lee Kenny laid
this in the
Riverside park.



Carmen
McFarridge
in Red Lake
Ontario
Remembers



Laid on behalf of the Doherty Family,
in honour of Matthew Doherty, his
brother Thomas and sisters Margaret
and Mary



BHC
Marjorie
Skidmore in
Rutland, BC
Remembers



Margie Skidmore and Joan Skidmore at the
Remembrance Day Ceremony in Rutland. Lorretta
Farquhar organized a wreath in honour of the British
Home Children and Descendants.



Toronto,
Ontario
Remembers



A BHC wreath was laid at Queen's Park in
Toronto



Whycocomagh,
Nova Scotia
Remembers



Lauren and Katherine MacDonald laid a wreath in
memory of British Home Children and Descendants

2016 Remembrance of our BHC who served across Canada and the World



Debert, Nova Scotia Remembers

Wayne Large,
Susan Mosher
and her grand
daughter Paula
laying a wreath.



Pictou Nova Scotia Remembers

Carolyn MacIsaac
laying wreath in
Pictou in memory
of British Home
Children and
Descendants



*Sherry Flinn
and the Brownies
in Chase B.C.
Remembers*

Sherry had the
Brownies lay the BHC
Wreath as she thought
it fitting for children to
represent the British
Home Children.



11/11/2016



*Loretta Farquhar
and her
Grandchildren
in Kelowna BC
Remembers*



*Claresholme AB
Remembers*

Hazel Perrier laid a
wreath on behalf of
their group, no
photo is available



*Maureen Clancy
Gagnona
In
Campbell's Bay,
Quebec
Remembers*

It's incredible to see the remembrance of the service of our British Home Children spread out further each year. We thank each and every person or group who took the time to ensure their service is never forgotten. Work continues on our Casualty Roster by our volunteers. This group, led by Sharon Munro, completed the task of ensuring each soldier can be searched in the Roster by name now. Our Casualty site can be viewed at: <http://bhc-who-died-in-the-first-world-war.silk.co/>

Deadline for our Bursary competition submissions is January 15th 2017

Lori Oschefski of BHCARA and Bob Huggins of Orphan Boy Films



Announce:

A bursary competition for students

We have had great success with our fund raising for a monument for the 76 BHC buried in the Park Lawn Cemetery, Etobicoke, Ontario, but we still need a design. Bob Huggins has secured us a 4 ft X 4 ft plate of steel, donated to this project by Marine Recycling of Port Colborne. We need a design which is to be etched on to the steel plate and we are calling on our young students up to university level to come up with a design.

- Dimensions of the working space is 4ft X 4ft
- Must have room for the seventy six names of the children buried there
- An essay of no more than 1,000 words must accompany the design drawing. This essay should explain your design choice decisions and should show a general knowledge of the BHC migration programs, explain why these 76 lives should be recognized and honoured; and why this important piece of Canadian History needs to be remembered through the generations.
- Contest is open to submissions until the 15th of January, 2017
- Lori Oschefski, Bob Huggins and members of the BHCARA Advisory Board will select the top 10 designs.
- The top 10 designs and essays will be published in our [Facebook Group](#) where our members will then vote for the winning design. The top three designs and essays will receive a cash bursary as follows: First Place: \$1,000 and the design etched on the monument, Second Place: \$500 and Third Place \$250.
- All designs and essays submitted become the property of the BHCARA and Orphan Boy Films.

Suggested reading and resource materials for our students:

1. The Little Immigrants by Kenneth Bagnell - High school to adult level
2. Charlie - A Home Child's Life in Canada by Beryl Young - younger grades, youth to adult
3. Web site: [British Home Children in Canada](#)
4. Students and their family/parents are encouraged to join our [Facebook Group](#) where many members are available to help with questions. Mr. Huggins and Ms. Oschefski may be contacted through the BHCARA facebook group or through email: info@Britishhomechildren.com or bob.huggins@orphanboyfilms.com

Please submit entries by Jan 15/17 to info@britishhomechildren.com

THE MANCHESTER AND SALFORD BOYS' AND GIRLS' REFUGES CARING FOR YOUNG PEOPLE SINCE 1870. BY AUTHOR AND HISTORIAN ANDREW SIMPSON

Now all of us who are related to a BHC will have one children's charity which features uppermost in our research.

It will like as not be the one which migrated and was responsible for our grandmother, great uncle or great grandfather.

In my case it should be Middlemore which migrated my great uncle Roger in the November of 1914 on behalf of the Derby Union.

And while that organization does interest me I am far more interested in the Manchester and Salford Boys' and Girls' Refuges which is now the Together Trust and continues the work of helping young people.*

It had been established in 1870 to provide a bed and a meal for destitute boys and at that time offered only six places.



But the charity quickly extended its work to include girls as well as boys, and to provide more permanent homes offering training for future careers along with holiday homes.

And it campaigned against some of the worst cases of child exploitation taking negligent parents to court and arguing against the practise of employing young children to sell matches on the streets of the twin cities.

Like other children's charities it also became involved in the migration of young people to Canada. But unlike other such organizations it stopped in 1914.

During the Great War because it depended on voluntary contributions it suffered as the public switched to sponsoring war time charities and as a result it was forced to make economies but it survived, and could look back on the successes it had achieved.

In 1916 the secretary reflected that the charity had "during its forty-six years helped 10,831 children," [including those] poor delicate children sent to the seaside home, and poor boys sent to summer camps for a week's holiday which have numbered no fewer than 55,891." **

This was a record set against the desperate degree of poverty and hardship experienced by our homeless children back in the 1870s who were "getting their living by begging, selling papers and matches, or by blacking boots in the streets, and when they could not raise 3d. for a night in a common lodging house slept out."

They were to be found lying under stalls in Shudehill Market, in the various alleys under the railway arches, and among bales of cotton in railway yards."** Forty-six years on the secretary commented "I could have taken you to half a dozen places where you would have found young lads sleeping out; today I do not know of one. Indeed I do not think boys and girls are to be found sleeping out, thanks to the work of our own agencies and of others in Manchester and Salford."**

Now as I live in Manchester and write extensively about the history of the city and the neighbouring city of Salford I am fascinated by both the charity's history and the work it did. The added bonus is that it has an extensive archive stretching back to 1870 which offers a vivid insight into just what a difference the charity made.

Here can be found the admissions records, reports on individual children along with many photographs and letters written by the young people who had been in the care of the Refuge.

Many of them feature regularly in the charity's blog, [Getting Down and Dusty](#) which is a good starting point for those interested in the work of the Manchester and Salford Boys' and Girls' Refuges as well as for anyone who may have had a relative who was helped by the charity.***

The archivist is always very willing to assist those who had a family member who was in the care of the charity and has been using the archive to engage the interest of young people.

Earlier in the year as part of the Manchester Histories Festival a group of students performed 'Deep Pockets and Dirty Faces' which was a Heritage Lottery funded project designed for young people to discover the origins and explore the history of the Together Trust in a fun and creative way.

And that project has continued with them using the archive to make a film drawing on the oral account of one child's journey to Canada.

Now that is how I like my history informative, helpful and above all ready to engage young people in a story which is close to our collective hearts.

Pictures: courtesy of the Together Trust

*The Together Trust, <http://togethertrustarchive.blogspot.co.uk/p/about-together-trust.html>

**The Passing of the City Arab Manchester Guardian January 3rd 1916

***Getting Down and Dusty, October 24, 2016, <http://togethertrustarchive.blogspot.co.uk/>



VISIT THE BLOGS OF AUTHOR AND HISTORIAN ANDREW SIMPSON

[WWW.CHORLTONHISTORY.BLOGSPOT.CA](http://CHORLTONHISTORY.BLOGSPOT.CA)

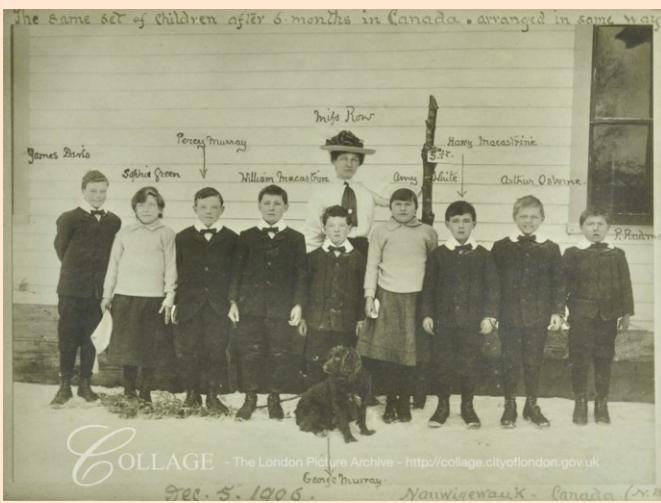
THE ELLINOR CLOSE FARM

Ellinor Close is credited as being one of the few children's advocates who was truly sympathetic to the needs of younger children. In 1903 she proposed that she bring 7,000 workhouse children from the UK to Canada. The children would be trained in Canada and returned to England when of age. The Times in the UK praised the scheme because the children chosen would be the ailing and the feeble-minded, therefore the better stock of children would remain in England.

The Canadian Government did not look with favour on this plan and it was amended to bring older children. Mrs. Close had first looked towards Manitoba, but it was the New Brunswick authorities who agreed to work with her. The death rates in New Brunswick institutions had reached 80% in some years, with rampant sexual and physical abuse reported. Mrs. Close's proposal saw the children living in small numbers in cottage homes where they lived under the care of a matron or "mother". This would allow the children to live in an environment which was likened to "normal" family life. Her farm, which opened in Nauwigewauk, NB, was mirrored after the Dr. Barnardo's Barkingside Village in Ilford, England. The children were to receive some training in England before being sent to Canada. In February of 1905, the Lord Mayor of London called a meeting to discuss the new emigration scheme of Ellinor Close. Attending this meeting was a seriously ailing Dr. Thomas Barnardo. A reporter from the Canadian Globe was present and published one of the last descriptions of this man who chose Canada as the home for thousands of British children. In his account, he told how Dr. Barnardo took the stage at this meeting and very eloquently and with great enthusiasm, ridiculed the proposed scheme. Dr. Barnardo died seven months later.

Despite the push back, Ellinor Close started emigration of children, in 1906, with the nine children shown in these photos. The photos suggest a remarkable improvement in the health of the children in the six months they had been in Canada.

The 1907/1908 economic decline in Canada caused the government to deem the Ellinor Close farm too costly to run. The government was tightening restrictions on child immigration to disallow the immigration of children who might become a burden to the Canadian tax payer. The local government subsequently withdrew approval of the migration of workhouse children. By 1912 the Royal Colonial Institute, a UK based "non-political learned society to promote colonial affairs" (now known as the Royal Commonwealth Society) suggested Ellinor Close's farm had "reached its highest expectations". By the outbreak of the First World War in 1914, the farm had closed.



forgotten by those present. The exclamation of delight and the happy faces were pleasant to behold as each was handed a gift and it made one's heart rejoice to hear the happy childish speeches and see the look on their faces and it did not end with the orphan children of the home, but was taken up by old and young of the invited guests, over 50 in number, and each and every one had some token of remembrance presented to them by Misses Dunn and Row. After that part was well over the visitors were very pleasantly entertained for an hour or more by the children of the home and the very able manner in which each and every piece was rendered was highly creditable to the children and those in charge. The Xmas carols were a treat, and the whole entertainment was very enjoyable. After all had enjoyed themselves in that

respect, Miss Dunn had another surprise in store as all were invited to another room where a large table was spread and filled with the most tempting array of dainties. This was another sight your correspondent will never forget. It was surely one good to behold and never to be forgotten. It is safe to say all left that table well satisfied and thankful. Oh, that the friends of the children could only see them, so happy and so contented here in Canada. It would do you good to see and know how dearly the children all love Misses Dunn and Row, and well they may, for they are in every way worthy of the love of all. As the Xmas party was chiefly for the young, Miss Dunn had about 50 grown up guests invited from 7:00 to 10:00pm on Friday, December 28th. This was also a time for pleasant surprise, a very enjoyable entertainment was given by the children after which all partook of the bounties of a well filled table. The remainder of the evening was spent in merry making and in remarks from many of the guests, who all



CHRISTMAS 1906 AT THE ELLINOR CLOSE FARM

Kings County Record, Jan. 4, 1907, page 8, Nauwigewauk Dec. 31

As the year (1906) is drawing to a close, it will be in keeping to say a few words of praise for the "Elenor (sic) Home" and its happy family and to begin, it is safe to say the children never experienced a Christmas such as the one just past. Everything possible was done by Misses Dunn and Row to make it pleasant. During the afternoon and evening a large number of invited guests gathered at the home. A monster Xmas tree, well loaded with very suitable presents for each and all, stood in the center of a large room and when the door was thrown open and the children entered, there was a scene never to be

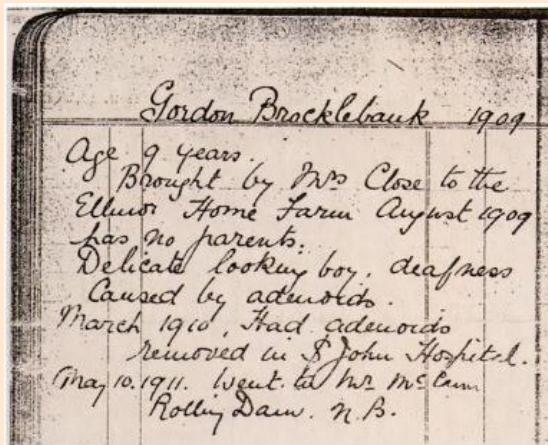


Photo credit: Smith Family

Sources and Credits

- Planters, Paupers, and Pioneers: English Settlers in Atlantic Canada
- The Golden Bridge: Young Immigrants to Canada, 1833-1939
- Ignored but Not Forgotten: Canada's English Immigrants
- Fairbridge: Empire and Child Migration
- Marjorie Too Afraid to Cry: A Home Child Experience
- The Curse of the Corporation
- LeeAnn Beer - BHCARA BHC Registry for finding the photos
- Photo credit: London Metropolitan Archives, City of London: The Little Immigrants: The Orphans who Came to Canada

FROM ADVERSITY TO ACCOMPLISHMENT: THE LIFE AND FAMILY HISTORY OF HAROLD MAYS WENN BY JENNIFER WENN

The title of this article is also the title of a book I wrote, one that was some 40 years in the making. It is intended to tell something of the story of Harold Mays Wenn, my grandfather, including everything that I have been able to find out concerning his family background, which included both birth and adoptive families. It is fairly complicated, and took some time to unravel. However, it is, I think, a very interesting tale. The effort resulted in two main things: the information recorded, and the re-uniting of a family that had been separated for over 70 years.



Harold Wenn's admission photograph courtesy of Barnardo's.



Harold in about 1970

Harold Mays Wenn was born September 14, 1909 in Grimsby, England and came to Canada in 1921 under the auspices of the Barnardo Homes. He died on December 13, 1973 in Norwich, Ontario, Canada. His widow, Laura, died on March 13, 1995. His family, as of this date, includes his three children, five grandchildren, six great-grandchildren and three great-great-grandchildren.

I was born in 1959, and so I was only 14 when he died. I do have some strong memories of him, however. He had a wonderful sense of humour and was just plain fun to be around. Harold never talked much about his background, and the rest of his family never felt that they should ask. However, some things were known, especially about certain aspects of Harold's life in Canada. After he died, my curiosity about his (and hence my own) roots grew. Before long I decided to try and trace his family background.

It seemed a daunting task, as all I had to start with was his birth date and place, a few remembered stories, and a stack of letters from some people of

unknown relationship in England. The letters (which turned out to be from his adoptive family) contained a few clues, but contact with the family of the writers was only very briefly re-established. His birth certificate provided only his mother's name. A letter to Barnardo's resulted in the news that he had been adopted at birth, some facts concerning his adoptive family, and some information concerning his release into the care of the Barnardo Homes and his journey to Canada.

A trip to England in 1981 provided the key piece of information. While there on a vacation, I decided to go to the General Register Office and look through their indexes (for birth, death and marriage certificates) for entries that seemed to match my information, and apply for the certificates. My hope was to get enough data to be able to start putting the picture together. One of the things I decided to look for was the death certificate for Harold's mother. The last year I knew her to be alive was 1918, and so I started there, and worked forward. In those days the indexes were not computerized, but were contained in a large number of very large bound volumes; searching therefore took time and physical labour. However, my efforts were rewarded, as two hours after I started, I found the entry in late 1973.

After I returned home, I received my certificates. They were helpful, but there were many, many things I still didn't know, including basic facts such as who Harold's father was. On my father's suggestion, I tried a long shot—I sent a letter documenting what I knew to the address in Leicester, England, where my great-grandmother had died, expecting nothing. Imagine my surprise when I received a reply stating that the people living there in 1973 were still there. Not only that, but they were my grandfather's half-brother, Harry Mays, and his wife Rose, two people I did not know existed. They in turn did not know that my grandfather had ever existed, but there was enough information in my letter for them to recognize the connection to Harry's family. Harry and Rose received my letter in the morning post, and were so dumbfounded that they just sat there, reading it over and over. Afterwards, we visited each other's families. This included memorable trips to England by me and subsequently my parents. We were also honoured to host Harry and Rose here in Canada, Harry coming on two different occasions, as well as their daughter Jean later on. Together we reconstructed the story of my grandfather's earliest days and his immediate biological family.

Subsequently, significant further archival and secondary source research and the kind assistance of a number of additional people filled out other parts of the account. At my mother's urging partway through this process, I started recording what I knew, and produced the first version in December, 1989. Over the



Harold's trunk and New Testament

subsequent years (and decades) I kept revising and enlarging it as new information and ideas arose.

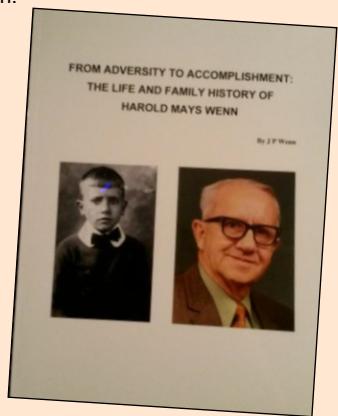
This work is based on a large number of sources. The main categories are personal testimonies; documents and records of various kinds; secondary works such as books; and periodicals, mostly of the time. While I endeavoured to ground as much of the text as possible in verifiable fact, I indulged in some informed speculation now and then where I felt that I was on solid ground.

Harold's story, is, I feel, a very moving one. It also features a variety of themes. For instance, I was impressed by the number of different people who gave Harold a helping hand when he needed it. Perhaps most striking though is that in the end Harold's life was the embodiment of triumph over adversity.

As I mentioned before, Harold's background and early days in Canada were a mystery to his family. This was in contrast to my other grandparents. Their families, including my great aunts and uncles and even great-grandparents were part of my extended family. Stories were told, forebears from days gone by were remembered, family trees were shown, traditions were passed on. Of course, with Harold (or Grandpa Wenn as I knew him), those things couldn't happen; there was almost no family folklore where he was concerned. By the time the final version of this paper was starting to take shape, I realized that one of the things I had been doing was trying to reconstruct that body of tradition we never had and integrate it with our own experience of Grandpa. This may help to explain why it took so much time and effort to get this manuscript into a form with which I was happy. The most recent phase involved searching out photographs and constructing maps to supplement the text.

Over time my conscious goals for this chronicle evolved. When I embarked on this project the first question I set out to address naturally concerned where Harold came from, and what his family background was. Later came a second one, which could be stated "What path led Harold from his origins to the man his family knew?" I have tried to answer these two questions as clearly and completely as I can. Harold's journey was an eventful one with a number of different way stations. Later on came other desires; one was to give his story some historical context. As I researched and wrote it there came a point when I really started to feel the presence of the persons in it, most especially of course my grandfather, who I have been able to get to know in a way that wasn't possible before he passed away. While they would be classed as ordinary folk, to me everyone in this book is, in his or her own way, quite extraordinary. Letting these very real people come to life became quite important to me, and I hope that in some small way I have succeeded.

Sadly, due to the substantial passage of time from when I started many of those who provided invaluable assistance have now passed on; somewhere I hope they are able to appreciate the final result. There have been many other changes, some quite significant, both to the world and its inhabitants, myself included. But this chronicle remains, timeless in its own way, I think. And, after all this time, I finally completed it in late 2015. May its readers enjoy it as much as I enjoyed my role in putting it together.



Copies of this book "From Adversity to Accomplishment" can be obtained by contacting the author, Jennifer Wenn, at: jpw4238@hotmail.com
Review by Lori Oschefski: Ms. Wenn's attention to historical detail in her book make this not only a compelling story of Harold Wenn, but a valuable insight into the Barnardo immigration programs, which brought countless numbers of children to Canada. Well done Jennifer! You answered many questions I had about the programs!



This image and front cover image from our vintage 1890 "Our Darlings" magazine collections

As another amazing year comes to a close, we look back on 2016 with the deepest gratitude to our outstanding group efforts and the caring community of our BHC Family. This year saw us traveling across Canada and across the pond, back home to England. No matter where we went we were met by BHC and BHC descendants who treated us like family. We were welcomed into their homes and our members could not do enough to ensure we were well looked after in our travels. This welcoming family feeling is also evident in our Facebook group. Our members there have shown outstanding consideration and caring for our new members and old. Our success is directly attributable to our members and their generosity. We are on this journey together.

All the best for the holiday season to our BHC Family