

Quarrier's village in Scotland - Bridge of Weir

February 2016 BHCARA Newsletter

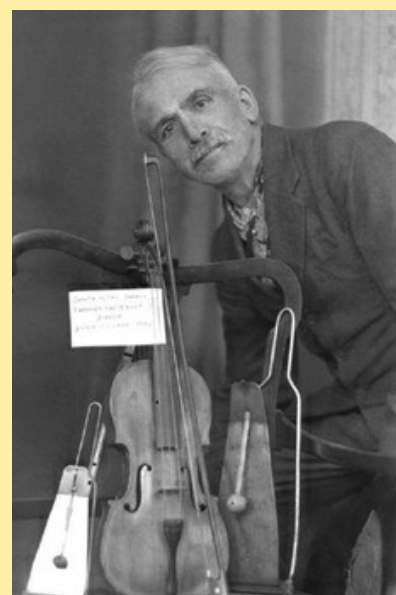
BHC of the Month William Carter

*Except from the book, **Stories Behind the Stones: The Churchyard and the Old and New Cemeteries at Great Yarmouth** by Paul P Davies
Published in 2008 (ISBN-13: 978-0954450939, 540 pages):*

In 1958 William Carter was buried in his mother's grave in the New Cemetery, Great Yarmouth in accordance with his strict instructions, which he had drawn up a few years previously. He was 83 years of age. His directions stipulated that as his coffin was being lowered into the grave a record of George Beverly Shea singing He brought my Soul at Calvary should be played. A portable gramophone was brought to the graveside and was played as the Rev. A. Heigham read the committal service.

George Shea was born in 1909 and sang at the services of the American evangelist, Billy Graham in the 1950's.

William Carter was born in Great Yarmouth in 1875 and led his adult life wandering around Canada. His mother died in 1882 and he entered a Dr. Barnardo's Home. One of his earliest memories was playing the mouth-organ and picking up tunes by ear. He never had a music lesson in his life. In 1899 he went to Canada with one of the groups of children, who were sent there from Dr. Barnardo's Homes, to be trained in farming. After fire destroyed his rented farm in Carrot River Valley in Saskatchewan in 1929, William Carter took to the road. He had lost all of his belongings, apart from his fiddle and his five whistles. He was forbidden to play on street corners and public places. Therefore, he gave impromptu recitals in offices, restaurants, pool rooms and wherever a few people were gathered.



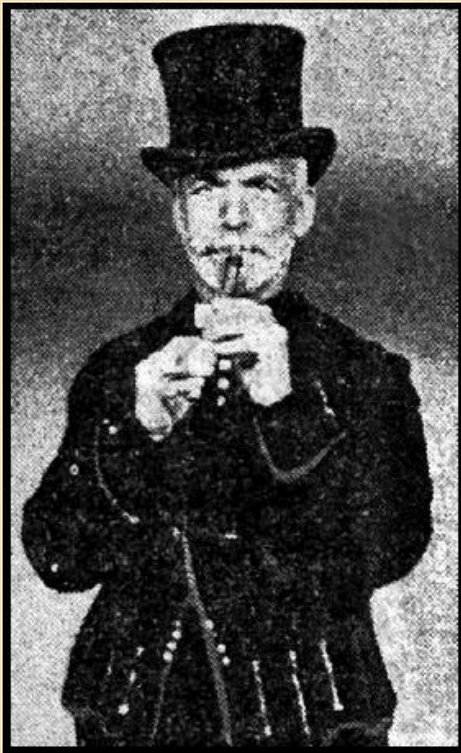
Usually a collection was made and he earned a few dollars.

He crossed Canada four times playing a violin and penny-whistles. He claimed that he had wandered over 30,000 miles. His biggest audience was in Callender, Ontario,

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Working in collaboration with Barnardo's in England, the BHCARA is pleased to launch a special project of remembrance
Visit page 7 of our newsletter for details and how you can help!

where he played to an audience of 8,000 people at a gathering to celebrate the birthday of the Dionne quintuplets. He had frequently broadcast from Western Canadian radio stations. His



chief ambition was to return to England and, by saving coppers earned in the copper mining towns of Northern Ontario, he managed to pay his fare.

In 1935 William Carter was interviewed by the Winnipeg Tribune. Their journalist wrote:

William Joseph Carter is a wandering minstrel of these depression years. He has learned life's rich secret to live life carefully and happily with no anxious thought for the morrow. He drifted into Winnipeg a few days ago. He played babbling melodies on his whistles and haunting lyrics on his violin, while office boys went into roars of laughter as he went into rhythmic ecstasies of

movement. His iron-grey hair and chin-whisker, his face chestnut brown from life in the great outdoors, his brown eyes twinkling merrily, his incredible 60 year old vitality, his sturdy 62 inches of height combine to proclaim his spiritual kinship with the troubadours and minstrels of Merrie England that was.

William Carter travels by train or bus, if he is in funds. Sometimes he is given lifts in cars, but mainly he walks. He has never been turned away from houses or farms hungry. People are glad to see the old fiddler. They find him happy and carefree. The whole day is one song of gladness to him. He likes to see people happy and to see the lines of care melt away from their faces as he plays.

In 1937 he was in Burnley, England where the local paper reported: 'this week a little elderly man with a goatee beard and a curious black lambskin hat is playing his metal whistle in the streets of Burnley. He stated his intention of trying his luck in this town for a week, having arrived here from Blackburn. Afterwards he intends to journey north to Scotland.'

In 1942, Winnipeg Tribune reported under the heading 'Top-Hatted Fiddler gets Nod from Genius':

One time prairie farmer and minstrel, W. J. Carter, who often wandered into Winnipeg with his fiddle tucked under a big bright smile has again broken into print, this time in England, his new stamping ground. The Nottingham Guardian had a story to tell of Canada's wandering minstrel with his black coat and battered top hat. This story

concerns one of his proudest memories, an experience in Calgary in 193. William Carter related that he was doing his stuff when a man stopped to listen and then edged up to him and said 'why do you hold the fiddle like that'. I told him that it 'suited me and my public did not give a damn how I held her if the tunes pleased them'. The man then lent forward and said 'you're doing fine' and dropped a dollar bill into my hat. He then gave me his card and said 'beat it round to my hotel and tell them to fix you up'. That man was Fritz Kreisler, the famous violinist.

William Carter often returned to Great Yarmouth, though he died in an old men's home in Liverpool, where he had been living for some years. His will was made in 1953 and he lodged a copy, detailing his funeral wishes, at the Great Yarmouth Mercury's office, with the cemetery superintendent and with his solicitor. He left his scrapbook and three photographs to the Great Yarmouth Mercury to make use of them as they wished, and then they should be forwarded to the Winnipeg Tribune in Canada. The photographs were inscribed 'the last photograph of W. J. Carter'. In a note scribbled at the bottom of his will he stated that he had sent copies of it to newspapers in Winnipeg, Montreal and Victoria, British Columbia. On the back of the will was written a number of verses and some prose, and some perhaps original and others from his scrapbook. After the payment of funeral expenses the residue of his estate was left to Dr. Barnardo's Homes

Passages:

STRAWBRIDGE, Brian, 14 March 1929 - 30 December 2015. Brian passed away peacefully at the Sunrise Seniors home in Victoria BC. He was born in Newcastle-on-Tyne, England and in 1938 he was sent to Fairbridge Farm School on Vancouver Island where he received his early education. He served in the RCAF for many years most notably flying CF100's with 445 Squadron in Marville, France and the Falcon Fan jet and Convair at 412 Squadron, Uplands(Ottawa)

Brian came on the Duchess of York, 23 August 1938 in a group of 28 children. RIP, thank you for your service

The Child Care Legislation

Damned if you do, damned if you don't

In 1870 reformers introduced the idea of building institutions for pauper children thus increasing the physical separation of children from their parents. This separation allowed institutions to legally attack parental rights of these children. By 1891 the Custody of Children Act was implemented, which effectively stripped parents of their rights when their children were either relinquished or taken into care by these institutions.

Author and historian, Andrew Simpson, from Chorlton-Cum-Hardy, stated in his blog, "The Custody of Children Act almost falls into that damned if you do, damned if you don't argument. At what point does the State step in to protect the rights of a child? Regardless of how Barnardo may have used the legislation the principle that authorities should have the power to act is one that comes with the development of a welfare state."

Undoubtedly this is true and that children do need to be protected. However this impacted the migration of children from England tremendously. The law was dubbed the "Barnardo Relief Law" because Dr. Barnardo was said to have been the instigating force behind the legislation.

The very first act of parliament in the UK to protect the children was the Prevention of Cruelty of Children Act of 1889. It enabled the state to intervene for the first time in relations between parents and children. Police could arrest anyone found ill-treating a child and enter a home if a child was thought to be in danger. The act included guidelines on the employment of children and outlawed begging.

Legislation was very much needed to help protect children and it did. However, this act allowed the courts to remove children from unfit parents and place them with persons they considered 'fit', often voluntary care organizations such as Barnardo's. The term 'fit' was loosely defined. This law also gave the organizations the right to make all decisions for the child including the right to migrate them out of the country without any further notice to the parent.

This legislation, however well intended, became the first door which opened legalized removal of these children from their country and therefore permanently from their parents by the "Child Savers" as they were also known. The terms of "fit" and "unfit parents" were undefined boundaries that were tested and pushed by these organizations.

The Poor Law Act of 1889, mandated that no legal action was required on behalf of the organizations to assume parental rights. If the parents objected they would have to fight it through the court system. This clause read "'1.- (1.) - Where a child is maintained by the guardians of any union and was deserted by its parent, the guardians may at any time resolve that such child shall be under the control of the guardians until it reaches the age, if a boy, of sixteen, and if a girl of eighteen years, and thereupon until the child reaches that age all the powers and rights of such parent in respect of that child shall, subject as in this Act mentioned, vest in the guardians."

In this same time frame, several parents applied for writs of Habeas Corpus, demanding that Dr. Barnardo return their children. Dr. Barnardo, in 1885, had boasted in at least forty seven cases brought against him in the courts, that he had won over the parental rights,

citing "philanthropic" or moral abduction above the law. However, no cases had made the high court until 1889 with the cases of Harry Gossage, John James Roddy and Martha Ann Tye.

In 1889, Mrs. Louisa Kate Reid objected to Dr. Barnardo's plan to send her daughter Emily Marion to Canada. Mrs. Reid requested the help of the courts to have her daughter return to her, stating she was in a better position now and could care for her daughter herself. In July of 1889, Dr. Barnardo was ordered by the courts to return James Brooks to his mother. In August of 1889 two sisters sought to bring a writ of habeas corpus seeking the return of their sister who had been sent to Canada by Dr. Barnardo against their wishes, returned. In 1890 there was also the case brought to the courts by a sister & brother seeking information on their two sisters who were sent to Canada by Dr. Barnardo in 1883. They stated that they were not neglected or destitute, but rather sent to Dr. Barnardo's in the belief they would receive a better training there. The fact is, there were many cases such as these brought to the courts and the fear was more would continue to do likewise.

In 1891 the Custody of Children Act came in to effect. This law is described in the "Emigration Statutes and General Handbook" issued by the Immigrants Information Office, Westminster, April 1892 - "Custody of Children Act 1891 - It has often happened that the emigration or other disposal of a child has been prevented, to the injury of the child, by the parent claiming its production. The Custody of Children Act, 1891, gets rid of this difficulty by enacting in sect. 1: - When the parent of a child applies to the High Court or the Court of Session for a writ or order for the production of the child, and the Court is of opinion that the parent has abandoned or deserted the child, or that he has otherwise so conducted himself that the Court should refuse to enforce his right to the custody of the child, the Court may in its discretion decline to issue the writ or make the order."

Further this act mandated that if an order was granted, then the parent could be made to repay the organization who had custody of the child part or all of the costs involved in caring for these children. This law made it highly unlikely that poor parents would seek court action to regain custody as they would not likely be successful and if so, they would not be able to repay the costs of child's care. From the proverbial horse's mouth, they got rid of this difficulty and cleared the way to unhampered legalized migration of children without the consent of their parents.

These laws made it legal to remove children from parents who were deemed "unfit", stripped these parents of their parental rights without court intervention and legalized their removal from the country without parental consent. These laws were one of the major divides of the good works and the atrocious results from these organizations. They were just the tip of the iceberg.

Those who spoke out

By Andrew Simpson

Lives revealed, commitments rediscovered those who spoke out part 1, William Skivington

Even now the words of William Skivington speaking at a meeting of the Chorlton Union in 1910 opposing the migrating of young people to Canada has a resonance and reminds us that some at least both opposed the policy and argued for alternatives.

Speaking of those who were sent from Manchester by the Poor Law Guardians he said

"they were robbed of their childhood and of the opportunity of a sound education the emigration of young children for working purposes savoured of a traffic in child labour carried on between agencies in this country and agencies in Canada and children would not be allowed to go from the care of the Guardians to anything like such conditions in this country."*

Along with his two his two fellow Socialist Guardians, Dr Garret and Mrs Garret, he maintained a consistent line of opposition to the practice.

But a century on all three have all but been forgotten, relegated in one history book to just a sentence which did not even mention them by name.

So this will be the first of an occasional series looking at the three and beginning with William Edward Skivington who deserves to be remembered.

His was a short life spanning just 42 years from 1869 to 1911.

There are no blue plaques to him in the city, nor to my knowledge has he been honoured in any way for his work on behalf of the unemployed and poor of Manchester.

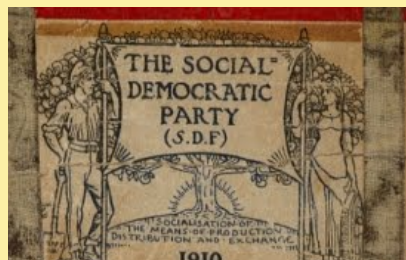
No photographs of him have survived and even the mean little streets in Hulme where he grew up and lived are long gone. But some of what he said and did and something of his political ideas do exist and from these I want to tell a little of his history.

I first discovered him as one the three socialist Guardians on the board of the Chorlton Union which administered the Poor Law across south Manchester.

Time and time again the three spoke out against the sending of young children from our workhouse to Canada to work on farms and as a domestic labour. They questioned the often petty but humiliating practices that existed, demanded better conditions and opposed any perceived cuts in the provision of relief to the inmates.

Now admission into the workhouse for working people was just an accident away, be it unemployment, ill health, old age or just bad luck. And it was a scenario which William Skivington would have been all too familiar with.

His father was a bookbinder, his mother a bookfolder, and both he and his brother had worked as iron turners. He began his married life in a one up one down back to back in Hulme and his brother died at the early age of 17 from an industrial accident.



William was a member of the Socialist Democratic Federation which was formed in 1884 and was the first Marxist political group in Britain. The membership included trade unionists like Tom Mann, John Burns and Ben Tillet as well George Lansbury, William Morris and Eleanor Marx. During the mid 1880s against a backdrop of economic depression the SDF campaigned for "the Right to Work" and demanded the establishment of state directed co-operative colonies.

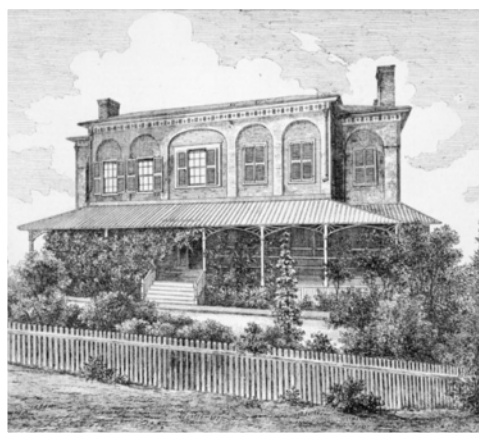


Now I don't know when he joined but in 1896 he nominated an SDF candidate in the municipal elections and may have already been in the party when he unsuccessfully stood for election as a Poor Law Guardian two years earlier.

The SDF experienced splits and defections along with short periods of greater political unity. In 1900 it had come together with the Independent Labour Party, the Fabian Society and some trade unions to form the Labour Representation Committee, but left just seven years later. William remained in the SDF speaking at its meetings and on occasion arguing against members of the Independent Labour Party within the unemployed movement.

And it was the unemployed movement which dominated much of his political life during the first decade of the 20th century. In the winter of 1904 in Manchester something like "7,000 heads of families were out of work, and that probably twenty-one thousand children were on the verge of starvation*** and William was at the centre of the campaign to publicize the situation and argue for change.

Over the next seven years he was on delegations which met the Prime Minister and leading Government Ministers, organised mass meetings, as well as marches and sat on the Distress Committee which had been set up by the

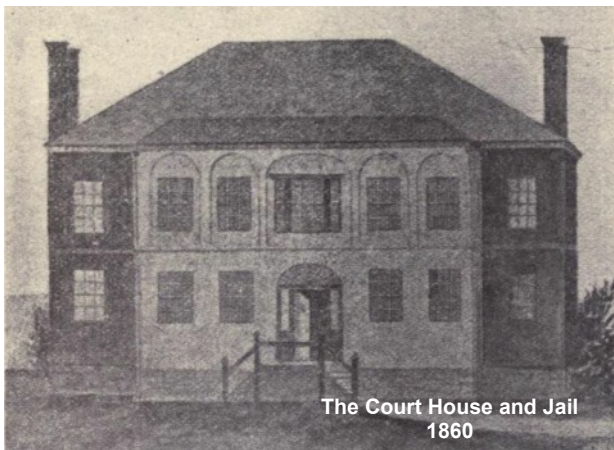


Histories of the Receiving Homes

Niagara-on-the-Lake Our Western Home Maria Rye & Church of England



On the morning of October 13, 1912, during the War of 1812, Fort George and the Village of Niagara, as Niagara-on-the-Lake was then named, came under heavy fire from the "enemy". Within minutes, the Court House and Jail, along with fifteen homes, were set ablaze and destroyed. Added to the enormity of the loss, some 300 prisoners were confined in the jail when it was burned. At the close of the War of 1812-14, the Village of Niagara lay in ruins.



down. In this room could be seen the grating, only about a foot square, from which a prisoner condemned to death might take almost his last sight of the light of day. Trees and flowers were planted, by Rye, outside the building. Some 4,000 children came through Maria Rye. She retired in 1895, and returned to England, turning her home and work over to the Church of England Waifs and Strays Society. The COE had previously brought their first children through Maria Rye.

An advertisement was published in the Spectator, St. Davids, in 1816 for brick, stone, lumber, lath, shingles and such, for a jail and court house was signed by Ralfe Clench a United Empire Loyalist, a member of Butler's Ranger, a member of Parliament, a Judge and a veteran. Mr. Clench, remarkably, had signed the advertisement for materials for the first jail and court house in Niagara in 1795.

Officials made the decision to move the town further inland, away from the river and American territory on the opposite shore. The new Court House and Jail, built in 1817, was constructed well away from the pre-existing town centre. This building, stately red bricked, became known as the most splendid and handsome building in Upper Canada. Lavished woodwork graced the interior.

The jail cells were located on the main floor. They surrounded and were open to the hall which lead to the Court room, so the inmates were exposed to the gaze of those who entered. The partitions and doors were made of oak bolted together, the doors nine inches thick of two thickness of wood with sheet iron in between. Some of the cells were heated with wood fireplaces, but others inmates in stoveless cells could only gaze out at the

stove in the hallway, which offered them no warmth during the Canadian winters.

Many historical and often dramatic events happen in this building, of which the most notable one was the 1837 Slave Escape. At that time there were 300 to 400 inhabitants of Niagara who had escaped Slavery from the United States. One of these men, named Mosby, had used his master's horse to escape. Following him to Canada, his Master had him arrested and demanded he be returned to the States. This caused a great deal of excitement in the village, hundreds, of both races, gathered by the jail to ensure Mosby was not removed. This was kept up for two weeks before a wagon arrived to transport Mosby back to the USA. A riot ensued including women armed with stones in stockings. Rails from a fence were stuck into the wagon's wheels and Mosby escaped. Gunshots were fired, two men died.

This building served as a double purpose jail and court house from 1817 until 1847. From 1847 until 1866 it was used as a jail only. The building sat empty for a number of years until 1869 when Maria Rye purchased the home and refurbished it to receive British children. The spectator's gallery and the fine arches remain but the prisoner cells were taken

The Church of England used Our Western Home to receive their girls from 1895 until 1914 when the home was sold and demolished. Maria Rye died in 1903 at the age of 74. The street leading up to the land where the building stood is now called Rye Street. A plaque marks the spot where the building once stood.

From the rebels, debtors, escaped slaves, public executions and the British Home Children who were placed through these walls, this building shaped Ontario's history.

Sources:

[Exploring Niagara](#)

[Records of Niagara](#)

Maria Rye's desk is on display at the [Black Creek Pioneer Village](#) BHC exhibit, Toronto, Ontario which opens in May for it's third season!



BHCARA News

New to our Collections! Vintage paper mache Dr. Barnardo Home Collection Box

Throughout the years, Penny boxes were distributed to homes in England as a means of fund raising for the various organizations. Community members were encouraged to put their spare change in the boxes. Periodically the organization representatives would come around and collect the change from the boxes. Penny boxes were made from a variety of materials, early ones from wood and paper mache. Newer boxes would be made from ceramic and then plastic. The BHCARA has several penny boxes in our collections including one similar to our new Dr. Barnardo Home box, our NCH box and our COE W&S box. These boxes will be shown for our third season at the Black Creek Pioneer Village in Toronto, Ontario. We are pleased to have found another paper mache box at a very reasonable price to add to our mobile display this year!



The BHCARA Memory Quilt Project

We are thrilled that our Memory Quilt project is coming along exceptionally well. All squares and information have been submitted now and our quilter, BHC descendant JoAnn Clark of Orillia, Ontario is busy assembling our quilt. The quilt is expected to be finished by the beginning of March 2016!



Andrew Simpson continued

Unemployment Act of 1905. He argued for improved rates of pay for the unemployed in the public works schemes, highlighted poor working conditions, constantly pushed for the adoption of new opportunities for the jobless and the rights of women workers.

Above all it was not just about the right to a job but about a person's dignity. So when the Distress Committee found work for some men carrying sandwich boards at eighteen pence a day, "it was not right that human beings should be employed as perambulating hoardings."***

Likewise "He was opposed to child emigration as he thought its only use was to supply Canada with cheap labour so necessary to that country. He had received a letter from a friend out there, who said the prison in the town where he lived was filled with boys from a well known charity organisation in the country and the asylum with young men who had been homesteading."****

Which is pretty much where we came in.

I would like to end on a positive note but stories don't always end such. Unemployment remained an issue and by 1910 -11 we were locked into a period of industrial unrest which highlighted the class fault lines.

And William was dead at 42. His obituary notes that "as his home was in the working class district of Hulme he was constrained by his interests in the improvement of the conditions of living there to bring forward many propositions for an active policy in the provision of work by the municipality" *****

Which is a fine if brief record of a man's commitment. But nor is this quite the end. William it seems died of neglect, at the hands of the Royal Infirmary after he had attended feeling ill. It could almost have been one of his own campaigns to highlight the disparity between different health services. But that is another story for another day.

Pictures: the work of Walter Crane

* Manchester Guardian April 14 1910, **J B Hitchen speaking at a mass rally in Stevenson Square quoted from the Manchester Guardian November 17 1904. ***Manchester Guardian March 21 1906 **** Manchester Guardian June 26 1905 ***** Manchester Guardian November 17 1910



British Home Child Park Lawn Cemetery Monument

The Park Lawn Cemetery, Toronto

Barnardo children (and infants of Barnardo girls)

approximately 75 Barnardo children are buried here in two mass unmarked graves

In collaboration of BHCARA, Barnardo's and the Park Lawn Cemetery office

Heading the fund raising and design team: Lori Oschefska, Beverley Schultz and John Jenkins



The Park Lawn Cemetery, Toronto, Ontario, Canada has two mass unmarked graves in which rests approximately 75 Dr. Barnardo Home Children. Canada's leading organization for the British Home Children, the British Home Children Advocacy & Research Association in collaboration with the Barnardo offices in the UK and the Park Lawn Cemetery, is raising funds to have a monument place in the cemetery for these 75 children.

Why is this important?

One of Canada's best kept historical secrets, the mass immigration of tens of thousands of children to be used as a source of cheap labour. Between 1863 and 1949, over 110,000 children were removed from the UK and brought to Canada. Known as the British Home Children, their descendants alone are estimated to make up over 10% of Canada's population and yet, even their very own descendants are unaware, not only that their ancestors may have been BHC, but also what this truly means. Many of these children did well in Canada, but many more did not. Some suffered abuses, neglect - some took their own lives in despair. Some died of ill health. 75 of these children, who died for a variety of reasons were buried, over the

years, in two plots in Park Lawn Cemetery. It wasn't until the BHCARA Research Team, led by Lori Oschefska, discovered these plots in 2013 that the names of those buried there were revealed. Since that time, the BHCARA members have been researching the names to discover the details of their deaths, dates and the stories of these children..

It is our goal to have a monument placed in the cemetery with these 75 names and on the back, the story of the Barnardo Home Children written.

The goal is to have this monument place by the spring of 2017, if not sooner. Those who donate towards this project will be donating towards not only remembering and honouring those lost lives, but also helping towards preserving this critical part of our Canadian History. Estimated cost is \$16,000. If everyone gave a little, the amounts collected would add up quickly!

There are several options for donations:

1. Our new GoFundMe page found at: <https://www.gofundme.com/BHCHMonument>
2. Pay Pal payments or e-mail money transfers to: BHCARA@gmail.com
3. Checks sent to Lori Oschefska, 59 Blair Crescent, Barrie, Ontario, Canada L4M 5Y4

PLEASE NOTE: Private payments sent can be counted in on the GoFundMe page as an offline donation with NO fees taken off for those donations. The amount shown on the GoFundMe site will reflect the full amount collected through both private and online donations.

Information on fee's charged by GoFundMe:
<https://www.gofundme.com/pricing/>

Information on those buried in Park Lawn can be found at:
<http://canadianbritishhomechildren.weebly.com/park-lawn-cemetery---barnardo-plot.html>

Or join us on [Facebook](#) for more information

