

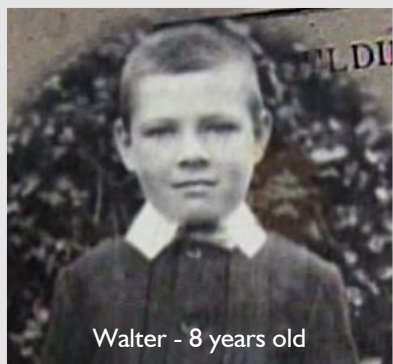
British Home Children Advocacy & Research Association

Newsletter - Jan 2014

Happy New Year

Walter Goulding, at 105,
is our oldest surviving British Home Child.

*"I get moments when tears come you know, but here I am,
God's Given Gift and I don't want to ever forget that"*



Walter - 8 years old

Walter Goulding

Before the First World War, Walter, his five siblings and his parents lived together in Coventry, England. When the war broke out, even though Walter's mother and younger brother were deathly ill, his father felt compelled to enlist, leaving the family to fend for themselves. Walter sat by his little brother's bedside for four days until he died, and his mother, who was also dying of kidney disease, was taken to hospital. "I was not allowed to see her," Walter said.

Walter's father took his children to Barnardo's suburban London Home and two days later, when the family's admission photograph was taken, he saw his four sisters together for the last time. They were picked up by 'women', Walter recalls. "I was left all alone. Standing there all alone at eight years old."

The only evidence Walter had that they existed was that photograph that he still treasures. Whenever he looks at it even now, it brings tears to his eyes. Although the children were only supposed to be held by Barnardo's for the duration of the war, Walter was asked at thirteen if he wanted to go to Canada or Australia to live. Walter was eager to leave Barnardo's as he did not like it there. He based his decision on how many days away they were by steamer. Canada was just over five days, Australia was five weeks.

Walter was sent to a farm in a village between Mitchell and Stratford, where he was 'used by' a middle-aged couple who had lost their only son. He was treated well and was with them for over nine years. Later, he married and had children.

However, his sisters were never forgotten. One day, in his late sixties, he was talking to his wife's cousin about what had happened to him as a child. She was able to trace not only his baby sister, who was living in Wiltshire, but a half-brother, George, from Walter's father's second marriage. They were reunited after sixty years. Sadly his other sisters had already passed on. Still struggling with the stigma of being a Home Boy, Walter was only able to tell his own sons of his Home Child past just a few years ago. "I was ashamed to tell them I was a Home Boy."

And the Petition for Records:

The BHCARA has assembled close to 2,000 online signatures to petition the government for help in obtaining better access to records being held by private organizations and individuals. The BHCARA and the signatories believe that these records should be readily available to the families of the BHC involved and should receive help in obtaining them. The petition and the comments, which we thank members of this group for, will be presented to the Honourable Chris Alexander, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, within the next few weeks.

British Home Child Day September 28:
2014 Negotiations are underway for a celebratory dinner to be held at Black Creek Pioneer Village after the closing ceremonies. Tickets must be bought in advance either online or over the phone. Price and dinner TBA. Also, the BHCARA are hard at work negotiating a special admission with Black Creek Pioneer Village!

Meeting with Judy Sgro, MP York West and former Minister for Citizenship and Immigration under the Liberal Government. She is now Liberal Critic for Seniors, Pensions and Status for Women, Lori Oschefska, BHCARA CEO and Sandra Joyce, Executive Director, Canada, will be meeting with Judy Sgro at the end of January to discuss further petition presentations.

*Walter's story will be featured soon on
Rose McCormick Brandon's web site:*

The Promise of Home

www.littleimmigrants.wordpress.com



Walter
Goulding
104 years old

Organization Directory

In November of last year, a more formal structure of the BHCARA was implemented and our constitution was written.

Executive Committee:

Chief Executive Officer - Lori Oschefska
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*If contacting any of the directors or
management please place BHC into the
subject line.*