

# FAIRBRIDGE GAZETTE

Newsletter of the Fairbridge Canada Association



THE NEW MIDDLEMORE EMIGRATION HOMES IN WEOLEY PARK ROAD, SELLY OAK.

*Middlemore Emigration Home*

*Selly Oak, Birmingham (see page 12-13)*

*Photo courtesy of Reginald Corns*

# Summer 2009

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*Laugh of the season*

An elderly man in Louisiana had owned a large farm for several years. He had a large pond in the back. had a large pond in the back. It was properly shaped for swimming, so he fixed it up nice with picnic tables, horseshoe courts, some apple and peach trees.

One evening the old farmer decided to go down to the pond, as he hadn't been there for awhile to look it over. He grabbed a five-gallon bucket to bring back some fruit.

As he neared the pond, he heard voices shouting and laughing with glee. As he came closer, he saw it was a bunch of young women skinny-dipping in his pond. He made the women aware of his presence and they all went to the deep end.

One of the women shouted to him, "We're not coming out until you leave!"

The old man frowned, "I didn't come down here to watch you ladies swim naked or make you get out of the pond naked."

Holding the bucket up he said, "I'm here to feed my alligator..."

Some old men can still think fast...

One day God was looking down at Earth and saw all of the rascally behaviour that was going on. He called one of His angels and sent the angel to Earth for a time.

When he returned, he told God, 'Yes, it is bad on Earth; 95% are misbehaving and only 5% are not.

God thought for a moment and said, 'Maybe I had better send down a second angel to get another opinion.'

So God called another angel and sent him to Earth for a time.

When the angel returned he went to God and said, 'Yes, it's true. The Earth is in decline; 95% are misbehaving, but 5% are being good.'

God was not pleased. So He decided to e-mail the 5% that were good, because he wanted to encourage them, and give them a little something to help them keep going.

Do you know what the e-mail said?

Okay, I was just wondering, because I didn't get one either.

*Sent in by Tom Isherwood*

***Two ways to get your Gazette—2009 prices***

*1) It is included with your Membership fees of \$25.00 a year; it also includes (1) Fairbridge Canada Association voting status, (Come to the next reunion and exercise your right to vote at the BGM) (2) membership in the Fairbridge Chapel Society and (3) a contributor to the Fairbridge Alumni Bursary Society.*

*OR— if you want just the Gazette:*

*2) For a yearly Subscription fee of \$15.00—you can get the Gazette, mailed to you 3 times a year.*

## ***Committee Members***

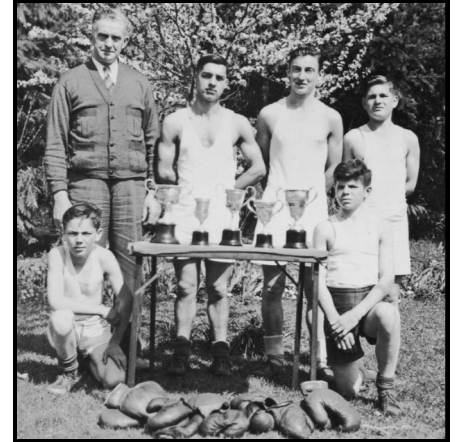
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**PLEASE: WE NEED A *RECORDING SECRETARY*.**  
PLEASE JOIN THE FAIRBRIDGE CANADA ASSOCIATION AND  
FILL THIS ROLL.

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Stan Blake  
Jean Conlon  
Doreen Hagen  
Roddy Mackay



*Does anyone recognize these boxers?  
Photo courtesy of Bunny Lewis*



## **Let's Keep Current**

.....  
Please send me your change of addresses

**Get Your Gazette In Colour—Receive It Via Email**  
Send us your email address.

**Send material for the Fairbridge  
Gazette & correspondence to:**

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**Please send Fairbridge Alumni  
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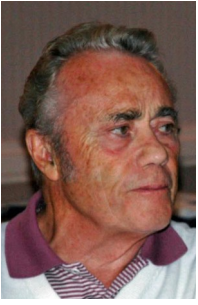
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**Please send Fairbridge Chapel  
Donations to:**

**Fairbridge Chapel Heritage  
Society**

4791 Fairbridge Drive,  
Duncan B.C. V9L 6N9

Please include a return address so we can  
send you an income tax receipt.



## *Message from the President*





### Summer Greetings from Pat

**Friends of Fintry:** My mother, Marjorie Skidmore and I attended the May 9th Fintry's Festival of the Falls: Earl Grey Centennial Day 10:00 - 3:00. I revised my Child Emigration slide show to include slides on Fairbridge Fintry and held two showings at the Festival. It was well attended. We enjoyed the tour of the Manor



Manor House

Photos by Pat Skidmore



House—and it was great to see the Kodiak Bear back in the Games Room.



Marjorie Skidmore  
Manor House Games Room  
Kodiak Bear  
The Fintry Flats

## Heritage News

They say a picture is worth a thousand words... so I have been relentless in my search for images pertaining to Child Emigration and the Prince of Wales Fairbridge Farm School. I have catalogued almost 2200 images now—

some of which are newspaper headlines pertaining to the Farm School. I have printed them off in a 'contact sheet' format—with 35 images per page. I will bring the folder to the next reunion. The images are numbered—so if anyone wishes to have a copy of any of the photos they can be easily ordered. Included in this collection are photos from the past three reunions.

*Please send in ideas of what should be preserved and pursued under the title of "Fairbridge Heritage."*

*If anyone has any old photos they would like to share, please contact me. I would love to get copies of them.*

Does anyone recognize the bathing beauties?

Kenny, Marjorie & Bunny Arnison  
Photo courtesy of Bunny Lewis



Phil Field

sent in by  
Bunny  
Lewis  
(Arnison)



## *Corresponding Secretary News*

From January to July 15, 2009 I have received approximately 375 pieces of correspondence: this includes letters, emails and phone calls — all relating to Fairbridge Canada Association. Many emails relate to the upcoming September 2009 Reunion and are between the directors—so I have not listed them here..



### **April 2009**

- ◇ Anita Baker—Friends of Fintry—re Child Migration Presentation
- ◇ Norah Dennis, British Home Children Descendants
- ◇ Ken Armstrong— Looking for a former friend—Helen Bumstead (I have been unable to locate her at this time)
- ◇ Colin Wordsworth—former Rhodesian Fairbridgian—thanks for the Gazette, you are perhaps unknowingly creating an electronic copy of the history of Fairbridge which is very very valuable.
- ◇ Bill Cockburn—re the Gazette
- ◇ John Sugars, Friends of Fintry
- ◇ Tom Isherwood—checking in and sending jokes

### **May 2009**

- ◇ Bill Stoker—regarding a family story and said he said would be at the reunion.
- ◇ John Stocker—Australia—checking in
- ◇ Josephine (Lough) —Bouknight's son David Bouknight—looking for information on his mother's family. (Josephine passed away in 2000)
- ◇ Marcel Moss
- ◇ Anita Baker—Friends of Fintry
- ◇ Reginald Corns—Councillor Birmingham and former Middlemore Boy—re Middlemore photos and booklet.
- ◇ Syd Baker—regarding his website at: [www3.telus.net/Home\\_Children\\_Canada/ Thanks Syd](http://www3.telus.net/Home_Children_Canada/Thanks_Syd).
- ◇ Colin Wordsworth—former Rhodesian Fairbridgian—sent a list of the Rhodesian Fairbridge Children and Staff
- ◇ Beryl Young—re book coming out about Home Children written for children. It's called *Charlie: a Home Child's Life in Canada* and is about her father who was a Barnardo boy and came to Canada in 1911, working on farms in Ontario, went back to fight at the Battle of the Somme and then joined the RCMP and served across the country. (See page 17)
- ◇ Patricia Bill—Betty Palser's daughter—from Weymouth England
- ◇ The Octagon—Fintry News, Spring 2009 Edition

### **June 2009**

- ◇ Tom Lisle—re Fairbridge Empire and Child Migration—(see page 14)
- ◇ Lindy Arnison—re Kenny Arnison, Captain on the tugboat, the *Lawrence L* (see page 18)
- ◇ 15 applications for the Fairbridge Alumni Bursaries
- ◇ Marcel Moss—Poem, see page 16
- ◇ Eric Dewhirst—re website
- ◇ Mary Barlow, Anglican Archives re newspaper article: Fairbridge Farm Organ Given to Christ Church, Victoria Daily Colonist, May 15, 1976.

### **July 2009**

- ◇ Ron Smith—with the Fairbridge Chapel News (see pages 22-23)
- ◇ Pam Wilson, Hon Sec, Old Fairbridgian Association, Victoria Park, Australia, Winter 2009 Newsletter: The Annual Founders Day Memorial Service and Reunion—July 19, 2009

Fairbridge Canada Association  
 2009 Reunion  
 September 11—13, 2009  
**Register Early**

Oceanfront Grand Resort and Marina  
 1681 Cowichan Bay Road, Cowichan Bay, BC

info@thegrandresort.co  
 http://www.thegrandresort.com  
 Toll free 1-800-663-7898  
 4 miles off Highway 1 on Cowichan Bay Road.

RESERVE YOUR ROOMS EARLY—To get our Reunion rate, just say that you are with the Fairbridge Canada Reunion

The Oceanfront has set aside a number of rooms for the Fairbridge 2009 Reunion Attendees. These rooms and their special reunion rates will be only be available until August 10, 2009

\*Friday night's *Meet & Greet* **\$10.00**

\*Saturday night's Banquet **\$40.00**

\*Friday night's *Meet & Greet* and Saturday night's *Banquet*: total for both nights- **\$50.00** per person

- ◇ Friday Night Meet & Greet
- ◇ Saturday Morning Biannual FCA Meeting
- ◇ Saturday Afternoon Fairbridge Strata Tea
- ◇ Saturday Night Banquet
- ◇ Sunday Morning Service at the Fairbridge Chapel

***Come and meet old friends***



***Door Prizes***



***50/50 Draw***



## Remembering Victor Redman

I recently read the book “Forgotten Children” by David Hill who as a child was sent to the Australian Molong Fairbridge School. The author like many children who attended Fairbridge (Canada) or the Australian Fairbridge schools had a relatively happy experience during his years at the Molong Fairbridge. However his book reveals heartbreaking stories of the abuse suffered by many former Fairbridge children, now many of them in their senior years have decided to speak out. In the past some of us have stated publicly that child abuse and the bully system was prevalent during certain years at the F.F.S. Canada. Many of those who apparently never witnessed or experienced abuse from staff members or the bullies will find his story hard to accept. So let me share the story of one of our own former school mates;

**Victor Redman:** Victor was nicknamed “Daggy,” he was a homely looking boy who was picked on daily by several of the older bully - boys who made his life miserable. Victor was a very bright kid who loved gardening, each cottage had its own garden-plot that the kids were allowed use to grow vegetables. Daggy grew wonderful plants, he saved hundreds of seeds which he kept in different bottles. There was a contest to see who could grow the biggest pumpkins and some kids put together a trick with their watering system. We would place a sturdy stick in the ground with a tin attached to the top – then we would fill the tin with water. Next step was to connect a piece of string from the tin to a nail stuck in the pumpkin. The water would trickle down into the pumpkin and our pumpkin or melon grow larger by the day. “Daggy” excelled in this contest and always grew the biggest pumpkins, but some of the kids were so mean to him that they would use a pen-knife to cut the roots under the ground and that would keep his pumpkin from growing, most often it would kill his pumpkin.

I liked Daggy, so it was maddening knowing that the bullies made sure he was given a miserable time. I also never understood why many of the older boys who were not the bullying types made no effort to stop the bullies. As for staff members I can only guess that some of them at times must have turned a blind eye on the bully boy system. “Pip pip, best way to toughen a boy up I always say old boy.” Of course I now realize that the British school bully-boy system

has a long sad history and was considered part of the (dumb) concept of making a man out of the boy. David Hill, in his book, *The Forgotten Children*, says this of the Australian Fairbridge School at Molong, “Although few former Fairbridge children talk about it, there was a system of bullying, particularly among the boys. The little boys were called runts or (turds at our school) and were expected to take orders from the big boys.” (2007, page 225)

Daggy, unfortunately like many kids was also a bed-wetter and that was maybe why his cottage mother seemed to care less about how he was treated. David Hill also talks of bed-wetter’s in his book at the Australian Fairbridge School at Molong, “Many former Fairbridge children recall savage punishment dealt out by various cottage mothers to little children who wet their beds.” (*The Forgotten Children*, 2007, page 160) He goes on to tell of an interview with a Former Fairbridgian at Molong, who, at six-years-old, had her head put down the toilet and flushed as a punishment for bed wetting. (2007, 157-158) Many institutional schools did not tolerate bed-wetter when we were growing up, and the Fairbridge School was no exception. Our Fairbridge had a cottage mother that forced a child not only to hang his wet sheets (unwashed) but to sleep in those same sheets night after night. A book has yet to be written on all ( not only the good but the bad) of what took place at *Prince of Wales Fairbridge Farm School*. Many “Old Fairbridgians” are in complete denial that any child was ever ill treated.

After several years at the school, Daggy, poorly educated, emotionally unstable left the school to make his way as an adult. He had great difficulty adjusting to life on his own, he also ran afoul of the law several times would end up facing the Vancouver criminal court system, end result sentenced to prison. Pat Hood, a former Fairbridgian school mate, who became a lawyer, did his best to assist in his court defence. Daggy, unable to cope with his life committed suicide in Vancouver. I honestly believe that the way he was treated during his childhood at Fairbridge had much to do with his struggle and the tragedy of taking his own life.



By Eric Lewis





Photograph provided by Eric Lewis

Victor Redman

Duchess of Atholl, Pat Skidmore, Postcard owner



**From the Editor:** Victor Redman was sent to the Middlemore Emigration Homes in Selly Oak, Birmingham, from Newcastle-on-Tyne on February 10, 1937. He would turn 8-years-old on March 3, 1937. Victor stayed at the Home in Birmingham for 6 months before being sent to Canada. He travelled over on the Duchess of Atholl. Victor arrived at the Prince of Wales Fairbridge Farm School with the September 22, 1937 group.

**A note on Bed-Wetting:** I have been told about a bed-wetting incident in one of the cottages at the *Prince of Wales Fairbridge Farm School* where one of the girls wet her bed on a regular basis. At first, she was made to wear her wet knickers on her head and stand in the corner, while the other girls were encouraged to tease her. She also had to wash her own sheets in the basement sink –and hang them on the clothesline out side her cottage, and because it was not a normal washday occurrence, it ensured that the rest of the school knew there was a bed wetter in the cottage. When the bed wetting didn't stop, the girl was forced to tie her mattress to her back and carry it around.

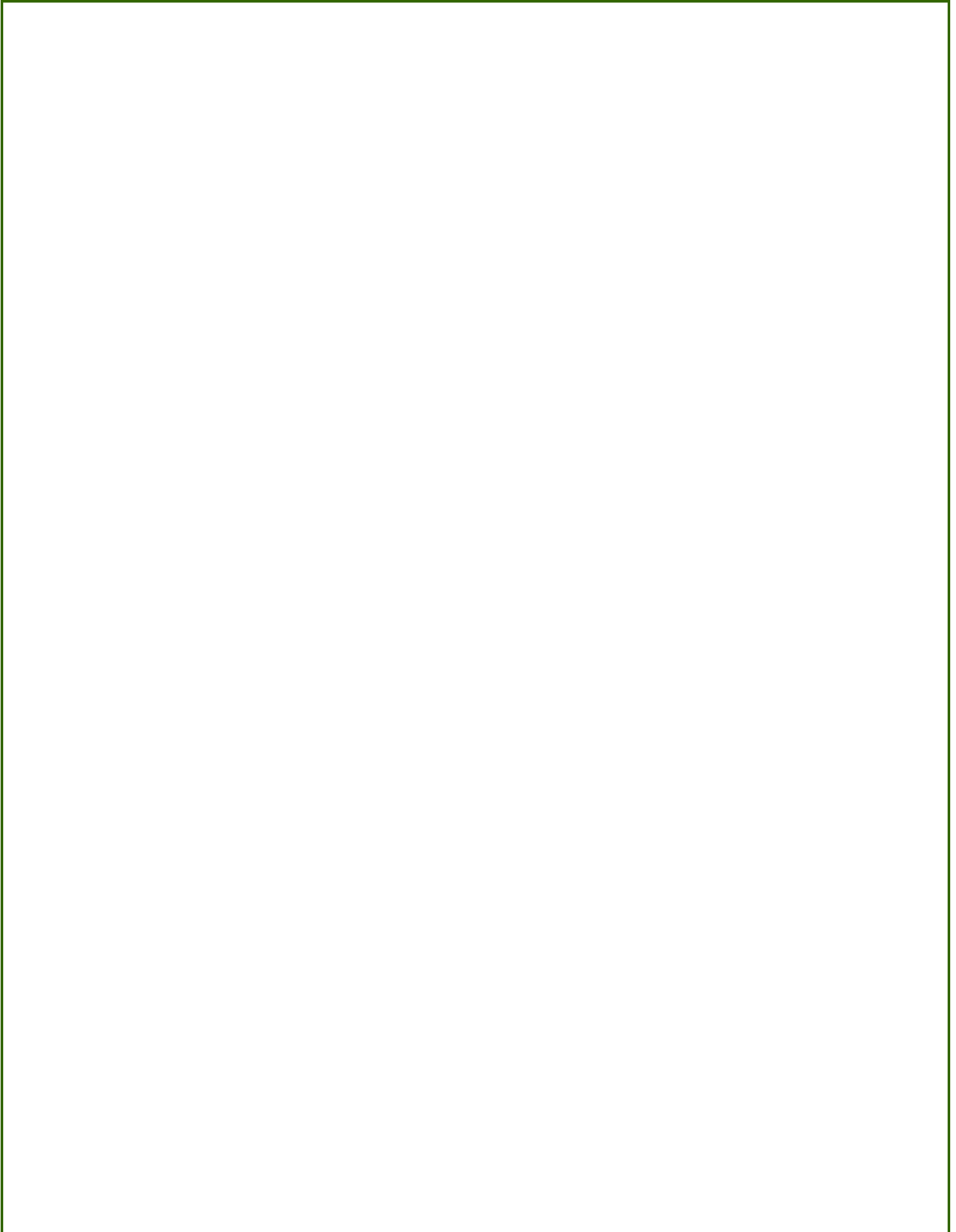
I found this on the web site at: <http://www.allaboutparenting.org/bed-wetting.htm>

There are various causes of bed wetting:

- \* Immature bladder muscles - Fifteen out of one hundred children wet the bed because of immature bladder muscles which aren't strong enough to hold urine through the night.
- \* Life Changes - Stresses in children's lives are the second highest cause for bed wetting.
  - ◇ Emotional Turmoil - An emotionally negative home life, such as a child's failure to adjust after being adopted, can also lead to bed wetting. Any family situation that causes the child sudden emotional instability can cause serious psychological strain which physically manifests itself in bed wetting.

It is difficult to talk about and to publish the *Hard Fairbridge Stories*, but they are out there as proof that not all *Prince of Wales Fairbridge Farm School* children had an easy time of it. I have heard it said many times, that your Cottage Mother could make or break your stay at Fairbridge. Some Cottage Mothers were very good, but many of them should not have been allowed around children and many sound like they certainly did not live up to Kingsley Fairbridge's dream of providing:

...gentlemen and gentlewomen of culture and refinement, in order to bring up the children in a clean and wholesome atmosphere. (Fairbridge, Kingsley. *The Autobiography of Kingsley Fairbridge*. Bulawayo: Books of Rhodesia, 1974, page. 229)



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# Middlemore Emigration Homes

I had the very good fortune to find myself in contact with Reginald Corns, a Birmingham, England Councillor who is an EX Middlemore boy. He was a wealth of information on Middlemore and he sent me a large number of photographs. He also confirmed the rumour that the Selly Oak Middlemore Homes had been demolished. He fought to keep the building but it was not to be.

Reg Corns said: Firstly the building in St Lukes road has part of the original home attached to it. That is the front part on the left as you look at it .That building still stands today It was used from about 1877 along with the girls' home in Spring street but the girls' home was not used for very long. However the building in Weoley park road is the one which your family would have been at It was opened in 1928 and remained operative as an emigration home until 1949 and then as a local authority home until about 1956 . Sadly it was demolished about 5 years ago I campaigned against it without success.



The Arnison Sisters: Joyce, Bunny and Marjorie: Middlemore Homes 2001

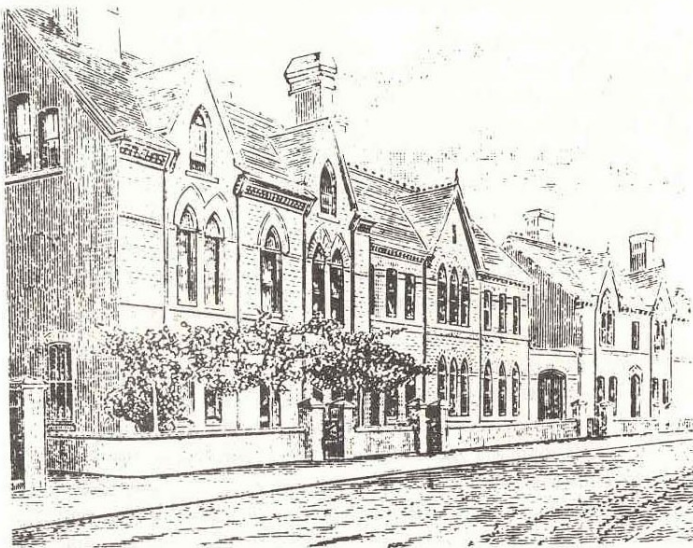
Pat Skidmore Photo

Below—Middlemore Homes in the 1930s(see also front cover)—photo courtesy of Reginald Corns



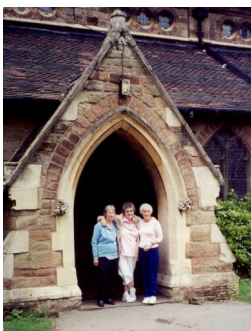
Former site of Middlemore Homes—now a housing development  
Google Earth—Aerial photos

St Mary's Church, Selly Oak behind Middlemore Homes



The first Emigration Homes (for boys) opened in St. Luke's Road, Birmingham in 1872. A Home for girls was opened in Spring Street in the same year.

From: *One Hundred Years of Child Care: The Story of Middlemore Homes 1872-1972*, Published by The Middlemore Homes Committee, Page 14



The Arnison Sisters: Joyce, Marjorie and Bunny 2001: St Mary's Church, Selly Oak behind Middlemore Homes  
Pat Skidmore photo



Middlemore  
The Dormitory

The Wash House -  
Also called  
"The Splash"



Middlemore Homes in the 1930s—photos courtesy of Reginald Corns

From *One Hundred Years of Child Care: The Story of Middlemore Homes 1872-1972*, Published by The Middlemore Homes Committee

**Preface, page 3:** Throughout its history the Middlemore Homes has broken new ground in this field. [helping deprived children.] In 1872 John Middlemore was a pioneer in rescuing boys and girls and giving them a new start in a new country. He was equally ahead of his time in settling them in foster homes at the earliest opportunity. Since 1955 the emphasis has changed. The Homes now care for children within the family unit, but they continue to break new ground...

The Homes have depended on the support of hundreds of donors and subscribers, and have received many legacies...

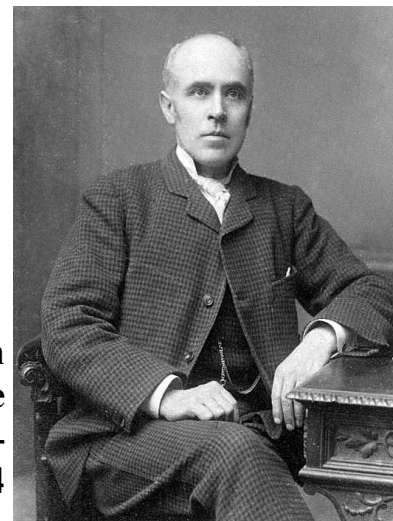
**Foreword, page 5:** The centenary year of the Middlemore Homes takes the imagination back to the Victoria Birmingham of the 1870's, with its vitality and vigorous growth, and the dark side of that growth, in the overcrowding and consequent poverty and squalor that condemned thousands to a barely human existence. But as the evil sprang from Birmingham's very soil, so

did the force that arose to combat it, for the young John Throgmorton Middlemore, who opened his first Emigration Homes in September 1872, came from a family whose roots in the Birmingham area can be traced back for nearly six centuries...

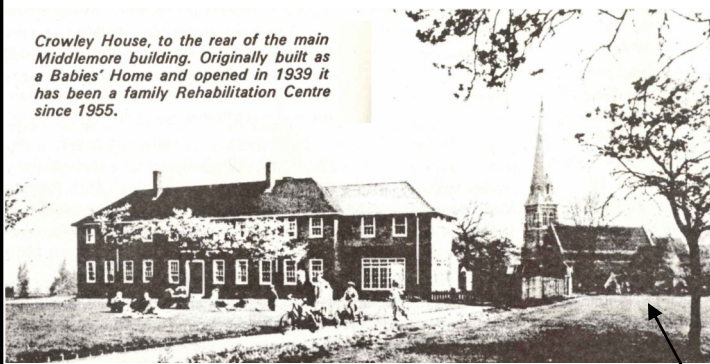
In September 1872 his scheme became a reality when he bought and opened two small houses in St. Luke's Road for his first group of boys...

**The Beginning, page 8:** A hundred years ago, between 1862 and 1872, the condition of the children in the slums of the greater cities stirred the conscience of Victorian England. There were no widow's pensions, no children's allowances, no National Health or unemployment benefits, no Social Security as we know it today.

**John Throgmorton Middlemore**  
June 9, 1844 -  
October 17, 1924



From: *One Hundred Years of Child Care: The Story of Middlemore Homes 1872-1972*, Published by The Middlemore Homes Committee, Page 32



Crowley House, to the rear of the main Middlemore building. Originally built as a Babies' Home and opened in 1939 it has been a family Rehabilitation Centre since 1955.

St Mary's Church, Selly Oak behind Middlemore Homes

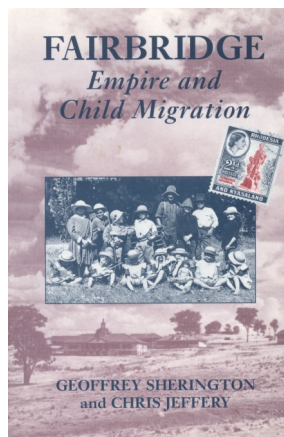
More information can be obtained from the following:  
**Middlemore Homes, 55 Stevens Avenue Bartley Green, Birmingham, England, B32 3SD**

The actual Middlemore records are held at the Birmingham Public Library (Archives), (a copy of which is held at the LAC in Ottawa)

**Birmingham Public Libraries, Central Library Birmingham, B3 3HQ, England**

Do any of the girls recall going to the Ilmington Girls' School while staying at Middlemore?

Does anyone know where the boys went to school?



My daughter sent me a book that I am reading and, as a couple of OF's showed interest in it, I thought I would pass it on so you can let others know about it. The book is called

**FAIRBRIDGE  
EMPIRE AND CHILD  
MIGRATION**

The authors are Geoffrey Sherington and Chris Jeffery.

It is published by Routledge Falmer  
Taylor and Francis Group  
London and New York  
( website <http://www.RoutledgeFalmer.com> )

The book is part of the Woburn Education Series.

I am not far enough along that I can summarize, but the book puts Fairbridge into a larger context of Child Migration that largely coincided with

the growth of the British Empire. A couple of lines from the introduction:

...The book attempts to provide an understanding of Kingsley Fairbridge, the virtual founder of the child Emigration Society. The study tries to analyze the role of the Child Emigration Society (later known as the Fairbridge Society), as an imperial child-rescue movement, and then looks to examine the background and provide some glimpses into the lives of the children caught up in that movement. Finally, it tries to provide a contribution to the study of imperialism and child migration in the 20th century.

The appendices to the book look at political support for Fairbridge migration, and provides numbers of Fairbridge migrants to the various schools in Australia, Canada and Rhodesia.

It looks like it will be a good read.

Cheers

Tom Lisle

*Editor's note:* this book is out of print but it can be bought through second hand book carriers, such as ABE Books (<http://www.abebooks.com/>)



These poems were sent in from Marcel Moss, a former Rhodesian Fairbridgian:

I hope you enjoy this poem which a Milton school friend wrote for Gerry ( Gez at school )He met his friend in Perth during our reunion there, it is followed by another poem by someone else, both worth reading.  
Cheers Marcel

## REUNION

We had not seen each other for over forty years since our schooldays in Rhodesia.

He, a 'Fairbridge' boy, abandoned and sent, after intelligence testing, to a colony where he was earmarked to become a boss.

A tall, strong, red haired lad who stood up to bullies; a brave lock who helped me in rucks and mauls.

I knew nothing of his abandoned loneliness from my privileged cocoon of love and support.

I believed for over forty years that he had died in Vietnam, victim of an ambush.

I often thought of the irony remembering other classmates mown down in our futile war where they had only wanted to die in their beds, old and satisfied.

I am driving to meet him now that I know he is alive, and as I turn into the street I see him waiting on the corner. I do not have to search for the Gez I knew for there he is, slightly stooped and a bit grey. "I'd recognize that bloody jaw anywhere!" He says in an Australian Zimbabwean drawl.

My eyes moisten slightly and the years fall from our shoulders like drifting autumn leaves as we walk together up the driveway for a beer on an Australian back step.

After two hours of looking at old photographs and musty school magazines, he shrinks slowly in the rear view mirror: the years return, and my eyes glisten moist.

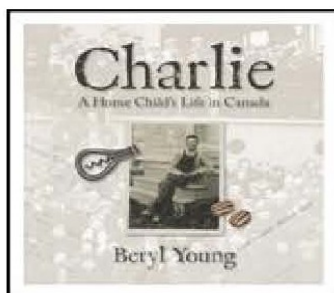
An old Zim schoolmate, Derek.

P.S. Here's a lighter one which the other poets really enjoyed a few weeks ago.

**\*DON'T POO POO THE DUNG HO MIGRANT\***  
 Industrious little dung beetle do you ever miss the shadow of an elephant upon your back, the reassuring cadence of a cobra's hiss or a friendly puff adder on a wildebeest track? Do you find the dung here to be a little bland with only roo, sheep and cattle to keep you fed? In the west do you like to feel the texture of the sand rather than thick red clay upon your head? Does the beautiful song of magpies bring music to your ear or does the go away bird still haunt your tiny brain? Do winter showers come at the right time of year or do you prefer the warmth of African summer rain? "Why do you ask me such questions when I have work to do?"  
 The only thing that concerns me is poo, poo, poo!"



## JUVENILE NONFICTION



<b>ISBN</b>	1554702003
<b>Price</b>	19.95
<b>Binding</b>	Hardback
<b>Pub. Date</b>	Aug. 26, 2009
<b>On Sale</b>	Aug. 26, 2009
<b>Status</b>	NOT YET PUBLISHED B/O
<b>Pages</b>	112
<b>Category</b>	JUVENILE NONFICTION
<b>Publisher</b>	Key Porter Books Limited
<b>UPC</b>	
<b>EAN</b>	9781554702008
<b>Net Priced</b>	N
<b>Carton Qty</b>	0

**Order this book:**  
[Indigo/Chapters](#)  
[Independent](#)  
[Amazon](#)

### Charlie

A Home Child's Life in Canada

Beryl Young

The story of the 90,000 British children who came to Canada as child immigrants between 1870 and 1938 is not well known. Yet the descendants of these "Home Children" number over four million people in Canada today. The author is one of them. Charlie was her father. *Charlie* is a compelling account of a poor English boy who rises from poverty to become a valuable member of Canadian society. Charlie's story, like many others, is an inspiring part of our Canadian heritage, and will fascinate adults as well as children.

### About the Contributor(s)

**BERYL YOUNG** had impressive first-time success with her novel *Wishing Star Summer*. Beryl is a member of the Federation of B.C. Writers and Illustrators of B.C., the Vancouver Children's Literature Roundtable and the Canadian Society of Authors, Illustrators, and Performers. She lives in Vancouver, B.C.

# New Book Coming Out

**Decorations for Bravery  
Captain Kenneth Arnison, S.C.**

Port Coquitlam, British Columbia  
**Star of Courage**

Date of Instrument: August 11, 1975  
Date of Presentation: September 22, 1975

Captain Kenneth Arnison, S.C.  
Captain Howard Keast, S.C.  
Ronald George Neal Lowe, S.C.  
Raymond Douglas Smart, S.C.  
Star of Courage



On January 4, 1974, a floating fuel depot carrying 65,000 tons of diesel oil caught fire at its mooring in Coal Harbour, Vancouver, British Columbia. With flames shooting to 200 feet into the air the barge began to drift towards another scow loaded with oil and gasoline. Realizing that if the conflagration extended, a major disaster could result, Capt. Keast of the tugboat Lawrence L. with Capt. Kenneth Arnison, Ronald Lowe and Raymond Smart as crew, decided to try to attach a line to the barge. Under the protection of the water jets from a fire boat, the tug was manoeuvred close in and an upright on the barge lassoed. As they pulled away, however, the rope was burned through. Undeterred, a second attempt was made and while the tugs hoses were turned on the crew members, they moved directly to the barge and Capt. Arnison made a line fast. They proceeded then to tow the burning barge to a place of safety away from the other shipping where it could be beached and the hulk was abandoned to burn itself out. Together the four men shared in a most perilous undertaking.

website at: <http://www.gg.ca/honours/search-recherche/honours-desc.asp?lang=e&TypeID=br&id=60046>

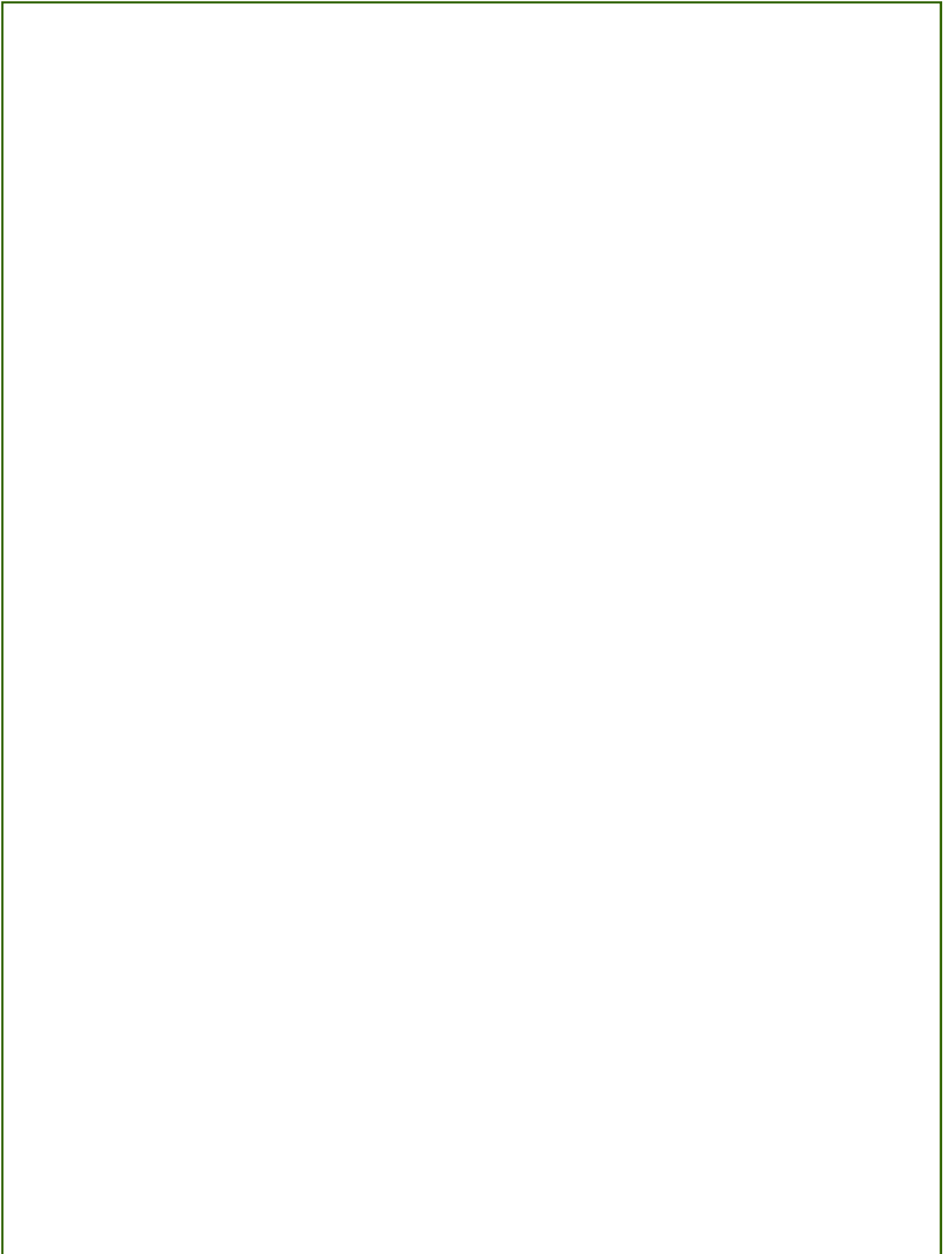


My Aunt, Ken Arnison's widow just sent in this photograph. I found the Star of Courage information on the website

*At the Prince of Wales Fairbridge Farm School September 1937-1944*

*Kenneth Arnison—1928-1983*







One day God was looking down at Earth and saw all of the rascally behaviour that was going on. He called one of His angels and sent the angel to Earth for a time.

When he returned, he told God, 'Yes, it is bad on Earth; 95% are misbehaving and only 5% are not.'

God thought for a moment and said, 'Maybe I had better send down a second angel to get another opinion.'

So God called another angel and sent him to Earth for a time.

When the angel returned he went to God and said, 'Yes, it's true. The Earth is in decline; 95% are misbehaving, but 5% are being good.'

God was not pleased. So He decided to e-mail the 5% that were good, because he wanted to encourage them, and give them a little something to help them keep going.

Do *you* know what the e-mail said?

Okay, I was just wondering, because I didn't get one either.

## ***Fairbridge Notes: Chapel Records***

***Sent by Ron Smith***

The Prince of Wales Fairbridge Farm School Chapel, constructed in 1939-40, held its first service on Sunday, March 3<sup>rd</sup> 1940 and officially dedicated on April 20<sup>th</sup>. It remains a very important part of Fairbridge, a functioning religious building, and it was designated an historic site in 1981.

In September 1949 there was considerable discussion between the Fairbridge Society and the Canadian Pacific Railway Company, who strongly assisted the Fairbridge Farm School Society from its beginning in 1935, and now was helping to close the school and oversee the lease of the property. An internal memorandum to CPR President W.A. Mather indicated that “there were presently 69 children in residence at Fairbridge” and recommended the farm be leased for seven years while “the church will be maintained by Fairbridge and be made available for general religious devotional purposes of the immediate locality.” (date: September 21, 1949)

In another very long memorandum to President Mather, dated March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1950, it mentions that the farm had been leased “for a period of five years, annual rental \$3,600 payable \$300 per month in advance...” The tenants were “high class fairy farmers, Chilliwack District with an excellent herd,” by the names of Jock McBride and Archie Stevenson.

Referring to the Chapel the memo states; “Very little use has been made of the Chapel for devotional services. Such services as have been arranged have been poorly attended. Mr. Bulcock continues to supervise it—dusting the pews, airing the building etc. as his duties permit. He also maintains sufficient fires for heating in the winter, and occasionally arranges for someone to play the organ to keep it in good working condition.”

Thus, from about 1950 to when the chapel was acquired by the Cowichan Valley Regional District (CVRD) in 1977, it was used on very few occasions. The *Church Parish Register*, of course provides the best record of its use but there were not entries during this gap of over 25 years.

The following information is contained in both the *Church Parish Register* as well as the *Register of Marriages* that is now the book of record.\*

### **Marriages**

The first marriage occurred on July 27<sup>th</sup>, 1940—George Warnock and Catherine Murray.

There were no weddings in either 1941 or 1942 and then just one the following year, two in 1945 another two in 1947 and one in 1948 for a total of seven.

In the early 1950's the Lutherans used the Chapel on a number of occasions prior to their Trinity Lutheran Church being completed and dedicated in May 1957. During this time

there evidently was the occasional wedding and is likely included in their church register.

Because the Chapel needed extensive repairs and with only limited funds being made available from the CVRD the first weddings were not held until 1982 when there were two (one couple, Bill and Michelle Jackson, who resided in Fairbridge for many years, was not recorded because the *Church Parish Register* had been misplaced). Between 1982 and the end of 1999 there were 106 weddings held in the Chapel and from 2000 to July 2009 another 64 weddings have taken place (one party did not register their wedding in the Register of Marriage in 2009). Thus, at least 177 weddings have taken place of which 187 taking place since the Fairbridge Chapel Society began maintaining the Chapel in 1988.

### **Baptisms**

A total of 69 baptisms have been held in the Chapel, all except three between March 7<sup>th</sup>, 1940 and November 27<sup>th</sup>, 1949. The others were held on October 11<sup>th</sup>, 1992—two; and on June 12<sup>th</sup>, 1994—one.

### **Confirmations**

The *Church Parish Register* also contains the list of those conformed—a total of 136. These occurred on six dates: March 8<sup>th</sup>, 1940, 31; April 10<sup>th</sup>, 1941, 16; April 15<sup>th</sup>, 1942, 32; April 20<sup>th</sup>, 1944, 22; March 27<sup>th</sup>, 1947, 15; and May 4<sup>th</sup>, 1948, 10.

### **Funerals**

There have been only six funeral held in the Chapel, three when the Farm School was operating, and of course after the Chapel was built, and three others, in 1984, 1995 and 1996. In addition there were two other memorial services held for local residents who had passed away since 2000

### **Other Events**

Since 2000 there have been a number of other important ceremonial events at the Chapel. This includes the re-dedication of the J.S. Dennis memorial windows in 2001 and again in 2007 with the placement of the memorial tables honouring Norman Alsop and Thomas Kemp, both fallen servicemen during WWII.

Each year, since the Chapel Society has been the custodians of the heritage site, the Chapel has hosted a Christmas celebration event for not only local Fairbridgians but everyone in the Cowichan Valley and beyond. Our Strata Corporation organizes the event is a much anticipated and enjoyed get-together. In the summer of 2009 there is also going to be a special concert at the Chapel—on August 9th. This is not the first concert but it is since the 1970's.

\*The Chapel Society closed the *Church Parish Register* at the end of 1999 (largely because there were only a few spaces left for weddings), and opened the *Register of Marriages* on May 20<sup>th</sup> 2000—the first wedding of the year. The Chapel still uses the *Church Parish Register* to record other events.



We held the AGM on the 30th of June and the directors decided to look into doing three major projects this year. These included fixing the ceiling in the main part of the Chapel as it is falling down at the seams, re-paint the very front area. It likely hasn't been done for 40 or more years. And finally replace the florescent lighting at the front with some track lighting. This should brighten the front up quite a bit. Yesterday I had a contractor in to look at the work and he is to get back to me in a couple of days with his suggestions and the costs.

At the same time we are doing other exterior work. We are about to paint the school house porch and will start painting the east side of the building as soon as we cut back some of the bushes in that garden. The directors also decided to remove all the plants from the round garden that was in front of the school house and either make a new garden or just put it all back into grass. The plants there now really don't bloom or add anything to the place although they will be dug up and put in as a ground cover around the rear of the school house or elsewhere. In

the next little while we will be cutting back the plum tree as well as fixing the sign. It needs cleaning, sanding, covering with a clear "Cetol" material and finally putting up a little heritage designation sign. I'm going to get it made in a week or so. An oh yes I haven't forgot to change the date on the Parties information sign!

In addition to this work I have to paint the second tier of window frames. They haven't been done since 2000. There are also other places to touch up including sanding and sealing the inside of the window frames with a waterproofing material (this has already been purchased), and the upper gutters need to be cleaned of debris. This will be done as soon as I can get a long ladder! We may have to forgo fixing up the other bathroom or doing other repairs and re-painting the other bathrooms for another year as I think we will be close to exhausting our funds once we do all this.

Well that is about it for now. I have Touy [Ron Smith's son] working with me so the work is going faster. He has also 4 copies of the early movies put on CD's and may do some more if people want any at the reunion. He is also transferring many of my slides and pictures of Fairbridge (and other things) this summer and he may be able to get them organized before the reunion although it does take a lot of time.

I will let you know when the major work inside is completed or, should the cost be prohibitive, we are holding off or just doing a portion of the work.

**Ron Smith**

***FABS Corner: Bursary News*** 

***Fairbridge Alumni Bursary Society***

We had a record number of Bursary Applications for the 2009/2010 school term: **FIFTEEN**

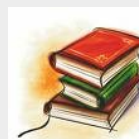


*Photo courtesy of Ken Armstrong*



*Fairbridge Alumni Bursary Society  
Registered Charity Number  
89079 2047 RR0001  
Incorporated October 17, 1989*

*Pat Skidmore President  
Theresa Shelley Financial  
Joan Skidmore Director  
Doreen Hagen Director*



**Your donations keep the Bursary Society alive.  
Thank you!**

# Fairbridge Gazette

First published in 1939.

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## Middlemore Children

Photos courtesy of Reginald Corns

## John T Middlemore and Children



**Look for your**



## Middlemore Children: Refreshments for the workers

Photo courtesy of Reginald Corns

**Next Gazette: Fall 2009**

Here's your chance to get your stories published in the Fairbridge Gazette. Send in poems, adventures, Fairbridge tales, what you are doing now or whatever you would like to see in your Gazette.

The deadline for submission for the next issue is:

**Oct 15, 2009**

Send them via snail mail:

Pat Skidmore, Editor  
2707 Fernwood Road  
Victoria BC V8T 3A3

Or email:

[patskidmore@shaw.ca](mailto:patskidmore@shaw.ca)

**Send in your stories for the Fall 2009 Gazette**

## WANTED COLUMN

Are you looking for a long lost friend?  
Confirmation of a Fairbridge Memory?  
An old photograph? A forgotten recipe?  
Or?

Send in your requests to our  
*WANTED COLUMN.*

## AROUND TOWN

Do you have any news to report?  
Send it in to the  
*Around Town* column.