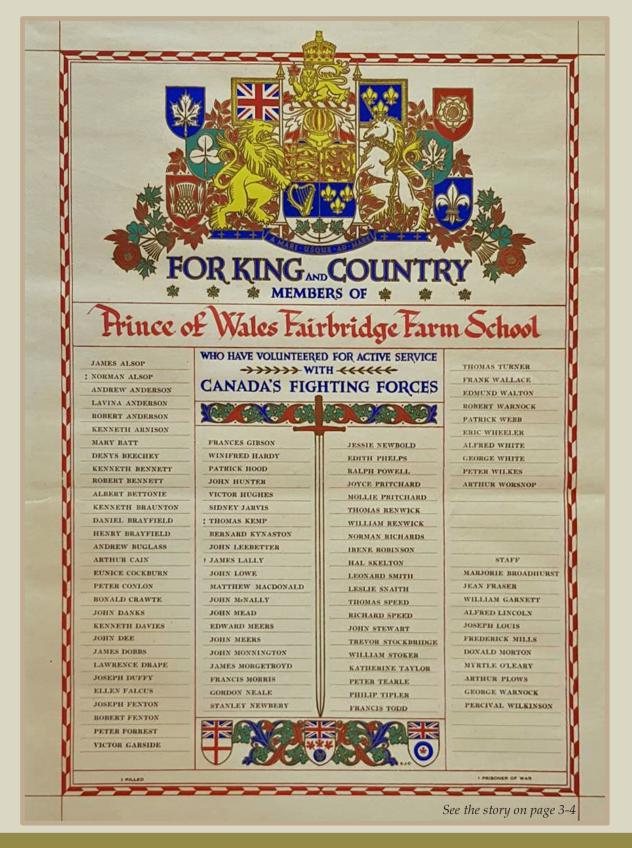
# FAIRBRIDGE GAZETTE

## Fall 2018





## Glen Dobson: President's Message

I hope this email finds you all well! It was fantastic to see those of you who

were able to attend this year's gathering in September.

At the gathering, a number of you agreed to be interviewed by the CBC's Matt Meuse and by Tony Cartey and Christina Dobson. Thank you. Matt is doing a CBC radio documentary on Fairbridge Canada. He hopes the program will be aired in early December. Tony and Christina were gathering video interviews for the film documentary possibilities that are being explored by a local filmmaker. The filmmaker is currently looking for grants to support this. Watch the Facebook page for more information.

The Fairbridge Board and the Fairbridge Alumni Bursary Society have had a number of conversations with membership. It is clear that a majority of members would like to see some of the bursary money available to Fairbridge offspring. The new FABS board is in conversation with the Vancouver Foundation to see how this can be done. We will keep the membership updated through the Gazette and the Facebook page.

I would like to congratulate Roddy Mackay for the publication of his book, "The Memoirs of a Guttersnipe". Roddy joins Pat Skidmore as our second published author this year!

I would like to thank Ron Smith for this dedication to the Fairbridge Canada Society and to the Fairbridge chapel. As of the last AGM, Ron has stepped down from his position as treasurer. We wish him all the best as he enters into the next phase of his life.

## New Book by Roddy Mackay. To learn more, google "The Memoirs of a Guttersnipe."

Or email Roddy - email is below.

## Family Restoration Fund is still available.

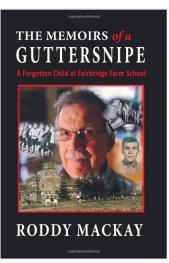
£2 million in extra funding was announced July 7, 2017.

Contact the Child Migrants Trust for the application forms and more information.

<a href="https://www.childmigrantstrust.com/services/family-restoration-fund">https://www.childmigrantstrust.com/services/family-restoration-fund</a>

Child Migrants Trust, 124 Musters Road, West Bridgford,

Nottingham, U.K. NG2 7PW



FCA Fees of \$30.00 per year REMINDER: memberships are due in January of each year.

\*\*\*NEW\*\*\*

Contact FCA Treasurer Tony Cartey: tony@invicta.ca

20900 45A Avenue, Langley, BC V3A 3G5 604-762-2192.

You can also email Pat Skidmore for a form: patskidmore@shaw.ca

### Fairbridge Canada Association Board 2017

President: Glen Dobson: kingdobber@me.com

Vice President: Dan Dobson: <u>DDobson@canpar.com</u>
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Gazette Editor: Pat Skidmore: <u>patskidmore@shaw.ca</u> International Liaison Officer: Christine McIver: kitt1062@googlemail.com

**Director:** Roy Myhill: royhill2016@outlook.com

# The Fairbridge Chapel Honour Roll Scroll By Ron Smith

#### Introduction

Over the past three decades the Chapel Society has kept members of the Fairbridge Canada Association up-to-date on the many projects undertaken at the heritage site through a column in the *Gazette*. On almost every occasion they have dealt with projects to maintain the site: namely the Chapel, school househerdsman's home and grounds.

This column will be a little different; it is about a surprise find and the story behind a story.

As many readers are aware there are a number of memorial plaques and scrolls within the Chapel. This includes four that are in memory of those Fairbridgians who served in the Canadian Armed Forces both during World War II or joined the services after the war including those who participated in the Korean conflict.

In July it was noticed the frame around the "For King and Country" scroll that is located on the rear wall of the nave was in very poor condition and needed replacing. It contains the names of 93 Fairbridge students and staff who enlisted during World War II including Norman Alsop and Thomas Kemp both losing their lives in 1944 and Jim Lally who spent almost two years as a prisoner of war.

The scroll was taken to the E.J. Hughes Art Gallery in Duncan for re-framing and have a boarder mat incorporated which enlarged the size of the framing. In addition, ultra-violet glass, which will stop the scroll from fading and turning yellow—was used. And as you will read a little further along in this story there was a *surprise!* 

## The 'For King and Country' Memorial Honour Roll Scrolls

For many years no one knew who made the scroll or when it was installed in the Chapel. As the Planning Director for the Cowichan Valley Regional District in the late 1970's into the mid 1980's, I worked very closely with Bellamy Properties the Victoria firm that re-developed the Fairbridge home site. As part of their new plans the CVRD purchased both the Chapel, and had the company relocate the school house to a small half acre historic site. Part of this transfer of ownership included a number of artifacts such as the Honour Roll Scroll, which, for about 10 years, were

stored in the CVRD office vault. It was only after the heritage site was acquired by the Fairbridge Chapel Heritage Society in 1988 that these plaques and scrolls made their way back to the Chapel.

Recently, after examining the scroll in greater detail I noticed the letters A.J.C. at the bottom right corner. By chance, a few months later, while walking past a store that specialized in military memorabilia on Government Street in Victoria I noticed a similar scroll in their front window. When speaking to the owner I mentioned there was an almost identical one in the Fairbridge Chapel but did not know anything about these scrolls. He immediately said that they had been created by A.J. Casson, a member of the Group of Seven near the end of World War II.



 $\uparrow_{
m AJC}$ 

Evidently there were different scroll designs prepared by A.J. Casson when he was the chief designer for the Toronto silk screen-printing firm, Sampson-Matthews Ltd. He had joined the company in 1926 rising to be Vice President and Art Director by the 1940's. It was during World War II that the company got behind the war effort producing posters such as the highly praised "Give Us the Tools and We

Will Finish the Job— Help Finish the Job— Buy Victory Bonds, in 1941. They also reprinted, enlarged silkscreen prints of paintings done by many famous Canadian artists such as A.Y. Jackson, Tom Thompson, B.C. Binning, Lawren Harris, Emily Carr, A.J. Casson and others. It was the largest public art project Canadian history. These large high-quality



silk screens were sent around the world to every Canadian military unit and government offices to boost moral during the war and eventually posters went on special tours to the USA, Russia and Europe. After the war many copies ended up hanging in various businesses such as Eaton's Department Stores and every Bank of Montreal branch throughout the country.

#### Other Works by A.J. Casson

In 1984 the Canadian Pacific Railway ordered new streamlined passenger train sets including 18 cars—often referred to as the "Park Car" for the rear of the train and named each after a national or provincial park. A.J. Casson was commissioned to paint the walls of the "Mural Lounge" in the *Algonquin Park* car. Unfortunately, this car is not part of the 14 remaining park cars of VIA Rail, the corporation that took over the passenger business in Canada in 1978, since the car is leased to the Tennessee Valley Railroad Museum in Chattanooga and used for their Hiwassee Premier Service. Fortunately, VIA Rail removed all murals from the trains in 1987 and are now preserved in The Canadian Science and Technology Museum in Ottawa.

While working for Sampson-Matthews throughout the week Casson would take weekend trips around southern Ontario to paint, often capturing the beauty of the many small towns and rural agricultural scenes. He also painted northern Ontario's empty forested lands and remote villages in the Canadian Shield often with other members of the Group of Seven. Most of his paintings were done in water colours and now hang in the National Gallery of Canada, the Art Gallery of Ontario, the McMichael Canadian Art Collection, Hart House (University of Toronto) and many others public galleries.

A.J. Casson, a resident of Toronto, joined the Group of Seven in 1926, was born in 1898 and died in 1992; age 93. He was a member of the Order of Canada as well as a number of art organisations such as the Ontario Society of Artists, the Royal Canadian Academy and the Canadian Group of Painters.

### The Fairbridge Memorial Scroll

Getting back to our story. The Fairbridge Chapel Memorial Scroll contains the names of 82 students and 11 staff. This is the one that was re-framed this past summer (2018). When the Duncan gallery began working on the project, staff was very surprised to discover a second scroll tucked behind the other one. No one was aware of its existence—until, well, now.

When I called to see if the Honour Roll was in the new frame they said yes it was finished but had something else to show me, namely a second Honour



Roll scroll. This one only has 68 names.

From what can be surmised the Fairbridge Farm School had purchased the first one, which also has different notations the very bottom. Likely the calligrapher was unaware that there had been so many students

enlisting from such a small rural Vancouver Island school and thus miscalculated the spacing. A new scroll was ordered and calligraphy started again.

This incomplete scroll will be kept by the Society, as it is part of our history, and from time to time, such as reunions or other special events displayed for all to see.

### **A Special Memorial Service**

The Cowichan Leader reported that on January 9, 1948 a special Friday service was held in the Chapel. With Col. H.T. Logan and his wife present a plaque "framed of B.C. fir to match the panelling of the chapel's interior, was unveiled in memory of Lt. John Elmo Murray Logan who died from his wounds at Falaise, France in 1944. "It was placed just to the left of the honour roll of Old Fairbridgians and staff members who fought in the war and is now permanently housed in the chapel." Thus, it seems that the Honour Roll Scroll was already in the chapel prior to this service.

By then, many Fairbridge students who had come to the farm school between 1935 and the end of the Second World War had left the school but in the same *Cowichan Leader* article there was mention of the recently held Vancouver reunion with about 50 Old Fairbridgians from around the province attending.

## Re-interpreting the Story of the Prince of Wales Fairbridge Farm School By Kathryn Gagnon

I was honoured to speak at a Fairbridge Reunion in the Cowichan Valley about a decade ago, thanks to an invitation from Patricia Skidmore. After the presentation, Fred Harding approached me and asked if the museum would be interested in receiving a donation of the suitcases he brought with him when he arrived at Fairbridge Farm School from England in 1938. I couldn't have been more thrilled to accept his donation, and the suitcases became part of the museum's collection. When the museum hosted the traveling "Year of the **British** Home Child Ouilt" display commemorated the 2010 Year of the British Home Child in Canada, Fred's suitcases and his photo were included in the exhibit. They spoke eloquently of his journey as a nine year old child to Canada.

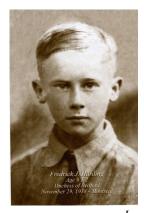
The museum is developing a new permanent Fairbridge Farm School exhibit to ensure that both students' points of view are included and that the legacy of British Home Children in the Cowichan Valley is not forgotten.

In the past, the museum presented the history of the Prince of Wales Fairbridge Farm School in a way that didn't include the voices of the students who attended the school. Most people will know the story about the affluent but socially responsible Kingsley Fairbridge and his dismay at the conditions of Britain's poverty stricken children. The foundation he created, the Child Emigration Society (later the Fairbridge Society) was designed to give underprivileged children an opportunity to have a better life. While there are former students who attest to the positive experience they had at the school, many other stories are now emerging that are troubling, hurtful and tragic. Patricia Skidmore has written beautifully about the courage of her

mother in *Marjorie Too Afraid to Cry: A Home Child Experience* to finally speak her truth about her life at Fairbridge Farm School. Stories like these are important and, for a museum curator, affect the way the story is interpreted.

The museum is developing a new permanent Fairbridge Farm School exhibit to ensure that both students' points of view are included and that the legacy of British Home Children in the Cowichan Valley is not forgotten. Looking back at the interpretation I provided for the 2011 exhibit, I realize now that the story glossed over the more difficult, darker stories of former students. To better reflect a variety of authentic experiences, the museum would like to collaborate with former students, with the goal of presenting a balanced history of Fairbridge Farm School. Fairbridgians and their families, please consider sharing experiences about the School with us. I'll be working with Patricia on how best to collect and include your stories.

Kathryn Gagnon Curator/Manager Cowichan Valley Museum & Archives cvmuseum.archives@shaw.ca 22.11.2018





Images: Frederick J. Harding, 1938 Suitcases of Fred Harding, put out for the British Home School Quilt Display, 2011

The Cowichan Valley Museum and Archives in Duncan is offering the opportunity for Former Fairbridgians and their families to get involved in creation of the new permanent display for the Prince of Wales Fairbridge Farm School.

## Fairbridge Chapel News

Fall 2018 by Ron Smith

While we have been doing odd jobs around the chapel this summer in between the weddings the long dry spell has taken its toll on our new grass and the gardens. Being at Level 4 on the scale of 1 to 4 it means we can only use a watering can to keep some garden plants alive but cannot water the lawns. The restrictions were put on by the strata around the 15<sup>th</sup> of August and likely will last until we get a substantial amount of rain.

There were two fires in the neighbourhood around the beginning of August. The first was at the farm between two of the barns. That was put out fairly quickly with no damage to any structures. The second happened on Sunday August 5<sup>th</sup> when the temperature was about 32° Celsius in the field below the chapel. Speaking to Pete Vanden Dungen from the farm he mentioned that an irrigation pump overheated and caught fire and set the adjacent bush ablaze. Fire departments from Duncan, Cowichan Bay and even Mill Bay came in to put the blaze out. Everyone was worried the fire would get out of control and go up the ravine or hillside below the homes and chapel.

This past summer we cleaned up the chapel basement and plan on building some storage shelves and also clean up the first level of the tower. Outside we are planning to remove the moss from the roof of the schoolhouse, clean all gutters and put a new shake roof on the kiosk among other things. There are also some additional repairs needed to the irrigation system.

#### Weddings

On August 9<sup>th</sup> we had a wedding at the chapel. If you look at the date you will see it was a Friday afternoon event. It turned out to be a very international affair as the bridge and groom, while both are Canadian, actually reside in Muscat, Omar.

It also turned out to be the last entry in the latest Registry of Marriage, which we started in 2000 so had to quickly order another book since there is one more wedding booked for September 8<sup>th</sup> 2018.

Since the chapel was opened in 1940 there has been over 200 weddings at Fairbridge. The first one took place on July 27<sup>th</sup> 1940 - George Warnock and

Catherine Murry. There were only seven weddings held at the chapel between then and 1948. It was not until 1982 that the Parish Registry, which also contains baptism records and the list of those members confirmed, was once again used and there were a further 16 entries between then and 1986. During this time the heritage site was administered by the Cowichan Valley Regional District. By 1987 the District shut the doors saying the building was unsafe.

It was that year the Fairbridge Chapel Heritage Society was formed and by the next year took possession of the heritage site. Over the next number of years, the Society received provincial grants and we were able to undertake some very substantial repairs. By 1990 weddings were once again being held in the chapel and up to October 9. 1999, 88 entries were added to the Parish Registry. It was decided by the Society Board of Directors that because the original Parish Registry was in a fragile state and contained very valuable information that a new Registry of Marriage should be opened and thus from May 20th 2000 to August 9<sup>th</sup> this year there were 86 marriages listed. In addition, there have been at least four other weddings held at the chapel since the year 2000 that are not included in the Registry.

The Fairbridge Carols 2018 will be held on Saturday December 15th from 2-4 pm. This year the afternoon event will feature the local Freedom Gospel Choir and the New Life Church band.

#### **UPDATE**

With the fall weather, probably, the best in years we were able to have two uninterrupted weeks to do a number of repairs at the historic site, almost all outside. With the chapel now approaching 80 years of age the Fairbridge Chapel Heritage Society has looked after it for about the past 30 years and there have been many challenges faced and still more work to be done. Over the years we have had super support from the Fairbridge Canada Association members, government, the B.C. and local governments not to mention area businesses, contractors and last but not least the many, many volunteers. All have a very strong appreciation for the history of the Fairbridge area and of course the two buildings and grounds of the historic site.

This fall the Society believed our work had come to an end by mid September but we were able to tackle a number of projects we just couldn't do earlier. This included the following; removing all the moss from the chapel and school house roofs and then spraying a moss killer on all the asphalt shingles, re-roofing the kiosk with new cedar shingles and totally rebuilding one of the side railings at the entrance to the chapel. This was undertaken by Ron Price, one of the FCHS



directors. Ron also replaced two broken and cracked wooden slats between the front and back double doors with metal bar strips that will provide better security.

We were also able to get all the firewood, split by Dr. Fred Swann in the spring, into the basement. There is likely enough now to last 10 years!! The next work to be tackled will be to organize the basement and the little office area in the bell tower and also clean all the interior windows throughout the chapel

Photos sent in by Ron Smith



## Fairbridge Farm School Bursary \*\*\*NEWS\*\*\*

As mentioned in the President's Message on page 2, the new FABS Board is working towards being able to offer bursaries to Fairbridge offspring once again. Updates will be in the Fairbridge Spring Gazette and on the Fairbridge Website as well as the Fairbridge Facebook page.

We will also continue to send bursaries to the Cowichan Secondary School each year.

This new direction has been made possible by the generous donation to the Fairbridge Farm School Bursary Fund by former Fairbridgian, Mollie Preece. One of the bursaries we hope to offer will be called *The Mollie Preece Bursary*. Mollie Preece was a childcare worker – she was placed with a family as a domestic servant upon turning 16 and she stayed with that family for the next 20 years. Later in life, she became a Practical Nurse. We would like to aim this bursary at a student in the Child Care or nursing/medical field.

Bursaries offered in the past to the offspring of Former Fairbridgians have been available for any level of post secondary education, not just graduating grade 12 students. In the past, students were able to apply for the Fairbridge Farm School bursaries up to three times during their school career. Hopefully we can reinstate that.

#### FABS: Fairbridge Alumni Bursary Society and the Fairbridge Farm School Bursary

#### 2018-2019 FABS BOARD

Patricia Skidmore, President: patskidmore@shaw.ca

Christina Dobson, Vice President:

christina@sustainmentalhealth.com Tony Cartey, Treasurer: tony@invicta.ca

**Directors:** 

Roberta Baril: baril@ualberta.ca Dan Dobson: ddobson@canpar.com Melody Dobson: melody d@telus.net A donation to the Fairbridge Farm School Bursary can now be made directly from the Fairbridge Bursary Page on the Vancouver Foundation Website: www.vancouverfoundation.ca/fairbridge

Or you can make a donation to the Fairbridge Farm School Bursary by contacting: Donor Services, Suite 200 - 475 West Georgia Street,

Vancouver, BC Canada V6B 4M9 604.638.8738 Website: http://www.vancouverfoundation.ca

For more information, contact one of the FABS Board members.

## Fairbridgians Who Passed.

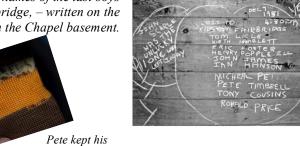
Peter Timbrell & Peter Frankish

**Peter R. Timbrell:** July 29, 2018: Peter was from a party of "The Bell" by the dining hall. 28 children arriving in Canada on May 31, 1947, aboard the Aquitania.

Fairbridge tie



The names of the last boys at Fairbridge, - written on the wall in the Chapel basement.





## Hazel (nee) Hughes (married names: Hunter Abgrall): Hazel passed

away September 2, 2018. Hazel arrived at the Prince of Wales Fairbridge Farm School in August 1938. This group of 28 children travelled across the Atlantic on the Duchess of York.



#### Hazel (Hughes) **Hunter-Abgrall** Born January 18-1929 - September 2-2018

Hazel was well known as the hat lady and was always impeccably dressed.

Born in Wales and shipped to Fairbridge Farm at the age of 8 years old.

Hazel was well know to her many friends as an insightful, comical and great friend.

Hazel will be sorely missed by her friend Stewart at Cairnsmore Place.

We are having a tea at First Memorial in Hazel's honour - October 13 2018, 1PM- till 3 PM. Please come and celebrate her life with us. She will be honoured by all who come to say their goodbyes to a wonderful Lady.

375 Brae Road Duncan B.C. Telephone 250-

by the dining hall bell



in Canada and the U.K. spending the war years. In an orphanage in the U.K., 11-yes made a turbulent (he said he tossed his cookies every day) jo pit to B.C.; entering Fairbridge boarding School in 1946. Upon a Canada, his work ethic was evident, and he always helped o

## John (Jack) Ayer:

Jack passed away on September 27, 2018. Jack was from a party of six boys

who arrived at the Prince of Wales Fairbridge Farm School on December 9, 1946. They travelled the Atlantic on the Manchester.

> Jack Ayer – right The boy on the left is unnamed.



Eunice (nee) Cockburn (married

name Nickolls). Eunice passed away on

October 10, 2018.

Eunice arrived at the Prince of Wales Fairbridge Farm School in August 1938. This group of 28 children travelled across the Atlantic on the

Duchess of York.

Eunice and her husband Joe (1923 - 2009) FCA 2005 Reunion

Eunice – the tall girl in the centre, with other Fairbridge girls, by the dining hall.





# Fairbridge Canada Association 2019 Membership



Please send to: FCA Treasurer, Tony Cartey: 20900 45A Avenue, Langley, BC V3A 3G5 tony@invicta.ca 604-762-2192.



# Fairbridge Canada Association Membership Form 2019 Membership fee: \$30.00



ET		
Name		
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Amount enclosed:		
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