

THE SCOTS CANADIAN

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Red Wilson named Scot of the Year 2000

Lynton (Red) Wilson has ignited a spark that hopefully will burst forth into flame across Canada. Single-handedly, he turned a dream into a multi-million-dollar foundation -- a national history foundation to encourage the teaching and learning of Canada's past.

Red's turning his dream into reality made him the unanimous choice as "Scot of the Year 2000" by the Directors of the Scottish Studies Society. He will be honored at the Scot of the Year and Tartan Day dinner, sponsored by the Scottish Studies Society, at Toronto's exclusive Granite Club on Tuesday, April 4, 2000. The Granite Club is located at 2350 Bayview Ave., just north of Lawrence Avenue East.

This is the eighth Annual Dinner, held to celebrate Tartan Day (officially April 6) and

honour our Scot of the Year and other Canadians of Scottish heritage. And it is an event that you will not want to miss.

Along with Red Wilson and other celebrity guests, there will be the bagpipers, Scottish dancing, music and a magnificent array of draw prizes.

The dinner is a black tie or formal Highland dress affair. Tickets are \$150 each or \$1,200 for a table of eight. To purchase tickets or a full table, contact Alan McKenzie, 580 Rebecca Street, Oakville, Ontario L6K 3N9, or e-mail him at alanmck@cogable.

For further information, contact John Macdonald at (416) 756-0345 or Neil Fraser at (416) 920-6851.

As Chairman of Bell Canada Enterprises (BCE), the billion-dollar holding company for Bell Canada, Nortel and many other interests, Wilson is one of Canada's most respected business leaders. Wilson anted up \$500,000 of his own money to launch *Historica*, a foundation with a goal of raising \$50 million to establish an endowment that would generate income for future generations to teach and learn about Canadian history.

He then enlisted the support of fellow Canadian business Titans --- such as Charles R. Bronfman, Royal Bank's John Cleghorn (Scot of the Year 1998), Charles Baillie of the TD Bank, publisher Conrad Black, television mogul Izzy Asper, frozen food king Harrison McCain and others who read like a *Who's Who* in Canadian business. Bronfman liked the idea so much that his CRB Foundation is matching any dollars raised privately, possibly to a maximum of \$25 million.

All for bringing back to life Canada's often forgotten and/or ignored history. "My

original idea was to put in a small contribution and then look at who else might be interested," Wilson told *Maclean's* when he was named to the magazine's Honour Roll for 1999. "I had no idea how big it would become."

As a business leader, Wilson is acutely aware of the challenges Canada faces to its economic sovereignty. As BCE chairman, he recently was involved with the sale of 20 per cent of Bell Canada to Chicago-based Ameritech Corp.

Wilson maintains that the partnership is essential to secure Bell's future in a fast-changing industry, but he's also the first to acknowledge that the pressure for such alliances highlights the need to preserve a unique Canadian identity.

"We're in danger of losing our sense of how great this country is, and how it came to be great," he says ... "If you don't know where you came from, how do you know where you belong?" ■



Lynton (Red) Wilson at his Oakville home

Photo by Peter Sibbald (courtesy of Macleans magazine)

Scots Wha Hae

*a desire to nurture and preserve
their heritage in Canada
are invited to join*



THE SCOTTISH STUDIES
FOUNDATION

*a charitable organization
dedicated to actively supporting
the
Scottish Studies Program
at*

The University of Suelph

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Letter from the Chair



Dr. Edward Stewart
Chairman, Scottish Studies Foundation

Dear Fellow Members,

The matters of which I speak in this letter may strike a familiar note since all of them have formed the basis of previous correspondence with the membership. While some might suggest that this shows a certain lack of imagination on my part, I would like to believe that it really reflects the decision of the Foundation, and its Board, to concentrate on particular initiatives in an attempt to demonstrate real progress by our organization.

Thus, once again, I will focus on our efforts to build membership, our working relationship with the University of Guelph, and our fundraising efforts towards the goal of establishing a Chair of Scottish Studies at the University.

We have now more or less completed our initial and modest advertising campaign aimed at the recruitment of new members. We have run two series of ads in the "National Personals" in the *Globe & Mail*, our ad in *Scottish Life* has appeared over the past few months, and, most recently, our pamphlet was included as an insert in *The Beaver*, Canada's history magazine.

In addition, as you are aware, I have asked each of you help us in finding new members. While our membership chairman, Dr. Paul Thomson, reports that it is often difficult to ascertain which approach motivated new members to join our ranks, one thing is clear

-- the combination of these efforts has resulted in the largest membership roster we have ever enjoyed with over 155 new members since my last report.

But after enjoying a brief moment of satisfaction about such results, we still must face the reality that our membership is very small compared with the number of people of Scottish ancestry who populate Canada and the USA. As a result, our efforts to expand must continue and at the next meeting of our Board there will be an extensive discussion as to what other approaches we might take in our efforts to increase our membership.

Without dwelling on the matter at great length, let me say that, my opinion, our current working relationship with officials of the University of Guelph is excellent. As an example, the general arrangements, and the various presentations, at the Spring Colloquium on the theme *The Immigrant Experience: The Scottish Diaspora* were the best in recent years in this series. It certainly drew the largest number of attendees that we have experienced. Scott Moir, who runs the Scottish Studies office at the University, and who organized the gathering, is to be congratulated.

Further, on three or four occasions over the last six months the University has responded to a request for a speaker for a "Our Club" luncheons that are held for the benefit of the Foundation.

Of particular note, in this regard, were the arrangements made to have Professor T. Christopher Smout, Historiographer Royal in Scotland and author of the major work "A History of the Scottish People 1560-1830"

speak to the club in early October.

A further example of the cooperation with the University of Guelph brings me to the third theme of these notes. Our treasury, like our membership, also stands at an all time high, over \$400,000 and all of those who have contributed time, effort and money over the 15 years of the Foundation's existence are to be commended in raising this large amount from a standing start.

But our major goal remains the establishment of an endowed chair of Scottish Studies and it is now estimated that it will take at least two million dollars to attain that goal. Fortunately, the University wants us to succeed in this objective as much as we do and we are currently in discussions with the development office at Guelph to determine how our financial goals can be integrated with the fundraising drive currently being planned by the University. While such discussions are at an early stage, if we are successful we may well see the Chair established much earlier than any of us had hoped or planned.

Now we look forward to a New Year, a new century, and a new millennium. The past contains an abundance of accomplishments by Scots and Scots Canadians. No doubt the future will give rise to similar results. The Scottish Studies Foundation, while giving emphasis to Scottish achievements, is still a young organization and the results obtained to date, we acknowledge, have been modest. But we are making discernable progress and the year to come, hopefully, will see our organization move further ahead.

Thanks to each and every one of you for the support that you have given the Scottish Studies Foundation and best wishes for the year 2000.

Sincerely,
Ed Stewart



Ed Stewart, Prof. Smout, and SSF Governors Alan McKenzie and Neil Fraser at the "Our Club"

Fall Colloquium at Guelph examines Scots in exile

The University of Guelph Fall Colloquium was held on the 16th October 1999 at the Lifetime Learning Centre at the University. About 85 attendees were treated to "The Emigrant Experience - The Scottish Diaspora" through papers by illustrious historians from across Canada, the US, and as far afield as Scotland and England.

The first topic *Imagined Communities* reviewed themes in literature, music and culture of Scots communities abroad. *Emigrant Stories* traced the history of individual families and groups as they settled in foreign lands. *Scots of the Diaspora* reviewed the activities of Scots dispersed



Attendees at the Fall Colloquium browse books on sale



Mrs. Cicely Watson presenting the Frank Watson Prize to Dr. Callum Brown

throughout the world. The final talk was given by David Forsyth (National Museums of Scotland) and was entitled *Collecting the Scottish Diaspora -- Scotland and the World*. At lunch, Prof. Ned C. Landman (State University of New York) gave a talk on *Mobility and Stability in Scottish Society and Culture*.

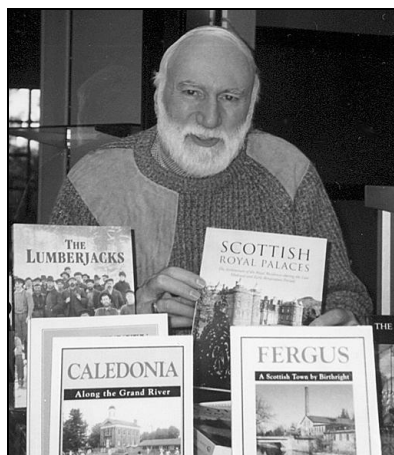
During the Colloquium, a presentation of the Frank Watson Prize in Scottish History was made to Dr. Callum Brown, of Strathclyde University in Scotland, for "Up-helly-aa". Custom, culture and community in Shetland" (Manchester University Press, 1998).

Dr. Brown was born in Edinburgh in 1953, studied Mediaeval and Modern History at St. Andrews (1975), completing his Ph.D. at Glasgow 1982. He has been a lecturer in History at Strathclyde University since 1985. His main work has been the social history of religion, popular culture (from sport to calendar customs) and oral history, mostly dealing with Scotland, and is now moving into gender identities and popular culture.

Dr. Brown is currently finishing a book on *The Death of Christian Britain: Understanding Secularisation 1800-2000* for Routledge (expected to be published in late 2000 or early 2001). He lives in a country cottage outside of Doune in Perthshire with Lynn Abrams, another historian from University of Glasgow, and two kittens. Lynn is the author of *The Orphan Country. Children of Scotland's Broken Homes from 1845 to the Present Day*, which includes material on Scottish orphans who came to Canada.

The Frank Watson Prize in Scottish History was established in 1993 by Cicely Watson, as an 80th birthday present for her husband Frank Watson, who after retirement pursued his life-long interest in Scottish history by doing a BA in History. The couple have been strong supporters of Scottish Studies at Guelph and of the Scottish Studies Foundation.

The prize is awarded every second year to the best new book in Scottish history in the



Publisher Barry Penhale with his display of heritage books on sale at the Colloquium



Professor Elizabeth Ewan presenting the Stanford Reid Bursary to Guelph Doctoral Student Shannon Creps

previous two years. The winner is brought to Guelph to receive the award and to present a talk at the university at the Fall Colloquium.

In addition, Professor Elizabeth Ewan presented the 1999 Stanford Reid Bursary award to Doctoral Student Shannon Creps.

The bursary was established by the Foundation three years ago to honour Dr Stanford Reid, noted Scottish historian and founder of the Scottish Studies Program at Guelph in 1966.

It recognizes academic achievement and the contribution of a Scottish Studies student to the wider work of the Scottish Studies program in giving lectures, organizing conferences and exhibitions, etc. This year's winner, Shannon Creps, is in the second year of her doctoral studies.

Her thesis is on the effects of the Reformation on Scottish women. She has given talks at several Scottish events, helped organize Scottish Studies displays at Highland Games and contributed to the work of the John MacCræ Museum in Guelph, as well as acting as book review editor for *Scottish Tradition*. ■

Canadian singer joins Runrig



Bruce Guthro

Back in August of 1992, thanks to the initiative of Scots-Canadian folk singer Bobby Watt, the Scottish Studies Foundation organized a historic visit of the popular Scottish band *Runrig* to the Ontario Place Forum in Toronto. The event was memorable for all who attended, with the stirring sound of Runrig's distinctive blend of Celtic and modern music filling the air on a warm summer's night.

Among one of the numbers performed was *The Cutter*, the story about Runrig's boyhood pal Johnny Morrison who used to give the boys a ride on the truck that he drove out on the Isle of Lewis. Johnny emigrated to Canada over 30 years ago but still faithfully went back to Scotland's Outer Hebrides every year to cut the peat that his mother needed for winter fuel. The fact that Johnny was in the audience that night made the rendition even more poignant.

Runrig's lead vocalist at that time was Donnie Munro who has since left the band to pursue a career in politics and who is now a solo artist in his own right.

Fortunately the Canadian connection has



David Hunter, former Runrig vocalist Donnie Munro, David Hunter Jr. and ex- Guelph Professor Ted Cowan in 1992. The SSF sponsored Runrig concert was held on August 21 of that year.

not been lost as, after a long search for Donnie's replacement, *Runrig* finally selected Cape Breton singer, Bruce Guthro has to fill Donnie's shoes.

Bruce's career as lead singer for *Runrig* got off to a roaring start last August at the famous Tonder Festival in Denmark, where their inaugural shows were wildly received by fans and press alike. "Long live the new King," read the National Danish newspaper.

Subsequent *Runrig* tours through Germany, England and Scotland through the fall of 1998 reaped equally enthusiastic press and fan response. In the fall, Bruce was on a European tour promoting *Runrig's* new album, *In Search of Angels*.

"A songwriter's heaven" is singer-songwriter Bruce Guthro's description of his native Cape Breton. "A place filled with beautiful rolling mountains, magical music. A place held together by the laughter and stories of its people.

Like many of his generation, Bruce was born into a large family, including seven brothers and one sister. He grew up in the small coal-mining town of Sydney Mines, Nova Scotia.

In his late teens he followed in the footsteps of his older brothers and headed "down the road" landing in the hard-rock mines of Northern Saskatchewan. "I grew up more in those six months than I did in the previous seventeen years. While most kids were starting college, I was packing a tin can and working a mile underground."

From there, Bruce moved around the country for a couple of years working various jobs and staying with people from home. One of them happened to have an old guitar lying around. "It was the first tool I held in my hands that I felt belonged there. When I picked it up, I could go anywhere, or be anyone, all through the lyrics of a song --my own little passport to the world!"

Upon returning home Bruce won a singer-songwriter contest which led to the single release "Livin' in the 90's" via MCA Records Canada. The single gained strong support from radio stations across the country. As a result, BMG Publishing came on board to co-fund his first album, *Sails to the Wind*.

The album was received well by the critics and again, supported strongly on radio, however, it was just one more step up a very long ladder. Bruce jokes "We opened our sails to the wind unfortunately it wasn't very windy that day, but hey, isn't that what music is all about - growing, changing, learning and going broke!"

Our Club Luncheons remain popular

The "Our Club" luncheons held at Toronto's Bow and Arrow Pub continue to attract members of the Scottish Studies Foundation and others interested in the things that Scots in Canada and overseas are getting up to. The idea came from Scottish folk singer and artist Enoch Kent now resident in the Toronto area.

The original Hour Club was one where people met in two old tenement houses next door to one another in Duke Street in Glasgow back in the 1700s. The wall between the two tenements was knocked down with one house forming the speakers' room and the other the bar. Notable speakers were invited to speak on a topic on which they had expertise, with a set time limit of no more than one hour. Legend has it that that Robert Burns paid a visit to the original club.

Enoch makes the point that people don't have to join the Our Club. "There are no membership fees and no committees. It just kind of runs on its own steam thanks to the efforts of those interested in its objectives. It is there for the cultural benefit of those who attend."

"Various topics are discussed with the type of information and ideas you can't get from books, radio or television. Most of the information comes from the members. It's not the type of arrangement where we say we formed a club and you can't come! In fact it's just the exact opposite. The whole basis is that everyone is welcome!"

And while professional speakers like university professors always get a big turnout, Enoch feels that like good Scottish folk music, it is the idiom of the common person -- not the elite in society that makes the difference. "In fact, just the other day we had a session on poetry. Not Burns, not Robert Louis Stevenson but just various writers." Enoch even recited one of his own poems -- and (perhaps to his astonishment) got applause into the bargain!

So as you can gather, the luncheons are a lot of fun. And as a portion of the luncheon tab goes to the Foundation, it's all in a good cause.

The luncheons are held at Toronto's Bow and Arrow Pub, 1954 Yonge St., a few buildings north of Davisville on the West Side of Yonge on Fridays, once every two weeks. For further information and to get the dates of upcoming luncheons, contact Gina at (416) 928-0760.

Now that he is with Runrig, Bruce's lean years are behind him! ■

Up-Helly-Aa festival celebrates Shetland's ancient Viking past

by Brian Smith

Britain's biggest fire festival and torchlight procession takes place in Lerwick on the last Tuesday of January. Over 900 colourfully dressed "guizers" follow the head guizer (the Jarl) and his squad of Vikings and their longship through the darkened streets of the town to the burning site. Here the official ceremony ends in a spectacular blaze as 800 flaming torches are thrown into the longship. A night of revelry follows as each of the 40 plus squads visit the local halls and put on wild and amusing sketches to entertain their hosts.

UP-HELLY-AA is a relatively modern festival. While there is some evidence that people in rural Shetland celebrated the 24th day after Christmas as "Antonsmas" or "Up Helly Night" hundreds or years ago, there is no evidence that their cousins in the town of Lerwick did the same.

The emergence of Yuletide and New Year festivities in the town seems to post-date the Napoleonic Wars, when soldiers and sailors came home with rowdy habits and a taste for firearms.

On Christmas eve in 1824, a visiting Methodist missionary wrote in his diary that... "the whole town was in an uproar: from twelve o'clock last night until late this night blowing of horns, beating of drums, tinkling of old tin kettles, firing of guns, shouting, bawling, fiddling, fifeing, drinking, fighting. This was the state of the town all the night - the street was as thronged with people as any fair I ever saw in England."

As Lerwick grew in size the celebrations became more elaborate. Sometime about 1840 the participants introduced burning tar barrels into the proceedings. "Sometimes",

as one observer wrote, "there were two tubs fastened to a great raft-like frame knocked together at the Docks, whence the combustibles were generally obtained. Two chains were fastened to the bogie supporting the capacious tub or tar-barrel . . . eked to these were two strong ropes on which a motley mob, wearing masks for the most part, fastened. A party of about a dozen were told off to stir up the molten contents."

The main street of Lerwick in the mid-19th century was extremely narrow, and rival groups of tar-barrelers frequently clashed in the middle. The proceedings were thus dangerous and dirty, and Lerwick's middle classes often complained about them. The Town Council began to appoint special constables every Christmas to control the revellers, with only limited success. When the end came for tar-barreling, in the early 1870s, it seems to have been because the young Lerwegians themselves had decided it was time for a change.

Around 1870 a group of young men in the town with intellectual interests injected a series of new ideas into the proceedings. First, they improvised the name Up-Helly-Aa, and gradually postponed the celebrations until the end of January. Secondly, they introduced a far more elaborate element of disguise - "guizing" - into the new festival. Thirdly, they inaugurated a torchlight procession.

At the same time they were toying with the idea of introducing Viking themes to their new festival. The first signs of this new development appeared in 1877, but it was not until the late 1880s that a Viking longship - the "galley" - appeared, and as late as 1906 that a "Guizer Jarl", the chief guizer, arrived on the scene. It was not until after the First World War that there was a squad of Vikings, the "Guizer Jarl's Squad", in the procession every year.

Up to the Second World War Up-Helly-Aa was overwhelmingly a festival of young working class men - women have never taken part in the procession - and during the depression years the operation was run on a shoestring. In the winter of 1931-32 there was an unsuccessful move to cancel the

festival because of the dire economic situation in the town. At the same time, the Up-Helly-Aa committee became a self-confident organisation which poked fun at the pompous in the by then long-established Up-Helly-Aa "bill" - sometimes driving their victims to fury.



The Guizer Jarl - Colin Summers.
Photo: John Coutts

Since 1949, when the festival resumed after the war, much has changed and much has remained the same. That year the BBC recorded a major radio programme on Up-Helly-Aa, and from that moment Up-Helly-Aa - not noted for its split-second timing before the war - became a model of efficient organisation. The numbers participating in the festival have become much greater, and the resources required correspondingly larger. Whereas in the 19th century individuals kept open house to welcome the guizers on Up-Helly-Aa night, men and women now co-operate to open large halls throughout the town to entertain them.

However, despite the changes, there are numerous threads connecting the Up-Helly-Aa of today with its predecessors 150 years ago. ■



The burning of the Viking longship or galley

The Shetland Islands north of the Scottish mainland remained under Norse rule until 1469. Today, the remote, windswept and treeless islands are almost as much a part of Scandinavia as of Britain, and the nearest mainland town is Bergen in Norway. Lerwick, the only sizable place in Shetland, has a fort, museum, Viking exhibition and a fortified tower dating from the 7th century BC.

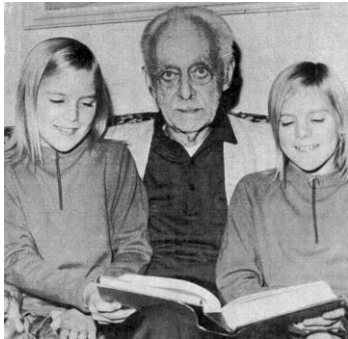
From our Readers

Famous War Historian

Your readers may be interested in this brief outline of the contribution, now largely unrecognized, by my father, Col. A Fortesque Duguid -- a Scot and a committed Canadian. From 1921- 1947 he was the director of the historical section of the Department of National Defense.

Col. Duguid was the author of the official history of the Canadian forces in the Great War of 1914-1918. He served for four years fighting in every major battle. He was wounded and mentioned in dispatches, culminated by being awarded the DSO on the field of battle.

Born in Aberdeenshire in 1887, Col. Duguid came to Canada as a child. He graduated as a civil engineer from McGill



Col. Duguid and his grandchildren
Hilary and Gillian in 1973

University in 1912 and became historical director following the war.

Col. Duguid is credited with suggesting the idea for a book of remembrance which was ultimately installed in the altar of remembrance in the memorial chamber in the Houses of Parliament Peace Tower. He designed the clever mechanism, which kept the book level at all times. Princess Alice and Lord Athlone dedicated the book and were impressed by the way the book was designed to always remain open on whichever page it fell. I can remember my father practicing with my knitting needles to perfect the theoretical design!

He wrote the historical wording for the panels in the altar chamber but these panels were later removed in the interest of bilingualism and are now stored in the war museum. It is too bad that this wonderful example of accuracy coupled with brevity is not available to a generation burdened with wordiness.

As early as 1926 he designed a version of the Canadian Flag which was taken overseas by General McNaughton as the flag of the Canadian expeditionary force. The design

included the Union Jack, the Fleur de Lys and his famous 3-stemmed maple leaf.

An artist in his own right, Col. Duguid was partly responsible for choosing the 30 war artists to do paintings of the Canadian forces in the field during WWII. His paintings and books are a precious part of the Willoughby household and a priceless heritage for his grandchildren.

Margaret H. Willoughby,
Milton, ON

The Demise of Gaelic in Scotland

My great grandparents emigrated from Scotland with their seven children in 1832. When they lived in Rathven, Banffshire, they spoke the Scots dialect of the North East, but were also fluent in Gaelic. Settling in Western Quebec, they soon learned French, and my father grew up speaking all three languages. As a native of Vancouver, I learned only English.

I have heard many romantic stories about the demise of Scots Gaelic, most blaming the English for putting down the Highland culture following Culloden (1746). Recently, I was surprised to read in *A Century of the Scottish People 1830-1950* by T. C. Smout, that the demise of Gaelic in the late 19th century may have been a natural occurrence when the Scottish Education Department established formal schooling in the Western Highlands and Islands. According to Professor Smout, when the Royal Commission on the Crofters (also known as the Napier Commission) made its report in 1884, one of the recommendations was that in Highland schools, instruction in the native language 'ought not merely to be permitted but enjoined.'

However, as Dr. Smout explains: "In fact, throughout the 19th century, as Dr. Durkacz has observed, 'the Highlander himself was strongly and consistently against the use of Gaelic as a school language', on the grounds that what was needed to get on in the world was English - as an HMI said in 1899: 'The language is beautiful...but the people do not want it.'

The contrary view was expressed by the activists of *An Comunn Gaidhealach*, but their attempt to introduce an amendment into the Education Act of 1908 to make Gaelic compulsory resulted only in a crofters backlash in the school board elections, when the vote went, in the contemporary phrase, overwhelmingly 'anti-faddist' and against them."

From my own experience in visiting Scotland, Gaelic is seldom heard now except in the Western Highlands and Islands. I recall hearing a group of youths conversing in Gaelic in the town square in Beaulieu, Inverness-shire, but they proved to be backpackers from the Isle of Lewis, not from the local area around Beaulieu.

Gaelic is still alive in the more remote regions of the Western Highlands and Islands, but not all that common in most other parts of Scotland, and only as a second language. English remains the working language of Scotland, but the current Celtic Revival has generated more interest in the ancient language of the Highlanders, and Gaelic continues to be popular in Canada in parts of the Atlantic Provinces and Eastern Ontario where a rural culture and close-knit community keep the ancient traditions alive.

W. Neil Fraser,
Toronto, ON



McPherson House, Fort Simpson

In Fort Simpson I am closely associated with the Fort Simpson Historical Society (a registered charitable organization). In 1998 the Society purchased two small residential lots on Fort Simpson Island which had been occupied by the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) since 1822. Our land is possible close to, or on, the site of the North West Company's Fort of the Forks, 1803-1811. We honestly don't know.

The log house in the photograph was built in 1936 by George McPherson on land rented from the HBC. George and Lucy raised 11 children and lived there until 1963, when the lease was broken and the land sold. We believe that George McPherson is the great grandson of Murdock McPherson (1796-1863) who joined the North West Company in 1815, transferred to the HBC in 1822 and retired as chief factor in Fort Simpson in 1848. He died in Picton, Nova Scotia in 1863.

I shall be at the National Conference of Provincial Historical Societies in Toronto, February 18-20 and plan to visit the Centre for Scottish Studies at the University of Guelph either before or after the Conference. I shall be looking for more information about Murdock McPherson and his son, also named Murdock (1838-1912). In addition, I shall be looking for any documents or maps that might help pinpoint the location of Fort of the Forks. Other plans include Ottawa and Picton for the same reasons.

Stephen Rowan,
Fort Simpson, NT

Quarriers' children and their descendants flourish in Canada

"Our great want has been a home to which orphan and destitute children might be sent and to which an emigration scheme might be attached, so as to draft off to another land, all who are fitted for it."...William Quarrier 1829-1903

Quarriers is a Scottish charity with a long tradition of caring, especially for children. The institution was originally established by Scottish businessman and philanthropist, William Quarrier, as "The Orphan Homes of Scotland" and back in 1996 it celebrated its 125th anniversary. At that time, Quarriers made a special effort to establish contact with as many as possible of the surviving former Quarriers children and their descendants living in Canada. Representatives from Quarriers traveled from Scotland to Canada with the hope of making contact with as many former residents and other interested parties as possible.

The primary aim was to provide an opportunity for people to make connections with their past, to listen to the experiences of former Homes children and respond in a sensitive manner. At the same time, Quarriers as an organization, was anxious to form a complete understanding of its own history.

William Quarrier is best remembered for establishing the children's village which bears his name near Bridge of Weir, some 15 miles west of Glasgow. This village offered a new life to the many children in the cities and towns of Scotland who were orphaned or living in extreme poverty, frequently in appalling slum conditions. Many were



William Quarrier

orphaned due to the deaths of their parents from consumption (tuberculosis) and over the years, Quarriers Village became the home of more than 30,000 children.

In the late 19th and early 20th century, when countries throughout the British Empire were pursuing active immigration policies, Quarrier realized that his children might benefit from a new life in a new country. He believed that the opportunities this offered the children would be far better than those available in the "dark satanic mills" of Glasgow and other Scottish towns and Canada was chosen as the main destination.

Between 1872 and 1938 over 6,600 children crossed the Atlantic, accompanied by William Quarrier himself on several occasions.

Most of the children went initially to receiving homes and were then fostered to families spread across Canada. Ontario became the focus with receiving homes at Belleville and Brockville.

Estimates made by projecting forward the number of children sent to Canada suggest that perhaps 200,000 or more present day Canadians have roots in Quarriers Village. Some of these could be the great great great grandchildren of the original child migrants in the 1870s!

Quarriers still has records of all the children it cared for, including those who went to Canada. It is known that many of these families still live in Ontario, around Belleville, Brockville, Ottawa, Kingston and Toronto. A smaller number are scattered across Canada from the Maritime Provinces to British Columbia.

The Institution is frequently approached by former boys and girls or their descendants to provide information about their past and such information is made available if it is considered helpful. The records date back to 1871 and hold a wealth of information that could help solve many unanswered questions

William Quarrier

The man behind the charity

William Quarrier was born at Greenock in 1829 into a working class family and his early life was far from easy. His widowed mother moved with the family to Glasgow when William was three. He took his first job at the age of six in a hatpin factory earning a shilling per week. At the age of twelve, he became apprenticed as a boot/shoemaker, becoming a qualified journeyman.

These early years had a profound effect on young Quarrier and helped to determine his later work with destitute children. He later described an early experience... "I stood in the High Street of Glasgow, bareheaded, barefooted, cold and hungry, having tasted no food for a day and a half, and as I gazed at each passer-by, wondering why they did not help such as I, a thought passed through my mind that I would not do as they when I would get the means to help others."

Through the influence of his employer, a Mrs. Hunter, William became a devout Christian, and his faith underpinned all that he subsequently achieved, and established the caring ethos which still guides Quarriers today. William married Isabella, Mrs. Hunter's daughter, his business prospered, and soon he owned three shops in Glasgow. However, he never forgot the hardships of his early life and vowed to help boys and girls who had not had his good fortune.

In 1864 Quarrier set up the first of the "Industrial Brigades" in Glasgow -- *The Shoe Blacks*. Destitute young people were given a simple uniform, a red badge, brushes and polish and allocated a pitch. Out of every shilling earned they kept eightpence to themselves and fourpence went to replace brushes and polish.

William, however, realized that this was not enough. In September 1871 he wrote a seminal letter to *The Glasgow Herald* and *Northern British Daily Mail* pleading the cause of the destitute children of Glasgow. A resulting gift of £2,000 (a small fortune in those days) enabled William Quarrier to open the first of several homes for orphaned children in central Glasgow.

in the lives of former Quarriers boys and girls. ■

For more information contact Dr. Tony Williams, Quarriers Village, Bridge of Weir, Renfrewshire, PA11 3SX, Scotland.



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