

THE FENNER FOUNDATION

R. R. # 2, • 1776 GALESBURG ROAD
LAKEFIELD, ONTARIO K0L 2H0
(705) 652-7395

November, 21, 2012

Rob Anderson
Recreation Coordinator
City of Peterborough
500 George St. N.,
Peterborough, ON K9H 3R9

Dear Rob:

Further to our meeting with Ken Doherty on October 19th, 2012, the following is our written request to Peterborough City Council:

Who is making the request?

The Fenner Foundation was established in 2001 as a federally-chartered registered-charitable family trust. Our purpose is to honour all British “home children” for their contribution to the development of Canada. Our mandate is to build a monument as a visual and genealogy centre at which descendants and friends can share in the stories of the home children.

Why are we making this request?

The home children were orphaned children who immigrated to Canada during the period 1867-1935. They came out of the many orphanages and workhouses of England. The first to come to Canada were sponsored by Barnardo, Quarrier, Fegan, the Salvation Army, the Catholic Association and many other organizations and groups. A total of 127,000 came out in the first immigration. The immigration of 1925-1935 was from the workhouses in England. They were sent to Canada by the British Government and received as labourers by the Government of Canada. Farms in the Peterborough area and industries such as GE benefitted from this influx of cheap labour. Canada’s population and economy grew greatly in this period, and the stories of the home children reflect the history of this period

What are we requesting?

We are asking for a site on which to build a monument. It will need to be a site that is plainly visible at all times and accessible year-round. The monument will have a “mother” stone with name stones added around it as required. We are asking for space at Nicholls Oval Park on the southeast corner, approximately 30’x30’.

Why have we chosen this site?

In 1855, Colonel Sam Strickland travelled back to England after living 27 years in Canada (north of Peterborough). While in England, he wrote his book, **27 Years in Canada West**, in which he told of the prosperity and opportunities that awaited anyone who wished to emigrate to Canada. He said one of the greatest needs was for labourers to assist the pioneer families to carve a living out of this new land. Farming was the means by which Canada would grow. Hence, farm labourers would fill that need.

Being an orphan himself, Sam recognized the miserable life of the thousands of young people in English workhouses, and knew that Canada offered opportunities for a new life in a new, open, free society. Sam wrote the policy which detailed the training and preparation these young immigrants would need for their adventure in Canada, a policy that Dr. Barnardo copied 14 years later.

Nicholls Oval (Lot 32, Concession 13, Monaghan) was Sam's first farm. He was the third occupier but the first to build a house. After Sam purchased and then sold the property, many prominent people owned it: the Batten family, John T. Williams (a Port Hope politician), James Wallis, Zaccheus Burnham, Thomas Need MPP, Wm H. Wrighton (Peterborough merchant), Samuel Dickson, George Barker-Hall (whose executor was Sir John A. Macdonald when practising law in this area), the Dickson Estate, Charlotte Nicholls, and now the City of Peterborough.

When are we planning to erect the monument?

We have the design for the monument, an application to the Trillium Foundation ready to submit, and fundraising will commence once we know that we have a site.

The home children story has remained untold is nearly a century, but the Privacy Act has now made accessible the details of their involvement in the fabric of Canada as our young country grew.

Thank you for considering this request.

Sincerely,

Stanley William Fenner MacLean
President

The Reverend Steven Smith
Communications Director

Susan Soble
Secretary