

## FALLBROOK FARM HERITAGE SITE – Update 27-October, 2009.

### HIGH SPEED TO DESIGNATION-AT WHAT COST????

At last, we are getting back to you, our support and life blood. We apologise for the long delay but so much is happening after a long lull that your steering committee is having trouble keeping its head on straight!! Yes. Designation is in the air. In fact, the vote at Halton Hills Municipal Council (H.H.M.C.) scheduled for sept.21 was postponed to allow us time to meet the staff of the Credit Valley Conservation (C.V.C.) The meeting took place on September 24 at the very place in front of the farm house where the patriarch Donald McKay read his Globe while Aunt Rachel brushed his long white hair in the 1920,s.

Before going further, I invite you to the *every trail* website (address below) or Bruce Trail Conservancy <http://brucetrail.org/pages/about-us>- It is a nice fresh fall day, ideal for a family hike at Fallbrook and Scotsdale, walking on the very land so rich in native, natural and pioneer history that we are fighting to preserve...After this breath of fresh air, we can concentrate on the serious business at hand. October 11, 2009 marked the second anniversary of the campaign which began in Durness, the Highlands, Scotland. Its purpose- to save and restore the site as a memorial to the native and Celtic peoples who adapted to this harsh land and settled it for future generations

[http://www.everytrail.com/view\\_trip.php?trip\\_id=111199](http://www.everytrail.com/view_trip.php?trip_id=111199)

*Bruce Trail loop  
including Maureen Smith, Bennett Heritage, and Roberts Side Trails - Ontario, Canada*

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After this interlude along the Fallbrook Trail, back to the business of designation. It could go on the agenda of HHMC with only 72 hours notice. Our delegation and our presentation can be modified at short notice but hardly realistic to expect our supporters to mobilise for the meeting like this. Especially an evening meeting for elders; a session which can go on until midnight? But given the significance of this historical vote, we will do our best. The vote is basic- will HHMC designate respecting the integrity of the Murison report or vote for demolition and send the history of the Ballinafad peoples, native and pioneer to the garbage bin of popular history. The case for designation is so overwhelming. Let's take a look.

**-The CVC, s own report done in 2007 by Ian McGillivray-some quotes-** `` may be rare or unique property and has contextual value`` (p.3), ``has distinctive landscaping such that it may originally have been a landmark``, ``old or original finishes are intact``, ``interior appears to have many original features`` (i.e. the farmhouse protecting the log cabin) ``. The Mc Gillivray Report concludes ``this building should be saved`` and ``we believe this house has the potential to add to the historical and architectural knowledge of the area``. Adding candidly in follow-up

correspondence that he was commissioned by the CVC who originally sought to demolish and ``naturalise``, M.McGillivray than opts for ``historical salvage``, demolition in disguise. The C.V.C. had a substantial budget in December of 2007 to do this.

**-Friends of Fallbrook-** after the HHMC refused the demolition permit to CVC on December 9, 2007, our community group consisting of Donald McKay descendants and Fallbrook farm families began to organise and contact absolutely every single person and organisation able to help. Over 200 persons receive our regular updates directly and hundreds more via our website-<http://www.electricscotland.com/index.html>- As well we have our own Scot connection – the electric Scotland website, Department of Scottish Studies, University of Guelph and the MacKay Sutherland Trust(Durness,the Highlands, Scotland)

**-the Ballinafad Oral History Project** is near completion after a gigantic effort by Joan Kadoke,Jim Kirkwood and Erin Grant and Kris Kies of Scottish Studies, U. Of Guelph. Over 50 elders have participated and the tapes are now being copied. Each contributor will receive their copy at an elders' celebration to be held at Ballinafad United Church on November 29, 2009.Their stories are so rich and old neighbours crossed paths for the first time in years. We now have a living political base in Halton Hills as well as our ancestors at Greenwood or Providence Cemeteries.



**-the Murison Report** has been recognised as a milestone document proving for the first time the existence of the McClure Mill but also the unique features of the farmhouse as completed by Donald McKay, family and local artisans. Tom's theme of the evolution of human civilisation through its occupants (native and Celt farmers) is now universally recognised.

**-Tom Murison** is currently completing the restoration to the CN Railway Park in the shadow of the CN tower. After so much time and effort spent on the campaign for Fallbrook, he prepared the detailed renovation submission for Trillium (on a pay later basis, at his own risk)...

Tom has also restated his commitment to resurrecting the Fallbrook site in two weeks, we will



send you a more complete report on Tom's work.

**-Trillium application-** the document of 30 pages laboriously completed by our committee over a year ago is awaiting CVC approval. Intensive meetings are planned to complete this task. **The College of Management and Economics, University of Guelph is providing the business acumen so sorely missing from our group of teachers, farmers and nurses.** They will help with Trillium, business plan-short and long-term, and the founding of a non-profit heritage group. This is a significant development and should reassure all.

**-The Bridge Report-** As you see in Update 21, HHMC, at the suggestion of the Ontario Heritage Trust, commissioned a heritage report on the Fallbrook Bridge, already detailed in the Murison Report. The Utterman report scores the bridge as heritage and strongly recommends its designation, not its demolition. **THE WHOLE FALLBROOK SITE IS NOW DOCUMENTED AS HERITAGE BT BOTH CRITERIA OF THE ONTARIO HERITAGE ACT- ARCHITECTURE AND THE HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF ITS INHABITANTS.**



**- Silver Creek Education Center-** since the beginning of our campaign in October of 2007, it has been obvious that the soul of Fallbrook is education. More than 10,000 students visit the center every year. Aunt Rachel McKay confirms that the ``tool shed`` housing the center today is the same built by her father. It is only just that the home be reunited with the ``tool shed`` as part of the education center. Much cheaper than the two existent portable classrooms which are foreign to the natural environment.

- **Emerson Native Archaeological Site** (Scotsdale and Fallbrook Farms)-Laurentian University (Alicia Hawkins) and Ontario Heritage Trust- HHMC has received the complete report which will be tabled at the designation meeting. There is no doubt of the significance of the native contribution. The significance of the Celt crofters is apparently questioned once again! Read on.

- **Halton Hills Heritage Committee Report**- In November 2008, HHMC voted to permit their heritage committee to prepare a recommendation on the designation of the Fallbrook Site. An expert was hired and the report was accepted by the HHHC in January, 2009. We were told that it ``would respect the integrity of the Murison report``. We were told it was secret until tabled in council just prior to the designation vote. By chance 2 weeks ago, we found the HHHC recommendation on Google

#### **- Heritage Register**

*A) Fallbrook Farm Designation Report in December, the committee hired S. Brasil to prepare a designation report as per GC-2008-0374 adopted at the December 8, 2008, meeting of Council. M. Rowe and R. Stewart reviewed the report prior to committee circulation. The report recommends designation of three features of Fallbrook Farm, under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act, to include McClure log cabin, McClure Mill site and Silver Creek Bridge.*

#### **Recommendation No. HERITAGE-2009-0002**

*THAT the Fallbrook Farm Designation Report be accepted and forwarded to Council for approval for designation under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act.*

*CARRIED*

Yes, once again the pioneer crofters of Ballinafad may lose their significance status... The farm house which has protected the log structure for 140 years is to be demolished if the HHHC recommendation is not modified.

We, at Fallbrook, feel both deception and bewilderment. The visual symbol of the courage and solidarity of the Ballinafad pioneer community is to disappear?? At least the original recommendation of HHHC forced the CVC in December of 2007 to ``historically salvage and insure appropriate relocation and storage``. We are consulting our partners and regrouping. Lets us hope that this was a slip of the pen. Mark Rowe, chairperson of the HHHC has confirmed to us that the proposed demolition of the farmhouse will be rediscussed at their next meeting.

We will get back to you next week than regularly until total designation is won. Our next update was already titled ``The Battle for Significance``. More than appropriate now. We will than follow with a report on Tom Murison and our collective position on designation. Than a new subject- ``Fallbrook Crofter Tours Link``. ``), describing the rich and wonderful human experience that the Battle for Fallbrook has been over the last 2 years. Good night.

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