



The River Round Up

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Farley Mowat - Our Veteran



Farley McGill Mowat was born May 12th, 1921 in Belleville, Ontario. Being an only child for most of his life, Farley welcomed adopted brother John. Dad Angus was town librarian while mom Helen had the hardest job in the world by being a stay at home mom. Farley went to school in Belleville before moving to Windsor for two years and then onto Saskatoon until 1937. In 1938 he moved to Richmond Hill, ON, to complete his high school.

War had broken out in Europe, so Farley attempted to join the Air Force, however he was turned down as he was underweight. "I wanted to bomb the enemy not wrestle them" claims Farley. Not to be defeated he joined the army and became an infantryman with the Hasting and Prince Edward (Hasty P's)-the same division that his dad had served in during World War One. Following an eighteen month training at Camp Borden, they were shipped overseas as a reinforcement crew. Upon arrival in England Farley, now a 2nd Lieutenant, continued training until the spring of 1943. In June, 1943 the Hasty P's, the 1st Brigade of the 1st Canadian Division troops were boarded on a ship heading to

Scotland, the Mediterranean Sea and onto the invasion of Sicily. Upon arrival at shore Farley had his first encounter with death as his Major was killed by a German Marine and the body fell beside him. For the next year and a half the troops marched from Sicily to the boot of Italy before finally reaching Rome. The battalion sailed to Marseilles in the south of France and then to Holland. At the end of the war Farley was made a Captain in the Intelligence Corp and stayed in Europe for five months collecting German artillery which was considered world superior. A Liberty ship from Brussels was loaded down with guns, tanks, one man submarine, V2 Rocket, Flying bombs and other military equipment. Upon arrival home in Canada Farley realized that they would be used to make more deadly weapons to be used in another deadly war. Fuming at being so stupid in helping another war he spent the rest of his life opposing war in all forms and still does to this date. Sick of human behaviour after the war, Farley fled to the Arctic and began writing books, forty-two in all. The first three books were about the war: "Regiment" was about his regiment, "And No Birds Sang" was about his personal experience until 1943 and "My Fathers Son" was about the balance of the war. Five of Farley's books have been made into movies: Never Cry Wolf, Snow Walker, Lost in Barrens, Whale for the Killing and the Curse of the Viking Grave.

On a personal note in 1960 Farley's boat "Happy Adventure" was once again ashore for repairs in Saint-Pierre et-Miquelon and while ashore he met the love of his life Claire Wheeler who was there studying French. Claire a graphic designer from Toronto and a graduate of the Ontario College of Art in Toronto has also written several books. Farley claims it was love at first sight and he swept her off her feet. Farley & Claire have spent their summers for the last thirty years in Grand Gully and their winters with family in Port Hope. Son, Sandy & wife Kim and grandson Justin live in Palgrave, ON but love to visit Grand Gully. Recently Farley & Claire

gave more than two hundred acres of land to the Nova Scotia Nature Trust to prevent not only the land but also the three kilometres of shoreline from being developed or as Farley says “exploited”. Farley & Claire, the people of River Bourgeois wish you many more years of health, happiness and writing.

Farley’s message: “*No excuse for war, never has been and never can be an excuse*”.

The Battle of the Atlantic



The Battle of the Atlantic was the only battle of WWII that was waged close to our shores. German U-Boats continually threatened the vital transportation of goods and personnel to aid in the war effort from South America to Halifax as well as entering the Gulf of St Lawrence.

More than 1600 Canadian Merchant Seamen and eight women would die during this period. Fortunately there were no casualties on the twelve Merchant Canadian flag ships that delivered supplies during the Korean Conflict. In the American Merchant Navy the causality ratio was 1 in 26, the highest rate of any branch of service during WWII.

On Tuesday, August 4, 1942 the front page of the Boston Herald read, “*Sub Sinks New England Trawler, 5 Die*” The Gloucester Daily Times would read much the same: “*Eight Others Wounded, Skipper Lost In Merciless Attack*”.

The Fishing Trawler SS *Ebb* out of General Seafoods Co., Boston, Me. was shelled by machine gun fire from the German submarine U-754 at 0400 EWT on July 28, 1942 about 45 miles southeast of Cape Sable, NS while en route from Boston to the Grand Banks. The *Ebb* carried a crew of 17. At a minuscule 260 tons, 122 feet long by 24 feet wide with a draft of 12 feet, it was unlikely that she would be troubled by the war as she was far too small for an effective torpedo shot and insignificant enough that use of gunfire was not thought to be worth the risk. This belief was sadly misplaced. Whilst fishing off Cape Sable her crew was shocked to see U-754 emerge from the water.

The early morning attack caught most of the crew asleep. A warning shot fired across the bow was mistaken for a backfire and then followed by a hail of bullets. As the submarine circled the unarmed

trawler, the crew was attempting to launch the two lifeboats. At this point the Captain and two men in the wheelhouse lost their lives, as well one lifeboat would be lost. There was no attempt to spare any life as was the case in the sinking of three previous trawlers which incurred only one death. The swiftness of the attack left no time to use the radio telephone. In the span of about twenty minutes, fifty or so direct hits would leave the vessel stricken to the point of sinking. The shelling continued while the ship was sinking almost severing the vessel. Twelve survivors abandoned the trawler in one lifeboat. The survivors were discovered and rescued by the Destroyer *HMS Witherington* fourteen hours later.

Three days after this incident, just a few miles from the scene of the *Ebb* sinking, U-754 was herself sunk when she was hit by depth charges from a 113 Royal Canadian Airforce Lockheed Hudson aircraft operating from RCAF Station Yarmouth, which sent her to the bottom with all 43 hands.



Patrick Morrison

In the end the ship, provisions and eighty thousand pounds of fish were incidental in comparison to the five that were lost, in particular great uncle Patrick Morrison, husband of Blanche (McNamara) of The Brickery. Edward M. MacDonald of D’Escousse was also a victim of this tragedy. *Information courtesy of: The Boston Public Library, The US Coast Guard, Websites: The American Merchant Navy, and U-Boat.net. Don Pottie Eds note: Each year we dedicate our November issue to our war veterans in keeping with Marie Boyd’s purpose for the original River Round Ups. We thank Farley Mowat for sharing his experiences and Don Pottie for sharing stories from his archives. Coincidentally Farley & Claire live in the house once owned by Patrick Morrison.*

Ship Building

All you who have read Garvie Samson’s book *The River That Isn’t* or *Of Ships & Men* by John Parker are familiar with the ship-building and sailing history of River Bourgeois. You would also be aware of the role that Boyd’s store and wharf played in the

transportation of goods of all kind to the merchants of old. A few of you might even remember the *Stella*.



Well this summer history started repeating itself as once again the Boyd's decided to get involved in ship building. Pictured above is the clan christening a sail boat constructed in the Boyd shed by Wes Johnson of California. Husband of Blaise Boyd's sister Betty, Wes spends a good part of the summer at the River and has decided he wants to while away his hours sailing. I understand that Roderick Burke the great boat builder from the South Side has decided that he too will have a christening party after his next creation.

Joe P.'s Clan turns 50

Pictured below are "57 Classics" and proud of it. All are relatives of Clara & Joe P Burke. They got together to celebrate their 50th birthday with dinner, corn boil, canoeing and partying the night away at the River Bourgeois Days dance. They showed everyone that turning 50 can be lots of fun!!



Back Row: L to R: Lil Smith (wife of Margaret's son Ron), Barbara (Anthony) Sampson, Cheryl (wife of Freddie's son Brian), Joan (Margaret's) Smith. Front Row: L to R: Sheila (wife of Freddie's son Stephen), Brian (Freddie), Rose (Theresa) Kelly, Brenda (Anna) Jesus and Karen (Raymond) Gillis.

Primary Class



Sarah (Jennifer) Gibson and Christian (Lisette & Kenzie) MacDonald started school this year. Judging by this picture only Sarah appears to be happy about it. Perhaps Christian will feel better when it's his time to graduate.

Boating on the River



Two of the teams that took part in the war canoe races are pictured competing with the wind and each other. Picture courtesy of Raymond Doary.

Congratulations

Pottie/Covin Promotion: On October 1st Charline (Pottie) Covin, Certified Tissue Bank Specialist with the QEII Health Sciences Centre accepted the new position of Tissue Bank Clinical and Processing Leader. She will be responsible for teaching the theory and the technical knowledge required to recover and process human tissue for transplant across Canada, a position and title which will become highly recognized throughout Canada. We wish you much success in your new job Charline. Love mom & dad.

Digout: We mentioned last month that Debbie (Cosman) Digout was manager of the St. Peters

Royal Bank Branch. She took over from Jim Doyle in July and we wish to extend our congratulations.

Wedding

Pierro/Landry: Congratulations to Richard, son of Catherine Pierro of Nyanza and Melanie, daughter of Blaise & Gretchen Landry of Baddeck, formerly of RB on their wedding July 26th at St. Columbo Church, Iona. They will reside in Nyanza.

Births

Benoit/Sampson: Leelan Vincent Michael, 7lbs 12oz, born Oct. 19th to Shawn & Leah-Anne of Arichat. Congratulation to the parents, brother Christian, grandparents Frances & George St. Louis and great-grandparents Anne & Joe Sampson.

Boudreau: Kallie Jorja, 7lbs 4oz, was born Oct. 10th to Dennis & Vanessa of St. Peters. Congratulations to the parents, grandparents Barbara & Georgie Boudreau, and Joe & Louise MacNeil and all four great-grandmoms Susan Stone, Mathilda Boudreau, Margaret Sampson and Beatrice MacNeil.

Burke/MacKenzie: John Aiden, 7lb 9oz, born Oct. 17th to John & Kerry of Edmonton. Congratulations to parents, grandparents Calvin & Nancy Burke and Catherine & Donald MacKenzie and great-grandmoms Obeline Burke and Evelyn MacNeil.

Martin: Gracie Ann, 7lbs 14oz, was born Oct. 5th to Donna & Joey. A sister for Jeffrey. Congratulations to the parents and grandparents Al & Shirley Martin and Ann Touesnard and great grandma (Jane) Stone.

Deaths

Boucher: Robert J, 60, passed away on Oct. 8th. Our condolences to his wife Anita, children Tammy & Chris, sisters Faye & Lana and brothers Leslie & Darryl and their families.

Dakai: Phyllis Marie, 66, Sydney, died on September 20th. Our condolences to her son Kevin & his wife and their family of River Bourgeois.

Hamm: Robert, 60, passed away in Halifax on Oct 23. He was the son of Christina (Sutherland) & the late Frank Hamm. Our condolences especially to his wife Gale (Sampson) and all his family.

Stone: George, 86, Ottawa, passed away on Oct. 22. Our condolences to his wife Helen (Landry), children and brother-in-law Leo Landry.

Bits & Bites:

- The family of the late Robert (Bobby) Joseph Boucher would like to say a **sincere thank-you** to everyone who helped in any way during our time of sorrow. The visits, phone calls, meals brought to the house, funeral home & hall, and

cards that were sent helped us get through this difficult time. A special thank-you is extended to Father McDow, The River Bourgeois CWL, and Alex A. Morrison Funeral Home. *Anita & Family*

- **Cribbage** Seniors Bldg Mondays at 7pm.
- **Senior's club** meeting on Nov 6th at 1:30 pm.
- **CWL meeting** on Thurs Nov 8th @ 7pm.
- **CWL Merchandise Bingo** Nov 4 at 2pm.
- **CAP site meeting** on Nov 14 at 7pm.
- **RBCSS meeting** -Nov 28th @ 7pm.
- **Seniors Mini Bingo**, Nov. 14th @ 1:30 pm.
- On December 9th there will be a **fishcake & beans luncheon** from 11am-1pm at the Tara Lynne Center. Cost is \$6.and includes tea or coffee and dessert.Proceeds to RBCSS.
- **High school students** willing to volunteer at CAP site call Sharon (3516) or Ann at (2944).
- **The annual celebration for couples** in the community married 25-30-40-50-55+ years will take place on Nov. 25th.Please call Deirdre @2827 Mary @2699 or Carmen @2902 if you or someone you know celebrated this year.
- **The Cenotaph Restoration Committee** are now selling Club 200 tickets. Draws are Nov. 16th through Dec 21st.Call Donnie@2740-Debbie@2495-Raymond@2820-Maurice @2223 or Joe @2677.
- Capsite winter hours are 2-4 & 6-8 Mon. to Thurs.and 2-4 on Friday. CAP phone # is 535-3251. FAX 535-3638. Anyone looking for Heritage Walk booklets, T-shirts (some of this years left), postcards or used books and for all your computer needs drop in. Email address is rbcap@stpeterscable.com and our website is www.stpeterscable.com/~rbcap. Lynn Boudreau is having a few computer problems which will hopefully be short lived and then she will update our website.
- Anyone wishing to book the TLC should call Mike Fougere at 535-3308. People requiring use of the Funeral Home call Marie & Conrad Fougere at 535-2621. Call Georgie or Harold Landry at 535-2939 to open the church for any special functions i.e. weddings, baptisms etc.
- The Round Up is available at Bucky's Garage, RB Post Office or East Coast Credit Union. Subscriptions are available for \$15.00 delivered in RB, \$20.00 within Canada and \$25.00 internationally per year.

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