

September 15, 2015

Report To: Mayor & Council

From: Doug Brown, Manager of Operations & Facilities

Subject: Decision on installing a New Columbarium – Riverview Cemetery

Presently the Town has 3 Columbariums; Two at the Riverview Cemetery and the other at the Fort Frances Cemetery. Each columbarium has 112 niches where each niche holds up to 2 urns or a total of 224 urns. See table below outlining pertinent information on each columbarium.

Columbarium	Cemetery	Installation Date	Approximate cost without Foundation	Remaining Niches	Sold Niches
Lady Frances Simpson	Fort Frances	May of 1998	\$ 41,554	85	27
Sieur de Lavernedrye	Riverview	May of 1998	\$41,554	0	112
JA Mathieu	Riverview	May of 2007	\$ 49,418	17	95

The reason for this report at this time is a decision needs to be made in the near future either to install another columbarium at the Riverview Cemetery or limit the supply of niches in order to sell the remaining niches in the Lady Frances Simpson Columbarium at the Fort Frances Cemetery. There is approximately one year supply of niches remaining in the JA Mathieu Columbarium. Sherry George, Museum Curator is investigating and suggesting who will be the next forefather/mother to be carved into the exterior side of the next new Columbarium at the Riverview Cemetery.

As you are fully aware, back in November of 2005, the Town suggested relocating the Lady Frances Simpson columbarium from the Fort Frances Cemetery to the Riverview Cemetery. However some of the owners of niche spaces within the Fort Frances Cemetery columbarium couldn't agree to this suggestion.

Respectfully Submitted
Operations & Facilities Division



Doug Brown, P. Eng.
Operations and Facilities Manager

Nancy Loutit Calder was born in 1849 in the Lockport, Manitoba area, the mixed blood daughter of Lowe Loutit, a Scot, and Jane McDougall, a Metis woman (Scot & Cree heritage). She married William Calder at Fort Alexander in 1870 and moved with him and their infant son, Peter, to Lac La Pluie. The trip from Fort Garry (near Winnipeg) was undertaken first by the old Dawson stagecoach trail to the Northwest Angle and then by canoe up Rainy River, the only means of travel at that time.

Arriving in Fort Frances in 1871, she found literally nothing. The only building was the Hudson's Bay trading post and the factor's quarters. These buildings were set in a small clearing overlooking the falls (paper mill offices on Third Street West).

The family spent their summers in Fort Frances, but wintered at Eagle Lake, where William collected furs for the Hudson Bay Company. Most of their eleven children were born in the wilderness, often delivered by William and Nancy themselves. Their home in Fort Frances, a log cabin, was situated behind the Wells Hardware Company (McTaggart's) and is still standing – one of the oldest buildings in our community. They later moved to a larger log cabin near what we know as First Street and Victoria Avenue.

Nancy, like her mother-in-law, Maria (Gibson) Calder was a mid-wife and nurse. She brought many children into this world, caring for both babies and their mothers until they were strong enough to resume their arduous duties of pioneer wife and mother. She was also called upon in times of illness during a period when doctors were not readily available. She remained active all her long life, keeping busy with sewing, knitting and making quilts. Well known and revered in the community, she was affectionately referred to in later years as Granny Calder.

Suffering a stroke in her final year, she died on February 14, 1943 at the age of 94.

It should be noted that women of that time worked in equal partnership with their husbands whether it was on the farm or in a business. However it was not the custom to recognize their participation. Someone today looking for an obituary of a grandmother (say Jane Smith), may only find a Mrs John Smith or a Mrs George Smith. Women were rarely accorded a write-up that included their birth name. That Nancy Calder is noted so often in our newspapers speaks to her respect in the community.

On a side note, the Calders are credited with being the second family to arrive in Fort Frances and remaining to make it their home. In truth you could say that they are the fathers and mothers of our community as their descendants and those of their siblings (numbering over 2000) make up a significant portion of the population of Fort Frances and district.

In 1876, William's father James was appointed by the Hudson's Bay Company as interpreter to Kettle Falls. The date of his appointment coincides with his son William's appointment to Eagle Lake. James and Maria and their children, soon followed William and Nancy to this area. Daughter Margaret married William McDonald; daughter Maria married Alexander Briere (Bruyere), brother Robert married Marie Jourdain, daughter Mary Jane married George Constantine Allan.

Herbert Williams - Fur Trader, Business Man and Community Leader

The Fort Frances Times of March 7, 1940 reports that Herb Williams, revered old timer, was laid to rest. "Fort Frances, in his passing, lost one of its most colourful characters, pioneer, fur trader, Hudson's Bay Company post factor, business man, benefactor of many who knew him, a willing and capable civic administrator." It was noted he died in "typically characteristic setting – playing chess".

Herbert Williams was born in Plymouth, Devonshire, England on April 30, 1861. Williams came to Northwestern Ontario in 1882, entering the services of the Hudson's Bay Company under chief factor Donald Matheson. He served in Fort Frances for a brief time in 1885, but returned to make a permanent home with his bride Agnes in 1894, assuming the position of chief factor of the post.

Williams resigned from the Hudson Bay Company in 1896 to start his own business as the H. Williams and Company Limited. The general store sold groceries, hardware, dry goods, house furnishings, boots and shoes. Williams not only sold retail, but also ran a wholesale business, supplying the camps with provisions. One story relates that an order of 150 cases of tomatoes, 2 1/2 tons of pork and some 30 or 40 sacks of sugar was referred to as a small order.

Williams employed a number of people who later rose to prominence in Fort Frances. Ambitious men like Bruce Lloyd, Alfred Watson, William Elliot, Frank Warner, Henry Cruso and Byron Stuart all worked as clerks behind his counter. Williams assisted them and many others by giving them sound advice and, at times, even financial backing for their projects.

Williams continued in business until the 1905 fire that razed his store along with many others. He then retired from the firm re-organizing as Watson and Lloyd. He built the Williams Block on the corner of Front and Church where Watson and Lloyd and the Bank of Commerce operated for a period of time. (Torn down in 1955 to make way for a customs facility.)

Following the 1905 fire, Williams turned his attention to civic matters. In 1906, he was elected to town council, and a year later, became mayor. He proved to be a capable administrator and remained in office until the end of 1910. In 1917-1918 he served as mayor once again.

During William's term in office, Fort Frances experienced a construction boom: the paper mill was built and most of the waterworks for the town was laid. During the sewer project when the town's credit ran out, Williams raised the 20,000 dollars on his own personal note to finish the work.

Williams was also responsible for negotiating the favourable electric power rates from the power company. At the time, dam construction was behind schedule, and Mr. Williams, being a good trader, saw the opportunity of getting something substantial in return for agreeing to an extension of time.

Williams was also an active member in the Granite Lodge.

Dr. David Croal McKenzie was born in 1870 in Durham, Ontario. He came to the Rainy River District in 1897 after graduating from the University of Toronto with a medical degree.

Dr. McKenzie opened a medical centre in Mine Centre — at the time, a bustling mining town.

Shortly after, he moved to Fort Frances where he built the McKenzie Hospital (now an apartment building on Third Street West), the first hospital in the district.

McKenzie played an active role in municipal affairs and was mayor of Fort Frances for a number of terms, totalling six years.

During the First World War, Dr. McKenzie was a colonel of the 98th regiment. Later he organized the 141st Bull Moose Battalion, a forestry battalion that recruited experienced loggers and lumbermen to cut the forests of Britain and France to provide the necessary building materials for the trenches. In 1916, as colonel and commanding officer, he took his battalion overseas.

McKenzie was often referred to as the father of the Canadian Legion in Fort Frances, serving as one of its first officers. He and fellow associates made the club rooms available to the community.

McKenzie supported local athletics, and often lent a hand to various sporting organizations such as football, hockey and baseball. An excellent curler, he held an honourary life membership with the Fort Frances Curling Club.

McKenzie was credited with organizing a town band, and was prominent in Masonic and Shrine circles.

A close friend and college classmate of Prime Minister McKenzie King, Dr. McKenzie was always a strong supporter of the liberals.

Dr. McKenzie passed away on Oct 21, 1939.