



FALLBROOK FARM HERITAGE SITE- PRESENTATION TO THE SCOTTISH STUDIES FOUNDATION- 19/01/2010

Since October of 2007, a small community heritage group consisting mostly of descendants of Scot crofters was formed to prevent the demolition of the last pioneer farm house in Halton Hills. The group is called the Friends of Fallbrook. The picture on the left shows the home today in relatively good condition. On the right is the farm before the original red pine barn (center) was demolished in 1998 by the Credit Valley Conservation, the current owner. . The barn on the right is now the Silver Creek Education Center which receives the visits of over 10,000 high school students a year and currently teaches natural heritage. Our principal aim is that the site be used as a living classroom to educate the young about the sacrifices and inestimable contribution of the Celtic pioneers. The surrounding farm community, Ballinafad, integrated many of the social and geographical traits of the homelandwork, family, church, integrated education and strong community, as well as hills and dales and poor farm land. Making fiddles and community dances were there main cultural activity, after church.

With the tenacious support over 2 years of Graeme Morton and his team at Scottish Studies and our webmaster Alistair McIntyre who developed our website(www.electricscotland.com/history/canada/fallingbrook.htm) as well as many other partners, we have succeeded in achieving two objectives. The oral history of the Celtic pioneer community has been painstakingly recorded and will be preserved in the archives of the University of Guelph. Their story will be incorporated in a book and developed as an educational tool on the Scottish studies website. **On December 7, 2009, Halton Hills Municipal council voted to designate Fallbrook as a heritage site.** This includes the site of the lumber and grist mill(1855),the stone bridge built by Scot masons(1885) and the original log cabin(1855). A very significant part of the site is a woodlands native village located on the original pioneer farm at the top right of the satellite image on the next page. The report on this site can be seen on the electric Scotland website. The bottom right is the beginning of Bruce Trail `` 13. Go to their website to see where we are. Fallbrook is opposite the Irwin side trail.

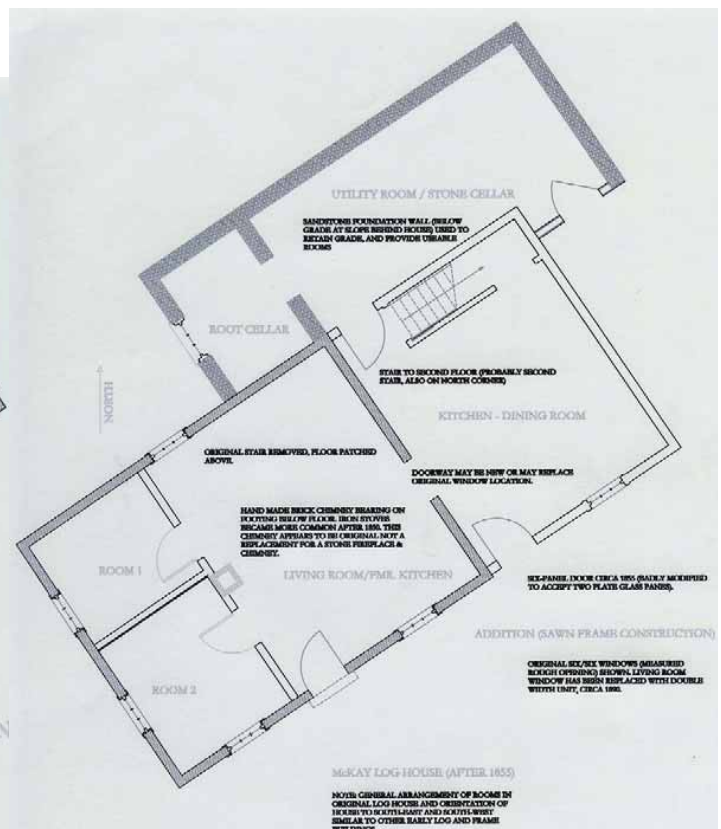
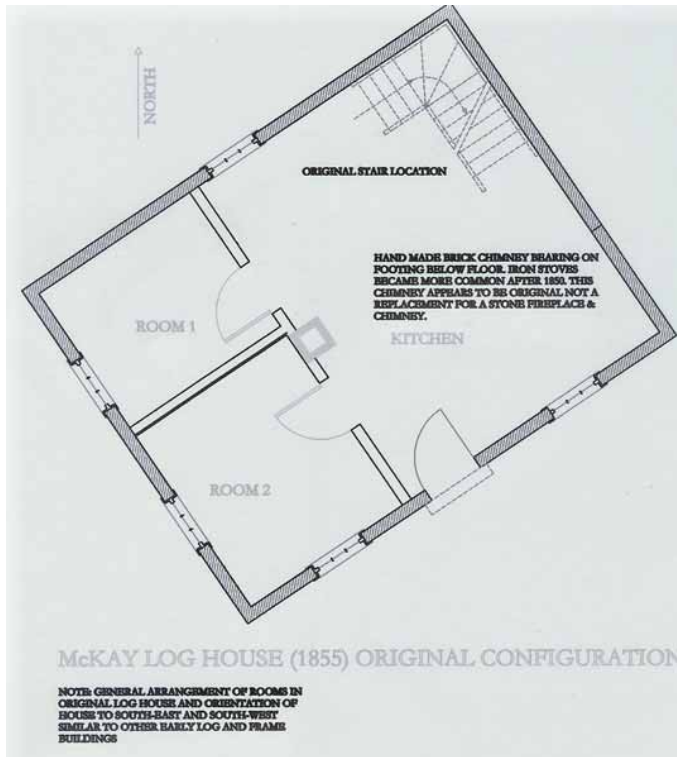


the archeological heritage consultant Tom Murison. Here he describes the location of each element of the site. His complete report can be seen at www.electricscotland.com. Update no.13. Referring to the above satellite image, M. Murison reports:

4.13 View of the entire Fallbrook Farm site, with gravel parking lot, two utility buildings and barn accessed from Fallbrook Trail. The log house is the green roof to the west along the narrow driveway. The bridge is visible where the road takes a sharp bend across the creek (purple rectangle). The millpond, (blue) is upstream from the dam (red). The narrow blue line running south towards the road is the head race. The red U-shaped box south of the bridge is the foundation for the mill wheel which emptied water back into the creek (tailrace). The house, mill, bridge and dam site were all in close proximity (less than 150 metres apart)

**1.22 FALLBROOK / McCLURE HOUSE (1855) NORTH (left picture)
KITCHEN DOOR FACES SOUTH-EAST. STAIR IS PROBABLY IN NORTH
CORNER WHERE FLOOR PATCHED AFTER ADDITION. © T. Murison 2008**

1.23 FALLBROOK / McCLURE HOUSE (AFTER 1855) (right picture) Additions to the East (sawn frame) and North (rubble stone foundation wall to retain hillside). Stairs moved. This is similar to the current plan, except for minor changes (replacement of windows, kitchen cabinetry, etc...) © T. Murison 2008



The above drawing and text from the Murison report explain our current dilemma now that partial designation has been achieved. On the left, the original log cabin. On the right, the cabin with the farmhouse added in 1877 by the McKay family and local artisans. The farm house can be added to the designation when the Friends of Fallbrook can demonstrate to council that we have the support of a solid organisation with credibility and the capacity to help develop a viable charitable organisation and a business plan which guarantees the long term stability of this unique heritage education project. We are currently negotiating with the School of Business, College of Management and Economics, University of Guelph to obtain the business acumen necessary to the success of the Fallbrook project. However the credibility, expertise and financial support of an organisation such as the Scottish Studies Foundation remains critical to reassuring Council and convincing the current owner, the Credit Valley Conservation(C.V.C.) to become a willing partner or sever the property to another recognised foundation willing to do so. A small community heritage community group mostly consisting of elderly Scot farm descendants and retired teachers, ministers and nurses is insufficient collateral. Your support will change that. We have prepared a solid application for Trillium funding with a recommendation from the Ontario Heritage Trust which waits a recognised sponsor.

Our second objective is one of EDUCATION and explains why we have developed such close ties with the department of Scottish Studies. To develop the site in conjunction with the existing education center housed in the remaining barn is so obvious it can easily be overlooked. There are currently 2 classes of young people who have dropped out of the mainstream who go to school every day on the Fallbrook site. The renovated farmhouse will be used as a living classroom to teach about the reality of pioneer life in conjunction with the natural heritage currently taught.

In the picture on the left, the education center is in full action with students camped outside. On the right, Ballinafad elders discussing at one of many gatherings organised for the oral history project. Our heritage consultant Tom Murison is on the left.



Our next steps now that designation has been achieved

- establish a clear orientation and strategy to achieve our primary goal of an education project. A forum will be held in early February in Halton Hills to begin this process
- confirm and establish a working agreement with a credible partner such as the Scottish Studies Foundation
- confirm the participation of the School of Business, University of Guelph to design a business plan and fund raising campaign.
- incorporate, if necessary, as a charitable organisation through the Ontario Historical Society under the name ``Ballinafad Historical Society``
- return to the CVC, the current owner, with a concrete plan to utilize the site.
- although firm support has been established in Ballinafad, it is necessary to inform the wider Georgetown population of the project. One method being considered is an evening of Celtic music and dance with local talent. Information kiosks at the market, summer games and shopping mall are other possibilities.

Request for support from the Scottish Studies Foundation:

From the Scottish Studies Foundation we would greatly appreciate support in the following areas:

- in promoting public awareness of the Fallbrook Heritage site through the use of appropriate media sources and special events.
- in further acknowledging the importance of this unique site through its inclusion in foundation documents and publications.
- Financial support to acquire a student resource for the purpose of guiding the development of a business plan and a site development strategy. Estimated cost is up to \$2,000.

Conclusion- On the following page we see the arch bridge and the mill foundation, both now designated with the original log cabin. After two years of collective effort of stubborn Celts, it is a fine accomplishment but much remains to be done. With your support, we shall succeed. Contacts regarding the above are Bill McKay bill_mckay@sympatico.ca and Lloyd McIntyre lloyd.mcintyre@hbwi.ca

Thank you, Friends of Fallbrook

