

This narrative history of a Residential School was researched and produced by the Government of Canada as part of its response to litigation and the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement. The National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation has not verified the content of this document. It is provided here for reference purposes only. Documented incidents of sexual and physical abuse are based on the documentary record and do not take into account survivor testimony.



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Federal Hostel at Fort Franklin

Narrative

February 2, 2008

Updated August 8, 2008

Updated March 26, 2009

NAME OF RESIDENCE AND VARIANTS

Fort Franklin Hostel [FFS-000012]

Pupil Residence at Fort Franklin [FFS-000013]

NAME OF RELATED SCHOOL AND VARIANTS

Fort Franklin Indian Day School [RCN-007765]

Chief Jimmy Soldat School [FFS-000008-0002]

Fort Franklin Territorial Day School [FFS-000008-0003]

Fort Franklin Federal Day School [RCN-005333-0001]

CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY

1964 A memorandum dated November 20, 1964 outlined plans for the proposed small pupil residences in the lower Mackenzie settlements. The construction of pupil residences at the smaller settlements was intended to accommodate elementary school students and expand school facilities at the smaller settlements. This would eliminate the need for elementary students to attend school in Inuvik, and accommodate those whose parents must leave the settlement on hunting, fishing and trapping expeditions. Residences must be large enough to accommodate the students whose parents are away for varying periods [RCN-002182-0002].

During the 1963/64 school year, 29 out of the 74 students enrolled at the day school were kept in foster homes for an average of 64 days during the school term. Foster home care did not prove satisfactory, as the children were not always properly cared for. It was estimated that the hostel should accommodate about 35 children, with 45 to 50 children by 1969 [RCN-002182-0002].

A memorandum dated December 3, 1964 revealed that an 8-bed pupil residence at Fort Franklin was being included in the 1965/66 construction program. This would enable elementary school children to receive their education in their home settlement [RCN-002213-0002]. A provision for an 8-bed pupil residence at a cost of \$30,000 was included in the construction estimate for 1965/66 [RCN-002176-0004].

1965 Treasury Board approved the construction of an 8-bed pupil residence to accommodate children living beyond commuting distance of the school [RCN-009384].

1967 A memorandum dated February 9, 1967 proposed changes to the 1967/68 construction estimate for Fort Franklin Hostel. Three 12-bed hostels were scheduled to be constructed in 1967/68 and had now been changed to one 12-bed hostel [RCN-004114].

A memorandum dated June 13, 1967 stated that an 8-bed pupil residence at Fort Franklin had been completed as of March 31, 1967. It also revealed that the 12-bed pupil residence scheduled for 1968/69 could be deferred due to the availability of foster home care in Fort Franklin [RCN-004128].

The Fort Franklin Hostel opened September 1967 [FFS-000001-0001].

1969 Attendance records pertaining to the start of the 1969 school year showed zero students in residence at the Fort Franklin Hostel, indicating that the hostel did not operate that year [FFS-000005].

1971 The Fort Franklin Hostel had been open for only a few days in 1971 [FFS-000018].

1972 A letter dated March 22, 1973 stated that the hostel had not been open during the past year and had been open for only a few days as a hostel in the previous year [FFS-000018].

1973 The Superintendent of Education indicated his intention to convert the 8-bed hostel in Fort Franklin to an Adult Education Centre [FFS-000018].

MANAGEMENT OF RESIDENCE

The Fort Franklin Hostel was managed and supervised by Hostel Parents, who were drawn from the local community and hired on contract. In some cases, a local person, also on contract, was employed to assist the house parents in the preparation of meals, house management, among others. The hostel was under the direct supervision and control of the Principal of the Fort Franklin Federal Day School [RCN-012203]. The overall approach of the Small Hostels program was to provide a residential setting more like the pupil's own home than the large Church-run institutions. There was no Church involvement in the Fort Franklin Hostel.

MANAGEMENT OF AFFILIATED DAY SCHOOL

The day school in Fort Franklin was a secular, government-owned and government-managed day school. It opened as an Indian Day School in 1950 and on April 1, 1955, it was taken over by the Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources and converted to a Federal Day School for pupils of all backgrounds [RCN-005312].

Prior to 1969, the Federal Government was responsible for the administration of education in the Northwest Territories. The role of the Territorial Government in federal education programs in the NWT was almost exclusively financial, through direct and indirect grants from the Federal Government. On April 1, 1969, the Federal Government transferred administrative control over education in the North to the Government of Northwest Territories (GNWT) through the Department of Education [RCN-011387].

However, it appears that the Federal Government continued to be involved in the education of Indians and Eskimos after the transfer date, maintaining an advisory and school supervisory staff to review education programs affecting Indians and Eskimos. This is due to the fact that it had a constitutional responsibility to aboriginal peoples that would not be relinquished even after the transfer of responsibility to the GNWT. The Federal Government also assumed total fiscal responsibility for services to Indians and Eskimos in the N.W.T., who represented more than half of the population, since the GNWT had limited ability to finance the costs of such services. That meant the Federal Government would continue to provide educational funding and ensure, through supervision, that educational programs to Indians and Eskimos would be equal to those in other provinces [RCN-001275-0002].

SCHOOL BUILDINGS

Associated Day School

Fort Franklin Federal Day School

1949 Construction on the Fort Franklin School began on July 27, 1949. A memorandum dated August 31, 1949 reported that the building was 75% completed [FFS-000029].

1950 The first federally-built and managed day school in Fort Franklin opened as an Indian Day School in 1950 and run by Indian Affairs [FFS-000041, FFS-000033-0002]. Mr. W.A. Bowerman was appointed to the teaching staff of the new Indian Day School effective September 1, 1950 [FFS-000030-0000].

1954 A memorandum dated August 27, 1954 by the Superintendent of Education reported that the lighting plant and heating system were "badly in need of repairs" [RCN-011644-0000].

1955 The school was taken over on April 1, 1955 by the Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources and converted to a Federal Day School for pupils of all backgrounds [RCN-005312].

- 1963 Two new classrooms were added to the original two-classroom school to expand the facility to six classrooms offering grades kindergarten through Grade 6 [FFS-000036].
- 1967 A Treasury Board Submission dated October 11, 1967 proposed the construction of a two-classroom and gymnasium addition to the Fort Franklin School. It stated that the enrolment in the Fort Franklin School had risen from 49 pupils in September 1961 to 97 pupils in March 1967. An enrolment of 135 pupils was expected in September 1969 [FFS-000036].
- 1972 The Hamlet Council of Fort Franklin requested that the Fort Franklin Federal Day School be named Chief Jimmy Soldat School, after the first Chief of the Fort Franklin Community [FFS-000034].
- 1983 A Treasury Board Submission for Replacement Facility for the Fort Franklin School dated November 16, 1983 proposed the construction of a replacement, nine-classroom school and gymnasium. The present six-classroom school had become overcrowded with the addition of grades seven and eight in the early 1970s. There was now a need for two additional classrooms, a resource centre, home economics and industrial arts rooms. There were plans to add Grade nine upon completion of the new school, and grade 10 after two years. Occupancy of the new school was expected in early 1985. It would be “a community education and recreation facility for all ages” [FFS-000033-0002].

The document also stated that “with the exception of two small, existing out-buildings which will be used for cold storage and land-based programs, the old facility will be either disposed of through Crown Assets or demolished” [FFS-000033-0002].

LAND

The settlement is located on the shore of Great Bear Lake [RCN-005952-0001]. The Federal Day School and grounds occupy all of Lot 1 in Block 1 in the settlement of Fort Franklin [FFS-000031, RCN-007829-0001]. No information is available for the exact location of the Federal Hostel at Fort Franklin.

PHOTOS, PLANS AND OTHER MEDIA

Document ID	Date	Description
FFS-000032	Undated - circa 1952 to 1961	General Layout of Fort Franklin

WRITTEN AGREEMENTS

We do not have any documents that pertain to written agreements for the operation of a pupil residence at Fort Franklin.

DOCUMENTS REFERRING TO SCHOOL INCIDENTS

We do not have any documents with information about incidents at the Federal Hostel at Fort Franklin.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

1968 A letter dated February 16, 1968 from the Principal of Fort Franklin School stated that since hostel children have no pocket money, they have free admission to movies shown at the Community Hall by the Fort Franklin Community Club. The admission fees would be considered as part of the running expense of the Hostel [FFS-000047, FFS-000046].

GENERAL ENROLMENT STATISTICS OVER TIME

Numbers provided below are taken from Quarterly Returns that reflect enrolment at the Federal Hostel at Fort Franklin at the start of each school year.

School Year	Average Attendance
1967-68	14
1968-69	8
1969-70	0 children in residence; Interim closure
1970-71	Interim closure
1971-72	Information not available. However, residence opened for only a few days.

PRINCIPALS/ADMINISTRATORS

Administrator

Name	Position	Tenure
John J. Talbot	Pupil Residence Superintendent	1967/68
J. Kryzanowski	Pupil Residence Superintendent	1968/69

R.G. Mazer	Pupil Residence Superintendent	1969/70
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Principal

Name	Position	Tenure
John J. Talbot	Principal	1967/68
J. Kryzanowski	Principal	1968/69
R.G. Mazer	Principal	1969/70
William Chorney	Principal	1970/71-1971/72
Carl Dillon	Principal	1972/73
John P. Brady	Principal	1973/74

The original school narrative document produced by Canada also contains a number of records that have been separated pending review.



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