

FARLEY MCGILL MOWAT, OC

Inducted 2013 September 14

Farley Mowat is a well-known Canadian author and environmentalist. He was born in Belleville, Ontario on May 12, 1921, the son of **Angus Mowat** and **Helen Anne Thomson**. He is the descendant of Loyalists **Ephraim Jones**, **Archibald Thompson**, and **Lt. William Ruttan**, and a great-grand-nephew of the famous politician **Sir Oliver Mowat**.

His father was a veteran of Vimy Ridge and worked for some time as a librarian in Trenton before moving to Belleville where he became chief librarian living above the old Corby library. The family lived in the Windsor area from 1930 to 1933 and at that time, Farley took an interest in writing verse. His family then moved to Saskatoon during the height of the Depression. While there he also wrote a regular column on birds in the local paper.

During World War 2, he served as a 2nd Lieutenant with the Hastings and Prince Edward Regiment and served in action during the Italian Campaign in 1943. Early in 1945 he worked in the intelligence service in Holland. He was discharged with the rank of Captain at the end of the war. Following the war, he enrolled at the University of Toronto studying biology, and during a field trip to the Canadian North became concerned with the plight of the Inuit. This led to the publishing of his first novel in 1952 *People of the Deer*, which became a critical success. His second book, *The Regiment*, in 1955, told of the actions of the Hasty-P's during World War 2. His first children's book, *Lost in the Barrens*, published in 1956, won the Governor General's Award. One of his most famous novels, *Never Cry Wolf*, was made into a motion picture in 1983.



His numerous books cover autobiographical works, children's stories, non-fiction and fictional works on the Arctic, and environmental works. It is for the last topic that has created controversy and criticism over the years. Throughout his writing career, he has won many accolades for his work, including the Leacock Medal in 1970 and a Gemini Award for writing in 1989. Farley Mowat was made an officer of the Order of Canada in 1981. In 2002, The Sea Shepherd Conservation Society named their ship *RV Farley Mowat* to recognize his activism against the whaling industry. Farley Mowat Public School in Barrhaven, near Ottawa, opened in 2006. His works have been published in over 50 languages throughout the world and over 17 million books sold. His wife Claire is also a published author. They currently reside in Port Hope, Ontario. Most recently a portrait of Farley Mowat by artist Susan Moshyniski has been unveiled on the main floor of the Belleville Public Library as part of their Mowat Collection.

Farley Mowat was inducted into our Loyalist Hall of Honour on September 14th, 2013.