

ST AUGUSTINE'S INDIAN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL, SECHELT, BC

5 students were listed on the NCTR website in 2021 as having died at the former St Augustine's Indian Residential School:

<https://nctr.ca/residential-schools/british-columbia/sechelt-st-augustines/>

Name	Date of Death (Year/Month/Day)
George Freddie George	1936-03-29
Joe Moses	1937-01-19 or 1937-01-20
Rawley Isadore Dan	1974-07-19
Simon Francis Jeffries	1935-09-30
Stephanie Joe	1965-04-01 – 1965-04-30

The above-referenced 5 students are not 'missing'. They are listed below in the order in which they appear on the NCTR website with the following indications as to the federal and provincial government and residential school records which have information concerning the date of death, cause of death, and place of burial for each student.

THE TYPES OF RECORDS CONSULTED

(1) Provincial Government Death Certificates

The letter [C] following a name indicates that a microfilmed copy of the provincial death certificate is available online at the BC Archives at:

<http://search-collections.royalbcmuseum.bc.ca/Genealogy>

An asterisk following a name indicates that the microfilmed copy of the provincial death certificate is not available online, but can be accessed free of charge at the BC Archives and at major BC public libraries.

(2) Inquiries Into Student Deaths

The Department of Indian Affairs mandated, on Form No. 414, that there be an inquiry into the death of any student who died at a residential school:

When a pupil of an Indian Residential School dies, the Principal is required to inform the Indian Agent at once.

On receipt of the Principal's notice the Indian Agent shall convene a Board of Inquiry, consisting of himself as Chairman, the Principal of the Residential School, and the Medical Officer who attended the deceased pupil. These members of the Board shall, in each other's presence, complete this memorandum, which shall then be forwarded to the Department of Indian Affairs, Ottawa, in one copy.

The Board of Inquiry shall, if at all practicable assemble within 48 hours of the pupil's death.

The parents or guardians of the deceased pupil shall be given notice of this inquiry and be permitted to attend it or to send a representative. They or their representative shall be asked if they wish to make a statement. In the event of their so wishing, their statement shall be attached to the report. The inquiry, however, shall not be delayed more than 72 hours after the time at which it would otherwise be held to enable them to attend it. . . .

This inquiry is not designed to take the place of, or prevent, any other inquiry including an inquest, which may be required by law.

If the pupil died as the result of an accident, the Indian Agent is required to take the statements of the witnesses of the accident and attached them to this memorandum.

Inquiry reports for deaths which occurred at the St Augustine's Indian Residential School in the years 1936-1937 were microfilmed by Library and Archives Canada. To access them, go to this link for LAC c-8781, and insert the page number 1299:

<https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/mass-digitized-archives/school-files-1879-1953/Pages/item.aspx?PageID=2519364>

(3) Quarterly Returns

A unique register number was used to meticulously track every student from the time the student was admitted to a residential school until the time the student ceased to attend and was formally recorded as 'discharged'. In the entries below the student's unique register number at the St Augustine's Indian Residential School has been added from microfilmed quarterly returns, applications for admission, and DIA inquiries into student deaths.

Quarterly returns which included student names, register numbers and attendance data were sent to Ottawa by school principals via the local Indian Agent every quarter in order for the school to qualify for the per capita grant paid by the federal government for each eligible status Indian student.

Quarterly returns for St Augustine's Indian Residential School for the years 1941-1950 were microfilmed by Library and Archives Canada. To access them, go to this link for LAC c-8779, and insert the page number 1708:

<https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/mass-digitized-archives/school-files-1879-1953/Pages/item.aspx?PageID=2514761>

(4) Application Forms Signed By Parents

The local Indian Agent was required to submit an individual application form signed by a parent to the Department of Indian Affairs in Ottawa for each student for whom admission to a residential school was requested, and each application was then formally approved or rejected in writing by Department officials in Ottawa.

Similarly, the Indian Agent was required to submit an application to Ottawa before any student could be discharged from the school, and each discharge was also formally approved in writing by Department officials in Ottawa. In addition, a form summarizing the applications for admission and discharge of students was sent to Ottawa by school principals through the Indian Agent every quarter along with the quarterly returns.

Applications for admission and discharge as well as the quarterly summaries for the St Augustine's Indian Residential School for the years 1934-1952 were microfilmed by Library and Archives Canada. To access them, go to this link for LAC c-8780, and insert the page number 1767:

<https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/mass-digitized-archives/school-files-1879-1953/Pages/item.aspx?PageID=2516988>

Also go to this link for LAC c-878 and insert the page number 6:

<https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/mass-digitized-archives/school-files-1879-1953/Pages/item.aspx?PageID=2519364>

(5) Department of Indian Affairs Annual Reports

Until about 1915, annual reports by principals, which included information on school health conditions and student deaths, were printed in the Department of Indian Affairs Annual Report. DIA Annual Reports can be accessed at the Library and Archives Canada website at this link:

https://recherche-collection-search.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/Home/Search?DataSource=Library|IndAffAnnRep&q_exact=for%20the%20year%20ended&DateBucket=%7C1864-1969&

See also:

<https://publications.gc.ca/site/eng/9.846380/publication.html>

STUDENT BIOGRAPHIES COMPILED FROM THE ABOVE RECORDS

George Freddie George* (1936/3/29), Register #182; 8 yrs old; born Squamish Indian Reserve No. 1; father Fred George Sr., born Squamish Indian Reserve No. 24 (Brackendale), mother Irene August, born Capilano; d. St Augustine's Indian Residential School; phthisis with pleurisy; death certificate signed by doctor; buried Squamish Indian Reserve No. 1; DIA inquiry, mother did not wish to attend (see LAC c-8781, pp. 1302-7) [NB: statement by principal at DIA inquiry: 'Patient was never normal, fluctuating temperatures, mother stated he was delicate from infancy & had been injured when very young & was always weak-chested.'] [NB: statement by Indian Agent at DIA inquiry: 'After death of this pupil, the infirmary was thoroughly disinfected in accordance with instructions of the medical officer. Rev. Principal recommended that this pupil be sent to hospital in Vancouver but Dr MacQuarrie

advised he was unable to find room for him and that the school infirmary was the best which could be done for this pupil.’] [NB: DIA inquiry states name was **Freddie George**, but registered as George Freddie George]

[NB: letter from Indian Agent to Ottawa dated 6 April 1936: ‘By a sad coincidence, his father, Councillor Fred George, Sr., died in Vancouver General Hospital at almost exactly the same time.’] [NB: death certificate for father, Fred George, states d. 29 March 1936, Vancouver, aged 32]

[NB: sister Sarah May George, Register #186, 7 yrs old, admitted August 1936: ‘Her mother wishes to keep her for a while.’ (see LAC c-8780, p. 1913)]

[NB: sister Josephine George, Register #193, 6 yrs old; admitted 19 October 1936 (for application signed by mother and witnessed by Councillor Louis Miranda, medical exam, admission, approval, see LAC c-8780, pp. 1918-21, 1952-3)]

Joe Moses* (1937/1/19 – 1937/1/20), Register #166; 11 yrs old; Sechelt Band; born Sechelt Reserve; parents Captain and Sophie Joe, both born Sechelt; admitted August 1934 (see LAC c-8780, pp. 1814-15); d. St Augustine’s Indian Residential School; ‘Measles. Hemorrhagic type’; death certificate signed by Indian Agent (informant T.J. Fahlmann) and doctor; buried Sechelt; DIA inquiry (see LAC c-8781, pp. 1321-7) [NB: death certificate states name was **Moses Joe**] [NB: death certificate states date of death was 1937/1/19] [NB: discharge states: ‘This student died Jan. 19, 37, (Black measles,) (Noted on 23 of File)’ (see LAC c-8780, p. 1952)]

[NB: letter dated 4 February 1937 from Indian Agent to Ottawa: ‘Although there were no deaths at the School for a long period, there have been five since the entire staff, from Principal to the janitor, was changed two years ago. A Board of Inquiry shows that each pupil died a natural death and received attention in the School sick ward after he or she had reported sick. . . The mental attitude of both pupils and parents towards the School is very unfavourable and complaints are continually being made.’]

[NB: letter from Ottawa dated 9 February 1937: ‘A copy of your letter is being forwarded to Indian Commissioner MacKay, and he is being requested to fully investigate the complaints which you have received.’]

[NB: sister (?) Catherine Joe, Register #149, 16 yrs old, discharged 15 March 1937, at school 7 years 3 months, ‘of age, neede[d] home’ (see LAC c-8780, pp. 1952-3)]

Rawley Isadore Dan (1974/7/19), [C]; 15 yrs old; Mount Currie Band; residence 370 4th Avenue North, Williams Lake; born 13 August 1958, Vancouver; father Henry Dan, mother surnamed Billie, both born Mount Currie; d. Cariboo Memorial Hospital, Williams Lake; cardiac arrest due to broncho-pneumonia, chronic renal failure, rheumatic heart disease (2 years); autopsy; death certificate signed by doctor, District Registrar; buried Indian Burial Grounds, Mount Currie [NB: resident in Williams Lake; not a student at St Augustine’s]

Simon Francis Jeffries* (1935/9/30), Register #146; 13 yrs old; Sechelt Band; born Sechelt; father Abraham Jeffries, born Deserted Bay, Jervis Inlet, mother unknown; d. St Paul’s Hospital, Vancouver (brought to Vancouver by principal); intestinal

obstruction, tuberculous peritonitis; operation; death certificate signed by doctor; buried Sechelt Indian Reserve; DIA inquiry (see LAC c-8781, pp. 1308-20) [NB: death certificate states date of death was 1935/9/14] [NB: Statement at DIA inquiry of Abraham Jeffries, father of deceased:

I thank you Mr Agent for what you did for me and my boy in Vancouver it goes right into my heart and I will not forget. I thank you Doctor Inglis and the doctor who tried to help my boy in Vancouver. I know even good doctors make mistakes sometimes. Simon was a quiet boy home he was never sick and never very well. In the holidays I told him he could go to the West Coast fishing and he said he nearly fell overboard last year and was afraid to go again. The trouble at the school is that the children feel sick and won't tell the Principal until they are real bad. I am quite satisfied with everything done for my boy and have nothing to say.'

[NB: statement of Indian Agent at DIA inquiry:

'I have reported to the Department in connection with this School and have received routine replies which are unsatisfactory, regarding wholesale dismissals of the staff by the new Principal. . . . Possibly we have no say where the inside staff is concerned, but I think you should be acquainted with the facts. Dr. Inglis advises me that the Sister who has been nurse in the school for many years has been replaced in the general shake-up. The former nurse knew all the Sechelt Indians and their family histories and Dr. Inglis said he could absolutely trust her diagnosis of patients and she knew exactly when to call him. In the Simon Jefferies' case it would have made little or no difference but the appendicitis case might easily have had serious consequences and the boy is still in hospital. Dr. Inglis says that the former nurse would have recognized the symptoms immediately but by the time he was called, inflammation had become acute. I have never yet been able to obtain any clear understanding of an agent's duties with regard to residential schools. . . .']

[NB: letter dated 23 September 1935 from Ottawa: 'I have read your letter and the enclosed report and have marked them to the Schools and Medical branches for attention.']

Stephanie Joe (1965/4/1 – 1965/4/30), [C]; 12 yrs old; residence 221 Rivers Road, West Vancouver (Capilano Indian Reserve); born 2 April 1953, Squamish; parents Frank Joe, Beatrice Dick; dead on arrival at Lion's Gate Hospital, North Vancouver; asphyxia due to carbon monoxide poisoning and inhalation of smoke (house fire caused by children playing); coroner's inquest; autopsy; death certificate signed by mother, Beatrice Joe, 221 Rivers Road, North Vancouver, and coroner; buried Capilano Indian Cemetery, West Vancouver [NB: death certificate states name was Stephanie **Amelia** Joe] [NB: death certificate states date of death was 1965/4/17] [NB: death occurred at her home in North Vancouver on Easter weekend; may not have been a student at St Augustine's Indian Residential School]

[NB: death certificate for mother, Beatrice Dick; residence 221 Rivers Drive, North Vancouver; born 26 March 1930, Mount Currie; parents Charlie Dick, Emily Dolores Dan; married (husband Frank J. Joe); d. 30 October 1969, 221 Rivers Drive, North Vancouver, aged 39; autopsy; coroner's inquiry; death certificate signed by friend, Stephen Charlie, 221 Rivers Drive, North Vancouver, and coroner; buried Mt. Currie

Cemetery]

Compiled by Nina Green 27 November 2021, updated 5 April 2023.