

SCHOOL BOARD

MR. R. A. MCMATH - 634 Francis Road, Richmond, B. C.

INTERVIEWED: March 6, 1975

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Term of Office - 1951 - 1956 incl.

Reason for Serving

Past president of the Legion for 3 years prior, and chaired some public meetings - a number of people suggested it would be a good idea for him to run for School Board, so he did.

Other Members of School Board

Harold Smith
Phil Buswell (now deceased) - chairman 1951 - 52
Mrs. Sara King (now deceased)
Bill Burnett
Jeff Horner
Fred Errington (now deceased)
Van Baggen (now deceased)
Dr. R. Talmey
Jim Patterson
Roy Scott
Mrs. Maude Steves

Secretary of the Board

Wallie Gibbs in 1951
Art Bassett started in 1952.

Main Problems of School Board then

- finding enough accommodation for growing number of school children
- transportation

Richmond High School

- School Board acquired a nine-acre site
- By-law for the proposed school turned down before Mr. McMath came on the School Board.

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School Board Operation

- Met every two weeks
- Committees were:
 - building
 - negotiation
 - transportation
 - maintenance & grounds
- Met when necessary.

Population & Transportation

- Bridgeport area, 1/3 of population attending school (highest in B. C. then)
- Transportation problems:
 - school bus policy explained
 - parents expressed concern at a general meeting, board stated number of buses were not going to be increased, thus parents worked for new by-law to place schools within general walking distance of pupils - passed with 86% approval
- Accommodation required
 - low cost of converting activity rooms at R.M. Grauer & Garden City Schools to classrooms
 - schools provided with covered play area, special design explained.

School Park Site Combination

- Explains new policy of activity room, washrooms, and kitchen used for both school & community purposes
 - i.e.- Tait Park in Bridgeport area
 - South Arm area
- Legal problems of expropriation of property for school and park site -

The school act and the municipal act changed when Mr. McMath on council --explains procedure leading to this change which resulted in school-park combination with school board and council approval.

Double Shifting

- In 1952 double shifting decreased; different schools had varying time of opening. Buses ran more hours and education was the same as before double-shifting.

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Teacher Hiring

- List brought before school board by the inspector, from the approved list the teachers were hired for the following term
- A problem arose due to the graduate teacher never being told of qualification placed on their records by the Normal School. Not all were accepted by the inspector.
- B. C. Teachers Federation attended meeting, resulting in a major change - the graduates were told of their marks.

Relocation of Hamilton School

- Talks of reasons for abandoning old school which was situated on curve of Westminster Highway (the original Trites School).
- A new school constructed on a municipal park on Gilley Ave., which the municipality was to acquire.
- Children would not have to walk on a dangerous curb.
- A community centre for Hamilton area.

Cost Cutting to Taxpayers

- Both the municipality and school board had equipment making separate trips - result of combining school & park sites, municipalities acquired all equipment for maintenance of grounds
- Higher level of service for a lot less cost
- Talks of night schools.

Parent Teacher Conferences

- Introduced. Once a month the school closed from 2 - 4 p.m. Parents invited to discuss their child's progress with the teachers.

A. L. DYBALL