

## DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

COLONEL JOHN N. BURNETT - 1106 W 48th Ave., Vancouver

INTERVIEWED:

January 27, 1975

T.36.2

Term: - September 1949 - October 1964

### Schools

- In 1949 there were 9 Elementary schools, and of these 3 were one-room schools
- Also in 1949, there was one Junior Senior Secondary school.. now Cambie Junior High School
- Presently, there are 6 Junior Senior Secondary schools; 3 Senior Secondary schools, one of which has a Vocational Department in it.
- Since 1949 a continuous building program has been carried on, mostly one-story schools, although there are two two-story schools (Elementary).
- Mobile schools - MacDonald School, a four-room school -- explains (MacDonald used until 1974).
- In 1949 Richmond changed from a rural agricultural to an urban area...in 15 years this was accomplished. During this time, in one year alone the school population increased 18% - a record for the Province. Very little double-shifting due to school population forecasting --explains

### Board Policy

- Favoured small schools accessible to students, particularly Elementary grades -
  - to avoid bussing
  - to allow many children to go home for lunch
- Aim:
  - an Elementary school with Primary annexes of Grades 1, 2 and/or 3.
    - Many of these annexes have grown into schools of their own right --examples
  - place Junior Secondary Schools in centre of Elementary schools.

.../2

.../2

- Aim..cont.

- the Senior High schools are placed in a central location to Junior High schools.

- School Growth

- the Secondary school not to exceed 1,000 pupils.
- every time a Secondary school reached a population of 750, the Board began the building of another school.
- limited size of the schools gave more pleasant atmosphere.

By-Laws

- Only one major one defeated...in 1950 for new Richmond High School.
- Board thereafter developed a plan for a by-law campaign using slides, pictures, population statistics in a prepared script.
- A by-law was defeated on kindergartens and cafeteria -explains.

Cafeteria

- Only one in Richmond at Mitchell Elementary School, the School Board providing only the cooking utensils, the P.T.A. and parents supplied the labour, etc., always breaking even.

Adult Education

- Only one or two classes in 1949 at Cambie in woodworking.
- In the early 50's began at Richmond High School headed by Mr. Arthur Dodd - explains.
- Later extended to Cambie School, introducing many subjects.
- In early 60's Mr. B. Reid became Director of Adult Education.
- This eventually became a full part of the educational system.

School Board Offices

- In 1949 housed in the old Richmond High School (now Cambie School). The office was and now is the Medical Room.
- About 1952 moved to large classroom of Richmond High School (on Foster Road).

.../3

.../3

#### School Board Offices - cont..

- After a short time the staff grew and a one-story building was constructed adjacent to the Municipal Hall.
- Two years later another story was added on which also included an excellent Board Room.

#### School Board Council Relations

- Up to about the end of the 50's the School Board estimates had to be approved by the Council.
  - never had any difficulties or arguments, only explanations.
  - Council always interested in education
  - Council very generous with School Board.
- In middle 50's the Council had a progressive program in Recreation, and this entailed the use of our schools after hours and weekends.
  - explains arrangements
  - the schools were used for all purposes.
- Believe the Richmond School Board and Richmond Council were the first to reach amicable arrangements for joint use of our schools.

#### Chant Report in 1961

- Did not make any appreciable difference on the educational system in British Columbia:
  - return Grade 7 to Elementary schools
  - Grades 8, 9 & 10 Junior High schools
  - Grades 11 & 12 Senior Secondary schools
- Expresses concern on teaching of 3 R's, from then on the fundamentals were emphasized in the school system.
- Obligated the Junior High School students to select their course for Senior High School not later than Grade 9. This proved to be difficult in many cases. This was to be disregarded later on.
- Subject matter in Secondary schools they had to take certain constants were English, Physical Education and Social Studies.
  - electives were quite varied
  - youngsters could obtain a broad selective education
  - in High School, students could follow an academic course or graduation course. This caused many difficulties and hardships.

.... /4

.../4

### P.T.A.

- A very strong institution in Richmond for many years, particularly from 1949 to 1965.
- In 1964 every school in the district had a P.T.A.
- Invaluable in aid to the School Board's concern - explains.
- After 1960 School Board estimates provided for all equipment needed.
- P.T.A. Council helpful and influential - explains.

### Douglas College

- Had its beginning in Richmond
- Early in the 60's the School Board staff assembled information regarding colleges - explains.
- The Board initiated meetings with School Board members of Burnaby, Surrey, Langley and Maple Ridge.
- A committee was set up to go into the permission of the college, later to be Douglas College.

### Duties of Superintendent of Schools

(Found in "Section 11" of the "Public Schools Act")

#### - Highlights

- assist School Board in carrying out provisions of the Public Schools Act.
- furnish information to the Board members, as if and when required.
- recommends appointment, transfer and dismissal of teachers - explains.
- has to attend all School Board meetings.
- make any investigations which the Board members require.
- recommends the area of attendance of students to various schools.
- provides directing staff in educational system in all matters when required to do so.

### History of Area Covered by School Inspector (from 1949-65)

- In 1949 the Superintendent also had to service Delta, Richmond, and University Hill School.

.../5

.../5

History of Area Covered by School Inspector - cont...

- In 1950 changed to Inspector of Schools in Richmond, Seschelt, University Hill, and the School for the Deaf and Blind.
- In 1951 the Inspector serviced Richmond, Alert Bay and the School for the Deaf and Blind.
- 1956 - assigned to Richmond only.

A. L. DYBALL